

# **595 Days**

## **A SOVIET PRISONER**



Lubyanka Prison Moscow May 1983

**By**

**Dr. IVAN NIMCHUK**

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## **An Intense Atmosphere**

***War hangs in the air. - What to do now? General Mobilization in Poland. - War Begins! German Flight Incursions. - Raid on Ukrainians. - Germans Besiege Lwów. "Vocation" in Position. - By what means Poland began and ended Domination on Our Lands.***

The summer months of 1939 were very hot. All indications were that of an approaching storm. The annexation to Germany without one shot being fired of the industrial region of the Saarland in 1935, all of the 7,000,000 population of Austria, large fragments of Czechoslovakia, and soon all of the Czech lands, all tied in with a rebellious triumph, swift and then full tragical end of independent Carpathian Ukraine, - Hitler also seized from Lithuania its only port of Klaipėda (Memel) and prepared for the jump to Poland. Stunned by his unprecedented progress, he observed Germany's rather tight and restricted situation, even in the widened boundaries. Not considering a pact of non-aggression, but rather a pact amiable to Poland, that co-existed a few years (from 1934), Hitler was not willing to agree to the existing Polish corridors, which divided Germany into two portions, but rather to Poland's existence entirely. War hangs in the air.

Under those serious circumstances, gathered in Lwów a convention of the Great Peoples Committee of Ukrainian National Democratic Association (U.N.D.A.) and that consultation was directed not only by the entire Ukrainian citizenship, but it could be said by all of the Polish citizenry. As could be expected, the conference resolved unanimously that in the expectation of German-Polish military conflict the Ukrainian nation expressed loyally their obligation against the Polish state. Both the largest concerned countries, Ukraine and Poland withdrew accordingly, after, with easement: Ukrainians without consideration of political party affiliation withdrew due to the declaration of the leading political party to defend the Ukrainian nation against the chance of war - or so it appeared - from the repression of the Polish administration and interests; The Poles isolated without national spokesmen, were satisfied due to the fact, that the resolution validated their position and gave certainty that millions of Ukrainians would stand in the war with Germany against the Polish state. As to Germany, they understood the decree very well; certainly to the side of the German state and its distinct indications of minor status in Poland declared continuity and clearly for over 20 years, its loyalty to the Polish nation, and German representatives in the Warsaw parliament never had occasion to vote against the budget so that it would never be faulted - God forbid - indications of non-loyalty to Poland. The type of indicative designs of the Germans who lived in Poland were displayed in the first days of the war, and more clearly in the latter years of the war. In such a tense atmosphere responsible Ukrainian spokesmen reflected regularly as to what action be taken in the event that Poland capitulates in the war against Germany (in this there was no sorrow) and West-Ukrainian lands in consequence of this or other military-political coincidence of events would be conquered by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic. I recall that in this theme we discussed broadly at the editors office of the "Vocation" (a Ukrainian publication of which Dr. E. Nimchuk was editor) then, when Stalin on the 16th Congress of the Communist Party put forward an awareness and demand a transaction in the affairs of the Carpathian Ukraine. Later we occasionally returned to this theme and particularly and regularly felt infringed upon in those days and weeks preceding the outbreak of the German-Polish war. Evidently - somehow any transparent definite resolution in this affair was never accepted. However, I remember the general opinion was for all those citizens without involvement in anti-Bolshevik activities, it is necessary to remain in the cities together with the population masses. What would the masses - it was discussed - think if its leadership abandoned their native land and left it alone to the sacrifice of the Bolsheviks? And how would such a departure of the intelligent (cultured classes) to the west, would then be taken advantage of by the Bolsheviks.

The month of August 1939 obligated the editorial staff of "Vocation" to a vacation period. On leave were three members of the staff, amongst them editor John Kedrin-Rudnitski with whom I during the last four years existence of "Vocation" (1935-1939) directed the editorial. He wrote us bitterly, thoughtless, letters and preferred not to believe in a war which hung above us. In the interim Hitler declared one military

speech after another, and set directly day after day, every time greater demands on his recent ally. Amid confusion, Poland responded with replies from the Minister of Foreign Affairs Beck, resulting in a provocative situation. Approximately a week prior to the outbreak of the war began the massive return to their administrations, offices and shops, the Lwów vacationers. Arrived back from an interrupted vacation also editor Kedrin and along with him other members of the editorial staff.

On the 30th day of August Poland proclaimed general mobilization. From all parts moved in groups of young soldiers to Lwów which was the headquarters of the command corps. Swarmed with young people were all the savings banks, parks, market squares, and streets of the Galician capital. It appeared that the mobilization was not skillfully organized: a lack of military provisions and also beds and linens for the medical providers, which from the first day of the war had to be collected from the civilian population. Thousands of the reserves suffered for a few days until they received necessary military equipment. One other interesting observation: not even at that moment was there any confidence in the military leadership of the Ukrainian nationality (of which there are very few) because not all of the Ukrainian intellectuals in the Polish army received mobilization calling cards. This appeared to be in return to the leadership of the reserves because the recruitment of Ukrainians for active service in the Polish army was entirely unacceptable (beyond a few emigrants) of the previous Ukrainian National Republic (U.N.R.)

On Friday, 1st of September at dawn, just before sunrise squadrons of German aviation bombarded numerous Polish strategical objectives and airfields, and at the same time, including in Skniłowa near Lwów. In the morning of that day, residents of Lwów were advised by radio that Germany had attacked Poland. Thus the war began! Of no aid whatsoever were endeavors of England and France's statesmen, and attempts of Mussolini as an intermediary in the rebellious conflict. The voice of the Pope was of no assistance. The war began, that in agreement broadened across the entire world, and ended only on the 8th of May, in the year 1945, and that was only formally. That war which cost humanity tens of millions of sacrificed, killed, disabled, homeless - a multi-million dollars of wealth. Interestingly, did any one in the world imagine its terrible consequences?

First flight incursion on Lwów were experienced by the residents on 1st of September precisely at noon. Sitting at the editorial offices stone building Prosvita (adult education) Market Square no.10, on the 11th floor, at the time we heard above ourselves a deafening roar. As we ran to the windows, the German flying squadron flew high above us, as if it were a flock of silver birds forming an acute angle, and we went directly downstairs in the direction of the main exit. They were flying in formations of three, of which the center was a bomber, which had on both sides a defender - fighter. When it appeared to us that the first group were beyond the Jesuit gardens, or more or less past the Polytechnic, the bombers with extraordinary swiftness dove at an angle to the ground and at a height of 200-300 meters, unloaded its' bombs, one after another (altogether 3 or 4). In the same dizzy swiftness they again flew higher and forward and assumed its previous position in the formation. The descending bombs, which cut through the air with a great whistling roar could be almost visible. After their fall and explosion the entire atmosphere trembled. Immediately after the first unloaded its bombs, there were other following bombers and after 2-3 minutes all was quiet. Visible only were signs of the high smoke which rose higher and higher.

It was interesting that this flight never met any defense or anti-aircraft attacks from the Poland aviation, and the population was not previously forewarned. Entire weeks and months before this residents of Lwów were trained as to what should be done in the event of enemy flights: it was done and determined at various bomb shelters, tried and tested in all types of sound sirens, - and here in a city of 300,000, had to experience large German flight incursions without any preceding cautions, and this precisely at noon. The sirens sounded only a few minutes after all was quiet, calling the central residents of the city, except only to irritate the loud grievances.

It was indicated that the bombs were dropped on a few residential homes near a small side-street that extended to Pyratsko Street, just beyond Horodetsko Street (a few hundred meters from the city square), and on the railroad work-shops. The bombs that were dropped that day were light, nonetheless, in only one Jewish home perished the first day over 80 Jews, the names of which were read out at the water clock of

the Jewish Faith. Confessors Assembly. Of the Christians perishing that day were only a few individuals. Of that first German flight attack on Lwow which took the largest sacrifice from amongst the Jewish population, as if in anticipation, that was only the beginning of which would be a thousand times worse.

Later German air attacks on Lwiw, which were experienced practically every day, were forewarned ordinarily with the wail of sirens, so that the inhabitants would have time before them to hide in the shelters. However, the shelters were not always helpful, as heavy bombs regularly destroyed a multi-storied residence entirely to the basement, where then everyone perished, who there sought protection. In a few instances all the people in basements were choked to death after dropped bombs tore apart gas distribution pipelines, while from above falling brick debris blocked off all entrances to it. In other similar situations, all the people were drowned by water from damaged water lines. The largest number of people perished on Sunday of September 3rd in an underground passage under Mikolasha Street during a raid which occurred suddenly, also at noon. At the time there was a cinema exhibition, and alongside the traffic stood a long line of smokers, who wish to get some high priced narcotics. They all perished from the ruins of the passageway, and the corpses of the unfortunates were dug up later after a period of a few months.

In addition to the two aforementioned, there were also more devastating German air attacks on Lwiw on the 7th, 9th and 14th of September. Weaker attacks continued until the 21st of September. The damage which the city endured was immense. Understandably, with every flight there people sacrificed.

Those German bombs and unfolding developments refreshed significantly the military enthusiasm of the Lwiw Poles and - one cannot conceal the truth children - also the Jews. When departing to the front detachments, individual Polish officials just recently bid farewell, boasted with airs of self-importance loudly "Till we meet in Berlin", and in a few days, all the Polish importance was stilled entirely impassive. Moderate Polish organizers prepared to consider the German occupation of entire Poland and placed all their confidence on the great alliances - France and England. Then on the evening of September 12th, large German motorized detachments arrived unexpectedly in Lwow and stopped in the suburbs of Bohdaniwka, Levandiwka and Signiwka, and started firing on the city center with light artillery. A dreadful panic overtook not only its entire outpost but also all of the most patriotically oriented inhabitants. Truthfully, the Polish military sections prevented the German entrance to the center of the city, however, trust and possibility of victory amongst them was lacking entirely. The Germans were content to encircle from three directions into a tight ring, so that the Polish defenders, could expect retreat only in an easterly direction - to Luckakiw, Winniki, Pidberestsi, etc. Then in 3-4 days the Germans surrounded Lwiw from the east also, and the city was closed off entirely.

When the war with Germany began from day to day becoming more desperate, the Polish belligerent parties began seeking the guilty of their failure and their nationalized misfortune - amongst the Ukrainians. This was followed by blame, arrests, and massive transport of young and older Ukrainians to concentration camps in Berezi Kartuzka, which had already begun a few weeks prior to the beginning of the war. There were scarcely any localities in Galicia (Halychyna) from which someone of Ukrainian workers were not sent to Berezi Kartuzka. To that place the Polish also sent many Ukrainian Catholic priests and nuns, no different than a herd of cattle. In Lwow the plight of the Ukrainians was totally unbearable. For the Poles it was perceived that in every Ukrainian either a saboteur, a traitor and German spy. The psychosis amongst the Polish population, educated by a chauvinist press, was so total, that it rendered suspicious practically all Ukrainians in that in all activities they were aiding the Germans. At all times circulating throughout the city were all types of provocative-fantastical reports: that Ukrainians are shooting from the windows of their residences at the Polish soldiers, that they are sending the Germans flashing light signals, that aided in sabotage... Very widely discussed was that the Ukrainians had organized their own legions, which were fighting against the Polish under directions from the Germans. In those difficult days for the Lwiw Ukrainians occurred not only the arrests of completely innocent Ukrainians, but also acts of violence and liquidation suspicious from a Polish point of view, individuals. At that time occurred the arrest of John Witwitski, a member of the editorial staff of the popular daily "New Times" and he was declared an enemy of German Nazism, then executed by shooting, without judgment, on the slope of the Lwiw Citadel.

In this inexpressible difficult situation we stood in position and issued uninterruptedly, publications of "Vocation", which from the 12th of September did not come out, truthfully, beyond the Lwów city limits, because of that day all the postal communications with the country and beyond the borders were interrupted. We kept issuing the newspaper - by then the only Ukrainian newspaper in Lwów and the country - in the beginning in the normal format (10 pages daily), however, after a few days it was necessary to reduce not only its expenditures, but also its size, in that the last editions of the "Vocation" consisted of only 2 pages of print. When the Polish public and Polish governmental officials did not cease harassment of the Ukrainians and sweeping raids spread to the countryside, spoke up Metropolitan Andrew who together with the then head of the U. N. D. A. and Ukrainian Parliamentary Representatives in Warsaw, Wasyl Mudry, lodged in the "Vocation" issue of 14th of September, a communication in which it was protested against Polish raids and confirmed that Ukrainians were not shooting out of windows at the Polish military, and that there were no Ukrainian Legions under German directives.

Although this Ukrainian declaration was announced a few times by the Lwów radio and communicated in the Lwów Polish press "Daily Polski" and "New Life", it did not have any success. In addition, already, after 2 days on 17th of September the Bolsheviks gave notice on their own radios that the Red Army had that day crossed the Zbruch and Buh Rivers to "liberate" West-Ukrainian and Bilo-Russian lands. The motive was, that Poland as a state had ceased to exist, therefore, the government of the USSR commanded its armies to cross the Polish borders to protect people of the same blood, Ukrainian and Bilo-Russian populations from the shattered Polish military fragments. And indeed, that day, before sunrise, the Red Army crossed over the then borders of Poland, and in a few days, near Lwów appeared the first Soviet aircraft, which dropped all types of agitational leaflets, that their Ukrainian members in the Warsaw parliament had protested against Polish violence over the Ukrainian population. After the seizure of Lwów, those same members were amongst the first to be arrested by the Bolsheviks.

Indeed, only a few hours prior to the Red Army crossing of the Zbruch and Buh rivers, the Polish police performed a devastation of the "Vocation" facilities. During the night of the 16th to 17th of September (from Saturday to Sunday) entered the building "Prosvita" about 100 Polish policemen and agents under the command of the military order, (probably the defensive detachments) to make a search of the entire building because - as it were - from its windows shots were fired at the Polish military, and in its basements were subversive elements. (Those "subversive elements" were young boys, Ukrainian political prisoners, who were at that time released from prison, and were seeking shelter from the bombs, in small groups, in the basements of the building "Prosvita" as well as in basements of other Ukrainian residential blocks. That police "inspection" lasted from 8 to 11pm and it appeared that the policemen destroyed cupboards and desks in the "Vocation" and "Prosvita" offices, scattered typewriters, etc..., in the printing shop, emptied all the inks from their containers, tread upon and ruined the linotypes in the library and book-binding of "Prosvita". They tore apart many books and with them turned over all the cupboards, so that it was impossible to enter the rooms; and in the residence of the book binder Dmytro Chomiak, cut apart pillows, feather bed spreads etc... At that time they also ruined the prepared composition of the "Vocation" dated 17th September - the final edition, a few copies were reproduced and posted, but due to the Polish vandalism, in general, they never appeared at all.

Its entry onto our lands created by an independent Poland began with closing down of the "Vocation", as it is well known, that with the occupation of Lwów in October 1918 the appearance of the "Vocation" was stopped immediately. Now in the last days of its domination, the endeavors of the Polish remained; by destroying the editorial and printing shop of the despised daily, which stood on guard for the nationalistic Ukrainian peoples interests for almost 60 years

## **First Four Days Under the Bolsheviks**

*From the 17th to the 19th of September, 1939. - Founding of the Ukrainian Relief Committee - The arrival in Lwow of the Red Army and the First Bolshevik Agitators - Ukrainian Delegation to the Partnership of a New Power - A revisit to Prosvita Building and raid on "Vocation" - The self-dissolution of the U.N.D.A. - Conference of Ukrainian Journalists and attack on me by colleague Chekanuk - What he experienced from those Present - My Arrest.*

Beyond the time the Red Army crossed the Zbruch River at dawn of September 17th, the Germans made fewer bombardments on Lwiw. Regardless, the German projectiles perpetrated considerable damage in the city. This one grenade struck a wing of Prosvita building from Blyachorski Street and ruined a portion of the roof and structure of the old building. One heavier bomb entirely tore apart the Semiary Church of the Holy Ghost near Komernika Street, with only the tower remaining, another - blew the roof off the large Jesuit (Roman-Catholic) Church, and also ruined the Treasury Chamber. Altogether, there were numerous tens of other objectives in the city

On September 20th came forth a German ultimatum to the Polish defenders, that they surrender the city, otherwise Lwiw would be entirely demolished. After the surrender of the city, there was a meeting of members of the City Council and - it was said - also the highest church dignitaries, as the Military Command under direction of General Langera (what a Polish surname!) reached a firm decision to prevent the Germans from entering the city. They consented, it appears, to an understanding with the German Military Command for the exit of those civilian individuals, that desired to be beyond the lines of the German fighting front. They were permitted to leave the city via two streets: Zowkiwsko and Luchakiwsko till 5:00pm. Immediately after the announcement of the consent to leave on the radio, movement of thousands of Lwiw people with bundles and parcels and their small children exiting on the two designated routes to free themselves from the besieged city. Those who chose Luchakiwsko, exit to the east, beyond the German lines at Winniki, met up with Bolshevik tank surveillance, and returned to Lwow directly behind them in 3 - 4 days.

Those who at that time were listening to their radios, were able to hear Hitler's speech, in which he extended sympathy to the entire Polish campaign, even though Warsaw had not yet capitulated. He praised the combatant spirit of the true Polish soldier, emphasizing inclination to take the initiatives of the military authorities, and confirmed full inability of the higher leadership of the Polish Army. Without consideration, as to whether the characteristics of the Polish Army were correct or not, its overthrow, in such a short time, was for the Germans, an unprecedented event in history. President Dr. Kost Lewitski, for many years a parliamentary Ukrainian national leader of Galician lands from the period of Austrian rule, with whom from September 12th I stayed at night in the basement of the Dniester building near Ruski Street, spent the days at his back-yard or at the theatrical hall Sokola-Batko, in those days regularly recalled: That is Gods penalty on Poland - for its violence and extermination of our nation.

Unexpectedly, on September 21st Senator Volodimir Detsikavich, who as I and many other Ukrainians in those days sought shelter in the Dniester building, brought news from the municipal council, that the Polish had formed their own Relief Committee, which by aiding the citizens of the city, would display an urgent responsible action amongst the impoverished Polish population. A similar committee - he indicated - was being formed by the Jews, therefore, it is necessary for us to organize a Ukrainian Relief Committee. From there a meeting was called for 3:00pm that afternoon, for the entire public, to which we invited those Ukrainians that lived or temporarily stayed at the nearby residential blocks: Dneister, Stavropihi, and Prosvita, also drew a few residents of neighboring Shewchenko Scientific Society at Charnetski Street.



The meeting was held in the hall of the Dniester building, and was attended by about 50 recognized members of the community. After a report by Detsikavich and a short discussion it was unanimously resolved to establish the Ukrainian Relief Committee and elected its temporary leadership: Kost Lewistski - President, Senator W. Detsekavich - Vice-president, and myself I. Nimchuk - Secretary. Understandably, the participants at the meeting believed, that the Committee could create activity under the Bolsheviks, which was believed by all would arrive in Lwow in a few days, or possibly hours.

As we departed from the meeting, from the direction of Waliw Street were heard a few rifle shots, which soon spread throughout the entire city. This was a Polish soldiers "demonstration" of a "last hurrah" indicating the end of the war. Soon after the soldiers filled the streets and began throwing away their weapons, ammunition, and their portions of provisions. Amongst them were those that walked with their heads lowered and discouraged, but the majority clearly displayed their happiness, because as they spoke, for them the war had ended. The same scenes were repeated the following day, just before noon on a larger scale, where in some instances there was plunder and theft. In a few places Polish officers tried to stop their soldiers in front of their countrymen with scandals and disgrace, and when that didn't help, they with desperation and shame shot their eyes out as well as the eyes of their alarmed, confused and exhausted countrymen.

On Friday, September 22nd between 1 and 2 o'clock in the afternoon from the direction of Luchakow Street via the main streets of Lwow, suddenly appeared a division of Red horsemounted cavalymen, to guard and cautiously protect the citizens. At about 2:30pm we heard a loud roar of motors. When we walked out of the Dniester building on the street from the direction of Waliw Street we observed Soviet tanks that slowly moved forward. On a few of them sat young, dissuaded, Jewish boys, with small red flags, whereby a few of them shouted out something. The garrison of tanks armed with 4-barreled machine guns, appeared rather frightened and worn out as if they had endured many months of combat and thousands of kilometers of fatigued travel. As the Red Army entered Lwiw without a shot being fired, who could have prevented its resistance as in the west a shattered Polish Army surrendered hundreds of thousands to German captivity, or attempted in small or larger groups to flee to Romania or Hungary? However, on Saturday and Sunday, as the Soviet tanks traveled through Lwiw in unity, uninterrupted, from east to west, the illustration was the same: The Red Army was remarkably fatigued and starved, and also the fact that they all wore pitifully worn and shabby uniforms, and they directly reflected lack of spirit and defeat, in comparison with the selection and types of uniforms which were worn by the German or Polish soldiers.

Just prior to the entry and at the time of travel to Lwow by the Soviet Army, Soviet planes were throughout the city, dropping all types of propaganda leaflets printed in the Ukrainian language, in which were various powerful and abundant promises. Promised was harmony and liberation of the Ukrainian nation from Polish-lord's slavery, for assistance with all its creative power, about land for the peasants and factories for the workers, to insure the greatest development of Ukrainian culture, education, etc. There were also assurances that the Soviet authority may not interest citizens of by-gone times, but is only requesting loyalty to itself and guarantees everyone freedom and diligence, individual rights and jobs. There were also leaflets with entire statements of the Ukrainian National-Democratic Association of the Polish parliament. I personally picked up a dropped leaflet of a speech of Dmitro Welikonovich in the Warsaw parliament, in which he illustrated numerical statistics of the Polonization of the Ukrainian public school system on our lands, and I handed over the leaflet to him in the yard of the Dniester building. He was apparently, very pleased, as someone from the crowd nearby loudly shouted: OK now, you Mr. Member. are secure till the end of your life! That security was hopeless as Welikinovich and almost all the other Members, Senators, and entire membership of the U.N.D.A. and other Ukrainian political parties in the country, were soon arrested and deported to the depths of the USSR of whom all later traces were lost.

From Lwow departed to the West, not waiting for the arrival of the Red Army, all of a number of distinguished Ukrainian membership: M.P.'s W. Mudry, a S. Skripnyk, Professor Roman-Smal-Stotsky, organizer and head of the Bleach Manufacturing Dr. Roman Daskevich, editors John Kedrin-Rudnitski and

Roman Holian and a few others. All the rest who had good opportunity at the time to leave Lwow remained in the city unknowingly awaiting their fate.

On the streets of Lwow appeared numerous uniformed propagandists, related to crowds of Lwow residents who had gathered around them, of the great marvels of life in the Soviet paradise, of the many rights of the workers and villagers, of the free education in all the schools from the lowest to the highest etc.. Expounded also statements, for instance, that every worker has at all times the free access to all ministers, as well as to Stalin, with whom to discuss personally and willingly his request. Order in the streets and the city was taken care of by the swift arm of the militia with red bands on their arms, and its members were principally young Ukrainian nationalists from the O.U.N. who were not longly amused with their muskets, as the Bolsheviks disbanded them very quickly with the aid of city Communists and began replacing them with more promising individuals of their own choosing. On Sunday afternoon the first manifest of the Lwiw communists was proclaimed throughout the city, organized by the Communist Party of the Western Ukraine (C.P.W.U.), whose participants of up to 300, were principally young Jews, shouting out various acclamations honoring Stalin, the Soviet authority and Red Army, and sang revolutionary songs in the Polish language.

Here it is worthy of recollection, that almost overnight, red flags appeared on all the Lwiw buildings. This was easily accomplished as the night watchmen of the buildings tore off the white portions of the Polish flags, leaving the red portions on the flags.

In the office of Dr. Lewitsky in the Dniester building, during the first days Ukrainian political leaders gathered for consultations, without locking the doors. Meeting there were not only leaders of the U.N.D.A., but also other political groups, amongst them Dr. Osip Nazaryk, who lived in an adjoining room. One time I also saw there Professor Kyrlo Studinski, who in his latter years, as an orderly citizen, stayed in the background of our nationalistic affairs. From the discussions there emerged ideas, to send delegations of the central culturally educated and economic management establishment to meet with the new powers in an effort to legalize the implementation of the new system. A delegation in the number of approximately 20 individuals went on Saturday, September 29th to meet with General Ivanova as the first Commander of the Soviet garrison, as well as comrade Mischenko, the political representative of the Soviet garrison, who was sent out to the station - it was said - from Vinnitsia. I spoke my way out of the delegation, therefore the "Vocation" was represented by the then present Dr. Stepan Baran. The representative of the "New Times" in the delegation was editor Zenon Pelenski. Leading the delegation was Dr. Kost Lewitski, who with his speech addressed to both representatives of the new power, was approved by all present.

As was later confirmed by the members of the delegation, their meeting with the representatives of the Soviet authorities took place admirably and smoothly. General Ivanov and comrade Mischenko were pleased and did not regret various promises, particularly the last. General Ivanov, who speaking in Russian replied the address by Dr. K. Lewitski, promoted the safety, peace, and order in the city, and guaranteed the same on behalf of the authority. Comrade Mischenko, speaking in the Ukrainian language. also, speaking more openly, persuaded and promised, which is normal for the Bolsheviks, for the Ukrainian population all types of Ukrainian culture and domestic life, also a strong support by the Soviet order for all good Ukrainian causes. He confirmed also that the Soviet authority brought the Ukrainian nation not only liberation, but also prosperity, from whom it deserves consideration from the present diligent citizenship, demanding from all only their full loyalty.

In his speech Dr. K. Lewitski recalled attention to the role of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and its clergy in the national Renaissance in the west of the Ukrainian population. In discussion with Mischenko he again returned to the topic, and indicated that if it were not for the work of our Church and its clergy Galicia would have in the previous 600 years, been entirely Polonized and comrade Mischenko would not have any duties to fulfill, and asked him directly? "What will now happen to the Ukrainian Catholic Church and its clergy?" To this Mischevich without interruption declared that the Soviet authority is well aware and expedient that the USSR constitution guarantees full freedom to all faiths, and the Ukrainian

Catholic Church will have the freedom of growth, and its clergy a clear understanding support for its work from the Soviet authority. This he underlined singularly and distinctly, and Dr. K. Lewitski returned with the delegation fully satisfied requested previous M. P. Wolodimir Kuzmovich urgently go to the Metropolitan Skeptitski to inform him of this declaration from Mischenko, that he had realized.

In Ukrainian circles there were thoughts of attempting to seek consent to continue with the publication of "Vocation" in that it would come out as a generally national, modest, non-party newspaper, visibly aligned with the governmental, or party officialdom. This idea was brought up at the time of the discussions with Mischenko. On this he did not give a clear reply, and indicated that in this matter he would seek an understanding with competent officials.

Meanwhile on Saturday, September 23rd before noon at the Prosvita building appeared three uniformed Soviet editors, whom I met in the corridor. They did not introduce themselves, but advised that they were editors, and inquired about the "Vocation", its editorial offices, and the printing shop. I showed them the location of the editor's offices, where we had already re-established everything after the Polish "inspection" and everything was more or less in order, and then I led them into the printing shop, the linotypes operation and where everything was still thrown about and ruined, and left by the Polish policemen. My explanations did not appear to have any impression on the Soviet editors: probably, they had previously observed similar situations in their lives. From the printing shop we went to the library branch of Prosvita at the rear wing of the building, where they questioned the frightened library-clerk whether the library contained productions of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin, in so far, as to its destruction they paid no apparent attention. They were also in the bookbindery in the Prosvita and even there they never expressed a word about the trail of the Polish "inspection".

On Sunday afternoon arriving at the "Vocation" publication were about 40 uniformed editors, amongst whom there were a few women. Appearing later was the editor of the Kiev "Communist" Chekaniuk, whom I did not have the opportunity of meeting, as I was at the time in consultation in the office of Dr. K. Lewitski. The new Soviet editors occupied all the editorial and administration offices, and looked with interest into every corner.

It was interesting at the time to observe the behavior and attitudes of the Lwów residents, which after the arrival of the Bolsheviks to Lwów began to compare themselves not higher, as was always the case till now, but distinctly downward. This appeared particularly clear by the Sunday forenoon: in the Ukrainian and Roman Catholic churches and on the streets where you would very rarely see a woman wearing a hat - almost all the Lwów ladies had their heads covered with regular head-kerchiefs: and many dignified citizens walked about without neck-ties and in older clothes.

In the Ukrainian emigration newspaper I read a short recollection that upon the arrival of the Bolsheviks to Lwów in 1939 the U.N.D.A. dissolved within itself. Therefore, as I was a witness of that "dissolution" I will explain how the events transpired. It was at a conference with Dr. K. Lewitski it became clearly known that of four legal Ukrainian parties announced their dissolution, the U.R.S.P. and the U.S.P.D. (From the United Ukrainian Front there were no participants at the conference). The resolution of dissolution of the two socialist parties were carried over to Sunday forenoon to the building of the vicar (not long ago a provincial administrator) where from the first day that the new administration was functioning the representatives of the parties: Dr. Wolodimir Storosolski, editor Ivan Kwasnycia, editor Michael Matsky, and possibly a fourth. I individually met all the three chosen as I was walking from St. George's church to the city, at the Jesuit courtyard and recall the moment: approaching Dr. Storosolski was a famous Jewish judicial attorney Dr. Akser and begged, so that he as a socialist, to whom the new authority would certainly be accountable, to intervene in the court action of the arresting of hundreds of judges and power of attorneys, who, with the announced call, peaceably reported to work in the court house building on Batoria Street, from where they never reappeared. Whether Dr. Storosolski (whom the Bolsheviks arrested only a few months later and deported to the depths of the USSR where he and his wife died at the same time) intervened on this opportunity on behalf of the arrested, I have no knowledge. The stature of our socialists influence on the few members of the U.N.D.A. that were in the office of Dr.

Lewitski was such, that they resolved without any discussion to advise the new authority notice of the dissolution of the U.N.D.A.. Then on a small piece of paper, probably torn out from a regular notebook, Dr. Dmitro Lewitski wrote that with the consideration, the possibilities of the approaching foreclosing of the U.N.D.A. one short sentence, that the U.N.D.A. ceases its activity, and that statement after a moment of hesitation, he signed. (Incidentally, in this he did not formally have any authority). The Secretary of the U.N.D.A. Wolodimir Tsekevich was not present at the conference, therefore, someone was sent for his co-signature. This declaration reached Michenko probably by Monday afternoon or maybe not till Tuesday. Who delivered it I don't know. One thing is certain, it was not Dr. Dmitro Lewitski nor W. Tsekevich, probably a third individual, maybe not even a member of the U.N.D.A.

On Monday, 25th of September, Chekaniuk announced a conference with Ukrainian journalists. At the conference which took place at 11 o'clock, forenoon, in the large hall in the Prosvita building, was attended by almost all the Ukrainian journalists in Lwow, and possibly a few of the officials of the Prosvita. Those in attendance had a long discussion with the amiable writer Korneychuk, as Chekaniuk had not yet arrived. I remembered Korneychuk amongst others from a recent theatrical exhibition of his drama "Plato's Gerkon" in a Czech. theater in Prague, and a wide critical review of which I read in the daily "Prague Press". Regarding this he said that inserted on the same page of the "Prague Press" was his photograph - not his, but an entirely different individual, as the publishers somehow exchanged the negatives of two different individuals. We queried Korneychuk about the fate other distinguished authors and cultural leaders, amongst them about the famous production manager and director of the theater "Berezil" Lesh Kurbasa, to which with an evident nervousness said that Kurbasa turned out to be a great saboteur in the theatrical arts and was required to travel north of Leningrad where he is managing some type of Russian theater. When the discussion turned to the newspaper relations in the USSR, about the earnings of their journalists, etc., Korneychuk began painting us a very rosy light of their circumstances. To his reply there was no reaction. In general the discussions with him, for those present, were very sincere and open.

That all changed when Chekaniuk finally appeared in the hall. He sat at a table near me and from there he queried, is editor Nimchuk present? When I replied that I was sitting directly beside him, he gave me an unfriendly look, but did not say anything. Someone addressed another question to Korneychuk, but in a moment Chekaniuk took over and began attacking the U.N.D.A. and "Vocation", in that they were a leading action against the Soviet power. He spoke bitterly and disagreeably, at which time, his thin and pale face, and his tightened lips, gave him the appearance of a fanatic. Assisting Chekaniuk in his attack one of the renowned Lwow journalists, who arrived at the conference, as was accepted in the mode of the day, without a neck-tie and also alluded to the U.N.D.A. consented policies against Poland. After that Chekaniuk turned on me individually, that I am replying, as if to say, for all the hostile attitudes of the "Vocation" against the USSR, an understandably clear topic, that I began to defend myself, and to clarify the position of the "Vocation" of the Ukrainian national lives during the previous 60 years, and particularly during the last four years, of so called normalization. To my assistance came practically all of those in attendance, who began to clarify to Chekaniuk, with attempts to outdo each other, with plentiful information on the normalization politics guidance of the U.N.D.A.. Joining them was the journalist who in his earlier speech had condemned the policies of the U.N.D.A. and began explaining about the purpose of the normalization policy was to preserve the Ukrainian cultural interpretation and economic management and above all our cultural existence in Poland from further decline.

The atmosphere here became progressively more heated as the Chekaniuk attack on the U.N.D.A. and "Vocation" and upon me individually provoked everyone. It turned out that those present went unobservably from defending, to stepping up the attack on Chekaniuk and on the political rule of the Soviet Union opposition against the Ukrainian people of Poland. Questions appeared: Why the authority of the USSR a powerful nation, never stepped forward in the defense of the persecuted Ukrainian inhabitants of Poland? And why there were never any notes of protest sent out? The confused Chekaniuk then began clumsily defending, in that, the circumstances did not officially permit the intervention of the Soviet power on behalf of Ukrainians in Poland, that he was unable to accomplish this because his hands were tied, due to an accord of non-aggression with Poland etc. The attacks carried on, and then one of the journalists to get out of the situation, explained "Hey, people! it is getting late - after 3 o'clock - let's go for

lunch." Both the Soviet representatives hastily took advantage and departed from the hall, accompanied by a few of our journalists.

After lunch, in the office of Dr. K. Lewitski, where I explained to those who had gathered there of the meeting of the Ukrainian journalists with the two Soviet representatives and of Chekaniuk's attack on me. They tried to calm me and said not to take the matter to heart, because Chekaniuk, he explained, is not too well informed in our affairs, he is some kind of a blind fanatic, etc., and the matter is totally different.

That day from the "Vocation" printing shop appeared the first edition of the Bolshevik daily "Liberated Ukraine" in Lwow, which, not being aware of the important events in the immediate area and the wider world, was as it is said, was totally lacking of any interesting news of local or worldly importance. It was a dull, uninteresting newspaper and thus the "Liberated Ukraine" remained to the end of its appearance, the period of the withdrawal of the Red Army from Lwow at the end of June in 1941. The language of the "Liberated Ukraine" was one of fear and horror: a lifeless jargon and a strange and nasty style, and it was beyond the power of understanding to its Galician readers. In regards to polluting the language with a multitude of Russian words is beyond mention, of more interest was the Polish daily Red Standard (Red Flag) which began appearing from the printing shop of the New Life on Sokola Street, and had more important and livelier contents, and without explanation, choice Polish literature and language. At this time it is of interest to recall that at the "Red Standard" the majority workers were Jewish editors. And - very characteristically - all the Jewish which numbered over 150,000 in Lwow at the time were capable of turning out a daily newspaper in the Jewish language after long and difficult periods, only 3 months prior to the beginning of the German - Bolshevik war of 1941.

At this point I wish to recall an entirely different set of circumstances. In September 1914 when the Russian Tsarist army occupied Lwow, a Ukrainian delegation met with the Russian representative Count Sheremetyevo to seek authorization for continued publication of "Vocation", he with clearly Russian principles replied "The Ukrainian nation never existed, does not exist, and shall not ever exist" and prohibited the "Vocation's" existence. Exactly 25 years later also prohibited the "Vocation", but began publication of the "Liberated Ukraine". Even with such charming signs there really wasn't anything Ukrainian, because in Galicia at that time no one read the boring "Liberated Ukraine" newspaper, therefore, at the time there were many Ukrainians, who got caught up in this Bolshevik slyness and initially accepted the name of the new publication with apprehension. What is amazing about our people of that time, that even today, after all the terrible experiences of the Ukrainian people during the previous 31 years, there are still amongst us many of which are trustful of the Bolshevik deception and demagogues and take seriously all their passwords and promises.

On Tuesday, September 26th, there was another gathering of Lwow journalists, however, Chekaniuk never had any further discussion with us, he only expressed his views, after which he said that if anyone wishes to work at the "Liberated Ukraine" to make their appearance. At these gatherings there were considerably fewer people, as Korneychuk had indicated the previous day that as far as he could see that many journalists could not be employed in their trade, and it would be preferable to seek their employment in some other practical occupation. Here he spoke truthfully. From the turbulent unfolding in the Ukrainian press, taking into consideration all the Polish censorship restraints and underhandedness, from Lwow out of 80 names there was only one mentioned. In the Ukrainian language in the years 1939-41 there appeared in Lwow only a useless 4-page daily the "Liberated Ukraine", a twice weekly "Comsomol Truth", and one monthly literary. That was all. The employment at those publications and at the radio stations was found by only a few individuals out of the previous 70 - 80 Ukrainian professional journalists from Lwow.

Wandering in the offices of the "Vocation" amongst the numerous Soviet editors was the head of the Peasant Workers (Communist Party) lawyer Dr. Zayets, who had just been released from a Polish prison, where he had spent a few years for illegal Communist activity (later he was arrested at the offices of the "Liberated Ukraine" of which he was a member and died, probably, in a massacre of prisoners carried out by the Bolsheviks prior to their withdrawal from Lwow in the final days of September 1941) writer Galan and a few young Jews. Seated near the editorial's radio was an entire group of new editors. From the walls

hung portraits of Mazepa and Petlura - probably they had been hidden by some of our boys, who worked at the mailing out of the newspaper. Portraits of the principal editors of the "Vocation" for its entire 60 years existence were still hanging, and it appeared, were looking at the new administration with sadness and fright, probably, anticipating their approaching removal from the walls

I walked out with an indistinct premonition at about 2:00 p.m., went without lunch to the house (on Murarski Street recently having been renamed Monchinsko Street). Wondering what to do next. About half an hour passed by when someone quietly knocked on the building. As I opened the door, I saw three uniformed men who quickly entered inside. Being certain it was me, they immediately began an inspection of my room. They looked into a cupboard containing books, into a large trunk, also filled with books, into suitcases, under the beds etc., and in general the inspection was quite rapid. They didn't take anything (except a sharp knife, which to them appeared like a dagger) and asked me to come with them. As I walked out on the street with them, I noticed an individual automobile parked in front of the house, in which they transported me to a nearby prison on Sapiha - Lontsko Street, from where in Austrian times, as well as under Poland, operating from a large building on Sapiha Street was the Gendarmerie Command (police), and in the outdoor court was a small police prison

Thus, I unexpectedly, found myself amongst the first arrested by the new authorities in Lwow.

## **In Prison on Sapiha-Lontsko Street**

***The First Hearing - Night-time Guests - Ukrainian Provocateur - In Cell no. 5 - Companions in Distress - Is there Torture in Russian Prisons? - Here a Provocateur! - One More Hearing - How we Passed the Days and Nights - The News from Newly-Arrived Prisoners - News from the City - Before the Election of The People's Assembly - "Gather all your Things."***

I was led under escort to the large building on No. 1 Sapiha Street, where I entered a room on the first floor. There I met an elderly man in a thick winter coat, he had a yellow and bloated face and it appeared to me as if I may have known him. I gave him my surname and asked him who he was and he replied Ivan (John) Kushnir. It turned out that he was a many-yearred secretary of professional organizations (Workers Union) for Lwiw and the entire country, from the period of the Austrians, to the last few days, when they took him from his home and brought him here just a few minutes before me. Thus they arrested Ivan Kushnir, and elderly Ukrainian - Social-Democratic leader and Workers Tribunal Justice, who spoke on behalf of thousands of workers assemblies, who helped organize and successfully settle hundreds of strikes, there was probably no one of Galician workers who did not know him. We did not have time to exchange two statements, when we were separated and taken to separate rooms.

In a short time I was approached by a uniformed investigating officer, who was a captain and his face appeared to be of distinctive Semitic origin. He asked what languages I spoke, and when he heard amongst them Russian replied, very well, it will be easier to understand each other. After that he began questioning me and writing down my replies. Initially he asked details and particulars of my descent, inquisitive besides of my social origins, and my studies. He was amazed, that I, the son of a poor peasant, could complete university, and even in Vienna, and could not understand that from the time I was a small boy I put forward in life nothing but a great deal of effort. My explanation, that in our country there occurred in life many situations similar to mine for thousands of peasant sons, apparently didn't convince him. Further questions were about my previous and up until now journalism work, and in connection about the press relations in Lwow amongst the Ukrainians, the Polish, and the Jews. Here again he was surprised by the fact, that Ukrainians in Lwow had over 80 periodical publications of various race-types, and points of view, leaving far behind them press reviews of not only the Galician Jews, but the Polish as well.

Finally my investigator turned to political parties in Poland, and particularly in Galicia. When he heard that in Poland prior to September 1, 1939 there were about 30 political parties, he laughed out loudly with all his vigor and declared, that for them in the Soviet Union there is only one political party, which was ideal for the people, because, as he indicated no one has revealed the desire to create some form of a second party. Then unexpectedly, another investigator appeared in the room and placed under my nose some type of Trotsky work, translated to the Polish language, on which was displayed the surname of the translator, he asked who the translator was, and do I know him personally. When I strongly denied first one and then the other, he harshly glanced at me and shouted at me with annoyance: - How is it, that you, a Lwiw editor, are not familiar with a local translator of books by Trotsky? You do not know this scoundrel? Maybe you will also say that you do not know Rosenberg-Chorney?

Upon hearing the surname Rosenberg-Chorney, I denied my knowledge of him, but disputed, that I may have an awareness of his political activity. Therefore, for the Trotskyites, as well as Ukrainian Shumskyites, that is followers of former National Commissar Shumsky, who was liquidated in Moscow, was of interest not only for my investigator in Lwow, but also future investigators in Moscow. Here I will give you a few words about previously mentioned Rosenberg-Chorney, for whom the powers of the N.K.V.D. were searching after overtaking the city by the Red Army.

Ludwig Rosenberg, known in Ukrainian circles by the surname Chorney, was one of the white ravens from amongst the Lwiw Jews: he was filled with such sympathy of the Ukrainian culture and Ukrainian liberation efforts, that as a young boy he joined the Legion of Ukrainian Sich Riflemen, with whom he

endured the most difficult battlefield combat. Later, as an excellent military officer of the Kiev Sich Riflemen served under the leadership of Konowaltsa and Melnyk, and returned after our failure, along with many others to Galicia, joined a small group of our intellectual Shumskyites (would it please God, that such a report would reach him). This Rosenberg, who had a few close friends amongst the Lwiw Ukrainians, to which belonged also Dr. O. Nazaryk, as the German-Polish war began in Warsaw, he left immediately before its outbreak. Due to several mishaps, he decided after a few days to return to Lwow, and when Lwow was overtaken by the Red Army, he was quickly captured by the Bolsheviks, along with editor Stepan Rudyk, and a few others who perished without trace in the Bolshevik forests.

The investigator who was interested in the Trotskyites left to another room and my captain then turned to the Galician political parties. Of all the parties Ukrainian, Polish, and Jewish what interested him the most was the U.N.D.A., of whose activities he had surprisingly no idea. I recognized that he was entirely unfamiliar in our internal party relations. For example, he confused continually the U.N.D.A. and the O.U.N., that is, identified one with the other and put forward the U.N.D.A.'s revolutionary activities and even organizing armed resistance and attacks on the Red Army. This I evidently, categorically, denied, because the situation in the country was that no Ukrainian political group, not even the U.N.D.A., ever considered the idea of any attack against the Bolsheviks. Here again beside me appeared a new investigator with the movements and facial features of an ape, and began shouting madly, explaining that the Ukrainian nationalists, along with Polish military detachments had somewhere waited in ambush of Soviet military sections and killed tens of Red Army personnel. This was apparently, nonsense, and I clarified to both investigators, as clearly as I could, that nothing of the kind could have occurred because Ukrainian nationalists, had for about twenty years been struggling against Poland, and would not in one night change, so as to turn against the Red Army in alliance with the Polish, and even moreso, from the Ukrainian point of view there was no reason for such an absurd move.

That judicial hearing and similar conversations, with short intervals in between extended beyond midnight. Finally the captain, without saying a word left me alone, and I began dozing at the table. After a period of about two hours the sleepy captain entered the room accompanied by two militia men: one Polish, and the other Jewish. They both tearfully begrudged the Ukrainian militia, they explained, which does not give any peace to either the Jewish or the Polish militias: they persistently persecute them, they keep disarming them, and somewhere last night some were massacred. It - they said - appears as if the Ukrainian militia is composed of only nationalists under the banners of the O.U.N. whereas the militias of the Polish and the Jews are only worker-proletarians (lower-class society), genuine followers of the Soviet authority. The investigator listened patiently, trying to calm both militia men and replied, that the following day he will look into the affair. After that no one appeared in my room, and I tormented with other thoughts sat there until morning.

On the second day my inquest began about 9:00 am. The captain again inquired about the political parties in the Lwiw territory, about their programs, tactics and relationships with Poland, Germany and the USSR. Later, he could not convince himself, that the U.N.D.A. as a legal democratic party, for whom terrorism of objects is entirely foreign, does not and could not, for him, have anything in common. He then spoke with fictitious and genuine irritation of some type of aggression of Ukrainian nationalists, combined with Polish armed units on Red Army sections, for which I and others like me were responsible, because that was how we brought up and educated the young Ukrainian generations. My fault - he said - is displayed by the fact I was a secretary of an anti-Soviet committee, which only for the cover-up of its true identity, and its counter-revolutionary actions, chose for its title the word "relief". None of my explanations, that that committee had as its objectives only to provide relief and aid to the poorest members of the Lwiw population, and after that he did not participate in any active dialogue, as there was no use, as nothing helped. The investigator stood firmly by his position, that I, as a member of the U.N.D.A. therefore was an enemy of the USSR political organization, as well as being the secretary of an anti-Soviet committee.

About 2 o'clock in the afternoon they took me to a small hall on the main floor near an adjoining room in which already seated in a corner was the famous fierce enemy of the Ukrainians, and supporter of Russian imperialistic policy to rule over all Slavs, professor of the Lwiw university Stanislaw Grabsky, (who has



only recently died in Warsaw). This was our "friend" who assisted in the performance of various projects "for the devastation of the Ruthenians" (previous inhabitants of Western Ukrainian Provinces, Galicia, Bukovina and Carpatho-Ukraine) and declared cynically in 1924, 25 years ago that the Ukrainian political matter on Polish territory will in 25 years be liquidated, definitively, and thoroughly, because by that time all Ukrainians will be assimilated, and have a sensation of feeling Polish. We have to admit, that in this direction led by Grabsky together with his numbers of like minded followers, led a most energetic, although unsuccessful, action to the final days. Now he sat in a nearby room, finding himself in a situation similar to mine. I could clearly see through the open door his shrunken figure and thought to myself, how he on that same day just before noon, investigated in a nearby room in his excellent Russian language with charges of his investigator, defended that he was an enemy of the Soviet Union. I heard how that old fox spoke skillfully and temperamentally about the fact that he and his group were always in favor of an understanding between Poland and Russia, and brought forth circumstantial proof, of not only recent times, but also from time of old Austro-Hungarian rule and World War I. For every investigators question he immediately gave a decidedly certain reply, and did not allow himself to be thrown into a noose, and the investigator was at times irritated. I then heard from the lips of the investigator, in reply on some question, whether, the charges against Grabsky (who was, it is known, the author of the Concorat agreement between Poland and Rome) about politics in the Soviet Union in relations to the Apostolic Capital, expressed these characteristic words:

-Yes indeed, the Vatican is a small state, but nevertheless, a state, and we must treat it accordingly.

I heard the same investigators phrases in Moscow a few months later.

I personally wanted to speak to Grabsky as we were left for a few moments without a guard, when into my room was led a young man, who immediately began conversing with me. He was complaining bitterly, that he had been caught by the N.K.V.D. (National Commissariat of Internal Affairs) that is, the terrible Bolshevik police, which had previously been named Cheka, and later G.P.V. and his destiny was tragic. When I asked him why, he with a break in his voice began explaining, that he is being accused of collaboration with Polish investigations. After further questioning, as to whether it was the truth, my fellow conversationalist, trying to instill more sympathy within himself, compassionately related to me, how he, a young Ukrainian socialist, not having the means to live, and the necessary practical experience, entered into employment in Polish reconnaissance in anti-Bolshevik affairs. Now he explained, he N.K.V.D. has compiled a list of all Polish researchers, which have his surname, so he didn't expect any mercy.

I was wondering all the time, if this was not a provocateur, who had been sent to me, to depict for me his own tragic circumstances, might entice me to give him some words of condolence, or perhaps some appreciation for his anti-Bolshevik work. He appeared to me to be of a suspicious nature, not only because he spoke to me, a totally unknown to him individual, besides, slickly admitting to his spying profession against the Bolsheviks, under whose hands he was presently, but also in the fact that he endeavored by all means to soften me to compassion for his fate and to obtain some type of appraisal for his work. Thus, it appeared to me that someone, unseen, was observing our conversation. Also when this individual gave me his entire "history" and asked what I thought of his situation, or if I encouraged him to admit to his espionage work, or to totally deny it, I didn't have the slightest uncertainty, that this was a vile, good-for-nothing provocateur - the meanest product of humanity, which is a characteristic of those type of people, which I once read about in one of the compositions of the Polish author Stanislaw Zheromski. Understandably, I did not give the provocateur any advice, after that I interrupted the conversation, and turned my back toward him. In a while the provocateur was taken away from me.

After some time Professor Grabsky was taken away from his room (we later found out to the prison in the courtyard) so that we didn't have the opportunity to exchange even one word. Later it was my turn. I walked under escort along a corridor, then outside and ended up in a small room in the main floor of the recent Polish (previously mentioned) prison. In the room sat two N.K.V.D. officers: the temporary director and one other. They asked me to turn in all items I had on me: watch, purse with money, pencils,

small notes, a small collection of charitable stamps, etc.. I then had to completely undress, even had to take off my shirt, and all my belongings were most neatly arranged, with even the shoelaces removed from my shoes, and I was left with only my tie. After I had dressed again, I was taken through a small corridor and stairs to the second floor, he opened one of the cells, and pushed me inside.

Thus I ended up in prison, cell no. 5.

As I was in the prison I could see that it was filled to capacity. Under Austria or under Poland it didn't have room for more than 4 or 5 people, and now there was a total of 14. Apparently the Bolshevik secret police (the N.K.V.D.) labored intensively in its new foreign city from the first day entirely filled (God Bless their souls) with guilty prisoners, all the Lwów prisons to the last place, and over-filled them to the point of impossibility, that, the hopeless people in the overfilled cells were immediately suffocated.

The first, of whom I saw in the cells (previously mentioned) was Ivan Kushnir. As we were acquainted, we exchanged greetings, and joined him in his presence, - which appeared - was with primarily highly educated people in the majority of higher positions in life.

Probably the most intelligent of all was the same Ivan Kushnir, who as a long-lived secretary of professional organizations in the city of Lwów knew well all of Galicia, and had thousands of acquaintances from all sectors of the population, as well as very extensive connections. Not taking notice of his dignified age, as well as his evidently painful illness, (his complexion was completely yellow and the swelling of his legs progressively worked its way up) in spite of his suffering he spread his witticism and clever remarks left and right and lively and spoke exuberantly of his many interesting appearances and adventures. Investigators tried to make objections to Kushnir, as if, he didn't defend the workers from exploitation by employers, and did not organize workers strikes, and on the contrary - spread revolutionary enthusiasm amongst the working classes and even "sold out the interests of the workers to the lords and capitalists." After every inquiry Kushnir returned to his cell immensely fatigued, and told me, that the investigators are continually tormenting him for his work amongst the workers in anti-Communist involvements. The general state of mind and health of Kushnir declined day by day. Initially, he believed that he would be freed at the most after a few days, because - as he said - his connections with the Leftists of the political party were such that the very influential people should intervene on his behalf. In the meantime he suffered more and more, as we all did, with him. Finally, his legs swelled so that he couldn't walk, but they still didn't take him to the hospital. After four weeks when I left my cell, he was still lying in his. After my return from the Moscow prison in May, 1941 I was informed that Kushnir was finally taken to a prison hospital soon passed away. As is the custom with the Bolsheviks the body of the dead Kushnir was buried in an unknown location, and his wife and daughter were advised of his death only noticeably later, and even that was not through official sources.

Another interesting appearance in the prison was the director of police from the city of Łódź (in Poland) Wład Łoźinski, who fled to Lwów ahead of the Germans, where he had previously been employed as a police officer. He was a lawyer who came from a peasant - Lettish background, probably from the Baltics, and spoke excellent Ukrainian. His sister - as he explained to me - had married a peasant-Ukrainian, with whom he maintained a good relationship. As he read notices on walls appealing to calls for registration, he as a higher police official decided, to individually report to the new authorities, at which time his wife accompanied him to entrance doors of the well known building on No. 1, Sapiha Street. From there he never left as a free man. The N.K.V.D. tried to allude that he came to them under orders of the secret Polish organization, to legalize himself, after which time he would carry on with lighter activities against the new authority. Understandably, they indicated that he was persistently following the revolutionary impressionable workers in the large industrial city of Łódź, and that although he himself may have further aggravated hypothesis of actions against the distant Germans, he ended up in Lwów. After one inquiry Łoźinski related to me in an openly irritated manner, that when they were leading him back to the cell, he met on the stairs with a noted Polish police agent from Lwów, Radonem (his surname was mentioned in connection with the assassination of the native Julian Holowinski, Commander of the Ukrainian Military Organization, on September 30, 1930). This Radonem was walking up the stairs alone and had a satchel

under his arm, meaning: he was in the service of the new lords. And that he was a specialist with a Ukrainian department was clear, as to what sector the Bolsheviks had attached him. As to future destinies of Lozinski, I learned many months later, that he had been transferred from the Lwów prison to the Dnieper-Petrovsk prison. While serving in that distant prison, he was surprised by the German-Bolshevik war at the end of June 1941. What happened to him later I don't know.

Hierarchically, the highest position in life of all of us was occupied by General Julian Malchewski, a landowner of one Ukrainian village of a Lwów suburb, a full brother of the famous Polish painter Yatsko Malchewski, who was minister of Military Affairs, till the overthrow of Pilsudski in 1926. He was arrested with other high officials, and spent a short time under house-arrest, and later he was released with a full pension to retire, and he lived comfortably in Lwów in the hotel Georgia, from where he managed his property, particularly a newly planted orchard. Of course Malchewski traveled regularly beyond the borders, and it is certain that he more regularly made use of the German language, than the Polish, as right to the end he spoke very poor Polish, but with a German accent and pronunciation. He was taken to prison on reports from someone in the hotels service, from his room in the Georgia hotel with personal belongings on his own free accord. As he lived alone, probably, no one at that time intervened on his behalf. They also accused General Malchewski, that he was left in Lwów for the purpose of organizing some type of resistance against the Bolsheviks, of which, understandably, he had never dreamed. During the time of my stay in the prison with him he wore only one shirt, even though when they took him from the hotel they also took mounds of clothes and linens as well as other valuables, and not once did he ask for a change of even one shirt, and after a few days he became infested with various insects. As he was 70 years of age his eyesight was deteriorating and he probably would be unable to endure prison life for a long period, furthermore, until that time, he lived not only in abundance, but also in comfort.

The original trinity in the prison was composed of three judges: Hahinchuk, Mislowski, and Mintz, all three volunteered, on their own free accord, for registration for the expected employment in the main judicial buildings on Batoria Street. From there they were all transported to other Lwów prisons, and in this manner the previously mentioned trinity arrived in our prison. Initially, all three kept themselves completely separated from every one else, never spoke with anyone, and considered that they were "detained" over some misunderstanding, and that they would be released at any moment. When I arrived in the prison, they'd already been there for three days, and besides all three were wearing stiff collars and neck-ties, which they removed only at night. In the prison it was very hot, and their collars appeared as if they had been pulled from a dogs teeth. They kept up this "manner" until the moment, they heard from me, that as of September 29th many cultured - Lwów citizens attended Ukrainian and Polish churches without collars and ties, and in old worn out clothing. After that they unobservably removed their collars. In another interesting circumstance, the judge Mislowski was an employee of the Polish Consulate in Kiev right to the time of his suppression, and he never oriented himself of such a Soviet regime, into the arms of which he fell. And now without exception, the new authorities arrested and exterminated all the judges, not taking into consideration that they may have during the course of their judicial law-suits been against the Communists, or not. The most defensive of all with his certain innocence was judge Mintz (likely a Jew). Judge Hahinchuk, was an opportunist (after World War I, during the presidency of Petruszewich, he was an immigration administrator, and became vice-president of the Lwów Appeal Court, and did not admit to his Ukrainian descents). He spoke primarily in Polish although some of the Poles, such as the aforementioned Lozinski spoke to his Ukrainian cohorts in Ukrainian. All the trinity was transferred one day, probably to another Lwów prison. As to what later happened to them, I have no knowledge.

We had one other interesting group in the prison. They were two young and intelligent Lwów workers, Kostiuk and a Jew Baran. The first with a thin tubercular appearance was a common paver (paved streets), the second a tailor. As Communists they had both served a few terms in Polish prisons for illegal activities, and were well acquainted with the prison system and its laws. They were both arrested by the Bolsheviks, on the second day of the arrival of the Red Army to Lwów, for evident association with a Trotskyite organization (at the same times as Kostiuk his brother was also arrested, but under which charges I'm not aware). Both Kostiuk and Baran, it could be said, were instructors in prison regulations for all of us, who ended up, for the first time in our lives behind the prison walls. They, and particularly Baran were

anticipating that we could easily be released, because they were well informed of the ways and methods of the Soviet judiciary, as far as, and generally, how the methods of the Soviet judiciary may be interpreted. But then, even they being accustomed to Polish order were unaware of the practices of the NKVD investigators. Then, one day we entered into a discussion in the prison, of our previous inquiries, and both of Communist-Trotskyites rather nervously "asserted", that in contradiction of the investigators, those transformed from the Polish police, the Bolsheviks, he indicated, never beat or extorted anyone. After those words the head of county Drohobich, Kusnezh rose from the corner, who having lost his freedom, arrived in our prison, and after a few days of interrogation returned silently. He took his trousers and turned the rear quarters of his body to the Communists and briefly replied: - Evidently, this is the reply for your crazy useless conversation.

As his entire backside was frightfully flogged, that substantial demonstration of the Bolshevik investigators practices sealed both Kostiuks and Baran's lips. In a while, probably they also had a taste of those or similar NKVD methods, as the Bolshevik investigators were specifically "sentimental" to all Trotskyites and for whom they didn't show any exemptions.

Of other companions in distress I recall a Ukrainian student Pluwak, an excellent, classic philologist. He got himself into prison in the manner, that he met on the street two - whom he thought - were officers of the Red Army, and convinced them, and to make an "impression" on them, and boasted that he as a student, supported himself, by collaborating with the popular Lwiw daily "New Times, even though this was a clear imagination. Besides this he invited them to visit him at his lodgings. These "officers" (were regular NKVD secret police) came to him at an indicated time, not to visit, but to take him to prison, where he would have plenty of time to reconsider, that it is not worthwhile in these times to display the beautiful attributes of our fathers and grandfathers, such as, ancient Ukrainian hospitality.

Moreover, I remember a few prisoners who arrived at our prison at a somewhat later time. The permanently frightened director of the Lwiw branch of the Bank of Poland, Alfred Blaha; managing director of the Ossilinsky Science Foundation in Lwiw, Lewyak, who although being an elderly person, upon being investigated, was soundly tortured; manager of the suburban Lwiw Cultural Park, Maslowski, who previously served with the Polish police, a young student - a Polish supporter of the national cause, who was betrayed on the street by his companion - a Pole, some type of a street model (probably a pick-pocket), who spoke in a continuously vulgar manner. I remember when he was called to order by the reverent I. Kushnir with the words - Can you not see that amongst us we have not only intelligent, but also Christian believers? How can you permit such obscenity, such blasphemy, to flow through your lips?

That helped, and the ungirdled model was silenced for the longest time. Also at our prison were two or three Polish police officers. One of them after a few days in the prison was sentenced to 5 years in a concentration camp, because two unknown workers attested directly before his eyes, that during the time of a workers demonstration in Lwow, which the police, on orders from above were to disperse, he struck them with a rubber club.

To conclude with prisoners in cell no. 5 I recall about one more provocateur. Released amongst us one evening a young boy wearing a beautiful pair of shoes, and upon request of his surname he called himself Sweshowsky. He spoke in Polish with a Russian pronunciation, as did the Volhynians from the Polish periods, and this suddenly alerted all of us. He began conversing with the two Polish policemen, one of whom worked with the Lwiw Department of Individual Rights, and they whispered to one another nearly all night. Lozinski, who had a good ear in those type of cases, advised me later, that the provocateur having overheard the general conversation in the prison, had yet another exercise: to recruit the two policemen to work of the NKVD. The provocateurs exercise probably appealed to at least one of the policemen. Immediately, in the afternoon of the following day upon being summoned by the provocateur, the aforementioned policemen did not stay with us much longer: in a day or two he was called for his employment for the new lords.

It was in such a society that I was accompanied for about four weeks. Although it was a difficult life, may it please God, it definitely was not monotonous, because we had all kinds of news everyday. Through holes in the windows and doors we could observe all movements in the corridors, and very frequently saw people from other prisons, who were conveyed here for interrogation, or for direction. From time to time arriving at our prison were new prisoners, who brought us news from the city as well as the wider world. Thus, all of us had different experiences in the prison and with our inquiries we ourselves had something to relate.

After a few days I was once more called for investigation. Appearing before me was the previously mentioned investigator with the ape-like facial features, who endeavored to acquire from me, to admit counter-revolutionary activity, hostile to the USSR. He tried with all types of trickery to directly agree with me on those activities, that he himself, as it were, "justified" my education, my position with the "Vocation" as the editor-in-chief, and also my position in the Ukrainian community. Besides this, he once turned to be pleasant and sweet, and even treat me to a cigarette, which I refused, and he then became brutal and vulgar, and threatened me with flogging. At one moment he went to another room, and after a minute returned with an entire bundle of the "Vocation", on a copy of which was visible the address of a previous village-member Hrynyo Tershakiwitz from Ruddichini. I guessed then, that addressee was already in the arms of the NKVD and those copies of the "Vocation" were taken upon a search of his house. The investigator showed me individual copies of the "Vocation" where there were various places, underlined with a red pencil, any thing at all about the USSR and asked me what they meant. I clarified eloquently, as well as I could the concerning items, and understandably, I did not even try to convince him that the "Vocation" stood favorably towards Communism or to the USSR. Those items, underlined in red pencil, laying on the table before me were from the end of August to the first days of September, 1939, were practically official telegrams from the Polish Agency of Telegraphy (P.A.T.), the only written articles from our correspondent in Warsaw. The investigator was dissatisfied particularly, with one telegraphic news item, which spoke about the stepping forward of the Ukrainian Insurgent group in Odessa, and about the mentioned contents. My explanation, that that article was given out by an official state agency, to which no publication in the world is responsible, it is apparent, didn't convince him. Less convincing to him was my declaration that the questionable to him article was not written at a publication, but was sent by our correspondent, who had a free hand in expressing his opinion. Therefore, all was not coincidental in those editions of anti-Bolshevik articles. Otherwise, I would not have had been able to provide a satisfactory reply. The day ended when the investigator released me to return to my cell, and that he would call me in a few days to clarify a few matters. And so it ended. As in Lwow I never had any more hearings, and never saw my Lwów investigators for the rest of my life. It was with great discomfort that we endured the days and nights tormented in the tight, cramped, quarters of the cell. In the cot assigned for four, slept the eldest residents of the cell: all three judges our two Trotskyites. At the edge pressed in towards them was I. Kushnir. All others including myself slept on the floor close to one another, and would place a hat under our head, some clothing, whatever one had, or even his own fist. For many days the new prison authorities were not overly concerned; they were, it appears, pleased that all the cells were overfilled. Only after 10-12 days the cells were provided with a few straw mattresses and a broom, and from that day on we slept on straw and swept out the cell twice a day. Another thing, were the insects, particularly the bed-bugs, fed mostly on those that slept on the wooden cots.

Whatever food, which we received, was very inadequate, the bread was moldy, but no one complained. Mostly affected were the habitual smokers, who for a few days didn't have any narcotic pass through their lips, suffered terrible pains, and imposed themselves anxiously on any new arrival for tobacco. Sometime after a period of two weeks we were all permitted to write those closest to us in the matters of exchanging communication. We received small portions of paper and on request from my companions in distress I wrote out probably all of their matters which they desired to receive from home.

As in other prisons, so it was here, the prisoners were taken two times a day for their direction. What happened once due to an error or an oversight by our guards there was an intermix of two cells during the various departures, and we in our filthiness, were set aside by people from another cell. Then I had time to exchange a few words with the long-lived leader of the U.N.D.A. Dr. Dmitro Lewitski, with Hrynyo

Tershakiwitz, and with the Polish socialist leader and editor Skalyk. Our Kostiuik, the elderly criminologist had a few minutes to run and bustle about from the guards, to his brother who sat in a nearby cell in our corridor, to come to an understanding in an important affair, and had that conversation through the door and was very satisfied.

It was then I heard that staying in one of the cells was the 80-year old president Dr. Ostrowsky: the latter who the day before the occupation of Lwow by the Red Army, under his own signature gave out a proclamation to the citizens of the capital of the country in which he appealed to them for peace and assured them that he wanted to share their destiny with them, and to remain in the city. That proclamation initially appeared after 20 years of Polish existence, in the Ukrainian and Polish languages, of which the Ukrainian language ranked in first place. Dr. Ostrowsky observed his promise and didn't flee, as did other worthy Poles. In the first days he immediately fell into the arms of the N.K.V.D. who gave him similar accusations, as they did to other distinguished Poles: and he remained in Lwow with premeditation to make preparations for rebellion against the Soviet authority.

During the entire period of my stay in the Lwiw prison we never had one, at least 10 minute exit to the outside for a walk and understandably, we were all overgrown with hair, like the robbers in tales. As I previously recollected the insects (fleas and bed-bugs) overgrown, probably from the Polish times of the prison, fled on us unmercifully, and as a result of the cold and drizzling days, amongst us appeared thousands and thousands of flies, which in no way we could kill. All that in connection with our dangerous situation was not only painful, but infernal hell.

During the last days even Kushnir was silenced, he withered away before our eyes. After a visit to the prison by a Jewish doctor and Jewish sanitarian who became alarmed of the condition of us all, finally, took him to the prison hospital, where in a while he died.

Abiding in the same situation were also others in the prison on Sapika-Lonsko Street. Through the small openings in the windows and doors we discovered different people, particularly Lwow leaders who suffered in other prisons. We learned in a round about sort of a way from a student in a nearby cell that there taking advantage of their "privileges" sleeping amongst them on one cot was M.P. Wolodimir Tselewich and well known in all Poland whiskey distiller Bachewski (or Baches), while all the other prisoners slept down below, on the floor. We also knew that one of the cells below us was occupied by Prof. Stan. Grabsky and there also was Jewish-Zionist Lwow M.P. Eisenshtien. Some of the Polish joint-inhabitants of our cell not taking notice of Jewish-Trotskyite Baran angrily protested that the prison is overfilled with Poles and Ukrainians and the medicinal consisted of one or two Jews. To those remarks Baran, an intelligent and well-read tradesman from the Zowkiwsko suburb of Lwow, did not react, probably because that was the truth. From the vice-head of Drohobych Kusnezh I learned something of the circumstances in that industrial center. I heard that from those coming from their Ukrainian leaders the Bolsheviks in the first turn arrested two lawyers (one a member of the U.N.D.A. the second from the National Solidarity Front) and that the lawyer Dr. Stepan Witwitski was successful in promptly traveling beyond the Seine River.

The Ossilinski Economics Director of Scientific Foundation in Lwow, Lewyak, who I previously mentioned arrived here from his freedom sometime later, and he was tortured immediately after his first hearing. They alluded he aided Polish officers in escaping beyond the borders, which he himself organized. Two of these officers captured in Trans-Carpathia "testified" against the older gray-haired man, police-investigators stretched him on the floor between two chairs, so that his head was under one chair and the feet under the other. They then removed his trousers, and began to beat him with clubs. They massacred him so long that he lost his consciousness. They desired by that method to have him betray other associates, or the entire organization, that were engaged in the transport of Polish officers and non-commissioned officers to Hungary. They carried him to our cell, under their arms, where he fell with a moan into a corner, where for a long time he was unable to utter a word.

From that Lewyak we in the cell heard some interesting news from Lwow. At the same time he told us a little about the youth in the Lwiw schools, and also that the new authority had abolished crosses, icons, where there were any, the teaching of religion in all schools and it was prohibited to have common prayers before and after classes. At the moment Lewyak related that at the gymnasiums, upon the teacher arriving for his first hour of classes, the youths would rise and quietly recite the "Lord's prayer" and then sat down (to the present time one pupil recited the prayer loudly, and the rest quietly). With the same demonstration the youth quietly recited the "Ave Maria" prayer after the completion of the final hour of classes. The teachers who were still Ukrainian understood the youth very well and in their souls we certainly convinced and of the same opinion, during the prayer stood quietly, as in Polish or Austrian times. Evidently - we were all delighted of such sound action from the youth and would not admit that the Soviet order would crush those actions quickly by their tried and proved many-yearred methods: brutal power and provocation.

The same Lewyak also told us about the enormous preparations of the Bolsheviks for the so-called Common Peoples Assembly, for which the election had been fixed October 22, 1939. The pre-electoral activity for the Bolsheviks was difficult, he advised, in that, in the final days they harnessed for work one thousand propagandist agitators. It was particularly bad for the Bolsheviks in Lwow, where the majority of the population did not hold back their hostile attitude to the new regime. That betrayal, amongst others occurred at the pre-electoral common council assembly at the Sokola II hall on Kentshenko Street, where the disgraced Poles, -as he explained- quietly listened to the Bolshevik speakers, on the completion of which they then pompously sang the famous Konopnitski "We will not surrender, the land of our birth" by which the arranged assembly was completely confused. From other new arrivals from freedom we received a 100% confirmation of Lewyak's narrations. This indicated: the new authority with its initial strides and appearances, amongst which not even the final roles were played by stupid, massive arrests, readily alerted against itself, the people in general, the majority of which in the beginning pledged a neutral position. The staff of the alerted and the later discontented grew day by day, by the same degree as did the progress of the various new "activities" of the new authority. Eventually, after a few months the Soviet authority proved the fact, may it please God, that 90% of the population of the country were against it. Of no aid was the violent Bolshevik propaganda work nor the previously unheard of unprincipled politicians of our country. All the segments of the population could perceive the gulf that exists between the words of the Bolshevik propagandists and the actions of Soviet rulers, to the extent that no one had any trust in them. It could be boldly said, that with the exception of those that benefited directly from the "benevolence" of the new order, (of which there was a small percentage), the totality of the Galician population - Ukrainians, Polish, and even the Jews - were occupied in the opposition of the Bolshevik authorities prominently hostile posture and had visions of how to rid our land of that hateful enemy.

Before noon on Friday, October 20 and N.K.V.D. guard came to my cell upon requesting my surname, replied "Gather all your things." I began dressing, and all others in the cell became disturbed. Upon hearing my call "your things", they thought that I was being freed. Then all my companions in distress begged me to inform their own relatives or some of their closest about them. A few looked upon me probably, with envy. In the meantime on that day began a new stopping-place in my prison life.

## From Lwow to Lubianka

*The Drive Directly to the Central Railroad Station - Railroad Delirium - In Cages Like Wild Animals - Hunger and Thirst - Irritation, or Nerves? - Who I Recognized - The "Black Raven" through Moscow - The Cries of Pres. K. Lewitsky - At Lubianka.*

I bid farewell to all the inhabitants at the prison and in a moment I was called out with my things. I walked down the stairs and I was again directed to a small office, the same one I had initially visited prior to being thrown into cell no. 5. Now, in the presence of two NKVD officers, of whom one was the manager of the prison, and the second, my escort, and again a proper search by a third NKVD member. Beforehand, while still in prison, in anticipation of future misfortune, I hid a small needle in the hem of a pocket, and a small pin in another location, while in the cuff of my trousers I hid a short piece of lead pencil (without the wooden stock). Upon searching they found two small pieces of the actual lead that I had previously saved, however, the items I had hidden in the hems remained with me.

The prison head upon handing my escort a large yellow envelope, replied to me, that inside were my papers and documents, as well as a watch. I thought that I was being transferred to another prison, but that I was being transferred all the way to Moscow, was never considered. The prison head then handed the sealed envelope to the officer-guard, and when I had completed dressed, I was escorted to the prison courtyard.

Parked in the small outdoor area was a regular transport vehicle with a wide uncovered platform, in the center of which lay a large spare rubber-tired wheel. I climbed up on the platform and sat down on the wheel. Alongside me were three young NKVD guards, armed with guns and revolvers. The officer with the yellow envelope accompanied by another, younger, sat alongside the driver. Thus, I was transported by 6 NKVD members.

The vehicle left the yard and turned up Sapika St. in the direction of the central railroad station. This meant that I would be transported further by rail. Along the route we had to travel nearby to the Polytechnic as the street at that location was barricaded by another large freight vehicle, which was filled with propaganda literature which was being distributed by two or three propagandists to passers-by, and students who were leaving the gates of the Polytechnic and assembled near the vehicle. Our vehicle traveled so close to the other vehicle, that I extended my arm and one of the propagandists handed a newspaper copy of the "Red Standard" and a small leaflet in the Polish language. However one of my guards with an unobservable hand grasped the literature away from me.

Just as we entered the thicket of people, in which hardly anyone would have expected that a prisoner was being transported, I thought to myself as to whether I would take a risk and jump into that throng. And what were the guarantees, that the throng would permit me to hide amongst them, or permit me to escape? The chances were too great, in that, I had against me six armed NKVD members, three propagandists from the second vehicle, not considering any possible spies from amongst the throng. In a moment our vehicle passed through the mass of people on the road and proceeded onward.

We had traveled a few tens of feet when a well-known teacher of mine M. Lehki walked out of the High School Academy, and I greeted him with a nod of the head, and he did likewise, and I was certain that he would advise my friends, who at the same time were his friends, when he saw that I was being hauled away. Meanwhile, 19 months later upon my return from Moscow, I confirmed with sorrow that Professor M. Lehki, probably from overwhelming fear did not mention a word to anyone about my transfer from Lwow. How soon the people submitted to the lordly terror, that the Bolsheviks had spread around them, and immediately "complied" with the new circumstances.



Our vehicle did not proceed to the main railroad station, but turned to the left between the Public Retail store, the creamery, and other retail firms to the branch railroad siding crossing. Just at the turn we met a creamery delivery truck where amongst the other workers I saw a village-worker, a fine orphan boy whom I had during the previous year drawn away from the village and found employment in Lwow. Not taking notice of my overgrowth he recognized me and greeted me with a bow, to which I replied with a nod of my head. Later, he himself was not afraid to discuss my transfer with either his or my acquaintances.

As the block of buildings ended our vehicle came to a stop. Under the custody of five guards I went directly across about ten sets of tracks, amongst numerous freight cars and finally we stopped in front of a strange looking passenger train. The train stood separately, and its cars had small shielded windows. As I entered the car behind my escort I could see that these were prison cars where the cells were rigorously separated from each other, narrow divided cages. It had the appearance, as if those cages were used for the transport of wild, dangerous animals. Each partition was rigorously separated by two walls between them, with a windowless rear wall. The entrance to each partition was locked with thick metal grates. In the grates of the door was a small opening through which the prisoners were passed their food. Each of those cages, assigned for one person, had along its length a diagonal bench, which could be used for sitting and sleeping. Underneath the ceiling was a small grate-covered lamp. When the metal doors were open the light entered the cage from the corridor which ran along the entire length of the car - underneath a window - one window per car. The windows had cloth curtains, which were opened by our guards when the train was beyond the larger stations. Briefly: our railroad delirium was from the times of the Czar Minister Stolypin and was used to transport prisoners to remote destinations. The Bolsheviks with these prison-trains, and the entire prison system in the USSR was "perfected" in harmony with the requirements of its harsh, brutally-inhumane regime.

Following my escort completely into the car I observed to my right numerous grated empty cells. Only in one of the end cells I observed in the grates staring at me with sunken eyes and an overgrown face, which appeared to be a previous member of the U.N.D.A. and editor of the Catholic weekly "Target" in Lwow, Wolodimir Kuzmovich, or previously mentioned, Polish socialistic statesman Skaliak Bronislaw (died in London in 1948).

In a nearby cell the thick metal grates were spread open where I was pushed inside and the grates closed behind me, and behind them a metal door was locked. I found myself, as if, alive in a grave. The sensation was frightful and frantic! Thoughts swarmed into my head, which was roaring, so that at one stage I was stunned as if from a fever. At one moment something strangled in my throat, and a short spasmodic weeping shook my whole entire being. Then in dreadful, hopelessness, I began to pray! God, how I prayed! Before my eyes appeared Ukrainian captives on a Turkish galley boat, the same unfortunates, as I was, and I passionately prayed their prayer:

-Jesus Christ, who endured such horrible suffering, forgive me!

-Mother of God, who with difficulty and pain suffered under the cross of your Son, save me, save us all!

That short prayer, which flowed from the inner depths of my soul, brought me some easement. I became more calm and began to listen more attentively.

After some time I heard some movement in the corridor. Somewhere the iron grates were slid open and then closed, and behind them closed the metal doors. Evidently, they brought a new victim and threw him into the cell. In a few moments the metal door on my cell was opened, and through the grates I received some light that broke timidly through the small curtained window. From that moment the NKVD guard walked along the corridor with equally-paced steps and glanced into each cell, or rather, at its resident behind the bars.

A while later I heard that one cell was opened and then locked - an indication it was being filled with additional prisoners.

Amidst the most extreme tension of nerves, I endured Friday and Saturday. When on Saturday afternoon all movement in our car ceased completely, I understood that all its cells were filled. After that more or less every half hour the heavily loaded vehicle drove directly to our train, from which I concluded, that after one night and day that the NKVD were prepared for the transport of prisoners from their vehicle directly to the railroad cars. The movement of that vehicle could be heard throughout the night of Saturday to Sunday.

On Sunday morning of October 22, exactly a month after the Red Army entered Lwow, our train began moving on the track. - Where am I being transported? - tormented by turbulent thoughts. - And who are the other prisoners on this prison on wheels? - It appears that we are being transported to Kiev, the capital of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic it is possible they may prepare against us, separately from the membership of the U.N.D.A., a clear process so that with their tried and proven methods, we would compromise and because of us, we would be branded as a Ukrainian nationalistic movement. God provide me the strength to endure it all! .

Neither on Friday, nor on Saturday was I given any food in the car. Only on early Sunday morning shortly before our departure, through an opening between the bars I was given a small amount of bread and a few grams of fine sugar. The NKVD officer advised to eat the bread sparingly, as that was all that we would be given for the trip. As to where we were traveling, and how long our anticipated journey, he did not indicate. He spoke through the openings between the bars with a whisper to each prisoner and advised that they in the same manner whisper their replies. Turning back to anything regarding defending oneself was not permitted.

As our train traveled well beyond the limits of Greater Lwow one of the guards opened the curtains on the small window which was at an angle from my cell, and I could see that the train was traveling towards Ternopil. Did the Ukrainian inhabitants, through whose localities the train traveled, know the destination of that train and whom it was transporting? In every case there was something frantic, and fanatic during that period of time, during which the new authorities hurriedly decided to rebuild the railroad tracks from a narrow to a wider gauge from the border to Lwow, and I presume, to initiate the new run through the Galician-Ukrainian territory with that terribly frightful prison train. I have been in many countries of the world and have never heard of the prison-train, in which I was traveling here with uncertainty. To the disgrace of the entire world the prison-trains were contrived by Czarist Russia, and the Bolshevik authority not only did not abolish those trains, but rebuilt and perfected them.

After two days and two nights of travel our train stopped somewhere in a field, which to me appeared to be in the vicinity of Vinnitsia. We stopped there for one day and one night and slowly traveled onward. After traveling for about two days our train stopped amongst a mass of rail cars carrying merchandise goods. I surmised that we were in Kiev. My assumptions that our journey would end here and that we would be detained here in some prison were never realized. After standing amongst the merchandise cars for a period of one and one half days, where we were again given a small piece of bread and a few grams of sugar our train proceeded forward. In the beginning, I thought that we were possibly being transported to Kharkhov, however, during the course of whispered conversation between two members of our guards, I understood that the final objective of our journey was - Moscow. In effect Kiev did not have any involvement in the affairs of prisoners from the West Ukraine. Any decisions were made by and exclusively Moscow, and the Kiev government had (and still has) one could say, a clearly ornamental significance. From Kiev our train traveled very swiftly, and on Saturday, October 28, that is, on the 9th day from the time I was placed on the train in Lwow, in the evening we arrived at a merchandising railway station in Moscow.

Here I wish to recall that in addition to the bread and sugar, I, and understandably all other prisoners were provided 3 servings of warm nourishment for the 9-day duration of our journey. It was a sort of mixture with potatoes which were probably cooked by our guards. It appears there was also a scarcity of plates as well as spoons, as my neighbor to the right completed eating his food he handed me his unwashed plate and spoon which I in turn handed to my neighbor to the left and so forth. Twice a day we were given hot

or warm water, and that was the extent of our food and water for the long journey. Nothing strange as we were all tormented by hunger and terrible thirstiness: my throat was so dry, in order to soothe it, on our morning and evening round I was tempted to drink water by the handfuls from the steam locomotive, that was released from necessity. That water was mixed with bits of straw and soot.

I was tormented not only by hunger and thirst, but suffered from a burning fever through my entire body. I thought that I had been befallen by a terrible mange, and scratched at my body to rid it of the parasites. After I had a bath and arrived in my cell at Lubianka prison my health recovered. The Moscow prisoners enlightened me that it was a fever caused by high stress, in other words, a nervous breakdown.

Along the entire journey I was unable to receive any information, as to who were these people that are being transported, along with me, in our rail-car, besides Dr. Kost Lewitski who, heedless of the prohibition, always spoke loudly, and at one time for some reason began a real quarrel with the guards. I recognized him by his voice and his characteristic cough. By his voice I also recognized M.P. Wolodomir Tselevich who once requested a match from the guards. When our train had already arrived in Moscow my neighbor to the right requested to go to the washroom, the escort led him beside my cell, he that time forgot to lock the metal door as it always was previously. There I saw very clearly the overgrown facial features of Dr. Dmitro Lewitski, a many-year head of the U.N.D.A. and Ukrainian Parliamentary Representative in Warsaw during the years 1928-1935. Therefore, not heeding the severe custody and isolation from the other prisoners, I knew, that beside me, there were three other distinguished Ukrainian National-Political leaders being transported in the same rail-car.

In the growing dusk, they began leading us from the rail-car individually with our personal belongings to a black automobile that was parked at some distance, and from the exterior it was entirely identical to the vehicle that was used in Lwow for the transport of prisoners. This was the renowned "Black Raven". When it was my turn and I was led in front of the vehicle I observed that it had a narrow center passage, and on both sides were 4 chest-cabinets not more than 70-80 centimeters high, and at the utmost one-half meter in width. And so, with that "Black Raven" eight rigorously isolated prisoners were transported. Into one of those cabinets almost as large as a cabinet for the placement of a doll in a regular store, with difficulty, I along with my parcel, were squeezed in, and when they locked the small door in front of my nose, I was in total darkness, in such a narrowly restricted space, I could immediately feel that I was lacking air. I began choking and tried to return, but was unable. A person with a weak heart would certainly be unable to endure such torment. As I suffered and tried to get some air, I then became envious of even the Galician dogs, as I had on many occasions observed how the lost and the lords unclaimed dogs were captured on the streets, how they were transported on small wagons in cages with widely separated bars through which they had access to air and sunlight.... None of that was evident here. The people in the USSR did not even receive the shelter, which was given to our dogs.

At one moment I could hear, how directly opposite me they tried to squeeze president K. Lewitski into his cabinet. One of the NKVD's thought he was a manager of a sugar refinery, or at least he implicated that to his partner. How President K. Lewitski crawled into that cabinet I certainly do not know. After that the "Black Raven" began to move with its load of freight, and to me it seemed like an endless journey. I heard as we traveled through the city, heard the movement of the tram-ways, and used all my efforts to keep from fainting. Finally we traveled through some sort of a gate, across a type of threshold and stopped. It was clear that we were in some sort of a courtyard. All was utter silence, which was interrupted again and again, either by a scream or a cry of President K. Lewitski:

- Kind people! Take God into your hearts! Open the doors, release me, because I am suffocating, dying....  
- Open up, I am dying! God, God, for what reason am I suffering? My God, how am I being unrespected, why am I not trusted... Open up, and release me!

At last he ceased beating the small doors, on the cabinet with all his strength.

Then the guards opened the small doors and he was the first to be released from his torture. I was the third in line. When the doors to my cabinet were open, I fell half conscious at the feet of my guard. They helped me up and taking my parcel, led me to a large multi-storied building.

Thus, ended my arrival in Moscow at Lubianka.

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## **First Days at Lubianka**

***Registration and Fingerprinting - The Aspect of Inspections at Lubianka - The First Night in the "Box" - In Prison no. 29 - Cut off and Isolated from the Entire World - Order in the Prison - Our Greatest Apprenticeship - Moral Suffering - The Most Vigilant Isolation and how it was Interpreted by my Fellow-Prisoners - Fright of the Fate of Nearest Family Drives People to Despair - Is Lubianka the Home of the Dead? —What is Meant by the Furious Roar of Motors? —Books — a Great Comfort — The Food in Lubianka —Is it Possible to Protect Oneself from Scurvy?***

As I was half-consciously led to the inside I could see some curved corridors in which were sparkling, many colored lights. After a moment I arrived in some type of an office where an NKVD office clerk, with a large sheet of paper in his hands proceeded with my registration. He asked me about my personal statistics and wrote down my replies under various headings on that sheet of paper. From his questions I was left with a comprehension of only numerous questions about what, if any, ties I had with Trotskyites, what literature of theirs I had read, and so forth. As to all his questions I had only one reply: that about the Trotskyites, in general, I knew nothing at all, and the NKVD quietly wrote under the appropriate columns: no. After that he took my fingerprints - which I was later advised - is done with every newly-arrived prisoner.

From there I was led to a nearby narrow room without any windows, moreover, very brightly illuminated. The only piece of furniture in it was a small table. There I underwent my third from the time of my arrest (two were carried out in Lwow) rigorous check of all of my personal belongings, inclusive from my shirt to my undershorts. As in Lwow, I had to remove everything that I wore on me, and the NKVD assigned to the task examined and verified every portion of my clothes, the linens, and my footwear. Individually, precisely, and "expertly" he re-examined all the hems and seams of the clothes, cloaks and linens, and with the shoes he rolled about, certainly for at least 15 minutes. He carried out the entire procedure, silently, and during the entire time never spoke or asked one word. Evidently, peaceful, with documentation, to which he was obliged, on various places of my clothing and cloaks, (underneath the collars and similar places where the thicker seams were joined, or where he had some suspicion) he, using a razor blade more or less cut a small opening where he searched for anything suspicious: small pieces of paper, any kind of pencils, wires, etc. The small needle and pin that while in Lwow I hid in the hem of the pocket on my suit coat, and the microscopic piece of lead which I hid in the cuff of my trousers, he found immediately. With amazing skill he began removing all metal and glass buckles and buttons from my wardrobe and linens and after a short time had gathered a small bowl full. After completing his entire search, which I think, took one and a half to two hours time, the same NKVD looked inside my mouth, in my ears, and my nose, checked me completely in different positions from the rear, and the front, and ran his hand through the hair on my head, and when he could not find anything that appeared suspicious, he bid me to dress myself. It was unpleasant to dress oneself in shirts and clothes without any buttons, and I had to hold up my pants with my hands.

After that search which painfully shocked my human dignity, I was led before another individual who in a dry voice asked me if I was healthy. I had not opened my lips that I had a burning in my throat and my entire body itched, when he said: "Nothing" - and I was led further.

At this time I arrived at the bath-house. Given a piece of soap I washed myself with hot and cold water, and had a long wait for my things which were in the meantime handed over for disinfecting. Finally they brought me back my belongings which were still vaporizing steam. I quickly dressed and again I was led through a corridor to a small narrow room, similar to that where I underwent my surprising search. That room also had no windows, but was different from the first, in that, along one wall stood a wide bench, on which lay a mattress, and in the corner fastened to the wall a small table. That room there was called a "box" and in those "boxes" were placed transient prisoners who were locked there and held for a few days

on bread and water, the prisoners that in some manner erred against the orders of stability, and confirmed prison administration.

Soon they brought me a small plate of some type of a dry meal, and instead of tea, a cup of warm water.

It was certainly beyond midnight, but I could not fall asleep. Tormented by many thoughts: Is it possible in this room, where it is difficult to turn around, in the future, for me to survive in this prison? And how long could a person endure in such a room without any windows, without the flow of fresh air? One month, two, three? I recollected various writings of prison torture - survivals in fortified casements, and in dungeons, which extended not only months, but entire years, and I became frightened. God, rescue me!

Finally I fell asleep, and as dawn I was awakened by an NKVD guard who asked me to follow him. We walked along a corridor, and the upstairs, then again along a corridor and at last stopped before some large solid doors. The guard opened the doors with a large key and I entered inside the prison chamber. Before me I saw five men, and all stared at me with their eyes. Understandably, from the previous night in the "box", seeing people before me, I breathed a sigh of relief. I will not remain alone, but with other people!

Advancing nearer to them, I asked them in the Russian language where I was, and if serving here together were political and criminal prisoners, or only political. In a reply I heard that this is Lubianka, and serving here were only political prisoners. Our chamber I heard - was no. 29. I immediately introduced myself to each of the prisoners. As is common in casual situations, I never clearly heard their surnames nor did they clearly hear mine, in that they could not clearly orientate as to what my nationality was, or what country I was from. With immodest pride I observed a few books that were lying on a table in the center of the chamber and began glancing through them, while in the meantime I carried on a conversation with the residents of the prison, trying earnestly to possibly speak proper Russian. As a new arrival they began with interest asking me from where I was transported to Moscow, and what was my nationality. To that I replied: Very well, guess! And very soon they tried to guess who I was and called me a White Russian (Byelo-Rus), a Georgian, an Armenian and a Tartar, and finally a Pole, and not one of them guessed the thought that I was Ukrainian. Of the fact that I was from Lwow it was understandably something they couldn't dream of, as Lwow belonged to a foreign country, and they the unfortunates, and the exiled, did not know anything about my arrival in the prison, nor nothing of Hitler's attack on Poland, nothing about the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, nor the division of Poland between Germany and the USSR and the occupation of the entire Western Ukraine, as well as Lwow, by the Red Army. Then when I told them I was Ukrainian their surprise was incomprehensible.

They all wrote out tens of various questions and I strove to give them as clear an answer as possible. I began telling them everything that I knew about the weeks and months preceding the outbreak of the war: I had to repeat to them all the speeches and demands that Hitler made, and the replies to them by the leading statesman from the various states; I spoke precisely about the initial beginnings of the war, and then described its progress practically and precisely on a day by day basis, as they reflected in my memory. Later I explained to my fellow prisoners of the experiences that I endured in Lwow during the period from September 1 to September 26 of this year, that is, from the first day of the war till the day of my arrest. I thoroughly discussed with them the German air raids on Lwiw and about the Polish defense of the city, and about the German siege that surrounded Lwiw from three directions, and from the orgies of Polish chauvinism, by which suffered primarily the Ukrainian people, and finally the arrival of the Red Army in Lwow, how the Germans with the conclusion of the pact withdrew the entire distance to the San and Buh rivers. By explaining everything I had to provide them with thousands of small details because these people were as if from another world, and many matters had to be clarified to them as to children, or visitors from another world. so everything was explained to them for three days without interruption.

I am not prompted to write here today, about the immense interest that was created by my explanations by those unfortunates, such as I victims of the Bolshevik regime, and how receptive they were to my every word. They were all very thankful for my information and all the news, and immediately approached me with a sense of understanding. From all my varied explanations, which for them were only revelations,

they not only recognized me but well sympathized that I arrived in prison with the same innocence that then had befallen on the largest majority of the then soviet citizenry, and had befallen on them. Later and to the end of my sojourn in that prison, and yet later in others, I discussed with my companions in distress about their annoying situations, and more about life in other countries beyond the Soviet Union, particularly about life in Austria, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Poland, and West Ukrainian lands. I always strove to speak objectively and presented circumstances to people truthfully, not exaggerating neither to one side or the other. Then I became authoritative in many prison affairs, and to my ideas they were not only attentive, but accepted them as their own. Certainly, I always spoke very cautiously about political circumstances very cautiously, taking into account that in the prison there may have been NKVD agents or provocateurs.

Orders in the prison were: in the mornings and evenings we were contentedly led to the primitive "lavatory" where we also washed. This always occurred at irregular times, depending on when our chambers turn came. We all took turns keeping order in the prison and carrying out the "waste" from the urinals. Everyday we had a 20-minute walk in the outdoors of the large prison block of multi-storied homes (5, 6, & 7 stories) as if we were in a deep hole. Closed in by high planks, our courtyard was placed in a wider space between three closely built tall buildings, from which gazed on us the barred and metal covered windows of the prison cells, and was 4 steps wide and 16 steps in length. After making about 30 rounds, that is, an average of about 1200 steps, we were required to return back to the prison. These walks also took place at various periods of the day or night, depending on the weather: once we went outdoors before noon, one in the afternoon, once late at night, and quite often at 2:00-3:00 a.m. after midnight. Then the prisoners had to be awakened but never refused their outdoor activities, not even during the harshest frosts, as this was their only occasion to breathe the so-called fresh air. During periods of extreme cold the prisoners either walked at a quickened pace, or probably ran. Then and during the entire period of my residence at Lubianka, I remained in cells situated contentedly lower (on 2nd or 3rd stories) and nearly always, day and night the lights were turned on, only at the times of our walks outside could we observe ourselves closely during daylight. And only then could we clearly observe our palely-yellowed, thin faces.

After our daily walks, every ten days, we were led to the bath house where we had hot and cold water (showers). On those occasions they changed our linens and spreading on the beds. The beds in the cells were metal, set beside the wall. On the beds were well worn mattresses, and the metal bars of the beds persistently tormented the bodies of us all, and at nights the pain in areas of the body compelled us to turn over a few times.

What annoyed us most at nights was that every prisoner while sleeping, summer and winter had to have his hands on top of the covers. Many had severe problems getting used to the habit, in that, the prison shirts, under obligation, regularly had sleeves only to the elbows, and during the winter period the naked hands of the prisoners at nights were as cold as ice. More than one of us then ended up with rheumatism, as the prison guards under examination were hard and unmerciful. As soon as they could see through the small window in the door, through which he peered every minute, that anyone of the prisoners was sleeping with his hands underneath the covers, he at once noisily and with clangor opened the heavy doors to the cell and summoned the concerned prisoner to immediate and strict order. As usual all the prisoners in the chamber were awakened and in their own self interests demanded from their fellow prisoner, frequently and severely with cursing, that they not be deprived of their nights sleep. There was no happiness, one had to endure the suffering, and during the coldest nights had to keep his hands above the covers, for that was the order at Lubianka!

All of our bodily sufferings were not comparable to our moral sufferings. Almost all the prisoners with whom I spoke at Lubianka, experienced painful moral torment, above all, in connection with the charges held against them and with the course of affairs with investigators, in general. Most suffered silently, afraid of their own fate, as well as the fate of their relatives. How many times have I heard there about the tragical destinies of the wives and children of sentenced prisoners! Their situations are truly pitiful. As the uncertainty and fear for ones future is real, it is even greater for the future of a wife and children, and after the sentencing of the bread winner, how the closest members of the family of the repressed, await a life of

impoverishment, and abuse, was more annoying to the prisoners than the physical suffering. That is, what there is beyond the USSR is unknown to the rest of the world: so that the entire family is accountable for their every member.

In addition, I would now wish to express a few words about the most strict isolation in the world that is experienced by all the prisoners in Lubyanka. It is the most dreadful isolation (segregated) in the outer world, that even its nearest equivalent cannot be found in the entire world. From the first day of my residence at Lubyanka, I with the greatest amazement heard that the majority of the fellow prisoners remain in the investigative-prison up to 10, 15, 20 or more months. Anything similar was impossible even in Poland. Later in other chambers in Lubyanka I met other prisoners that had served 28 and even 32 months in the investigative prison, and still could not foresee a conclusion of their cases. In addition, I convinced myself that the investigators in the USSR always have time and are never in a hurry. It does not concern them in the least, that the delaying actions or postponement of the cases, affect the health and nerves of the hopeless prisoners, who are under investigation.

The unbiased reader can appreciate to some degree the plight of the in-soviet prisoner who is under investigation, who can consciously for a moment, understand what it means to be torn away and separated entirely from not only the closest relatives, but from the entire outer world. And that does not extend for weeks or months, but continues for many - many months which add up to years! Genuine torments of Tantalus are endured by those hopeless people, who from the moment of their arrest to the completion of investigations and conviction (as conviction completes no less than 90% of the case!) and are unable to give out the slightest bit of information about themselves to their relatives, or to receive any kind of news from their closest loved ones. And that is how it was in Lubyanka, where all the prisoners were very severely segregated not only from the entire outside world, but also from all the other prisoners of the large prison, beyond their own chamber. The chambers there were small (for 3 to 6 individuals) and the people are under investigation for long months or even years, and the activity in the chambers is minimal.

Casually, more than six months or longer pass by when someone of the prisoners is removed from the chamber and in his place arrives another with news from the world. If the prisoner is from another chamber, it is necessary to wait a few months longer for the arrival of another prisoner "from the world" to learn anything, whatsoever, about the world, and the internal Russian events. However, any new prisoner will not bring you any news of your relatives or those nearest you - and you longer endure the intolerable suffering.

During my many-month residence at Lubyanka I observed prisoners, who by their horrible isolation, and grieving about the destinies of their wives and children, were driven to despair. Those closest to them did not vanish from their minds, and they thought and spoke about them everyday. I personally was later tormented by the segregation, which was more burdensome than the hunger, the cold, and all the unpleasantness and inconvenience of prison life.

Why in the kingdom of Stalin are the prisoners under investigation submitted to such inhumane separation that does not permit them to send even two or three words of knowledge about their resident prison location and the state of their health? Would this have a result on the course of the investigation? And why must the families of the arrested endure such burdens even before their sentencing? It appears to me that the intentions are, that the inhumane methods are to further weaken and to crush the resistance of the prisoner and force the prisoner to endorse whatever the investigators desire. But whether that is truthfully the purpose of the plan, we can only surmise. Of what I personally observed and experienced at Lubyanka, it would appear that by the strict isolation desired by the investigative judges, no results are evident.

It is interesting to reflect on the extraordinary and stern regimes in all the Soviet prisons and at Lubyanka, in particular, and the misunderstood - extraordinary isolation from the world of the prisoners in our prison. They advised that the present aristocracy in the Kremlin at one period of time served in various prisons of not only Czarist Russia, and were very familiar with all of its secrets. From the Czarist prisons they were capable of obtaining news from the entire world, and some from those prisons, were in contact with their own groups and organizations, wrote out, and communicated the revolutionary manifestoes "to the world",



and issued far-reaching commands to their like-minded in freedom. Now, possessing the power of their own authority, they, like well experienced criminals, have built and completely reconstructed their prison systems, in order that prisoners fall into their arms, would never be so bold as to even consider about what they were capable of. For that reason, the present aristocracy in the Kremlin is capable of isolating its prisoners very precisely from not only the outer world and prisoners in other chambers, but also from their own closest relatives. And that threatening and cruel-heartedness of their system has already triumphed from the Carpathians to Kamchatka and is gradually moving to all its satellites and is threatening to overturn the entire world.

The administration of Lubianka very diligently applied its own orders, which did not permit the prisoners to any kind of louder conversation whether it was in the chamber or outside. Speech always had to be quiet, almost a whisper. The NKVD guards whenever called out would also speak to the prisoners in a calmed voice. That was, it always was, and there were no exceptions to those regulations.

When the prisoners accomplished their so-called walk in tandem they preserved the most discrete silence. They were not permitted to exchange even one word with their neighbor! It was also not permitted to speak anything to the NKVD guards that led you to your judicial hearings, and later guided us back to the chamber, likewise to those that led us - usually the entire chamber - to the "bath-house", and every morning and evening to the "lavatory". The situation was the same with the NKVD prison-barber, who every 10 days called out individual prisoners to a corner in the corridor and clipped our faces with a clipper in the same manner that regularly children's hair is cut. (God forbid the use of a straight or even a safety razor! And what if some desperate prisoner grabbed the razor out of his hand and cut his own and perhaps the barbers throat!...) One time I attempted to speak to that enlightened (as was all the service at Lubianka) barber, with the distinctive Semitic facial features. He gazed at me angrily with his large eyes and never uttered a word.

Above all I must admit that all the protectors of the prisoners at Lubianka, all the day and night guards, the guides, the porters, the barbers, the managers of the "bath-houses", "benches" etc., etc. were so trained that they appeared as mannequins. Of notation, during the period of my 19-month residence in that prison not one of the official subordinates of the Bolshevik prison regime, never said to me nor to other fellow prisoners from other chambers, beyond that which was necessary, not one unnecessary word. This is due, apparently, to the peculiarities of the regime, that the guards do not dare to have any, not even spoken contact with the prisoners.

In this manner Lubianka reigned always, day and night, in complete silence. The steps of the guard on duty could not be heard as he continuously paced the corridors, and almost every minute peered through the small windows in the doors, chamber after chamber. This was due to the corridors being covered with thick footwalks that absorbed all the echoes of peoples footsteps.

It would appear that Lubianka - is a home of the dead. In the meantime, there in that large block of residences, was "seething with life" during the entire 24 hour day, moreso at night, than during the day. There weighed the scales of fortune of vital necessities of life, and the same necessities for thousands of hopeless, human beings.

During my term of incarceration at Lubianka that death-like silence was perforated only once by loud hysterical cries, shouting, and lamenting of exiled women who occupied one or two stories above us. Those cries were stopped very promptly. What were their reasons and what consequences followed for the poor women, we were never informed.

Somewhat later our death-like silence was penetrated by the terrifying, furious, roar of motors, that reached us from somewhere outside and brought forth the balance of all the prisoners. No one in the chambers ever spoke about it, all were listening to that ill-boding roar, which at times continued upwards from ten to twenty minutes, under nervous tension, but gathered together, with the greater dignity. All sensitized very clearly, that at that moment, somewhere underneath us, in the deep dungeons, were occurring executions of

those such as us, human beings, who lived, suffered, loved, and hated, and had their own ideals, such as we did. On the basis of how long the motors roared, we calculated how long it took those trained atrocious chekas (secret police) to execute their dreadful "labor" and in our minds also calculated how many new human offerings were sacrificed by the so-called proletarian revolution. We thought about those unknown to us martyrs, who probably to the last moment would to God, have a spark of hope, and were now falling by a cuff of the neck, from flame, or from a revolver.

Those moments obliged the prisoners to stop to think deeper beyond the nature of human life itself and also beyond its value. They never discussed these items immediately but at least on the second or third day after that ill-boding humming roar of motors. During the periods when the motors were running no one in the chamber stirred. The prisoners experienced a great human tragedy with all their being. The believers prayed for the souls of the murdered, evidently, more in their thoughts, than with words. And those same prayers revealed more deeply the human soul.

Of great consolation to the prisoners at Lubyanka were books. Every 10 days they were delivered by an NKVD librarian from the prison library to every chamber, where he left every prisoner one book, and one additional book for the entire chamber. Understandably, when a chamber consisted of 5 prisoners, every 10 days they received 6 books, where there were 6 prisoners, 7 books, and so forth. After 10 days the same librarian arrived at the chamber, and without any useless conversation, took the books, and left the same number of others. For instance if any book that was already in the chamber, he silently took it and replaced it with another.

Interesting that in the prison at Lubyanka there were never any books on social-politics or economical-administration subjects. There also was not anything in the Marxism-Leninist categories. During the entire time of my stay in Lubyanka I never saw even one book on Marx, Lenin, Stalin, or in general any theorists (and practitioners) of Marxism. The prison observation evidently did not consider the price of incarceration and investigating prisoners, may it please God, to have influence on them, with the aid of suitable reading, although they were held there for many long months.

Anything that the prisoners could lay their hands on was fine literature, well narrated, dramatically composed, stories and poetry. Exceptions were composed descriptions of travel, and disclosing and all mention and memoirs of distinguished writers, actors, directors of theaters, musicians, etc. As for authors, they were substituted (and very numerous!) and old Russian literary artists, a new writers and the newest soviet troubadours, inclusively. There were also many literary works of old and new writers, German, French, Anglo-American, Italian, Spanish and also Indian and Japanese, particularly, in excellent Russian translations. Also included in translations into the Russian language were literary works of Slavic writers, as well as works from amongst the semi-soviet nationalities, Georgians, Armenians, Tartars, Kalmyks, etc..

During my stay at Lubyanka over 200 books of many heterogeneous authors, more or less half Russian and the other half of all other nationalities. Upon my release from prison and with a fresh memory, I wrote myself the titles of those read books and their authors which I have here before me. It brings back many memories: to take into consideration that those books brought us a new world every day, at least for a few hours - amidst such difficult circumstances, and about our companions in distress, with whom I only discussed the themes and authors of the books we had read: and also about how much we learned from those books, and about the news...

Amongst all those books I had the opportunity to read a few translations from the English language. These were not any of our classical, or distinguished recent writers, but the contemporary semi-Soviet Ukrainian authors, who evidently, wrote for hire. In all their narrations and communications, that I had access to, they magnified in the highest terms to all organizations, the virtues and attainments of the Bolshevik regime: the construction of the Dnieper River power station, the development of mine shafts in the Donbas, the industrialization of the state, and so forth. In those frayed propaganda leaflets, the authors aspired unsuccessfully to gain literal artistic recognition, brought attention to ones eye that: their important personal characteristics were expressed from the principles of ideologies and devotion to the party and

communist government, from the one and persistent enemy of the regime, regular paid agents from foreign countries, from the other side. Those "creations" come forth with a powerful force, and in different languages. For those not interested in local circumstances, he would never believe that in the Soviet Union there are thousands of foreign agents, comfortably working for pay for the menacing threat of just life. Those who can believe are only those brought up and educated under a Bolshevik regime, who were never beyond the borders and have no imaginations of life and circumstances in other countries. That those people are present there, I had to be persuaded by my fellow prisoners. And when we at one time had a discussion on the activities of foreign agents in the USSR after the readings of the propaganda leaflets, one of the younger explained with complete seriousness: "Why are we the poor, guilty, that foreign countries, our nearest and furthest neighbors, wish to destroy us and send millions of their spies and saboteurs onto our territories, and do not provide us with the possibilities of extending our construction of socialism in a manner in which we desire." Other older age prisoners only smiled at his statements and did not react. Obviously, they didn't believe anything of such an over-flowing of the Soviet Unions foreign agents and saboteurs. Later, when they had already come to know me, and had placed some trust in me, I heard the truth from some of them: that the same authority is universally engaged in the "creation" about detriments and sabotage of paid foreign spies, researchers, and saboteurs, in such a manner, as to have some justification for all their own inconsistent plans, villainous mistakes, and its own full incapability.

Remaining to say are a few words about the food in Lubyanka. It was inadequate and monotonous, in that, after a few months many of the prisoners contacted scurvy. They were provided with medical remedies, but there was no change in the provisions.

The basis of the food was, as in the entirety of Soviet Union, dark, and very dark, heavy digestible bread, which bloated almost all of the prisoners. For dinner we received a thin diluted soup, and an especially dry gruel, which even the hungriest person would have difficulty passing through his throat. Prisoners called it "oaklike". At times instead of gruel we had small portions of peas or lentils, at times also portions of macaroni, or a few small pieces of potato, mixed with pieces of beets, cucumbers and 2-3 microscopic pieces of herring. Those were the species of our salads which they called "vinaigrette." For supper we had the regular gruel, identical to what we had for dinner. There's not much use in saying that the portions were totally inadequate, and every prisoner could normally eat two or three times as much. In addition to those foods every morning the prisoners received some colored boiling water, which, why I don't know they called "tea" and two lumps of sugar per day. That was all. One item I must confirm: all of those insufficient foods were clean and from a hygienic view without objection.

Of great easement to all the Moscovite prisoners and all those with some money in the prison deposit, at the store, which every 10 days provided the prisoners with some supplemental foods or provisions not exceeding 20 ruble value. Each time there 400-grams bread, or a pound of sugar, 100-grams butter, or more regularly margarine and foremostly, onions and garlic, which the prisoners ate in large quantities, the use of which protected them from scurvy. In the store matches and some amounts of cigarette papers were available, which were always useful for the smokers, in that, on the days when the store in the prison was open, the chamber was dark and suffocating. There one could also purchase soap, tooth-brushes, combs, etc..

It was a very happy day for those prisoners who while in prison had some spending money, when the NKVD came to the store, wrote down their orders and later delivered their ordered provisions. Sometimes on that day even the prisoners who never had any money in the prison and were not able to order anything, might receive something from their more fortunate prison companions. (On the following day there was no sign in the chamber of any of those provisions.) The onions, and garlic were equally shared by the owners to the satisfaction of all the residents of the chamber. Interestingly, here is yet one more circumstance, namely: how the relatives of the imprisoned Muscovites were counseled to inquire in which prisons their family members were placed. As there are many prisons in Moscow and when someone was arrested, whether it was at home or on the street, or at the office, or somewhere else, it was not an easy matter to obtain information as to which prison he was taken. In those cases the family of the arrested would send a small amount of money, usually 5 to 10 rubles to all the Moscow prisons in the name of the

arrested. After a period of time the money was returned in the mail through the post-office. And the prison that did not return the money, was an indication to the family, that is the location of their family member. Then the family endeavored to forward small amounts of money every month to the concerned prison.

Within a day or two of my arrival at Lubianka, my fellow prisoners informed me that in no less than half a year I would contract the "obligatory" scurvy. One of them gave me advice on what he himself did every day: to clean your teeth, rubbing them with a brush till they bleed, explaining, to temper your teeth and gums. I began doing that, although some of the prisoners advised me against it and scornfully smiled. That manipulation was of no aid, and also of no aid was that every day, was my compulsory eating 2 or 3 onions. Six months had not gone by when one time while eating one of my teeth fell out, and another nearby I easily pulled out with my hand. During those days I could sense a pain in the extremities of my feet, and in my knees, and my body was covered in various places, especially on my hands and feet, with small red spots, similar to the rash that children have when they are sick with the measles. When I reported to the medical assistant I was soon called to the prison doctor, who apparently, was a young lady. She examined me thoroughly, confirming it was scurvy and prescribed me some type of medicinal drink, which they brought me every morning and evening. Within 10 days all the red spots disappeared and the pains completely withdrew. At this time I have to make a note, that when I arrived in the chamber amongst the prisoners, I completely forgot about my terrible itch, which burned and tormented me on the trip from Lwow to Moscow. It suddenly, as if by the stroke of a hand, disappeared.

## **The Prisoners In Chamber No. 29**

***Two Predecessors: Lettish Redentz and Greek Spy Sharapov. - Marketing Representative Titov - Bookkeeper Schekin. - 26 year old Golubiev - a recent Investigator at Lubianka. - Mongol Lapsan Shirap. - New People.***

After somewhat informing the reader about Lubianka and its regime, it is now timely to mention a few words about the residents of chamber no. 29, with whom I was accompanied during the first months in the most paramount prison in the entire Soviet Union. Paramount, not only in that in it on all the upper stories, and all its rooms near the street were administered by entire staff of officers, in the closest collaboration and assistance of the Peoples Commissar Beria, and also, that here were assembled those prisoners, who for various reasons attracted the specialized interests of central organization of the NKVD. For that reason, here everything was performed accurately and precisely, as in excellent clockwork. In comparison with other prisons in the USSR where filth and uncleanness reigned, where the chambers were regularly overfilled, and where the people were preyed upon by every species of insects, here, other than the bed-bugs which we were never able to brandish from the old beds and mattresses, everything was clean. As for cleanliness, it was a concern of most of the prisoners, and early every morning everything in the chamber was brought to wholesome order, scrubbed the floors, and took turns carrying out the waste from the so-called "privies", etc..

Before I turn to the individual prisoners in my first chamber, I can recall about two prisoners whom I did not meet, who both stayed in my chamber until my arrival there, about whom my fellow prisoners spoke often during my initial days. They were a Lett, Redentz, and a Moscovite, Sharapov. About the first they said that he was quiet, and well-adjusted. His interrogations were difficult, and after one of his inquiries the prisoners observed a freshly blood-stained shirt that was exposed from under his vest. The general conviction in the chamber was that Redentz, in all likelihood was a spy, and that after one of his summonses from the chamber, he was executed by shooting, right there, at Lubianka. As for the second, Sharapov was, they said, a talented engineer of inventions, and had served in Lubianka a few years earlier, and was sentenced as a Greek spy, many years of hard labor and deported to the mine-shafts of the distant Kolima (in NE Siberia). He served there for two years and in 1939 he was again incurred in Lubianka where his case was again re-opened, whereby, his wife came forward with various actions. The situation was that during that period of bloody rule Shaparov appeared, as did hundreds and thousands of other, in prison, and they certainly desired to accuse him of some type of espionage or national disgrace. After too long a period, they "pressured" him to admit finally, whose spy he was, he said with a reflex action, "Grecian". And then gratified with such an admission the investigators questioned him further, as to whom he gave out his information on Greece, and what he received for his services, the engineer Shaparov further presented his contrived story: that he at one time met a Greek merchant, whose surname he didn't know in a coffee-house, and the pay that he received from him, was paid for with that glass of black coffee. The investigators wrote everything down very precisely, and after that "admission" by Shaparov, as a dangerous spy, began his journey to Kolima. Shortly after he left, he succeeded in some manner of informing his wife, and she having various connections, during the unsettled bloody revolt, managed after two years to have her husband transported from Kolima back to Moscow as was said "for the consideration of affairs." Those cases occurred, but very rarely, and that Shaparov returned truthfully, as if from another world. Kolima was in the distant north-east, where travel was by ocean vessel during the short summer months, and where, extracting gold and other metals, perished from hunger and cold, hundreds of thousands of hopeless enslaved convicts. That is the same Kolima about which the deported sang with despair: Kolima, Kolima, the new planet, Twelve months of winter, as for the rest its summer.

After that introduction I will now return to my companions in distress in chamber no. 29.

Most clearly reflected in my mind was Titov Anatoly Yosefowich who was employed as a marketing representative of the USSR (Market Rep.) in Warsaw, and prior to his arrest in the same position in Syria. He was arrested, probably, in connection with the general clean sweep of all the foreign representatives,

who were almost entirely alluded to be sympathetic towards Trotskyism or ties with the Trotskyites, and upon arrival in Moscow, were accused of, if not sabotage, of some type of mischief-making. The mentioned, Titov, was also under investigation as a great saboteur, and after, it is apparent that he was rigorously tormented, as during the days and evening he spoke to us about all types of uninteresting details of his case, besides, his purchases of railroad cars and rails, and declared like a maniac uprightly defensive speeches, as if before a judge. Generally, this was a person, as they say, was intelligent, beaten, and torn to pieces, and truly his outlook wasn't easy. He was, I think a Jew, but you could not recognize it, and his wife was a White Russian. Under investigation he defended himself very tenaciously, and from that, as he spoke to us very candidly before its termination, the outcome was, that of all the allusions of his earlier wickedness, he was finally tagged with only so-called "negligence", in other words, not serious attitude to his responsibilities, or some other trifling carelessness. Definitely the investigators had to pin something on him because "the NKVD never make mistakes."

Another distinguished prisoner in the chamber was Schekin Boris Wasylevich, the head book keeper of a large manufacturing enterprise, a Moscowvite. As he said, he was managing quite well, and led a satisfactory sufficient life. Long before his arrest he was employed as a book keeper for a few years with a Soviet-Swedish firm that supplied matches to the USSR. At that time all the employees fared very well as the work was lighter, and the pay was high. Everything suddenly changed for the worse, from the moment that the factory was taken over completely into the arms of the soviet authority. And there, in a group of employees was somehow mentioned during one occasion, a few years later, of the excellent times of co-operation with the Swedes, and in a few days all those participants of that "counter-revolutionary" discussion were locked in prison, and amongst them was Boris Schekin.

Whereas, Titov and Schekin were in the prime of life and were both approaching their forties, the third prisoner, Golubiev Wolodimir Petrowich, was only 26 years old. And although he was still young, he already had ten years service with the NKVD. He, himself, explained to us, not concealing that, from his scholarly years the NKVD drew him into their service. He served them from his school bench, and during the latter years he was here, at Lubianka, the same investigator, as those who are presently examining him and ourselves. Why he lost the confidence and benevolence of his superiors, and under what evidence he was placed in prison, he never stated to us. He only hinted that he was being charged with espionage, to which he was tormented, and thrown into damp basements, he had to admit. It grieved him, as he said, his punishment was the pain of death. During the final phase of his investigation, the investigators, he indicated, took into consideration his NKVD service of former times, as well as his younger age, and proposed a motion of his deportation for perhaps 15 years of hard labor, which he accepted with some satisfaction. At his request, I taught Golubiev the German language from practically the first day, without a textbook, without paper and pencil, and covered with him, all the most important grammar, and taught him a few hundred German words, that he mastered very rapidly. Only on days when he was called to the investigator for inquiry, he was strangely distracted and unnerved, and then no learning was undertaken. There is no need to add, that in all our conversations on political themes with Golubiev, we were all very cautious.

A very interesting prisoner was the Mongol Lapsan Shirap, to the time of his arrest was the most important individual of the then known outer Mongolia (to the world as if independent) as the Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party of that distant eastern land. His arrest was a glaring example of how the Bolsheviks honored their guarantees of Mongolian independence, and how is conducted itself with the people who upheld their grace to follow and serve with all their power. In broken Russian language of which he knew no more than 200 to 300 words, Lapsan Shirap explained to us, with irritations, that he is being charged, as if he was a Mongolian nationalist, and as such, he had sold off the interests of the Mongolian nation - to Japan. In short: he was demanded to admit to espionage in the interests of Japan. As he explained, how the NKVD seized him in broad daylight, how they placed him in an airplane, blindfolded him, and transported him on a long, lengthy trip till they arrived in Moscow. At Lubianka, he underwent very severe investigation and suffered greatly. In addition, for him, the prison food was not only unworthy, but also totally unsuitable. As all Mongols, in his native country, he ate very large quantities of sheep meat (perhaps 2 to 3 kgs per day) as sheep - that was the only natural food of the

population of Mongolia. It was not surprising that here on prisoners food, our Mongol, at one time as strong as a bear, withered and pined away, day after day, became feverish, and finally his condition deteriorated so, that he was unable to walk. At last they took him away from us, probably to some prison clinic (as there was none at Lubyanka). We all sympathized with him, and considered, that the days of his life were numbered.

Those were the prisoners, whom I met in chamber no. 29. After the departures, at various times of the final three, came the arrival of new people. Normally, that in the place of one that served his time at the chamber, another prisoner arrived within 24 hours. The chamber was always full.

Of the first new arrivals from freedom was a village bachelor, Grisha from nearby Moscow who every day traveled from his village to his work in the capital. He fell into the arms of the NKVD as a speculator of gold. (After his arrest, in searches of his fathers home, with whom he resided, in the village, was found a large piece of gold and 5 clocks). Grisha was brought to our chamber during the first days of January 1940, and he related to us, powerful and countless items of news. From Hitler's arrival in Moscow to visit with Stalin, of the great public assembly with the participation of both dictators in some great hall in Moscow, where an underlaid bomb exploded, and killed hundreds of people, but did not cause the least amount of harm to either Hitler, or to Stalin, or to many other things. It was from the same Grisha that we first heard of the war with Finland, but, being of lower intellect he could not tell us much about it. After a few days Grisha was taken from us, and we for a longer period examined all sides of the question: was Hitler in Moscow, or not? Clearly, in combination with that, we considered all sorts of combinations, and thought of various probabilities, as far as, the unfolding of political or military developments. Finally, I learned all the truth about those and latter periods after my release from Lubyanka.

A second novice who was with us was an elderly peasant Barbashov Ivan who was employed as a watchman (janitor) in a large Moscow bakery named Stalin, which had 600 employees, who worked there in three shifts. The mentioned bakery also baked bread for the military. There it was brought to light that the soldiers on the Finnish front received bread that was mixed with glass, and that bread originated from the bakery named Stalin. Then the entire NKVD machine went into movement. This was followed by mass arrests from amongst the administration of the bakery, and also from amongst the employees. Whether the bakery did indeed bake bread with glass for the army, or in other words, were there actions of some type of dangerous saboteurs, or not, I do not know. But, the arrests of such masses of people was in the NKVD's favor: as from this opportunity were uncovered all types of abuse, not only from amongst the leadership organs of the bakery, but more or less, a systematic theft from amongst the employees, to the detriment of the bakery. Then, it was also revealed, that under the surname of John Barbashov, a watchman at the bakery, was concealed, former dangerous Kulak (peasant capitalist), owner of 8 parts (land measures of 2.7 acres i.e. 21.6 acres) a team of horses, two cows, and a dozen children, who as "an enemy of the state" and "an exploiter of hired labor" was deported to forced labor in a concentration camp, from which with some amazement he escaped all the way to Moscow, where he found refuge, and employment in the aforementioned bakery. Thus, the "omnipotent" NKVD discovered Barbashov, and bundled him all the way to chamber no. 29 at Lubyanka. How many years of hard labor he was given for his escape from the concentration camp, and for the secretiveness of his enriched farming background, and perhaps, of his paternal surname, we were never informed. How many of those and similar "enemies of the state" were discovered and punished from amongst the personnel of the bakery named Stalin?

Worthy of attention also is prisoner Gagua Akaki Pawlowich who was transported from the Caucasus to Moscow in a train similar to which transported me from Lwow. He was a Georgian, secretary of one of the district committee parties, therefore, a person of importance. As a true believer Marxist, in 1924, he assisted the Russian Bolsheviks in suppressing the nationalized rebellion of the Georgians, supported by Georgian patriots, under the direction of the then popular Social-Democratic leadership. After the inhumane suppression of that rebellion, Gagua occupied prominent positions in the region, and fell into the firm clutches of the NKVD, which after long imprisonment in his native land was drawn to Lubyanka, where he was charged with inclination to "bourgeoisie nationalism". Of no aid were his assurances of verbal communication, nor his "revelations" of literature, that he was still a "believer in the prophesies of

the Lenin-Stalin party." For in Georgia, just as in the Ukraine, there is now no room for the native intelligentsia (cultured) and within sight of internationalism there exists an excessive Russification, of which I later heard a lot from Georgian fellow prisoners. And Gagua in some ways dearly loved the boundless spaces of his Georgia, and at the very thought of its great poets and many cultural leaders, he blushed, and his eyes took on a wonderful sparkle, How could Moscow tolerate that in Georgia?

Also in the same chamber were two Tartars. One of them Gizatulin, lived in Moscow where he was a wardrobe designer in one of the theaters, and fell into the arms of the police, probably for speculation in gold. (The investigators were suspicious of gold speculators, and accused them of espionage, and endeavored to obtain their admissions that the gold in their possession was received from beyond the borders for their espionage work).

The second Tartar, and engineer Ismail, was a very intelligent individual, was employed in the Donbas region (Donets Basin, coal region of Eastern Ukraine) - where he explained to me, he had many acquaintances, and even friends from amongst Ukrainian engineers. He was charged with, not only sympathies to Tartar nationalism, but also with some type of sabotage. I began teaching him, also, in German, but within two weeks he was taken from us. In that, he did not feel responsible for any blame, and did not admit to anything he was probably transported to the Lifortov prison, also in Moscow, where generally speaking the prisoners are tormented with all types of tortures, until, they agree to sign to whatever the investigators demand. - "Farewell, my friend"! - were the last words of engineer Ismail, with me, when he was called, with his belongings, from the chamber, one afternoon during the latter half of October in 1939.

Finally, I remember the Jew, Davidov Zelman Aranovich, a doctor, who came to our chamber from a larger provincial city, probably Saratova. He was also accused of nationalism and some type of mischief-making. That Davidov, as a person was very unsympathetic, with which it was impossible to truly define the other prisoners hostile attitudes toward him, which were evident on all occasions everyday. Active here without contradiction was racial prejudice, although, a hatred toward Jews, even the Bolshevik authority, in such cases, punished very rigorously. In the example of the aforementioned Davidov and in relations with prisoners with other arrested Jews, I convinced myself very clearly, that under the Czarism of Stalin there flourishes a wide range of not only Russian chauvinism, which calls forth from natural objects, and similar reflex actions from within all oppressed people in the Soviet Union, but also racial prejudice completely separate from the hatred toward Jews. -

On those affairs we will have the opportunity of broader discussion in following sections of my recollections.



## The First Inquiries

*NKVD - A Terrifying Machine. - How you are led to an Investigating Judge in Lubianka. -Control Point. - My First Investigator and his Greatest Curiosity. - What I Experienced Upon My Return to the Chamber. - Further Inquiries and some Interesting Moments. - Dr. Julian Olesnitsky, also in Lubianka. - My Loss.*

Already during the first days of my residence at Lubianka, and hearing the conversations of the prisoners in the chamber, I understood, that the inquiries, which I am awaiting, one should not fear and turn aside the observation of when the investigator will make believe, that the NKVD knows everything, and has proof of everything. For the NKVD rarely has any kind of evidence, and only the investigators will endeavor the use of all types of fine arts, to gain admission to guilt for some offense. Later I heard, that in the USSR it is not necessary, in general, to believe in anything, because there nobody ever tells the truth: in the USSR I was told, exists such falsity, likewise, at the top, and lower down, that no one at any time can say where the truth ends and where the lying begins. Finally, I heard that whoever ends up in the arms of the NKVD cannot depend on anyone for anything. Every prisoner under investigation defends himself in every way he can, but when the NKVD demand, the most innocent person will accept the guilt for all types of crimes, even those of which they never dreamed, and will endorse everything that the NKVD investigator dictates. The conceptions of rights, justice, not speaking of humanness, do not exist in the dictionaries of the Bolshevik investigators.

For they, the investigators were by no means jurists, and were never taught any judicial instruction. In the first place they were dedicated and proven members of the party, which are chosen and gathered for training from everywhere, providing them with possibility to practice a few months under the care and supervision of already legalized senior investigators. Later they are told to carry out their own investigations and they begin to swim and "earn by serving" in front of their principal leadership. And after some time one of those younger investigators are promoted higher, acquire a career, higher pay, and various rewards, and tokens of distinction, and others - which happens very rarely - slip on something and break their necks and die in the same concentration camps, or in the basements of prisons, the same as those unfortunate prisoners, as their recent victims, who they with their own investigative methods forced admission to some type of evil-doing. As the NKVD - a terrifying machine, and methods of its operation, is difficult to understand even for people who have lived under its continual guardianship for well over thirty years. And what's to say about the people who lived within the immediate reaches of the terrifying authority, and fell as I did into its arms?

All the information that I had time to gather from my fellow-prisoners, for me was not entirely new, as for the investigative methods of the NKVD, I had read many earlier, and had heard something of individuals who had the good fortune to escape alive out of its arms. Also, here I heard more than once, very candidly, from those people that had many long months of investigation behind them, and were somehow passed by. Therefore, I listened very carefully to their communication, and what I heard from them, I, would soon have the opportunity to examine for myself.

On October 1, 1939 arriving at chamber no. 29 was a guard-chekist (Soviet secret police) and asked in a quiet voice "Who here has the letter N"? I stepped forward and called out my surname. Then he said: "Your initials"? I replied: I.K. that is, Ivan Kuzmich. In the USSR similarly as it was in Czarist Russia, every person has not only a surname and a proper name, but also a compulsory patronymic (of the father: Ivanowich, Paulowich, Stepanowich - with emphasis on the third syllable at the end). The NKVD looking at the photograph said: "Prepare for interrogation!" and walked away. There wasn't anything to prepare, I only straightened out my jacket and in a moment I was called from the chamber. Immediately at the door I was told to place my hands behind and two powerful chekist-guards, one on each side grabbed me by the shoulders and began leading me through the entire maze of corridors to the investigator. That walk, where a person is led by two chekists at a fast pace amidst the monumental silence of a large building would

appear very strange and even frantic. In front of you some type of flashing controlled lights that evidently signaled the approach of the prisoner under arrest. Not taking notice that at every turn in the corridor one of the guides leaves you and runs 2 to 3 steps ahead and looks to see if the way ahead is clear and then you are led further. Along the route it was necessary to ride on the elevator, a few stories higher, and then again by foot through the corridors. At one location it was necessary to pass through a control point, where a guard at a small table in the center of the corridor wrote down my name and surname, from a photograph held by one of the guides, and the precise time into a large book and asked me to endorse it. On my return from the investigator to the chamber, where the same guard again wrote the precise time of my return (hours and minutes) which I again had to endorse.

Finally we stopped at the doors, probably on the 8th floor, and my guides knocked on the door and led me inside and quickly exited. I ended up in a small brightly lit study. On a massive table arranged for writing, with some papers, behind the table in a wide chair, sat a young handsome male, in dark civilian clothes, about 30 years of age. In the room was one window, on the walls were hanging maps and beyond them portraits of leaders. To the right of the investigator set on the table was a telephone. Before the table was a regular wooden chair. Other than that there was no other furniture in the room.

The investigator asking me about my surname and indicating to the chair, commanded me to be seated. Then he began writing something, and requesting so-called generalities, such as detailed data about my entire life, beginning with my birth to the arrival of the Soviet authority to Lwow and my arrest. Requests were slow, with details, and is not hurried. On occasion he questioned a lot about Lwiw and, particularly, about its international relations. With visible interest he listens about the September battles for Lwiw between the Germans and the Poles, and about the siege of the Germans until the arrival of the Red Army. As for the German air raids on the city, I had to reply to him with the most precise accurateness, with which I illustrated my replies with various statistical data. When I stopped describing a powerful air raid, which caught me at the Lwiw market, where from a blast of energy (after the explosion of bombs near the Jesuit Catholic Church) I suddenly fell to the pavement and bruised my knee, he asked if my knee had healed. I showed him my knee which after a duration of six weeks still had a large red scar.

While I was giving my narration the telephone rang and the investigator took hold of the receiver. I heard as he said: "Tsigov here" - and that was how I learned his surname. (Whether it was authentic, I don't know).

After a short telephone conversation the investigator further questioned me about all sorts of details, tied in with the siege of Lwow and the German air attacks, and I gave lengthy narrations about the then difficult sufferings of the Lwiw population which in those days sacrificed so much wealth and blood. It was clear that all that interested the investigator at that given moment, somewhat more than my affair.

At last, after about three hours, not completing my generalities, Tsigov picked up the receiver and said "Take away the prisoner!" In a moment two guides appeared, grabbed me by the shoulders, as they did previously, and along the same corridors and elevator led me back to the chamber where at the doors one of them lightly searched, in case, I may have taken something from the table of the investigator. This is done upon the return from investigation with every prisoner.

Along the route at one corner in the corridor I experienced one strange event, specifically characteristic for the prison regime at Lubianka, which took care of not only that the prisoner under investigation was in every situation totally isolated from the outer world, but also that he would not have the possibility to meet any other prisoners, and also that he would not be able to see anyone. As it was, when I was being led back to the chamber my guides stopped me at the end of one corridor, one of them looked around the corner, while the second strongly held me back by the shoulders. Seeing that the route was not clear, by the pressing of an unseen button on the wall in front of me, it opened and I could see in the wall in front of me, as if it were, a cupboard. I was quickly pushed into that dark cupboard and the wall closed behind me. I began listening and heard deadened human footsteps which means: someone was being led for investigation along the same corridor. After a moment the wall again opened. I stepped into the corridor,

and without any mishaps I was led further. Later, I experienced that "concealment" in the wall more than once, and it did not have any impression, whatsoever, upon me. Of note also, that those locations for the concealment of prisoners are assigned to various places in the corridors of Lubianka, and they were so cleverly camouflaged that it was impossible to identify its location, and even moreso, the button that you pressed to open and close the wall was invisible.

After that first visit with the investigator Tsigov they began calling me before him during the various periods of the day or night. He further assembled and wrote down my generalities, - and was further curious about circumstances relating to Lwow. I spoke to him of the severe international combat in Lwow, about the revolution in 1918, and about the realization of Ukrainian rights of self-determination in Lwow and throughout the land. I explained to him about the battles at that time for Lwow between the Ukrainians and the Polish, and described to him the (pogrom) terror against the Jews, which was permitted by the Poles after the withdrawal of the Ukrainian military from Lwow on November 22, 1918, witnessed by a massive Jewish tomb in the Uniate cemetery. I also explained about the extensive and bitter fate of the Ukrainian population in Poland, which aspired, in addition, with all its powers to Polonize not only the Ukrainians but also the other nationalities: Byelo (white) Russians, Jews, Germans and Lithuanians, who composed over 40% of the total population in the Polish state.

As for my investigation with Tsigov it did not proceed beyond that, what occurred in Lwow after that he very rarely questioned internationalism and even less political party circumstances in our country, and here probably were the reasons of why he questioned me so thoroughly about those events. During the entire time he raised his voice at me only once. That was once when I would not, without first reading through, endorse one small page of testimony, that he along with me had written. But he quickly restrained himself, and as he hurriedly left, he gave me the page to read at ease, after which I endorsed it.

During my inquiry with Tsigov I can recollect a few interesting moments, of which I will now describe. The first time I was brought before him, I without a haircut and unshaven after 6 weeks must have appeared rather frightful. When I was called "for interrogation" the second time I had been clipped with clippers not only on my head but also on my face. As it turned out, that Tsigov did not recognize me. He observed me for a long time and loudly asked if it was me, or not me. But the most comical scene took place with my third or fourth inquiry with him, when initially I found him in civilian clothing, this time he was in a nice new uniform. He appeared to me then, to be a completely different individual, as a new investigator, and I began to speak to him in Ukrainian, although to that time I always spoke to him in Russian. Tsigov began to laugh loudly, and the situation cleared itself when I told him that the uniform, in my eyes made him a different investigator.

Another moment was: One time Tsigov asked me where in the land were the county organizations of the U.N.D.A.. I replied that, in all the county towns, and upon his request, in which, I began calling them out, beginning in the west with Yaroslaw and Peremyshl. That was too long for him, with impatience, he finally took me to a map of Poland on the wall and asked me to point out those towns on a map. I again began from the west, this time with Sianowka, Sambir, and moved my finger to the north. Then the impatient investigator asked: "Was there a U.N.D.A. county organization in Stanislawow?" When I replied: "Understandably, there was," he wanted to know, who was its leader. I stated that in Stanislawow during the latter periods the county committees of the U.N.D.A. underwent large changes in personnel, its numbers and leadership and I do not know the surname of the newly-chosen leader. Then all at once the impatient Tsigov laid out his cards: "Do you know a lawyer Julian Olesnitsky?" I replied that personally I barely know him, which thoroughly amazed him, and asked me to give him his most important characteristics. After that I tried to reply to Tsigov further queries about Dr. Julian Olesnitsky in a manner that would do him the least harm. Evidently, it was very clear, that Julian Olesnitsky was here in Lubianka, and the investigator expected me, in co-operation with him, to provide various information. This revelation of Julian Olesnitsky at Lubianka, and knowledge of the transport, along with me of Pres. Dr. Kost Lewitsky, Dr. Dmitro Lewitsky and M.P. Wolodimir Tselevich, I was convinced even more of the fact that, residing there then, were many people from the leadership of the U.N.D.A.

Finally, I can recollect how that first investigator in Lubianka one time pulled out from a drawer in a desk, items taken away from me during a search in Lwow, small notes and a collection of Ukrainian charity stamps, of which I had a very good collection. He began looking through the notes and asked for explanations. There wasn't anything interesting in the notes, and my investigator was more interested in the collection of the Ukrainian charity stamps. Tsigov began going through the stamps individually, with me, and wanted to know as much as possible about everyone of them. Thus it came upon me to provide him with a full review of the stamps, such as, the Soldiers Fund of the Ukrainian-Nationalist-Democratic Party from the period before World War I, about the stamps of the Radical Party of the same period, and then the Public School, the Tradesmen's College, the "Ukraina" Sports Society, Boy Scouts, and other organizations. Then at the bottom was a complete row of stamps of the Ukrainian Legion (the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen) from the period of the First World War, as well as stamps with the portraits of Shewchenko, Franko, and Drahomanov, and other Ukrainian leaders; and finally stamps for the period of our occupation by Poland. And what was portrayed on those stamps, one could say, was the complete history of the Western Ukraine, and Tsigov listened to the history of those stamps and the explanations of them with great interest. After a detailed review he gathered them cautiously, as would a stamp collector, all the stamps, sorted them and placed them along with my notes back into the drawer. Unfortunately, upon my release from the prison, that collection of Ukrainian charity stamps was never returned to me. Sorrowfully, is there somewhere in the world a Ukrainian who now has a full collection of Ukrainian charity stamps from the earliest periods to the present day? For that reason my stamp collection, which was left at Lubianka, is an unforgettable loss.

## Christmas Eve at Lubianka

*During Difficult Times Where Does a Person Seek Salvation? - A Conversation on a Religious Theme. - Why did the USSR Abolish Statistics in 1937? - What is the Make-up of the Comsomol Organization? - The Tragedy of one School-Teacher. - Why Were the "Evangelists" on Trial? - Festival Impressions. - On the Day of Jan. 6, 1940. - Christmas Eve in Chamber no. 29.*

The winter of 1939-40 was very severe. In the bitter cold, night and day, prisoners were conveyed to Lubianka. Cold and oppression weighed on the soul. Tormented by all kinds of thoughts. Dark desperation overtook the entire existence of more than one prisoner.

And in chamber no. 29? Our chamber with windows covered with grates and almost fully painted tin on the windows did not even permit not even the slightest ray of sunlight, the same as us, it seemed, we never had practically any rays of hope for liberation. The dreadful isolation, without any news from our native land, or from the world, and all the horrible recollections of fellow-prisoners about the bloody revolts of the recent past took its toll. During those difficult times a person spontaneously seeks some kind of pleasure or assistance and one's thoughts of salvation turn to a Higher, Super-natural Power, from God? To that it is difficult for me to truthfully reply. From my experiences, which I attained at Lubianka, it would appear that even the so-called atheists, even the confirmed ungodly, educated in the spirit of the long-lived propaganda of the Bolshevik party, were in some manner "broken". Because, the feeling of no assistance and probably, the hopelessness of one's situation, they seek - perhaps unclearly, and without sufficient consciousness - some kind of support, some kind of rescue from the end of ends, the same as those people who believe - in God the Creator. This was simple to satisfactorily observe distinctly particularly in those days that preceded the greatest festival in the Christian world - the Birth of the Savior. Appropriately we spoke very seldom in the chamber on purely religious themes. After all it was clear that my companions in distress took a lively interest in those affairs as they questioned me a lot about religion and denominations of religious connections in the Western Ukrainian lands, in Poland, and in other European states. Interesting them particularly was the role and influence in the world of the Apostolic Capital (the Vatican) of which I was able to explain to them much of what they to that time had never known. I clearly expressed that amongst the prisoners in our chamber, there wasn't a shadow of any hatred to Catholic Rome, or to the Head of the Catholic Church, although that hatred was inebriated to them by the Soviet authorities from the first days of bloody rulership.

Even less was spoken of the predicament of the churches in the USSR. I heard only (which for me wasn't after all, any kind of a secret) that all the church organizations and all denominations in the USSR were completely dissolved and the authority will tolerate till some time only a few Orthodox churches in Moscow and 1 or 2 churches in the larger cities. Assembling at those churches on holidays such as Christmas or Easter, are thousands of the faithful from even the depth of the province and in this instigation from Moscow, for the multitude of people beyond those few churches would then stop all movement of even the tramways, as well as on adjoining streets. On those holidays, even the militia becomes helpless. For instance, the cynical hostile attitude of authority towards the Church and its clericals was factual, of which I heard somewhat later from a few fellow prisoners: that in one of the chambers at Lubianka were held for derision three "cult-servants", at one time, an Orthodox priest, a Catholic priest, and a Jewish rabbi, who are continually maltreated.

However, I listened attentively to more of the 1937 census of the population of the USSR, which in spite of desire of the government disclosed that the greatest majority of the population were genuine believers. When the final definitive estimating and the unpleasantness for the ungodly administration was completed the truth came to the top, the government agents, with the aid of the NKVD, counseled themselves with the fine tried and tested means of defense, and shoved aside thousands of statistical administrators from the highest beginning with their rank and sentenced them for "falsification of statistics". After that a higher

authority itself "republished" the confronting members, with which it was necessary, and proclaimed those numbers in print. Then another scandal appeared, and so as not to lose any more prestige with the "supplied figures", two years later, in 1939, the publication of statistics was prohibited. Consequently, instead of announcing the authentic figures, the authority punished innocent civil servants. As it later appeared, that did not solve the matter, new figures appeared, that in the USSR there are still tens of millions of religious people, the publication of statistics was banned entirely. Are such paradoxical circumstances possible in any other country in the world?

Of further interest I also heard of the so-called Comsomol organization (Communist Youth Alliance) which is a follower of the previous German organization "Hitler's Youth." The greatest complaints of the Comsomol were from prisoners whose children belonged to the organization, as the Comsomol educates its members consistently and sternly, in an atheistic spirit. When a Comsomol member attends church and the organization becomes informed, the person is promptly expelled from the organization, and the career of that young person - is ruined. In general, the Comsomol is a wing of the Pioneers (children of a younger age) has two distinct purposes: a thorough preparation of the Soviet youth for military training and struggle against religion and further: to provide the Communist Party with a staff of new promising members. \*)

In conversation with one of the younger prisoners I can still recall his narrations from how his mother, a teacher in a village school, had to, as did other teachers, walk through the village from house to house to obtain "voluntary signatures" from the people to present a written petition to abolish divine services in the local church and convert it to a club. He whispered that quietly only to me, and lived through many years for the pain and suffering of his mother, who herself a believer in God, in desperation beat her head against the door-jamb, and had to go into the village and convince people that "God does not exist, then we do not require a church in the village..."

From a prisoner who came to us from the so-called small internal NKVD prison in Moscow we learned that he spent some time there in a chamber with a group of "Evangelists." They were - he said - common people, but very deep believers (there were 6 altogether). They used to gather in one of their homes and would read and interpret the bible for themselves. That did not continue for long as on the report of one of the neighbors they were all arrested and placed in prison, where they conducted themselves with great dignity. Understandably, as always, that even here the NKVD tried earnestly with all its efforts to "persuade" them that they were gathered not for religious but for political purposes: so speaking, that under the pretense of bible reading they gathered to prepare a conspiracy against the government... There, from the most innocent people in the world were created dangerous, anti-state criminals, and they all, from the narrations of our informant, were sentenced to very severe punishment. Because as they were already arrested it was then necessary to sentence them. Certainly, "the NKVD never make mistakes."

In the midst of continual interrogation and great uncertainty of the further destiny of all of us, the alarming-nervous and impressionable moods, passed our days and nights. Specially at night, those long winter nights. Because very few of the prisoners could sleep soundly at night, and rarely was there a night when someone from the chamber wasn't being called for questioning. Then the entire chamber is obligated to be awakened. Whoever is called "for interrogation", begins trembling, as he is not aware of what he will have to suffer during the period of his inquiry.

\* From official statistics, on March 1, 1949 the Comsomol organization in the USSR had 9,283,289 members which were organized in 437,310 lower cells, and 13 million Pioneers (children).

Thus slowly approached the end of the uncertainty of events of the 1939 year. The Moscowvite prisoners spoke extensively, that the Bolshevik authority every year celebrates January 1st in grandiose manner, how stately decorated and lit fir trees are set in various squares and sites in Moscow, and the noisy and clamorous banquets and entertainment occur there on the night of December 31 to January 1. And quietly whispering into ears, that is all done in such a method to bedim (a little more) and entirely destroy amidst the population the mere thought of the approaching Christmas holidays, celebrated formerly during Czarist periods, with extraordinary feasting. But all that, the prisoners said, was of no help, as the largest majority of the population, arriving home on January 6 after a day of difficult work, always sat down to a traditional, although regular, modest, Christmas Eve supper. That occurs on all the wide extensive spaces of the Soviet Union.

Here, I must recall, of the times, when the saying Sunday, as a day of rest, has for a long time, been abolished in the USSR. In order that the population would not have the possibility of attending church on Sunday and to forget altogether, that that is a festive day, it was proclaimed throughout the state that every fifth day was a day of rest. That was the so-called day off, on which the population were at liberty from work at the institutions, and factories, and the children from school study, etc... Instead, on those days off the people were massively engaged in "volunteer" work, in the repairing of roads and bridges, in the planting of trees, in the construction of public housing, workers clubs, sports grounds, and whatever. In the chamber we diligently counted the days including their numbers, so as not to erase the memory and order of days of the week and months, and also Sundays. And thus we arrived at the 6th day of January, 1940, in other words, to Christmas Eve, in the old fashion.

It was a wonderful day in chamber no. 29. All the prisoners were aware of the approach of the miraculous Christmas Eve, the most memorable day of the year, however, no one hinted not even a word about it. On that day the prisoners spoke very little, and when someone did speak, it was still quieter than normal. And all were surprisingly kind and gracious. Certainly everyone of us had really true thoughts of his closest and to recall in his mind perhaps more than one wonderful Christmas Eve remembrance of where someone (a year ago) sat, whether it was with his dear wife and children, or with his own parents, or with their closest at one table, and shared with them the Heavenly Host, and they all extended each other mutual Christmas wishes. On that day, I sat on a bed in the corner of the chamber, and passing through my mind I sang over and over again, all the famous verses, including the Christmas hymns. I also recalled different Christmas Eves during my life, beginning with my childhood: shared with my parents (they were the finest, never-to-be-forgotten!), and occurring during, and after the First World War on foreign land, and then celebrated again on the fatherland.

When evening arrived, the chamber was ruled by a deathly silence. For a long, long time no one disturbed the festive calmness. The faces of all were gathered together in a dignified manner. It appeared to one, that we could sense that Christmas Eve had arrived, not only beyond the stone walls of our prison, but also amongst us and in our souls. In some the eyes sparkled with tears, but only for a blink, a second, so as no one could see. The reality was that it was not permitted to inform anyone of such emotion. Certainly, in our chamber, the "Almighty" NKVD could have one of their informers, who diligently reports to them not only of conversations, but also the general state of mind amidst the constrained residents of the chamber.

I very much feared for myself that evening. Feared that my nerves would not hold out, that on the mention of my dear ones, who somewhere could be prompted to take a seat to their Christmas Eve supper with tears, that I myself would break out weeping. I was fearful that my heart would break from grief. As it happened, I commenced a conversation with a young Moscowvite prisoner, mentioned in the previous recollections Wolodimir Golubiev, whom I taught German during my free moments. I'm not certain whether he was doing any studying during the general state of mind during that evening, or if there was some other reason, altogether, he repeated again and again, after me, quite diligently and attentively, German words and sentences, not for an hour as it was regularly, but till exhaustion. Our lesson was interrupted immediately after the order to the chamber: "Go to bed!"

In the strange tranquillity I lay down to sleep, as did my companions-in-distress. After a short prayer, recited silently under the covers, I breathed a sigh to the Newlyborn to offer me a helping hand, and fatigued after a long lesson I promptly fell asleep. As that night no one from the chamber was called "for interrogation", we all slept somewhat more peacefully that night than during all the preceding days.

Thus, the Christmas Eve remembrance of January 6, 1940 passed by us at chamber no. 29 at Lubianka.



## **Further Interrogations**

***An Investigation With the Face of a Diplomat - Who Supported the Finances of "Vocation"? What was Demanded by the Galician Investigator? - "You Spoke a lot there - now Speak Here." - Neither Flattering Words nor Threats were of any Assistance. - What the Investigator Yevtyekov Desired to Know? "What was Your Status"?***

After tens of years have passed since my initial investigations at Lubianka, it is difficult for me today, to recreate their entire image, and furthermore, they occurred regularly and there were very many. Therefore, I will transmit here only the most important moments of my investigations that are reflected in my memory.

In one of my earlier chapters I have already written of how thoroughly my first investigator Tsigov queried me of international affairs of our state outside of Lwow. On those queries of his, appropriately ended my investigation with him, and although he questioned me further, after each time I had to reply as broadly as possible of the Ukrainian-Polish struggle and of the disposition of the Jews - the third nationality on our lands under Poland. Noticeably, that the destiny of the Jewish nationalities in Poland, particularly on the western Ukrainian lands specifically interested Tsigov, and on every inquiry I offered him something interesting and unknown of the divisions of Ukrainian-Polish-Jewish affairs on our lands, and painted with peaceable and truthful colors the serious circumstances of the Ukrainians and the Jews - in contradiction to the privileged Polish ruling state. Beyond that my investigation with Tsigov did not move one step beyond that which had occurred in Lwow.

One time - probably two or three weeks after my arrival in Lubianka, I was again called in "for interrogation". This time my guides did not lead me to Tsigov, but to someone different, of a somewhat older age, whom I think was also ranked as an investigator. After that I never saw this investigator again. He was dressed in civilian clothing, very respectable, about 50 or more years of age, had thick gray hair, and the face and manner of a diplomat. Verifying my statistics, and presenting a few questions, in which there was nothing peculiar, he asked me later if I had anything to add to my Lwiw confessions or to withdraw from them, or if I admit to them as they have been documented. To this I replied that while in Lwow I in my comprehension did not put together any evidence, and was not conscious of my wrongdoing.

- How could that be? asked the bewildered investigator.

- I was employed as an editor of the "Vocation", which was an organ of the Publication Co-operative of the same name, whose members were distinguished citizens of about 100 people. Although the "Vocation" stood in the position of the Ukrainian National-Democratic Association it was never a party editorial, eliminating the fact that the same U.N.D.A. was never truthfully a party in the European understanding, but rather embraced in the conforming framework of a broad nationalistic movement. Beyond the "Vocation" the U.N.D.A. had its own newspaper publications, ("Liberty", "National Politics".) Depending on the support of the largest majority of the Publication Co-operative membership and its own readers, the "Vocation" in its later years had the courage to oppose very decisively the politics of the official leadership of the U.N.D.A. which was influential in the so-called normalization course in relations with the Polish government, and that course overpowered the entire lowest status. Myself, I never actively participated in politics, due to the important work in the editorship of the daily, I did not have the physical capabilities.

-Who are you? Who are you? interrupted the investigator. - The "Vocation" as your entire press there - that was the exclusive agent of Polish publications...

- What agents? - I burst out, as I was unable to take conquest. The "Vocation" which after 60 years of its work endured only persecution and confiscation from Polish censorship (and under Austria as well) was an agency newspaper? That agency editorial undergoes 300 publications per year of which 250 are

confiscated by the Polish states censors, who inflicted a burden on it of great intolerable material losses? That agency editorial and its printing shop was laid to waste every fall by Polish students, arriving in Lwow after their holidays and thus commencing their school year? That agency editorial - - -

-You mustn't get nervous! That was all a Polish comedy, carried out to pull the wool over someone's eyes. Child's play. Now you tell me quietly: How many thousand of subsidy did the "Vocation" receive from the government? ... Because the "Vocation" must have had some sort of financial support.

Upon hearing that, in the first moment I was dumfounded. I could expect anything, but not anything so nonsensical, and not in the same likeness.

Thinking it over I replied thus:

-Those who financed the support of the "Vocation" were yourselves, as was the Soviet Union. As the Publication Co-operative of the "Vocation" had a large proper printing shop where not only the "Vocation" was assembled and printed, but also many other Ukrainian editorials and journals, without consideration of its political tendencies. The printing shop of the Publication Co-operative in Lwow was a marketable enterprise, calculated for income, and accepted all types of work which would bring in revenue. And there in the printing shop of the "Vocation" was printed amongst other editorials for some time also a weekly newspaper "Freedom for the People" under the editorship of Kosma Pelekhatovo and Kirylo Walnytsko who were the ancestors of the later Communistic "Village Worker". A public secret in Lwow was that the "Freedom for the People" was financed by the Soviet Consulate. Therefore, through the printing shop of the Publication Co-operative in support of the "Vocation" was your money, and not Polish, which the "Vocation" never required. Therefore, the "Vocation" from the first of its appearance and to its last days stood in a gesture of accompaniment of the Ukrainian peoples struggle against Poland, who endeavored at all costs to Polonize us and our lands...

-Oh, what kind of a struggle did you have against Poland? - replied the investigator, apparently surprised by my reply.

- The "Vocation" was a spokesman of those democratic powers of the Ukrainian population who struggled against the Polish force by legal means. We also had other powers who replied with terrorist actions against Polish violence. Neither the "Vocation", nor the U.N.D.A. who collected in its ranks, principally mature, older, people who speaking sensibly of its membership would have no rhyme nor reason to participate in terrorist activities.

After such a testimony from me the investigator never said anything, probably because a handsome NKVD officer, dressed in a first class uniform, as if fresh from a tailor entered the room. After a moment, the elder investigator left and the younger turned to me and asked who I was and upon hearing my surname began speaking in the Ukrainian language with a distinct Galician accent:

-Oh that is you - Nimchuk! How long we have waited for you, we have heard a lot about you, and at last, have waited for your arrival to be a host to you. Do you realize where you have arrived?

After a moment:

-Back then you wrote and spoke a great deal against us. Now speak to us here and don't you dare distort anything, because the NKVD knows everything and before it nothing can be distorted! We know everything and can locate our enemies everywhere: on the land, on the sea, in the air and even 6 meters underground... Well - speak little brother, don't be so quiet! Speak - you did not pity us back there! Now speak to us here!

With exception that I did not lead any action, and did not speak anything against the Bolsheviks, as all my life I had worked only in the sector of the anti-Polish struggle, he swiftly interrupted me:

-Don't weave me any foolish mess! What type of anti-Polish sector struggle? We know very well of your anti-Polish struggle! And again he changed to the formal "you" - you tell us who the U.N.D.A. sent from itself to us as a mediator, and who arrived on a similar mission from Kiev or Kharkhov to Lwow?

Upon hearing that I was astonished, but I attempted not to give even the slightest indication that his questioning had any impression on me. I replied as much as possible in a very calm manner that insofar as practical politics I stood on the sidelines, and did not participate in any conspiratorial activities, I could not believe at all that the U.N.D.A. sent anyone to the Soviet Ukraine. Of anything similar I never heard anything at any time, of any Ukrainians from Kiev, from Khardov, or from any other city traveling to Lwow for any business with the U.N.D.A..

After that the young Galician NKVD began to wrangle me demanding with most measures the surnames of those - as he said - were sent by the U.N.D.A. to the Soviet Ukraine, and of those who traveled from there to Lwow. Of no help at all were my confirmations that nothing of the sort ever happened, and in vain he insisted that I give up the names of those people. Again and again he demanded from me one - surname of those people, and made use of ambiguous tactics: once he begged, promising that the Soviet authority was capable of evaluating such favors, and immediately he threatened. Threatened with me everything, amongst which was that I would be sent to the Lefortova prison where I could sing to a different tune. (Lefortova prison - is a well known Moscow prison, known throughout the USSR where prisoners are compelled to torture to confession. He threatened me in the basement of Lubianka, saying:

-Perhaps you are not aware of your situation, where you are. There have been others here, unlike you, who finally admitted to everything. And you an irate enemy remain silent! When you are thrown into the basement - you will tell everything.

Finally, not realizing anything, he advised me that I should give some thought and try to remember by all means the surnames of those go-betweens and to present them at the earliest time, when I am recalled. Into the room again entered the elder investigator with the appearance of a diplomat who had left me for two or three turns with my Galician NKVD who tormented me with his questioning and expected the impossible. Then the young Galician asked:

-Tell me, you are probably pleased, that you met here in Lubianka, one of your fellow countrymen? - indicating to himself.

I replied with an involuntary action, that yes, I was pleased that I could speak in Ukrainian, which he accepted in a rather distracted horselike burst of laughter - and immediately changed to the Russian language. He further for about a half an hour, or perhaps longer jabbered to me in the Russian language all of his learned memorized NKVD phraseology: that the NKVD knows everything, that nothing can be concealed from it, that it is the most supreme, that I must admit to everything that I know, particularly in providing the surnames of the intermediaries between the U.N.D.A. and the Soviet Ukraine.

It was well beyond midnight when I was led back to the chamber. Although I did not experience any type of physical torture those interrogations and discussions with my investigator- countryman affected my nerves so, that I was unable to sleep till morning.

Those interrogations with my countryman, whose surname I was unable to learn, I had a few more. After each time he tormented me and exhausted my nerves to the limit, and the results were one and the same: I did not present his expected surnames, even though my investigator became exhausted, it appears, all his eloquent speech in flattery of his gracious words and promises - were from the one and only origin threats - from the other side. And I did not surrender any of those surnames for any type of personal heroism, but truthfully, even today, I do not know if any of those intermediary persons even existed.

After that I was left in peace for some time and was called for interrogation only after a few week period. This time I was brought to an investigator of smaller stature, whose name was Yevtyekov. He hung onto me so that I would give him a characteristic of the last mayor of the city of Lwow, Dr. Ostrowsky, of his stay in the Lwiw prison on Sapiha-Longtsky Street (in the same chamber as Pres. Dr. Kost Lewitsky). I remembered an earlier chapter of that reminder. It was very clear that Dr. Ostrowsky was here. When I stated that personally I did not know Dr. Ostrowsky at all, Yevtyekov could not contain his surprise:

-How could it be that the editor of the "Vocation" did not know the President of the Lwow City? Never could I believe that! And no one else will believe you. When I explained that there wasn't anything in common between us, and that we stood far apart from each other, because Ostrowsky belonged to the right wing of the Polish upper classes in Lwow, and we the "Vocation" struggled with that upper class, and led consistent political opposition against the Polish authorities, Yevtyekov replied with deep penetrating thought:

-How could you stand so far away from yourself? Is it that far in Lwow from no. 10 on the square (where in the Adult Education building the Editorial office of the "Vocation" was located) to the City Hall in the square? How many steps distance separated you? I declared that the matter was not in steps but in nationalistic-political area, that we belonged to two separate, enemies of our world. To this Yevtyekov replied:

-Don't twist things around, but admit to me here immediately, what you know of Mayor Ostrowsky. And place it here on this paper (which he shoved in my direction) on what themes he wrote in your "Vocation" and eventually what pseudonym he generally used.

Those words thoroughly disarmed me. I wanted to laugh into the eyes of the investigator, but had to control myself. I only stated calmly, that such things are not done among us where a Pole would write in a Ukrainian newspaper, even under a pseudonym or a Ukrainian in a Polish newspaper. Furthermore President Ostrowsky would be unable to write in the "Vocation" where the Ukrainians and Poles lived as if on a volcano. And how could as an enemy of the "Vocation" write to it in the Polish administration of the city of Lwow.

I don't know whether I with my arguments convinced Yevtyekov. He was generally satisfied not with the characteristics of Dr. Ostrowsky as a mayor, but the politically Polish chauvinistic administration of Lwow against the Ukrainian and Jewish populations of the city which was, one could pleasantly say, always hostile. Those politics had its eye on only one aim: to consistently lead the Polonization of the un-Polish populations and the building with magisterial funds such Polish buildings as Polish Churches, shelters, asylums, public housing, animal shelters, etc... Characteristically those politically hostile Polish administrations of Lwow were specifically against the Ukrainians, as I was called, along with others, to at that time renowned declaration by a leader of the Polish Socialist Hnat Dashinski, who asserted that all Polish cultural and civilized attainments in Lwow as throughout our land must be attributed by the money of the Ukrainian taxpayers.

I was once more, for the last time interrogated by Tsigov, with whom I was surprised to meet an unknown investigator who did not get very involved in our discussion. Tsigov asked me about some other insignificant affair and suddenly turned to me with the question:

-Now tell me, what was your status? (In other words, some paragraph in criminal law, the basis on which I was arrested and held for investigation). When I replied: I don't know, he asked me the question somewhat differently:

-What status were you given in Lwow? Likely, you must have been given some sort of status in Lwow (handed over)?

To that I replied that during my 4-week stay in the prison in Lwow I was never given any kind of status and therefore, without any status I was sent to Moscow. While in Moscow no status, that is, any kind of substantial accusations, till now, I had not been given. Upon hearing this declaration both investigators rolled their eyes. I could see distinct astonishment on their faces. - It was apparent that such coincidences were very rare in Lubianka.

Later, I heard similar questioning's a few times more from following investigators. In their eyes I could always read utter surprise that they have a prisoner without any charges. Such a prisoner without charges I remained to the end of my stay in Lubianka.

## **In Chamber no. 14**

***The Lives of Workers in a Moscow Bakery named Stalin. - Is it Possible to Carry on a Hunger Strike in Soviet Prisons? - Something about Abkhazians and their Fate. - Russophiles are never Extinct even in Prisons. - For a few Meters of Living Space! - A Meeting with a Trotskyite. - Finally an Informed Ukrainian!***

At the end of March 1940 I was transferred from Chamber no. 29 to Chamber no. 14, where I was in residence till July 1st of that year. In that chamber I got acquainted with a few interesting prisoners of whom I will now say a few words.

The largest impression on my mind was an extremely tall blonde, Golushev Ivan Fyodorovich, a young worker from a large Moscow bakery named Stalin from which the Red Army on the Finnish front received bread mixed with glass. This Golushev came from a village near Moscow, was married, completed his military service, and successfully lived through the Finnish campaign. There were 600 workers in the mentioned bakery living (also married with families) in old barracks beside the bakery which operated on three shifts as the operation worked on a full 24 hours per day. The conditions of life for the workers in the overfilled barracks were exhausting and dreadful: everyone of them had the right to a bed, unless otherwise arranged, that were laid out alongside the walls on two levels, for only 8 hours, no more. After the lapse of 8 hours the worker had to get up, make room for the next that had just returned from his work, after the next 8 hours the same situation was repeated, endlessly. Understandably, during the circumstances of the times, there was no thought of preservation of at least the most primitive sanitary-hygienic principles, therefore, it was no wonder, that in every barracks the evaporation of the human bodies, the rotting of different food droppings, and all types of filth was all so intermixed that for anyone entering the barracks from the street, he walked not into the filthiest bathhouse in the world, nor into some type of Czarist plague, he had only one desire, to get away from this place as soon as possible.

Of that, which the residents of the barracks suffered the most were varieties of insects, particularly bedbugs at night, of which there is no reason for mention. And that is how 600 workers were tormented. And that - as it was previously said, in those barracks survived many families, who tried earnestly to occupy for itself at least a small corner, which to them it always appeared, that was their entire life, where even the most intimate scenes were open to the eyes of other co-inhabitants. And there they suffered - and how! - public morals, blossoming forth shamelessly, and known licentiousness. And that was of no concern to the management of the bakery nor the powers of authority, and no one reacted about it, and the same conditions dragged on for years.

An interesting phenomenon. When Golushev spoke in the chamber about the life and circumstances in those barracks, which was an integral part of the bakery named Stalin and dependent on its management, that did not have the slightest impression on the other prisoners. On my questions as to how calmly they perceived that, I was told that in other factories and plants the workers live still worse, and often two families with numbers of children lived in miserable, tight and damp rooms, or in mud-huts or dugouts. There, for what reason, in the bakery named Stalin in which the workers were, as it is said, privileged.

That bakery worker Golushev took upon himself the act of turning aside the entire societies attention for only one purpose: he was the only prisoner during my entire stay at Lubianka who tried to hasten the investigation of his case with a hunger strike. Strictly speaking, not a hunger strike but a refusal of food, because such a way of protecting a prisoner in a "state of workers and peasants", as a hunger strike, are closely observed by counter-revolutionary agents. Therefore, when Golushev was unable to strike a bargain in the investigation with the power of attorney, to whom he had pleaded many times, he began his hunger strike, with the refusal of food, to all members of the prison administration who all wanted to either break his attitude, or to extract from him a declaration, that he began a hunger strike, he only clearly

replied: I do not condone a hunger strike, I will restrain from food, until the time when I am no longer called to the power of attorney. And there Golushev did not accept food for 4 full days and nights, during which he was not called to the power of attorney. The entire chamber observed with great interest of what the end result would be. At the end of the fifth day, after all suggestions, and persuasions of the members of the prison administration and the call for the aid of the medical assistant had failed, the weakened Golushev was taken from the chamber on a stretcher, and after about a half-hour he was returned on a stretcher. It was indicated that he underwent a very cunningly skillful feeding procedure. After Golushev had somewhat recuperated he explained the procedure to us in great detail, from which he tried to defend himself, as he could, requesting only - admission to the power of attorney. Of no aid was any kind of resistance: he was bound and then very skillfully fed. All this occurred during these circumstances, that he, not being granted an investigation with the power of attorney, did not think of demonstrating his full innocence and non-participation in the matter of glass in the bread from its bakery, and did not prolong his hunger strike and discouraged everyone from using such means in defense of his rights in Lubianka.

A second interesting prisoner who resided a short time in Lubianka chamber no. 14 was a youthful, all of 15 year old, handsome Lakoba from Georgia, a fighter from the mountain tribes of Abkhazia. His father was the chief of all Abkhazians, of whom there were approximately 250,000 and he paid a great reward in the reinforcement of the Soviet authority in Georgia. For one who assisted the red powers in humbling the proud Abkhazians the father of the young Lakoba was built memorials during his lifetime and in his country he held the highest respect. He became acquainted with Beria who was regularly entertained in their home. Upon the arrival of the period of the bloody turmoil Lakoba was arrested and was soon executed by shooting as a "monstrous nationalist" and a "malicious enemy of the state". Understandably his monuments were leveled to the ground. The loyal Abkhazians began gathering at the grave of Lakoba, from all over, as if, in forgiveness. Then the Soviet authorities dug out his corpse and so nimbly removed it that even the most attentive Abkhasian eye could not see where it was dismembered. At the same time the entire Lakoba family was arrested: his wife - doctor, and two children, our handsome one and his younger dear little sister. Initially they remained in Georgia, and with the consent of the children they were transported across the Black Sea to the Ukraine, where the young Lakoba was placed in a children's nursery in the town of Litena near Vinnytsa, and the sister also in the same vicinity. The young Abkhasian stayed for over a year and learned some Ukrainian, recited to me, amongst others Franko's "Stonecutters". He spoke to me of the beautiful orchards in the area, and about how he with other adolescents from the nursery stole into a locked Roman Catholic church in Litena, crawling up the stairs to the beams like a cat, and in the choir he tried to play the organ. What happened to his mother, the youth was unable to say. The last time he saw her was still in a prison in Georgia when she was led out of the chamber into a prison courtyard, but he was unable to give her any indication of himself. And as to the number of times that youth mentioned his mother, every time he had to tighten his lips to prevent himself from crying.

Lakoba arrived at our chamber sometime near the end of the month of April or in May. He was transported directly from Liteno. Why he was taken from the children's nursery from that particular district all the way to Moscow he was unable to explain. One could only guess that Lakoba may have said something incautious about the fortune of his father or his mother, and that delivered the adolescent boy directly to Lubianka. Besides the youth was severely starved and ate all the burnt bread crusts, which could not be chewed by some of the toothless prisoners, and licked all the dishes, in which - it could be truthfully said - there wasn't anything left. After a few weeks the young Lakoba was taken away from us. As to where and for what reason, not one of us knows.

As I write about the underage Abkhasians, it is not out of question to mention here the entire group of minors who at about the same time or only shortly before sat in one of the chambers in Lubianka, as was related to us by one of the recently arrived prisoners. This was in all the Moscow ten copies per year editorial committee wall newspapers, and were the finest pupils in the class, amongst them was the son of a highly placed Soviet dignitary. They placed these young boys there because they had inserted a star on the title page of the Russian publication. Not a 5 pointed Russian star but a 6 pointed Jewish (Zionist) star. The illusion was very transparent. Although from all appearances it was a very rare occurrence, it was loudly known throughout Moscow the moment the NKVD arrested all the lads participating in the affair

and had them placed in Lubianka. The most noise on the occasion was only caused by the school mates of the arrested who in a low voice, from ear to ear spread the report all over - to the great displeasure of the NKVD, who were unable to hush it up. Along with the attention of the noise surrounding this event, as also the probable attention of the participation in it by a son of one of the Bolshevik leaders of that time, the case was closed for the arrested lads, when in consideration of Soviet circumstance the sentence was very light: they probably all received about 6 months, which was served in the investigative prison. As to what later happened to those young boys, our informant was unable to tell us.

For well over two years, interred in our chamber was Owsyanikov, an elderly man of unhealthy facial appearance, who at the time of his arrest was a lieutenant-colonel of the militia in Moscow. He sat there with the charge of "connections with international bourgeoisie" because upon his person they had found some kind of a letter from out of the country, and wanted to prescribe with the article (paragraph of penal law code) against which he persistently defended himself. Owsyanikov spoke very little with us, and it was evident that he confessed to the "old first prayers (in Mass)" and in the description of the Ukrainian population used the term "Little Russians", and during my entire stay in Lubianka he never heard from the prisoners, nor from the investigators. In another instance he had the courage to loudly speak out that during the rule of the Czars the Ukrainians did not experience any type of persecution, to which I replied with an entire lecture, inspiring many convincing arguments against his thesis. The entire chamber then acknowledged that my proof "unraveled Owsyanikov" after which he sat disheartened and discouraged and did not enter into any further discussions with me.

Another type of prisoner was a Russified Pole Tsibulski, who was forwarded to Lubianka a second time. The first time he was sentenced to a few years compulsory labor near the distant Vladivostok. After serving his years he returned to Moscow, he was surprised in his residence - one room, a grievously sick mother, and a younger brother who had married in the meantime. In awhile the mother died, and the brother, and moreso, the sister-in-law began to insist that he immediately vacate the dwelling which they desired only for themselves. In Moscow, at the time, obtaining rooms was possible only with huge amounts of money, and Tsibulski became helpless. And behold one day he was arrested by the NKVD and again transported him to Lubianka, this time on suspicions of ties with Japan, therefore as a "Japanese spy". Tsibulski with great pain confirmed to us that this denunciation was made to the NKVD - not without knowledge of his brother - by his sister-in-law, out of hatred toward him as an intruder, and desired at all costs to rid him out of the dwelling. Similar stories, where the struggle for a room, began as one from the pages of misfortune, existed in Moscow - as was related by prisoners - were many. So that for a few meters of dwelling space, the closest family banished Tsibulski again into the clutches of the NKVD, from which he had only recently had time to be released.

A similar domicile was also related to us by prisoner Nohilewski, who was a Moscow inhabitant for many years and fell into our chamber somewhat later. Apparently, he was a speculator (probably trading in gold) and also a pimp of young girls, of which one would not accept him. When a search of Nohilewski revealed a few pieces gold the investigation against him proceeded in the direction, that he was a spy of some neighboring country, which paid him for his information with gold. In espionage for the benefit for foreign states all the speculators in the Soviet Union are gradually matured, and are not wanted in any other country. The same Nohilewski called himself a Ukrainian, however his Ukrainianism was once defined: "I am a Ukrainian, but if some will say that I am not Russian I will beat him in the mouth." With that type the prisoners did not have much to say, as in the chamber sat primarily the intellectuals. After a week or two Nohilewski was taken away from us.

Staying in our chamber for a short time was a Jew, Tayis Michaelo Yurievich who was transported to Lubianka from another Moscow prison (probably from Taganka) where he was held in solitude. That Tayis was at one time, as were many others of the same faith, in the Foreign Command military mission (in Germany, and other locations) and from that period wore a nice suit of clothes, excellent linens, shoes, etc... During the change of "authority" he was called to Moscow and arrested as a Trotskyite where he was detained for a long period of isolation. There he must have endured all types of survival, of which he spoke very little. He only constantly grieved, that he was made conspicuous by accusations of all possible



sins and crimes against the Soviet authority. From his conversation, it appeared that he would consider himself fortunate to escape a death sentence.

Finally I recall a competent Ukrainian Waskewich, a genuine, huge and powerful man, who was transported to Moscow from somewhere in the Polar regions, far to the north of Murmansk. There he was employed with the Agricultural Department of the Russian Academy of Arts and Sciences, which had in those regions experimental stations, and as he explained, cultivated and grew special breeds of wheat, cucumbers, as well as tomatoes. In those regions, after a few years were built two large cities, and the life that Waskewich led was tolerable, as he had his own farm household and also raised a pig. While there he came under the eye of the NKVD and under the perception of counter-revolutionary actions or perhaps "belonging to the Petlura Government in the Ukraine during the years 1918-1920." He was sentenced to Lubianka where he was interrogated about his and his brothers activities during the previous 20 or more years. Regretfully, I was not with Waskewich for long, therefore, I was unable to become more detailed of his affair.

Other prisoners who at that time stayed with me in chamber no. 14, were not noted with any exception, although their surnames, such as Rukinow, Lipin, Pavlov, Yakovlev, are preserved in my memory to the present day.

## **From Internationalism to Nationalism and Imperialism**

*Not only Anti-Semitism, but also a Hostile Attitude to all non-Russian Nationalistic Movements. - The Blossoming of Russian Nationalism and Great State Imperialism. - "And for what Purpose is it Necessary for Them to Have all those Different Languages?" - "A Ukrainian School is Not Necessary!" - Pushkin is Unsurpassed as the Genius of the World. - What did not Please the Russian Chauvinists? - A few Words of the Fate of the Jews in the USSR. - What is the Desire of the Majority of Russian Citizens?*

In previous chapters I have mentioned on several occasions the fact that under the Soviet authority anti-Semitism was not entirely halted amongst the wide sectors of population of the USSR. Of this I had many opportunities to convince myself seeing the unfavorable general attitudes of prisoners towards Jewish prisoners. This was also attested by the arrest of an entire group of young scholars from Moscow, who on a publication of a wall gazette placed a star on the title page, not the 5-pointed Russian star, but the 6-pointed Jewish star. Of this I was most clearly ascertained, above all, upon returning from Lubianka to Lwow in May, 1941. I met with some of my previous Jewish acquaintances and I heard from them that the Jews in Lwow, although at that period of time, consisted of a third of the cities population, after long endeavors, settled for all of 3 schools for their children, at a time when Ukrainian and Polish schools in the city numbered in several tens: as to newspapers in the Jewish language (and similar jargons) they were only received for a period of two or three months prior to the withdrawal of the Red Army from Lwow at the end of June, 1941. Thus, the existence of anti-Semitism amongst the Russian masses and the Soviet upper classes was evident. That anti-Semitism did not weaken till our days and no one dared to deny it.

Yet alongside the anti-Semitism in Stalin's kingdom, there is a blossoming forth, with no less vigor, also, an open repugnance, and an obvious hatred to all national un-Russian movements which are not concealed by the representatives of the dominant Russian nation, as the intellectuals, and the regular workers or laborers on a collective farm. After long months of my stay at Lubianka, I spoke with prisoners and heard many interesting reports on the theme from investigators, at which times I always anticipated or felt from them some type of respect for the large Ukrainian population, in comparison with the other numerous smaller nations of the USSR and agreed with many of my wise cohorts, or was an apparent observation or contempt, or perhaps an inconsiderateness and repugnance.

Russian nationalism and great state imperialism frequently over inflated itself so that after a long period of time it became very clear that amidst such universal dominant tendencies and dispositions there were absolutely no possibilities for any sort of just aspirations for any proper cultural appreciation for another, non-Russian people. From the famous internationalism of which initially the Russian revolutionary Bolshevik agitators so strongly mystified their own and other people, there was truthfully speaking nothing left. After my completed stay in Lubianka I only once heard from one investigator such strange words "Do not forget, that we are also internationalists." And after saying the word "also" he embarrassed himself and lowered his eyes, because he felt, that he had spoken - an evident falsehood.

When the reckless and ungirded Russian nationalism revealed itself amongst the prisoners, I could bring forth many instances. In remembrance of some of their attempts (it is a surprise, for even those that were never in the Ukraine and did not know our language) to make sarcastic remarks of the Ukrainian language, such as "a self-made pauper" or other vulgarities. Those endeavors I broke in the budding stages, by which those types that came to me with same or other obvious provocative offenses or requests, received the same regular dismissal, that at another time they would prefer not to discuss those themes.

Of the many times I attentively listened to conversations at Lubianka, the conclusions led to the degenerate question: For what purpose is it necessary for the people to require all the different languages of the

different nationalities in the Soviet Union? And where will it all lead them? And for what reason to teach the children in schools all the different languages, when none of them equals neither the abundance of words and forms, nor the beauty or grandeur, nor the talented writers and literature productions of the great language of the great Russian nation?

This was spoken as if it were of the language of smaller nations, but everyone of the speakers without contradiction had the Ukrainian language on his mind.

In general, all the languages of the nations of the Soviet Union, with the exception of the one Russian language, were, in the minds of those poor wretches, somewhat inferior, poorer, more weakly developed, and - unnecessary. The future had before it only the one Russian language. All the others must suffer for some time, and more greatly in their domestic provisions.

When I at one time asked a prisoner who originated in the city of Kazan the capital of the Tartar Republic. what language is taught in the Tartar University he replied straight forward without any digression: What else could be taught? Visibly it was Russian. Obviously the Tartar language was taught there as a subject. Then he added: You probably think that in the Ukraine it is so different? There and in all the other national republics, all subjects in the higher schools are taught in the Russian language, as only the full knowledge and mastery of the Russian language in all its different shades of perception can secure graduates in the higher schools the possibility of finding the necessary employment in his trade in the entire vastness of the Soviet Union - from the Baltic and Black Seas to Vladivostok. And only with that language will they feel secure everywhere. He completed his phrase which I had often and previously heard before:

-For what reason do they require all those different languages? It will be fully realized when they learn to read and write in their native tongue during their elementary school!

The same was expressed by the prisoner Zelyenkov, who was a director of the gigantic State Farm Economy in Siberia, which consisted with the union of many larger and smaller private farm properties and extended for entire tens of kilometers. He advised me at one time, that on the state farm under his supervision and direction were employed hundreds of people from the Ukraine who often sang beautiful Ukrainian songs. When I asked him if those people had Ukrainian schools for their children, he replied, as it was evident, with profound persuasion:

-What is the need for such a school in Siberia, where they are in the center of a sea of Russian people. Of what aid would the Ukrainian language there be for them?

When I recalled that at one time there were Ukrainian schools for the Ukrainian population in Siberia in his reply I heard:

-No, that existed during the time of the cursed nationalist Skripnyk, who desired to destroy and separate all of Russia!

Similar opinions "cursed nationalist Skripnyk" who desired, it was said, to destroy all of Russia. I also heard from the lips of other fellow-prisoners, although there is general knowledge of the subject as to how much the same Skripnyk did for the destruction of Ukrainian nationalistic powers during the earlier years of revolution and the merits he gave out for the consolidation of the Soviet authority in the Ukraine.

Of that, that practically all Muscovites were obsessed with great state nationalism there is not much to say. That was possible to not only to be experience, but to be observed very clearly during various occasions. Along with this they were particularly hard people, deprived of any feeling, and often even human compassion who became accustomed to thinking in entirely different categories as far as comfort, the value of money, and also human life, than the people in the West. To me it appeared that they were born imperialists. One Polish prisoner once said to me, that to 1918 he was a Russian serf: You know now I don't recognize those people and I can't understand them. Where have they become divided from those

beautiful human attributes, which they previously possessed? God, God, what that Bolshevism has accomplished with them, in such a relatively short time! Later, in meetings with the Germans, our people often spoke in the same manner about the Germans whom they also did not recognize, observing only brutality in human resemblance among them...

When I now read all types of revelations about what was discovered or accomplished in Russia, multitudes of inventions in the very long ago, before the times, when they first appeared in the West, I am not very surprised: in Lubianka I heard much from the prisoners, as well as from the investigators, about the "greatness of the Russian genius" about the "unconquerable Russian army", and about the genius of Russian poets and writers etc... In chambers in which I stayed, I happened to hear wide discussions, also from the lips of university professors who explained:

-Pushkin is the unsurpassed genius of the world, and only after him come Shakespeare, Dante, Getty... My proofs which contradicted such statements was not pleasing to some of the Russian chauvinists. Any support for me came regularly from the prisoners of the nationalistic minorities, such as Georgians, Tartars, and also the Jews.

Such evidence did not entirely please the Russian patriots, because the Russian element grows continually, for hundreds of years, at the cost of all those nationalities who fell, at various times, under the rule of Russia, and what is the finest proof is the pressure of that element on them and the accompaniment of the systematic Russification of the "foreigners". I remember very well how it hurt some of those chauvinists when during the time of one of the discussions, I strongly confirmed the fundamentals of the statistical data of the newest census of the population of the USSR, that the Russians had grown from the first Czarist census of the population (1897), in relation to the Ukrainians by approximately 2/3 or 3/4, that is, that in 1897 for every Ukrainian, there devolved two Russians, now there existed three Russians. When they heard from me that there was a total of over 45 million Ukrainian people living in the world, they answered me directly, that is in "itself a nationalistic statistic", prepared for propaganda purposes. It was difficult to convince them that those statistics were established from upright and certain data, and also made by upright and impartial scholars.

During the occasions of my investigations in Lwow I perceived that it made some sort of an impression on my investigators when I told them that during my period as a student I translated the compositions of Ivan Rukawishnikov and Vsevolod Garchina and other Russian authors, into the Ukrainian language and published them in Ukrainian newspapers. That circumstance was also taken advantage of while in Moscow, that is to prove that I did not have any hatred towards the Russian nation or its literature. I am presenting that fact which is very typical of the mentality of the investigators of the NKVD which is the main power and support of the communist system in the USSR, which steps forward into the wide world so regularly, under the disguise of "internationalism."

I began this chapter with the Jews and it happens to end with the Jews. Just recently (near the end of 1949) I read in a news information service of the American correspondent Joseph Newman of the New York Herald-Tribune, that in the autumn of 1948 an unlawful public demonstration occurred in Moscow. On Jewish New Year, Jews gathered before a Moscow synagogue to welcome the Members of Parliament for the state of Israel under the accompaniment of Mrs. Golda Maier. She along with other members of the Israeli mission were amazed at the enormous masses of Jews who arrived for their welcome. Women and men in distracted weeping implored: We have waited all our lives for you. To Israel! Tomorrow we shall travel to Jerusalem... With great difficulty the managers guide the Members to the interior of the synagogue. After the divine service new rules and orders appeared on the streets. Hundreds of Jews accompanied the Israeli delegation to the "Metropole" Hotel where they were detained.

A few weeks later, during the Jewish days of Atonement (Yom Kippur) other rules and manifestations again appeared. After that began the repressions, as the rulers in the Kremlin began to view them as unloyal against the USSR an uprightly high treason.

First of all was the arrest of a group of Jews who were the organizers of those "demonstrations", followed by further arrests "in larger proportions". Along with that was the closure of two printing shops with Jewish branches in Moscow, which produced Jewish newspapers and literature creations in the Jewish language. Liquidated also were offices of the anti-fascist Jewish committee, because he explained it accomplished its exercises during the course of the war, but it can not be tolerated today, because it is a center which aided the Jews with contacts in foreign countries. Afterwards was the isolation of all the Russian Jews from diplomatic representation of the state of Israel, which after all, was done many years previously, with all the diplomatic representatives in Moscow. Finally, throughout the USSR territory began the attacks on the press, Jewish authors, the scholarly, musicians, managers of theaters, etc., with the excuse that they were "foreign cosmopolitan bastards", along with which - their greatest characteristic - their previous Jewish surnames were placed beside their acceptable Russian surname, in order that they would be yet further compromised. By these methods the governments propaganda progressed, which further strengthened such peculiar Russian anti-Jewish enthusiasm and sentiment.

Here it is necessary to recall that the Jewish people, in general, went through some very sad experiences, due to the fact that they conceived a hatred towards Bolshevism and refused to be placed under its authority. That was displayed in the finest way possible during the months of June, July, August, and September in the year 1941.

At that time there were one hundred thousand Jews that remained not only on Western Ukrainian lands, but also on lands beyond the Zbruch River (which forms the border between Ternopil and Khmelnytsky provinces) awaiting the Germans, although they knew what a "friend" Hitler was, and also his regime. However, they always thought that they would enjoy a better life, than they had under the Soviet authority. In miscalculation, none of them were left in the world, as the Germans executed them all, one by one.

Finally, I will say a few words about my conversation with a prisoner Jew who had fled from Birobidjan\* and also ended up at Lubianka. Birobidjan - was as if, a Jewish state within the USSR or rather, and independent country, which was declared in the depths of Siberia in 1924. It was a very swampy region separated by thousands of kilometers from larger cultural centers, with a population of 100 thousand souls of which the Jews made up a total of 25%. Livelihood conditions in Birobidjan were very difficult, therefore, the Jews who at the beginning had believed in their own republic Birobidjan and gathered together, over time began massive escapes for they did not want to labor 12 hours or more per day in factories or on collective farms. In retaliation the authorities performed one "purge" after another by which all Jewish originals in the "Birobidjan state" were executed or sentenced to long years of compulsory labor in concentration camps, as "dangerous Trotskyites". At the end of World War II the Soviet authorities sent many Jews from their European territories to Birobidjan - as was described in the Soviet press - mainly from the Ukraine. There is no doubt that all those Jews, if they only could would with pleasure leave their own "Jewish state" and would give much so that they could leave not only Birobidjan, but above all, beyond the boundaries of the Soviet Union. However, such desires are held by not only the Jews under Russian authority. During the opportunity of one discussion with my fellow-prisoners during my first months of my imprisonment, I heard a suggestion which at that time directly confounded me: That if the Soviet Union - they said - would open up its borders, that in a few days the majority of its population would leave its territory... Such a sweet paradise is pulsated by all the populations under the sun of Stalin's constitutions!

\* Birobidjan, a district of the USSR on the NE border of Manchuria; 14,205 square miles; also called Jewish Autonomous Region of the Far East.

### **In Chamber no. 13**

***Engineer-Inventor Myasoyedov. - A Prisoner who Endorsed all Aspects of the Soviet Regime. - Previous Fireman-Engineer. - What did the Polish army require from Dr. Tabidze? - What was the Narration of Editor of the "Leningrad Truth"? - How a Village lad Michealo Babenchuk arrived to Lubianka. - What News did he Bring from Beyond the Borders? Something of how Workers Live in Proletarian State, and in a Bourgeoisie State.***

Precisely on July 1st, 1940 I received an order from the guard on duty to gather all my belongings. When I came out of chamber no. 14 with them, I was immediately pushed into the nearby chamber no. 13. I did not stay in that chamber too long, perhaps 2 1/2 months, and during that time I again became acquainted with a few interesting people about whom I will relate more broadly in this chapter of memories.

Of those prisoners the most noticeable of all was the engineer-inventor Myasoyedov, who, although being entirely Russified, had a sense of his belonging to the Mordva nation. (Mordva, Mordvinians are an eastern-Finnish race) mentioned in our chronicles. From the 1926 statistics there were a total of 1,340,000 Mordvinians residing in the central Volga region. They split into a number of clans of which the Karatais were Tartarized and the Geruchans were Russianized. Myasoyedov was under investigation for many long months, for what reasons, no one in our chamber knew. One time, upon returning from interrogation he informed us that he was to be given consent, while in prison, to write a scientific study. Indeed, on the following day they began calling him at indicated hours to the "box", where he was given ink and paper and wrote out his work. Prior to returning to the chamber he had to return all his written notes and empty pages, for which he was completely accountable, after that he was thoroughly searched, so that as it often happens, he did not take any pieces of white paper to the chamber with him.

Another prisoner who I recalled, was previously mentioned by me in an earlier chapter, the director of a large state farm in Siberia, Zyelenkov. He was an unfriendly person, and most interesting of all he was blindly devoted to the regime. Of all the prisoners with whom I had the occasion to meet in the various chambers in Lubianka, he was probably the most unique, as he endeavored to apologize for everything against the Soviet regime, that came from the lips of the hopeless exiles. I remember very well, when at one time there was a conversation in the chamber, as to how many people were at that time, in concentration camps in the USSR and the prisoners gave number of 8 to 12 million convicts, at which Zyelenkov stubbornly contended that the numbers of convicted sentenced to compulsory labor in concentration camps would, at the highest, not exceed 3 million.

Of particular attention to me was the prisoner Popov Wasyl Ivanovich, previously a fireman, and now an engineer, who completed his studies in the so-called Workers Faculty. Formerly, he joyfully sailed on a ship as a fireman, on the Volga. At times he perceived that he wasn't successful, but in general he was satisfied. However, he came under the attention of the members of the party and was sent for further training at the Workers Faculty, and upon completion Popov became an engineer. Popov was not able to rejoice for long in his new position as an engineer. He was tagged with a charge of some type of "sabotage" or something similar, and not considering his reliable proletarian origins, he was set down in Lubianka. One more piece of evidence, that neither "proletarian origins", nor the loyal and obedient work for the regime is not any safeguard from all the inconceivable courses of the NKVD.

While in chamber no. 13 I also met doctor-lieutenant-colonel of the Polish army Tabidze, who after the disintegration of Poland in September, 1939 fell into the arms of the Red Army somewhere in Volhymia (province north of Lwiw province, in Western Ukraine) along with his very young son, a lieutenant, or a second lieutenant in the Polish army. In the beginning they were both in one of the Soviet prisons for Polish officers, and were taken from there, separated from his son, and the father of Tabidze was brought to Lubianka. The reason was probably that Tabidze was by birth a native of Georgia, and was married in 1918 to a Polish lady, settled in Poland, accepted Polish citizenship, and became a military doctor. As

could be expected, Tabidze was interrogated less about circumstances in the Polish army, however, moreso about Georgian emigration in Poland and its organizations, which greatly interested the NKVD.

In that chamber I also became acquainted with a young tall Georgian Mochevoriani, who passionately loved his nation, in addition all Georgians, and displayed not only high nationalistic consciousness, and also nationalistic pride. Why he was exiled into Lubianka no one in the chamber knew.

Still the most interesting prisoner in chamber no. 13 was the former editor of the "Leningrad Truth" Levitt, a highly intelligent Jew, who remained with us for only a few weeks, after which he was taken somewhere else. He was brought to us from a Leningrad prison where he had already sat for many long months. Although he was still quite young, (he was then 37 years of age) he appeared to be at least 50, moreso, because he wore a very long beard. About the great shocking example of Zyelenkov, he explained to us all very sincerely and daringly, various tart, souring and racy histories of Soviet life, apart from that, which happened in Leningrad following the assassination of Kirov in 1934. He did not conceal the fact, that following each and every "cleansing" there were in Leningrad, they arrested thousands of innocent people who were transported from there to the far east or to the north. That was how the Soviet authority took advantage of that mysterious murder to straighten out, not only its own adversaries, but also the so-called "potential enemies", and in their numbers, also those that previously served the lords (former lackeys, servants, etc...). The fact of the arrests in Leningrad of several hundred thousand people following the assassination of Kirov during a several month period was later confirmed by other prisoners.

That Levitt, who had such a sharp tongue and courage to speak of internal circumstances in the USSR, in particular, the methods of investigating by the NKVD, did not entirely turn back his attention to the original motto spreading then throughout the USSR: The tongue - is the greatest enemy a person has - and silence - the first condition of life in general. It appears that cost him dearly, as amongst prisoners in chamber no. 13, he had not only the highest prisoner seniority (he sat under investigation for over 30 months) who returned from most interrogations with buttons torn off his clothes and covered with black and blue bruises on his legs... Those were the methods investigators put into practice against him in Lubianka - a characteristic example! - some investigative Jew, whom Levitt feared and begrudged in front of us, on a number of occasions.

What charges the investigators places against him we did not know. It appeared, as connections with Trotskyites, but it wouldn't be appropriate to truthfully say anything as Levitt who enjoyed talking wasn't always accountable for his words, was silent, as if exorcised about his affair.

For me personally, the most pleasant of all prisoners in chamber no. 13 was a village youth Michaelo Babenchuk, son of Stefan who arrived here after various mishaps, immediately after his liberation from lands under German occupation. As Babenchuk explained, he originated from a Ukrainian-Polish village in Chelm which was located 40 kilometers from the border of that time, east of the Buh River, which separated the lands, which were recently divided by the two occupants: Germany and Russia. The parents of Babenchuk were amongst the poorest in the village: altogether, they had 1 morg (about 1 acre) of land and a house, and was compelled to seek work as a day laborer for wealthier land owners. Such poor men as he, were plentiful in the village. Then when the Germans began gathering more village youths and girls from their newly occupied territories in the East, for labor in Germany, came the turn of the village in which Babenchuk resided. The boys did not have any desire to travel to work for the Germans, moreso, there were fantastic rumors from the Polish times of the great possibilities of work and wages in the Soviet Union, and now such rumors had become stronger. Then the young boys agreed and resolved to send the most intelligent of them, Michealo Babenchuk, in search of more information in the East beyond the Buh River. There he would thoroughly observe and confirm the labor and wage possibilities and would then in a few weeks return back to the village. As to the possibilities - he indicated - they would be expressed by his fellow countrymen, then for work to the Soviet Union, of which there would be several tens.

Not anticipating any sense of evil Babenchuk decided to start out on the road. He easily reached the border, and crossed the Buh River in broad daylight without any difficulty. Only as he reached the

opposite side, appearing before him, as if from under the ground were the border NKVD (frontier guards) and upon being seized he was led to their command. While there amongst jostling and beating he was minutely investigated and upon not finding anything suspicious, he was handed into other arms - to a prison in a nearby small town. There Babenchuk firstly met with tens of Jewish prisoners who tried to depart from the Soviet Union to the other side of the Buh, under the Germans, and fell into the arms of the Bolshevik border guards. In that prison Babenchuk was brought under severe inquiry, as they tried to gain from him, by all means, that he was sent by the Germans to make inquiries, in other words, as a German spy. By those methods he was not only severely questioned, and taken advantage of by using different contrived fine fear tactics, and also cut away from different parts of his clothing and tore off the soles and heels from his shoes, in case he may have hidden there some important notes. While Babenchuk explained all this he cried very bitterly. Unable to obtain anything from Babenchuk, after a few days he was sent from the prison, already overfilled with Jewish fugitives fleeing from the "paradise", further into the depths of the country. Until Babenchuk's arrival in Moscow, he was for two weeks along the route in a large prison in a larger county town, where the majority of prisoners consisted of Jews, who were also trying to escape to Hitler. From there they transported Babenchuk, as a dangerous spy all the distance to Lubianka in Moscow, where he was put through an extreme round of rituals, and evidently, they were soon convinced this village youth cannot be any kind of a spy, as he had no interest in that type of vocation. In the Soviet Union the smallest sentence for illegally crossing the border is 3 years in a concentration camp, and there are no exceptions from those rules, and Babenchuk was transported to a central camp in the far North for at least 3 years (if not longer). Of that I am certain, as I had a chance to discuss with him, that whichever one of us is released from Lubianka sooner, he would at the earliest opportunity, give information to an indicated address, that the one whom I met in Moscow, is "alive and well." It is with great pleasure to confirm, that this village youth kept his promise, and from one of the camps beyond Murmansk forwarded news regarding me to my indicated address, of which I learned only after my release from Lubianka.

Other prisoners from Lubianka and myself were thankful for the meeting with M. Babenchuk, and some news from the world. He was not familiar with the military-strategy situations of that time, but was capable of telling us something, that for us, completely isolated from the rest of the world, was news. From that, which we heard from him, we were able to form our own thoughts of how the Germans were conducting themselves with the population of Chelm. We heard about the authorization for the Ukrainian society, of school and churches by which the Ukrainian citizens of the Chelm region began to benefit, in comparison with the massive scale of Bolshevik arrests. Besides, Babenchuk who called himself a Pole (he came, as he said, from a mixed family: father - was a Pole, mother and sister - were Ukrainian) explained to me of more than one interesting event of that time in Galicia. He heard for example, of the Bolshevik massive arrests of not only the Ukrainian intelligence, but also the former members of the Luhovian Organization, and competent villagers and workers. He also related that while in Chelm they were informed of when the Bolsheviks removed a tall church statue from St. George's church and had taken it outside, when quickly gathered around them, as he explained, were a thousand people, mostly women, who raised such an outcry, that the NKVD yielded and returned the statue to its proper location. The Russified prisoners who heard Babenchuk's story immediately stated, that was not possible. They confirmed, that even with such a large number of people gathering would be of no advantage, because the NKVD in those situations, never gives up. Upon my return from Lubianka I confirmed in conversations with people, that such an event as was described to us by Babenchuk, never occurred in any area in Lwow.

M. Babenchuk's stay in chamber no. 13 also brought us a few other interesting moments. For example a few of the prisoners tried to feel sorry for him, a hired laborer, who was forced to work for foreign profiteers for only his food and one zloty (Polish gold coin) per day, as he himself explained. It appeared that for Babenchuk, it was necessary to let his motives rest. When in further conversation it was revealed, that the clothing that Babenchuk was wearing, and which was cut under the NKVD upon examination, cost him 18 Polish zlotys, the shoes 5 zlotys, the shirt 1 zloty, and the hat 1 zloty, which amounted to in one month's labor for the "profiteer" (not including Sundays and holidays). Babenchuk was not only very well fed (as that was in the interests of the employer) and was able to earn enough to clothe himself from his toes to his head! Upon hearing this, the prisoners began calculating the wages of the Soviet workers,



including their own when they still had their freedom, and finally had to admit that to clothe oneself (with discretion) as Babenchuk was dressed, the scant Russian workers would have to work, continually, undernourished, for at least one and one-half years.... It was to such a conclusion that the prisoners of our chamber reached after discussions with this simple and common village youth, who soothed everyone with his sincerity and love of the truth. It is not necessary to say how much that gave them for thought and to the comparisons of workers pay and the living circumstance, in general, in both neighboring states: the so-called peasant-workers and the capitalist-bourgeoisie.

## **My New Investigators**

*Russian Zaitsev and Ukrainian Kudria. - About Lwiv, as a Nationalistic Volcano, and the Ukrainian Women's Alliance. - Who was the Most Distinguished Ukrainian in Lwow? - Thoughts of the Possibility of Freedom. - What Passed Through My Mind. - What I Sensed from Investigator Kudria, and What was my General State of Mind at That Time? - One Story - a Soviet Agitation. - Day after Days, Week after Weeks, Pass by Again...*

Sometime near the end of February or in the beginning of March, 1940 I was called out "for interrogation" and was brought before new investigators. There were two: the elder in years and rank, very fat - and blonde, the younger, somewhat thin - dark complexioned. After sometime I learned that the elder - was Zaitsev, a Russian, and the younger - was Kudria, a Ukrainian.

Immediately upon entry the elder asked me to explain something about Lwiv, as a nationalistic volcano, and its political circumstances during the past years, I began explaining very generally of how the ruling, skillful Polish majority lorded it over in Lwow, and how such power was perceived by the Ukrainians and the Jews. My explanations were illustrated with figures on the school system, cultural-enlightenment and agricultural life, during which I referred to a phrase of previous Socialist M.P. Dashinsky that the entire Polish culture in the East, particularly in Eastern Galicia is built with the money of Ukrainian tax-payers. My explanation, as it was evident, interested Zaitsev, as he walking around the room, interrupted it a few times and raised a few additional queries, and demanded clarification. The second investigator, the younger, sat at some distance from the table, was silent all the time, as if he was writing something. After a long, long time he raised his head and asked in the purely Ukrainian language, with a distinct Galician accent:

-Do you know the leader of the Ukrainian Women's Alliance? Was the Alliance a political organization?

I replied that I knew many leaders of the Ukrainian Alliance, personally, and began explaining, how the Polish authority, observing the strong development and extension of labor in the Ukrainian Women's Alliance throughout the country, began an attack on that women's organization, the leaders Miss Milenia Rudnitsky, and Miss Halia Sheparovich, and finally, dissolved it. However, the leadership of the Women's Alliance, foreseeing its dissolution, beforehand prepared a constitution for a new women's organization, as a political party, under the name of "Friends of Princess Olga", and thankfully, it may be said, that after one night, in the place of the dissolved branch and circle the Ukrainian Women's Alliance, summoned to life throughout the entire land were the Friends of Princess Olga. Those friends were found everywhere during the arrival of the Red Army on our lands during the last half of September in 1939.

After that the younger investigator began bringing in various detailed questions in the Ukrainian language, which the elder probably wasn't interested in, as after some time he left the room and left us alone together for a longer time. The younger investigator asked me about the number of Lwiv Ukrainian journalists that had Leftist political party tendencies, which clearly he must have known. Upon recollection of Wolodimir Temnitsko, a former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the U.N.R. he asked me about his brother Milko (Omelian). When he heard that he had died a long time ago in Odessa, he was surprised and accepted the news with visible sadness. He further queried me about the Ivan Franko Society of authors and journalists in Lwow and about its notable members. Most of all he questioned me about the two young Ukrainian leaders from Bohorodchan (county in Ivano-Frankivsk province), from which I drew a conclusion, that he himself originated in that district. (From deceased journalists Wolodimir Dzisa and Stepan Fedak, who had when they were arrested, amongst others, the same investigator, in far distant prisons, and got their freedom, which I had heard in Lwow during the German times, that Kudria was a pureblooded poltavian (Poltava, a province in Eastern Ukraine).

The elder investigator returned to the room and the questioning was changed to the Russian language. That elder asked me who was the most distinguished and the most popular amongst Ukrainians in Lwow.

Without hesitation I replied, Metropolitan Andrei Sheptitsky. On the query, why, I clarified that the Metropolitan, in the eyes of all the Ukrainian population on the Western Ukrainian lands - that he is a great patron of literature and the arts, a Czarist prisoner - martyr, a strong defender of not only the church and religion as well as the nationalistic rights. He had the courage to step out with decisive protest against the Polish administration for the massive destruction, by his written order, of the Orthodox churches in Chelm in 1938. On the query of other distinguished Ukrainians in Lwow I also named President Kost Lewitsky, Dr. Marian Panchyshyn, Prof. Kirilo Studinsky, Prof. Wasył Simovich and a few others.

I was released back to the chamber, and told that I would be recalled on the following day. On that day I was again investigated by the same two new investigators, during which the elder left the room a few times leaving me with the younger. In conversation with him I had a feeling that my case was not that serious, and furthermore, that on the previous day neither, of the other investigators had any substantial charges against me. In the various inquiries with both of them, I guessed that they had both arrived in Moscow directly from Lwow where they certainly gathered various data about me and other Lwiw-Ukrainians who were then interred in Lubianka. When questioned by Zaitsev as to which associations I belonged, I replied, that amongst other associations, for many years I was a member of the Lwiw Boyans (Ukrainian singers in ancient times), he stated very plainly, that he very clearly remembered me during the appearances of the choir in Lwow. Therefore, it was apparent, that both Kudria, as well as Zaitsev, members of the NKVD, stayed in Lwow during Polish times and gathered their required information in the city.

When I was released in the chamber I began to give a lot of thought to the possibilities of me being released, or (may it please God) that so-called exile to freedom. To that, I did not have any kind of firm reasons, however, from the inquiries on those two days I instinctively sensed that the two aforementioned investigators did not have any certain facts against me, and that they traveled from Lwow to Moscow, with some significant objectives contrary to the interests of other Lwowvians, as well as my own. As one drowning grasps a stalk, so did I from a few hints from my new investigators, from whom I never observed any animosity towards me, thinking to myself, that my release may be near. This I fondled in my mind, along with that both the investigators interrogated me severely, and themselves spoke of Professor Kirilo Studnitsky and Dr. Marian Panchyshyn, my good acquaintances from Lwow (the first of which was my professor in Lwow University) who were now members (deputies) in the High Command of the USSR who I surmised were intervening on my behalf.

As to what transpires in those circumstances, began going through my mind of some of my anti-Bolshevik appearances in Lwow, and gave some serious thought, as to how I could defend from those events when my new investigators could recall those appearances for me. Previously my disputations with the sovietized editor of "Labor" (later "Power") Roman Skazinsky (executed by shooting in 1934) were loud, when he stepped out against my negative evaluations, in the pages of "Vocation", of the film "Taras Shevchenko", and the endeavors of the renowned consultant Lapchinsky, were exhibited not only in Lwow, but also throughout the country at the end of the 1920's. Then I wrote with good understanding and truthfulness, that Shevchenko was played in the film by artist Buchma, came out not as a national poet, prophet, and genius, but as some sort of rebellious-fanatic, which deeply hurt the sovietized Lwowvians, and the soviet counselors in particular. Not having any positive reasons, Skazinsky wrote in the "Labor" probably after an understanding with the soviet counselors, that my evaluation of that film was unfair and one-sided, because, as he said, I was pronounced by the hateful Soviet Union as a "poor Petluran writer". Later, when he was invited to the "superabundant development" of Ukrainian Literary Productions of the USSR during the recent years, I in a very thorough reply brought forward the basis and statistics of the Ukrainian Literary Chamber in Kharkov and the "superabundant development" in a true light, and in such a convincing manner, by which Skazinsky was silenced, and did not have any further reply. I remember when at that time all the establishment work in the USSR came out in the Russian language, whereas, all types of rubbish and Communist propaganda brochures were in the Ukrainian language. Here, I recall that the aforementioned Roman Skazinsky was sent to the Soviet Ukraine at approximately the same time as the Krushelnitsky family, or possibly somewhat earlier, to - as it was said - assist in the construction of a Ukrainian-Soviet state. After the murder of Kirov, Skazinsky and two sons of Anton Krushelnitsky along with 34 other Ukrainian writers and leaders were executed (by shooting) in Kiev. The elder Anton

Krushelnitsky and the notable Galician socialist theoretician Julian Bachinsky were then sentenced to 10 years each, after which all track of them was lost. I began to consider that if the Bolsheviks executed such blind and devoted Russophiles as Skazinsky and Ivan and Taras Krushelnitsky, what could I expect, when I smashed Skazinski to pieces in the "Vocation" for his idolatrous admiration of the "Ukrainian Soviet creativity" in the fields of moving pictures, literature, and education?!

I also remember the evening departure from Lwow of the writer and schoolmaster Anton Krushelnitsky, who formerly taught me the Ukrainian language in the Stanislawiw (now Ivano-Frankivsk) gymnasium, as I met him I tried desperately to persuade him from leaving. He would not permit himself to be convinced, he said, that it was too late. Then he traveled to the death of himself, his wife, and his children. Also, come to mind were a few of my anti-Bolshevik articles in the "Vocation", apart from the articles of the 60 year old native Serhi Yefremov who signed his full name and surname, who was recently sentenced in the court action of the Ukrainian Liberation Association, which caused anxiety in my mind. I was only counting on God's help, as to what happened a long time ago, as in the last years I never wrote any articles in the "Vocation" (these were done by private reporters and correspondents). So perhaps, I thought, my investigators would not have to rummage through the old annuals of the "Vocation" and those articles would not be revealed.

Amidst such thoughts, and all sorts of combinations passed the days after days, as for me, in spite of all expectations, my investigators never called me out again. Luckily, in the chamber we had books from the prison library, and after the New Year we were able to obtain checkers and domino games, and otherwise, we would have perhaps gone crazy.

Until about two months later I was again called "for interrogation" and I was again brought before the same investigators. I remember, as at that time I had already contacted scurvy and I was being treated with medication. The investigators did not put forth any substantial questions, other than those of my connections with the St. Barbara's Parish Church in Vienna priest, Dr. Myron Hornikewich and a few other Viennese-Ukrainians. It was not difficult to convince them, that these were a few of my former acquaintances, from the times of my studies in Vienna after the first World War - and nothing else.

On the second day I was again called in to them. With the approval of my fellow-prisoners I began to try, if with the assistance of my investigators, particularly Kudria, it would be possible to have my ration of bread increased. When Zaitsev left me alone with Kudria for some time, I turned to him with my request, if he could assist me in obtaining a 150-200 gram daily bread ration increase, as due to the lack of nourishment I had contacted scurvy, and had already lost 2 teeth. Upon hearing my request, Kudria looked at me, apparently with a sympathetic eye and replied:

-Well, that is not so easy, and that is not our matter. As before you, probably in a very short time will be something of greater importance, than increasing the ration of bread in prison...

Upon hearing that, I understood that the investigator was unable to more clearly explain, that the transaction of my release - is on the right road.

Today it is very difficult for me to describe my mental state of mind upon my return from the investigators back to the chamber.

I thought to myself, that I would be recalled if not in the first few days, for certain in the first few weeks and upon being informed of my release, would be permitted to return to Lwow. It was with those thoughts that I awakened in the morning, lived the entire day, and with them went to sleep. For a few days I didn't have a desire to even read a book.

Thus again passed the days after days, and weeks after weeks, and not once was I recalled to my new investigators, or to any others. At last, one day after the passing of about two months I was once more brought before Zaitsev and Kudria. Zaitsev asked me in Russian "How do you feel?", asked some minor

question, and left after a few moments. Kudria then took a small booklet out of a drawer of the table, which - it became evident was a collection of narratives, as if it were, of the life of Taras Shevchenko. He stopped at one of them and began reading loudly. It was a narration of how Shevchenko during his life a very poor Jew, and how he became acquainted with him and a few others, a relationship that continued to the end of his life. That was a very common Bolshevik propaganda which their Soviet authors write in large quantities. Reading that "narration" Kudria glanced at me curiously and asked whether I was pleased with it. I endured his glance and said in a calm and convincing voice,  
-That is all very interesting and well written. As to such an event in Shevchenko's life, till now I have never read anywhere.

Kudria again glanced at me curiously and released me back into the chamber, without saying a word. I never saw Kudria, nor Zaitsev again during my lifetime.

## During the Long, Gray Months

*When Absolutely Nothing Happens in the Chamber.- What did the Bukovinian-Investigator Desire from Me? What I Wrote in my "Statements" and the Procedures in Writing Them. - A Land Where There are no Pardons for Penalties. - "Rather the Sentence of One Hundred Innocents Than the Liberation of One Guilty". - What an Amount of Responsibilities. - Inhumane Penalties for "Damages". - A Few Words about the Yezhovist Horrors. - The Prosperity of All from Moldavia to Finland.*

And again began the long, gray, and unhappy days similar to one another as two drops of water. In our chamber there was absolutely nothing happening and there had been no world news for many long months: none of the chamber residents had left, and no one arrived to take his place, and how could we obtain any kind of news?

It was very rarely, on an average of once every six weeks that I was called for "interrogation", before my ignorant investigators, who after putting forth a few questions, which in general, did not have any connections with my case and would again release me back to the chamber. One of those investigators was one Bukovinian (Bukovina, a former province of Southern Ukraine, now named Chernivtsi) whom I recognized by his distinct accent, who had a thin, pale face. He asked me if I knew a shoemaker Zarvada from Bohdaniwka, (a suburb of Lwow). When I denied it he annoyingly said:

-That is certain, you only knew the mighty lords: Kost Lewitsky, Dmitro Lewitsky, Tselevich, and others of like manner. To that I remarked that those mentioned I knew very well, but that I had never gone to Bohdaniwka, and don't know anyone from there.

In addition, every ten days I wrote the so-called "statements". Sometime near the end of December 1939 in time when our chamber was on a so-called "leave", posted on the door of our chamber were orders that were strict obligations and rights given to the prisoners under investigation. There were not many of those rights there, which probably appeared in the written statements - so thought the Moscowvite prisoners, - but a result that, the USSR had then occupied some new lands, where prisoners, particularly political, had somewhat better rights, than the prisoners of the USSR. So as to display some measure of culture in the USSR the prison authorities unexpectedly hung out the aforementioned orders, and soon for a change in the chamber, we were given dominoes, as well as checkers. Amongst those rights was the rule that a prisoner could put forward a "statement" (petition) in writing, to the power of attorney, to the attorney-general, to the deputy of the Peoples Commissariat, to the Minister of the Peoples Commissariat, to the head of the Supreme Court of the USSR and even to the Head of State of the National Republic, and behold, after that my investigators Zaitsev and Kudria, did not reappear, and my case remained stuck at a dead end, when I again began writing the same "statements."

The procedure of writing them was such: Once every 10 days one could apply to the NKVD guard on duty, that you desired to write a "statement". After some time you were called out, led to the "box" and given some ink, a pen and a small piece of white paper, (the size of a postcard), after which you were locked in for 10 - 15 minutes. When you completed writing your own "statement" the guard on duty again arrived, collected your written paper and writing supplies, and another duty guard led you back to the chamber. And I, with the majority of fellow prisoners wrote those "statements" regularly, every ten days, endeavoring to give on that small section of paper, as many contents as possible to prove ones innocence. They and I wrote in turns from the lowest to the highest resorts, and when we had gone through all the dignitaries, counted out in order, we again began from the lowest and then to the highest. Whether those "statements" of ours ever reached the addresses, particularly to the highest, the prisoners doubted, and probably not without reason.

As to my "statements", my opinion is that they were never sent anywhere from Lubianka, although I wrote them to all the possible dignitaries. I wrote all those "statements" in harmony with the thought in mind of

my defense from the first days of my arrest; that I born then and there, an editor of the Ukrainian national daily "Vocation" in Lwow, arrested on 26, IX, 1939, have been sitting for so many months under investigation, and without any charges (paragraphs), and do not feel any guilt against the Soviet Union, because all my activity occurred in Lwow, which belonged to Poland, and was directed entirely against the Lords of Poland: therefore, I beg you to quickly review my case, and put forth a possible and speedy resolution. I believe I must have written about 30 of those "statements". Every time they were always handed to my investigators, and many times I heard them say:

-What are you always writing and writing?

To that I gave the same reply as I wrote in my "statements": that I don't feel guilty, as I lived outside USSR territory, and when I was politically active, it was against Poland and not against the USSR. Along with that, with some of the investigators I daringly and frankly said: Poland, by measure in USSR terms, had the right to arrest me 100 times, which it did not do. And you, who came to our country as "liberators" from the Polish lords slavery, by the fourth day, deprived me of my freedom and have been holding me during these many long months, without any fault of my own... Upon hearing that, some of them remained silent, while others tried to reply something in the manner:

-Wait a while. Be patient. No one in the Soviet Union is arrested without any reason. And when you, as you make certain, are innocent, no harm will be done towards you.

Such routine statements from some of the investigators did not pacify me at all, and furthermore, as far as my case was concerned, they would rather forget and say nothing, hoping that eventually it would go away.

During these long extended months there were many opportunities for acquaintance and discussion with the fellow-prisoners, of the ways of life of the Soviet people and populations and to often hear, as they say - what is beyond peoples' comprehension. Then I heard much about, that in the USSR there are no real pardons for penalties, which as is well known, are guaranteed in all corresponding laws in countries throughout the world. Therefore, in the USSR people are punished very severely for something that wasn't within the rules 25 or 30 years ago. Also of no significance is where you committed a crime or offense against the laws of the USSR: on its territory, or in any other country in the world. With that it was clear to me why in countries occupied by the Red Army, the NKVD immediately arrest tens and hundreds of thousands of people of different categories (officers, policemen, judges and attorneys, members of political parties, and in general, all leading citizens), who from the view of Soviet laws are "enemies of the state" and unfortunate "counter revolutionaries" and they must be destroyed. In those cases - they said - there exists particular secret instructions from the Minister of Internal Affairs, and the Chief of the NKVD Beria, who can quote 19 varieties of such villainy, which the NKVD must incapacitate as quickly as possible, throughout all areas to which the Soviet authority extends. (That secret instruction was initially discussed by Dr. Stepan Baran as a separate article, inserted in the "Christian Path" (publication no. 19, 1939) which went out during my editorship in Mittenwald, Germany).

Furthermore, I heard much about the terrifying principle of the Bolshevik judge who practiced, it was said: Rather sentence one hundred innocents than the liberation of one guilty. In connection with that principle I also heard this jest: In the vicinity of the border fleeing with all his might was an overly frightened rabbit. Not far from the border he met a horse who asked him - Why are you so over-frightened and where are you fleeing? To which the rabbit replied: - How is it, have you not heard of the new order, for the shoeing of all camels? To which the horse said: - Well, why are you fleeing? You are not a camel. Then the rabbit replied: You are just joking, farewell! And when you are caught and then shod, you can the explain that you are not a camel.

Most of what I heard at Lubianka was the so-called amount of responsibility of the members of the family, when from its midst someone is arrested. All the prisoners who stayed with me in the various chambers, worried not only about the progress of investigation of their cases, but moreso about the fate of their own families, left in freedom. More than one of those thoughts, particularly, about wives and children,

interfered with their sleep. The responsibilities of family members extended not into two, but naturally into three directions: 1) when one of its members belonged to a category of the repressed, in other words, he was arrested; 2) when one of the family members was located beyond the borders, and the authorities were made aware of it; 3) when the same Soviet authority sent someone beyond the border, regardless of its objective: as its own political, trade, or military representative, or a regular employee, or a highly trained espionage agent. All those people leaving the families or one of their dearest behind, where they lived, were by their conduct responsible for their fate. Hundreds of thousands of such families who had a repressed member or someone closer beyond the borders suffered with the loss of their freedom, and probably their lives.

And how much did I hear then, of how ruthlessly the Soviet authority punishes for "damages" (catastrophic cases)! They were a long way away from what I knew of such cases in foreign countries. For example if a disaster occurred on a railroad line or a shipping catastrophe on the Dnieper, Volga, or other rivers, the NKVD would discover a regulation of a type of organized "sabotage" and with every one of those opportunities would arrest tens of people that were involved as well as people that were not implicated in the situation. The guilty of the "damages" had to be discovered! By the renowned methods of the investigators, methods that ended by always convicting a large or smaller number of the guilty to long years of penal servitude, and frequently, with death sentences. Individually discussed by the prisoners was one recent railroad catastrophe after which the courts of justice sentenced to death a few members of the railroad personnel as "wicked saboteurs", and their executions were performed. After a short time it appeared, with great sadness, that those people did not have any connections with the catastrophe and that their executions were totally unjustified. In such misfortunes, probably the families of the executed innocents were exposed to further repression. Of the many similar histories, where many innocent people perished, there are no "statistical facts."

In general, it must be said that the ruthless regime, always associated with terrorism, and the entire satanical system reigned with everlasting power throughout all vast expanses of the Soviet Union and all the populations of the USSR continue to suffer under its club. Truthfully: from Moldavia all the way to Finland, everyone prospers... However, in discussions with prisoners of different nationalistic and social backgrounds I developed a judgment that on a scale the NKVD applies the least amount of terror in Moscow itself. That is, because located there are all the foreign embassies and representatives of foreign states, for whom there is impeded contact with the population, but would nevertheless learn something of the scale of administrations repressions in Moscow and would present a responsible report to their own states. In other cases - far from Moscow, particularly in countries with foreign populations: there the NKVD by its own activities, does not have any restraint, no controls, is not accountable for anything, and "labors" for the continuity of terror for its' population.

During those long months I also heard of all the horrors against the *Yezhovists*, who became ferocious during the years of 1936 to 1938 throughout the vast spaces of the USSR that cost a few million human victims. One prisoner who arrived in our chamber had earlier served in another chamber in Lubianka and was there with a former *Yezhovist* secretary: that secretary explained that on the basis of his records in two years of regulating, there were 75 -80, 000 *Yezhovists* executed (shot by firing squads) and close to 3 million people exiled to prisons and concentration camps. Those horrible crimes against all nationalities of the USSR finally reached the end of ends by the liquidation of the last surviving *Yezhovist*. The individual responsible for that hell on earth of villainous crimes under Stalin's direction did not lose a hair from his head. Is it possible for anything at all, approximately similar, to occur in any other country in the world?

During all those times that I sat in Lubianka, the damned memories of the *Yezhovists* were remembered only as a fanatic obsession. I perceived from investigators on a number of occasions that there were 3 million spies and diversionists, who they said, the mighty NKVD army must liquidate on USSR territories. How is that, and what type of authority, that must liquidate 3 million spies and diversionists? And who of normal minded people would believe that there are 3 million spies and diversionists in the USSR territory, not the true and proper unfortunate citizens, who for some reason, didn't make themselves pleasing to the organs of the NKVD and therefore, arrived their liquidation? And yet another case, what power does the NKVD



represent, and how many million members, armed to the teeth with all types of armaments, does it have, when it must struggle with millions of its own citizens who earnestly tried with what ever means to display their dissatisfaction, or generally did not impress the organs of authority.

In the conversations, at that time, with the prisoners we often examined in detail the question of how many prisoners were sitting in prisons and concentration camps of the USSR and how many were in other European states. The truth came out that even in Poland during its most difficult years, there were at the highest 100,000 individuals in prison, that is, 0.3% of the total population, whereas in the USSR it was a permanent 10 - 12% and millions more sentenced people that is 6 - 8 % of the population. When the unfortunate exiles hear from me, that, for example in Sweden, on the prisons in the larger cities, very frequently and often a white flag is flown - an indication that there at that time there is not one prisoner, and that surprised them to no end. Only then did they enlighten themselves fully of their own tragic fate, and also the fate of all people who are forced to live under the horrible yoke of the red tyrants in the Kremlin.

How many times has it occurred to hear and read the phrases: "Power and violence - are bourgeois influences." When are the influences of the bourgeois powerful and violent, which is the same as calling those influences to practice opposition of all their subject populations, for over 30 years, by the over-filled, unpunished Soviet authority?

## **In An Atmosphere of Psychological Pressure and Despair**

*While under investigation, a prisoner is deprived of all contact with the world. - Why all the spittoon covers were removed from the prison chambers? - An atmosphere of true superstition and fright prior to ... dreaming. A narrative of the unsuccessful overthrow of Marshall Tukhachewsky and its tragic conclusion. - Why the execution of all-Ukrainian head Petrowsky? - The thoughts of America in the USSR. - More about the horrors of spies and diversionists. - The reasons for executions of stamp collectors and Canadian Ukrainian Communists. - Correspondence in the USSR and in other nations in the world. - "A good spy is never executed."*

When arrested one is deprived of all protection and support and he feels terribly lonesome and helpless. He knows that no one will replace him, however, moreso: he is denounced, as an "enemy of the state", even by his closest, parents, wife, and children. It is a common atmosphere that is endured by all arrested in the USSR. With the addition of psychological pressures which are shared by prisoners influenced by an entire system of interrogation, one can imagine the difficulty with which they suffer from the torment of long months of investigation.

I also was in a similar atmosphere, particularly when I could see that in the short term there was no opportunity for freedom, nor were there any hopes of expulsion into exile. I was then possessed by such skepticism, that I began to pessimistically observe my situation. Sitting under investigation for well over 10 months I felt as if I was left all alone. It appeared to me as if everyone had forgotten about me. Added to that torment was the longing for ones closest family, and for ones native land. I then decided to take advantage of the moment of the arrival of someone from the higher levels of management for the inspection control of our chamber which took place practically every month by one of the representatives of the prison directors, and to request to permit me to write to my closest family only one short sentence: that I am alive and well. That opportunity soon arrived when the checks of chambers were carried out by the Lubyanka director Mironov. I stepped out of line and on a written form laid out my request. Mironov briefly replied: "That cannot be done, while a prisoner is under investigation. After I'll turn this matter over to your investigator." But, I did not have "my" investigator for a long time...

In addition during difficult days we had one rare but rather characteristic occurrence, which brought us all many sad thoughts. One evening, in the usually quiet deathlike silence of the corridors, we heard some loud bustling activity, running and someone's, either scream or moaning. After a moment everything was quiet, and after some time we heard that our guards began opening one chamber after another in the proximity of our chamber and then closing them. In the quiet, we awaited as to what would happen next. In awhile came the turn of our chamber which was entered by the guard on duty who took the metal cover from the spittoon which stood in the corner of the chamber, right near the door, without saying a word - as was appropriate with them all - and walked quietly out of the chamber, locking it with a key. For us all it was very clear. One of the prisoners in a chamber near ours took opportunity of a moment of the guards inattention, unobservable, to the other prisoners, removed the metal spittoon cover and with it probably cut the blood vessels in his wrists. That recalled all the activity and running in the corridors which we had heard in our chamber. After that the prison authorities requested the guards to remove all the hazardous covers from the spittoons in the chambers, in order that the same historical events would not be repeated in other chambers.

In such an atmosphere, in which we lived those many long months, created original superstitions and fright amongst the prisoners prior to ... some dreams. The prisoners also hastily grasped onto every rumor, brought into the chamber by God knows who and how, or actual contrived fiction, and clarified it to themselves to their own order, which regularly was as far from real facts, as our prison life was from a life in freedom. I also then had strange dreams which for a long time did not give me any peace of mind and brought on depressing thoughts ... I once had a dream that walking out of St. George's church in the

direction of the Lwów Polytechnic, along the route I met a well-known acquaintance, an elderly Lwów lady, who upon my greeting, without stopping quickly replied: "Skoplak has also been taken," after which I suddenly awakened. When many months later I returned to Lwów, and it was at about the same time when I had my strange dream the long term leader of the League of Ukrainian Merchants & Manufacturers, the well deserving and alert citizen Yaroslav Skoplak, and his wives brother Yalko Lewitsky who in the few final years prior to the war was the head of the Ukrainian Sports Society and led it during the difficult Polish times, truly from success to success, were both arrested by the NKVD. After both the arrests the organs of the NKVD installed workers from the paste factory "Star" who managed both firms with great difficulty and also physically worked in them. There was no opportunity for consultation, as the workers were told not to get involved in affairs, which, it said, were not of their concern. As to both the Ukrainian citizens and of many others who were arrested in our country by the NKVD during the year 1939 - 41, all subsequent tracks were lost.

During those times I heard a lot about the unsuccessful trial to overthrow Marshal M. Tukhachevsky, who was uncovered by the NKVD, it was said, five minutes before twelve, after which Stalin ordered the liquidation of not only marshals and generals, but also thousands of the militaries upper ranks. There was something fanatic - as the prisoners indicated - about the liquidation of the military leadership throughout the USSR. After a short time we learned that wasn't only separate regiments, but entire divisions that found themselves without any higher officer, so that the officers of the highest ranks, were sparingly, captains. If only at that time - the prisoners said - one of the neighbors of the USSR had attempted an attack on its territories, it would have surprised the entire Red Army completely decapitated, disorganized, and deprived of all leadership. And the great masses of the population would welcome every invader, who would bring them freedom with nightmarish reality. However, it was apparent that at that time no one in Europe even gave it any thought.

As we are still on the trial of the overthrow of Marshal Tukhachevsky it is probably in order to bring forward a few details, which, as it appears to me, may not be known in the wider world, as they probably were never announced. I heard that at the moment of his arrest, he wanted to commit suicide, to which he was not allowed. Later the matter of that great conspiracy was discussed by a higher military counsel under the command of Voroshilov. They reached their verdict acknowledging Tukhachevsky and seven other higher commanders in the Red Army guilty of state treason. That was on the 4th of June, 1937, and on June 11th Tukhachevsky and his comrades were arraigned before a tribunal: Justices of the Supreme Court Ulrich, Blicher, Buddonov, Duvenka, Aksnisa, Storova, Byelova, Kashirina, Shapochnikova and Goryachov. The magistrate was Vishinsky. That tribunal sentenced the accused: Tukhachevsky, Feldman, Korka, Yuborewich, Yakora, Frimakov, Fideman and Putno to execution by a firing squad.

On the following day, 12th of June, the NKVD closely surrounded the Lubianka site. Through the gates of the prison, where the NKVD detachments were located, the "Black Raven" arrived. Each of the convicted who came out of the "Black Raven" was accompanied by two armed members of the Soviet Secret Police. At 10:30 A.M. Marshal Blicher arrived at the prison. At 11:00 A.M. the convicted were led from a side door to the prison courtyard. Their hands were tied behind their backs and they were lined upon a chalk line 5 meters from the wall. Then began the roar of motors. Marshal Blicher took a white handkerchief out of his pocket and raised it. At that signal the Secret Police who were standing behind the convicted, withdrew their revolvers and aimed them at the top part of the neck. Blicher waved his handkerchief and at that moment rang 8 rifle shots. After a few moments the roar of the motors ceased. On the asphalt of the Lubianka courtyard lay eight corpses. Blicher sat in his automobile and drove to present his report to Stalin. Within half an hour 2 freight trucks left Lubianka and turned onto the road to Leningrad. Somewhere along that route, in an unknown grave, rest the remains of Marshal Tukhachevsky and seven of his comrades.

I also heard prisoners narrations about the secret Tukhachevsky plan of Yakir; the Commandant of the Kiev Military region, immediately prior to the beginning of the planned insurrection, was present at the committee of representatives of the Kiev organization, which discussed the matter of the May 1st holiday celebrations which were to take place the following day. He waited long into the night, sitting behind the

vice-presidential table, expecting a call at any minute with news from Moscow, and with impatience regularly checked the time on his watch, when unexpectedly before him was standing an individual dressed in civilian clothing. Yakir surmising that perhaps he was a representative of the plot, left with him to another room. Waiting there for him were other representatives of the NKVD, who after a short dramatic discussion "invited" Yakir to the automobile and he was transported directly to the central of the NKVD.

Also discussed were the reasons for shoving aside and liquidation of Stalin second "comrade-in arms" Petrowsky, a long time Ukrainian country chief. Also involved in the Tukhachewsky affair were two of Petrowsky's sons, both military officers in the Red Army. On that same memorable night the eldest, who was distinguished in high conspiracy, was in command of the early stages of overthrow of the Kremlin guards, and was chosen to accomplish a very difficult exercise: to perform an overthrow in the Kremlin, by arresting Stalin and all that were with him. The revelation of the conspiracy, it appears, was prepared in the finest possible manner, and with the greatest degree of secrecy, brought about the fate of all the three Petrowsky's: firstly, the firing squad execution of the two young officers, and their father, who was soon removed from his high post, and was also liquidated, at an unknown location. But indeed after the unfortunate second world war it was revealed that it was not the NKVD service, but the Czech chieftains Toma Masaryk and Benesh who uncovered that large plot against Stalin and his regime. As it is now well known, the center, through which all the threads of the conspiracy ran was Prague. And there upon obtaining information of the conspiracy, the Czech leaders, in attempting to endear themselves to Stalin, and to gain favor for their state and themselves, handed it all over to him in order that he could exterminate thousands of highly ranked military leadership. As to how Stalin retributed Czechoslovakia and Benesh in particular (Masaryk died after the unveiling of the plot in 1938) is known throughout the entire world.

In connection with that unsuccessful Tukhachewsky overthrow there was some talk amongst the prisoners about which of the powers could provide the untimely demise of the Soviet Union. Considering the militarized powers and the highly organized spirits such as Germany, and also Japan, the prisoners were never convinced that those nations could account for themselves with the military powers of the USSR about which even then, in 1941 there were serious thoughts. One power, which in their thoughts, could put the Soviet Union in order, was the United States of America. It with multitudes of human resources and inexhaustible domestic economy and material resources, and with highly technical superiority, could not only be successful in putting up a stand against the Red Army, but would shatter it to pieces, moreso, that in the event of military conflict with the USSR the United States could count on the sympathies of a considerable portion of the Sovietized populations. In general, the entire masses of the citizenry of the USSR have a high degree of admiration for the United States and Americans and for the spirit of American independence, which I confirmed many times in discussions with fellow-prisoners. Some of them who tried to discuss those matters, probably with a great deal of caution, could not conceal their sympathies, and - their own confidence in the United States.

In previous chapters I wrote about the type of mania, or rather the terror that is prevailed upon foreign country spies in the USSR. Time and time again I have heard investigators, and from fellow-prisoners about the millions of spies and diversionists that have been arrested on the territories of the USSR. There is nothing strange in that, when in "the most fortunate land under the sun" suspicion of spying is aroused on everyone that writes a few words to someone beyond the borders, or receives from there a most innocent letter. Under the allusion of espionage to the advantage of foreign states, as I have heard, there has been liquidation of thousands of quite innocent philatelists (stamp collectors), who at one time exchange postage stamps with other philatelists from foreign countries, which was acceptable all around the world. That this is factual, is most apparent that in all the cultured countries of the world exist numerous philatelist organizations and clubs, well developed philatelist publications, large stores and millions of stamp collectors. In the whole of the Soviet Union at one time came out the one and only monthly in Moscow, the "Soviet Collector", and even it had to cease its existence. And how many people, particularly the young, could be engaged there in such an innocent and useful work as collecting old postal stamps from foreign countries. For them there is no other way, because for only the collection of stamps from any foreign country, that stamp collector can be suspected of sympathies to it, and sentenced for espionage.

There is knowledge of the espionage that was considered advantageous to Canada, when sentences were imposed upon all the Canadian Ukrainian-communists who were captivated by the writers Irchan, Sembayem and other leaders, sold all their farms and businesses here, and traveled to the Soviet Union to "build Socialism." They were executed as spies, when they were able to observe face to face, the appearance of the Soviet "paradise" and the hopelessness of their own situation, expressed to the authorities, their desire to return to Canada, about which some of them, not being familiar of the situation had the boldness to write to their friends in Canada.

The writing of letters within the boundaries of the Soviet Union itself is not a simple matter, as it is in other countries of the world. After the difficult every day labor the average USSR citizen does not have the actual time to correspond\* about himself and his dearest family and friends, with whom he would share his pleasures and sadness in letters, and there is no actual reason to do so. In addition, the pure eye of the NKVD always diligently following the correspondence of the internal states. Therefore, the people from those locations, taught by bitter experience, in general, correspond very seldomly, and when it is necessary to correspond with someone, it is written very briefly, coolly, and simply, with only a few sentences. I questioned the prisoners if they had ever seen any official statistics on correspondence in the USSR, that is the number of letters that are delivered by the post-officers of the USSR to its citizens, how many are sent beyond the borders and how many are received from foreign countries every year. They explained that they had never seen nor ever heard of any such statistics. It is evident - that they are never given out, or probably, not even conducted. I am certain that if the Soviet Union ever published any statistical data on the number of letters that are expedited by the Soviet post-officers within the internal state in one year, it would be revealed that in comparison with every other state in the world, the average citizen of the USSR would probably write 20 or 30 times fewer letters than the same citizen in a foreign country. When it comes to writing letters beyond the border, it can be boldly accepted, that under such stern review the Soviet citizen does not on the average send out even one-hundredth as many letters abroad as do the citizens of any one at all of the countries of the world.

In the writing of the true mania, and the panic of terror placed on spies in the USSR I would like to recall about the one genuine spy who at that time sat with us in a nearby chamber. One prisoner from that chamber who was transferred to our chamber, told us that he had sat with a Japanese prisoner who admitted loudly to espionage to the advantage of his fatherland. He not only admitted this, but also considered himself to be a first rate spy, and confirmed the cause of much of the misfortune in the USSR. The threat of the death penalty awaited that spy, but he was so certain that he would be exchanged for another spy, likewise, a distinguished Russian spy, captured in Japan, who always conducted himself in a self-confident manner, and was always cheerful and alert. To that Japanese spy belonged a suitable phrase which I remember to the present time: "A good spy is never executed."

\* A characteristic subject, that the verb "correspond" is now generally used in the Ukraine to mean: to sign or endorse. That came about when during all investigations and inquests the investigators told the arrested to "acknowledge" what he said underneath the written statement. Millions of unfortunates heard this not once but ten times and to this day still hear "signing", in other words "endorse". Thus that verb in its deceptive meaning, in addition to many other similar Russian words, after many long years have been accepted into the language in practically all Ukrainian lands under Soviet occupation.

## **Distinguished Fellow-Prisoners in the Lubianka Chambers**

*Amongst two university Professors. - Was Wsewolod Belustin a Mason? - Ivan Obreyemov, a learned mathematician and a wonderful storyteller. - More about the prison library and its authors. - What was revealed in those books. - The removal of surnames of co-authors and co-editors from books... - Why was the engineer Shteinman imprisoned? - The thoughts of Colonel Paul Shymanski, Polish Chief of Staff about the inevitable defeat of Germany and the futures of the Polish and Ukrainian populations.*

On September 14, 1940, that is nearly a year after my arrest, I was again transferred to another chamber, which was no. 31. It was a small and tight chamber, in which I found two university professors Wsewolod Vyacheslav Belustin and Ivan Wasylowich Obreyemov. With the three of us together I spent more than three months, when we were later transferred to chamber no. 42 until they were removed at various times, and they were immediately replaced by two other prisoners till the time of my release.

Approximately 40 years of age, of short stature, slender, and very intelligent Wsewolod Belustin, an expert in foreign languages, was the son of a senator, and while young, received a very diligent education, and broad enlightenment. Upon completion in Czarist Petrograd to the revolution in 1917 (and a few years later) there operated a few gymnasiums (high schools) which taught the French and German languages. He studied languages in the French gymnasium, qualified with this thesis, and became a university professor. During the time of his arrest, he was a university professor at Alma Ata, the capital of Kazakhstan. He never explained under what charges he was arrested. From a few hints it came out that he was accused of belonging to one of the Masonic lodges, which were in existence in Czarist Russia prior to and during the early years of the revolution. In every instance Belustin, who called himself a Believing Christian, acknowledged to involvement in international Masonry, and after the first World War, in Paris loudly proclaimed himself as a Masonic Ukrainian (Little Russian?) There were also rumors that he was involved with some of the Ukrainian representatives of that time at a peace conference. Belustin was also interested in and questioned me about Hetman (Cossack chieftain) Paul Skoropadsky, about whom I made a conclusion that Belustin probably knew the hetman, or particularly someone from his immediate family.

Here, I must remark that in those times the Bolsheviks were specially sensitive to the points of Masonry, and ties with it, keeping in mind that every Mason - is a spy, if not genuine, a potential, to the advantage of international bourgeois. Some of the prisoners under observation as international bourgeois, were held under investigation for many long months, about which I earlier mentioned the lieutenant - a colonel of the Moscow Militia Osyenikov: and probably under the same accusations, Belustin, who it appears, had some connections with Masonry, although previous, perhaps upwards of ten years before his arrest, also arrived in Lubianka.

A different type of prisoner was a University of Kharkov professor Ivan Obreyemov, a learned mathematician. Incurred by exile for review of his case he appeared rather intimidated, but in the preciseness of the performances in prison comments he was very sternly conscientious, and led both Belustin and myself into amazement. Obreyemov probably endured much, but in years he was not much older than Belustin but appeared like a 60 year old man. Under what charges Obreyemov was accused we were not aware. During the latter weeks of his case, it appeared, everything was progressing satisfactorily, because at his request, he was provided (probably from home) with some scientific publications of his profession, and at the same time with a thick book on advanced mathematics, which he had translated from the German language, and gave the book its proper introduction. He also obtained a forwarding of money to the prison, probably from his wife, with which he regularly, every 10 days, made purchases in the prison store, whatever was available there, and like a decent person shared with me a portion of his purchased goods, as at the time I was deprived of the privileges of having access to that "small shop."

The professor Obreyemov, of whom I recall as being one of the finest, was not born in Kharkov, nor in the Ukraine; he was sent there from Moscow territory a few years prior to World War II, probably in place of one of the executed scholarly Ukrainians. He once explained to us how some of the Russian "patriots" in Kharkov ridiculed the Ukrainian language, as though, it was lowly-cultured and underdeveloped, and with those methods they themselves contrived or invented fiction with various other eccentricities, which the ordinary words, that is, Ukrainian words, would be only a mockery of the Ukrainian language.

Obreyemov also had one other rare quality: he was a wonderful storyteller. Having a one and only daughter, whom he dearly loved, during her childhood he read to her many and all kinds of stories, and when she became somewhat older, also narratives, and at her request, read many of them several times. As he had a truly phenomenal memory, now in prison he had the opportunity to tell stories for entire hours, days, and weeks. The contents of various stories and narratives were as if he had been reading them to his daughter with the preservation of all the coloration's particular to the presentations in the language of the authors, with his phraseologies and various rhetorical reflexive pronouns. In that manner, we heard from his lips, amongst others, an entire series of detective narratives of Canon Doyld, and fantastic stories of Jack London and Jules, and more of the "Twins" by Robert Bridges, "Ivanhoe" by Walter Scott, "David Copperfield" and the "Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens, and a few stories from Riplings jungle volumes, three series of interesting narratives by the American writer O'Henry (pseudonym of William Sydney Porter), and many others. Of Russian writers we heard from his lips only a few stories of A. Chekova (The Wife, A Duel, With the Nobleman Chief), the "Vampire" by Count Oleksiy Tolstoy (the elder) and the prolonged novel "In the Woods" by Melnikov Pechersky, which Obreyemov related to us in its entirety during the course of a few long cold evenings. Ten years have passed from those times, and to this day I have not forgotten the contents of many of those stories. It is not necessary to say what a spirit of refreshment, with a stroke of a pen, all those narrations were to me, communicated by Obreyemov as if from a book and the calming effect they had on my shattered nerves, and also the nerves of other listeners.

As we are still on the topic, I still remember other books, which we received at that time from the prison library, from which came creations of the so-called leftist-European and American authors in excellent Russian translations. To the latter belonged other literal works: "1919" by John Dos Passos, the well-known "Fire" by Henri Barbusse, and others. We also read productions of Balzac, Beranger, Flober, Jules Romains, Mopessan, Walton, Dodge, Anatole France, Selma Lager-Lof, Ibanez, Byron, Dickens, Heine, Heinrich, Thomas Mann, and others. Of the foreign authors I well recall an old Russian translation of a book by the French Pierre Loti, "The Marriage of Loti and Raraya", published in Seblin in 1911, from which a Ukrainian authoress in one of her books depicts the life of the author on the silent islands of Polynesia as if they were his own...

In a Russian translation from the Ukrainian language I then read a story "Children of the Sitch" (Sitch, settlements of Ukrainian Cossacks on the banks and islands of the Lower Dnieper River) the authors surname I have forgotten, and a large book "New Shores" (two volumes) by Kotsuba, where the author has described the gigantic volume of labor in the construction of the Dnieper hydroelectric station, and the continual struggle of the workers and shock brigades with a secret organization of saboteurs, who endeavored their entire time to destroy the construction of the project. Both of the stories were in themselves customary propaganda publications, which are mass produced in the Soviet Union and generously distributed throughout the world. I do not recall where I read the same Kotsuba (was he not a Galician?) who in his novels invoked the most terrible repressions on saboteurs and diversionists, was executed by the Soviet authorities, similar to entire hundreds of other Ukrainian writers.

At that time I also read through many very interesting and informative recollections of distinguished people, which mainly appeared in the "Academy". Here I also recall the world famous "Remembrances" of the artist-director Stanislowsky, whose originals first appeared in the English language, and also the unusually interesting recollections of the Russian aristocrat Shteken-Schneider, in which were descriptions of the very active literal-cultural life in Russia during the middle of the previous century. From those same recollections I also learned about the indiscreet discontent of a Russian authoress on the occasion of Taras Shewchenko's return from his 10 years in exile, when he came forward with a few of his literary works at a

grandiose literary evening party in Petrograd (later Leningrad, now St. Petersburg) at which he won the greatest acknowledgment from his audience, removed himself far from the shadows of all the other distinguished authors present that evening, amongst whose numbers also, was Dostoyevsky. The authoress could not go through the pain of such success for the Ukrainian poet and diligently tried to illustrate him with, as it is said, that such a meeting with Shewchenko was prepared and the enthusiastic reception was organized by - "Ukrainophiles" (sympathizers). At another time the authoress throws a "wet blanket" (unexpected verbal attack) at historian Mykola Kostomarov, who, in those times came forward in public evening debates in the capital, and predicted - evident separatism: that Southern Russia - territorially - historically is a separate solitude, and its population - those Little Russians (Ukrainians) - are an entirely different nationality type than the Great Russians. What grieved the authoress the most was that in his debates, Kostomarov had the support of an evident portion of the audience, which were a group of highly-educated intellectuals. Of the other remembrances that I read through during those months, I still remember the recollections of the author Danilewsky (a Ukrainian who similar to Gogol, Korolenko, Potapenko, Hrihorowich, Harshyn, and many - many others wrote in Russian). In the Danilewsky recollection I learned some interesting facts that during the Czarist Russification of the Ukrainian Left Banks (eastern side of the Dnieper River) during the first 10 years of the 19th century there was a well established and developed Ukrainian school system in place.

Also one more very characteristic matter of attention, as nothing even similar would resemble it beyond the Soviet Union. They are cutouts in books published then, even during fairly recent times, of surnames of their co-authors, editors, co-editors, and even proofreaders, who in the meantime, for some reason, had fallen into disgrace, and they were arrested. In the Soviet Union once someone is arrested, his surname must be removed from any of his works in which he applied his hands. Those books, in which the title pages have had the printed surnames cut out with scissors were of the co-authors, and above all, the co-editors and proofreaders, a great many of which were imprisoned. That was one more proof of the uncertainty in the USSR of fate for the people of the pen, and on which dangerous horse they ride.

On January 8, 1941, we received a new prisoner in our chamber. He was brought in late at night and assigned a bed beside mine. As I was not sleepy we conversed and talked nearly all night. That was Samuel Hertzovich Shteinman, a representative in the food provisions industry (the deputy of the Peoples Commissariat, or, the Minister of Provisions and Supply) of which I learned somewhat later. He was a highly intelligent expert, who a short time earlier, the Soviet government, has sent to Germany for the purchase of all sorts and kinds of specialized machinery, as well as to the United States, (as Shteinman was fluent in the English language). On the occasion of those excursions, Shteinman had also spent some time in other European states, and was well acquainted in world politics, particularly in economic relations. He had spent many long months under investigation, perhaps from the Jehovahs period, as for what reasons, he never revealed anything. I think that, as a Jew, he was under suspicions of connections with Trotskyites, or was sympathetic towards them. He viewed his own situation with much skepticism, primarily because his own case had somewhere become entangled, as if they had forgotten about him, and he was very seldom called out for interrogation. He frightfully grieved about the future of his wife and only son, not knowing anything about them for a long time, and apprehensive about his son, the son of a person under arrest, and whether he would be permitted to attend school.

In awhile after the arrival of Shteinman to our chamber, Prof. Belustin was called out, and a few weeks later also Prof. Obreyemov, who never again returned to our chamber.

Instead, Paul Shymanski, a Pole from Posnan, a Colonel and General Chief of Staff with the Polish army arrived one night. Within that trinity I lived through a few of my final months in prison until my departure to freedom, but then in chamber no. 32, to which all three of us were transferred sometime near the end of January or at the beginning of February in 1941.

Paul Shymanski, the Pole from Posnan and member of the Polish Chief of Staff was pulled off to Lubianka from one of the concentration camps which resided the captured officers of the shattered Polish army. From exactly which camp he arrived, he was not permitted to say, as he gave the words or endorsed a



testimony of secrecy ( That was a military secret in the USSR). From that time to the end we, along with Shymanski, diligently studied the English language, which was taught to us, apparently without any textbooks or other supplies, without pencils or paper by the engineer Shteinman. In his discussion with me, Shymanski never concealed his true personal opinions, and along with that criticized the Polish extremist political repulsion against the Ukrainian people, and deeply and solemnly believed that the war would end with the definitive destruction of Germany and to the restoration of a great Poland, in which all Ukrainians, and other nationalities would have an abundance of rights. It saddened him when I described to him the conduct of the organs of Polish authority, particularly the police, of opposition against the Ukrainians, when those alive recalled to him the well known behaviors of the Germany police opposition against the Polish populations in Poznan prior to the First World War. Of attention that the Ukrainians have a great deal of German guardianship, to which Shymanski did not have a reply. He very firmly believed that after the war all will be well for the Poles and the Ukrainians, as they will certainly come to an understanding.

One other note about Shymanski, who as a member of the Polish Chief of Staff, took official participation in various managements of parades, and amongst others, the funeral of Hindenburg, as a representative of the Polish army, which in Lubianka apparently was of consideration in connection with his own particular situation. That was evident, amongst others, that he had complimentary better foods, and with the permission of the higher administration was able to establish connections with his wife and daughters in Switzerland, from whom, while in Lubianka, he received two letters. After the end of the war, I received rumors that Colonel Paul Shymanski was residing in England.

### **In the Final Stages of Investigation**

*My two final investigators. - Setting a trap for me, or only testing. - "No desire for Lwow, and even less for Vienna". - The thoughts of engineer Shteinman about my fate, and about my future. - At the barbers and in front of an old-fashioned camera. "We had Khmelnytski, and we also had Mazeppa" who was Dickie, my investigator. - "Write everything favorable that you know of Doctor Starosolsky and editor Kwasnycia." With whom I was accountable, and what-I subconsciously believed.*

After the 1940-41 New Year, I was one day again recalled for "interrogation" and I ended up in front of two new investigators: the elder, a Russian, and the younger, a Ukrainian. During the course of their questioning I learned that the elder was named Kozlov, and the younger, Dickie. They were the last investigators that pursued my case in Lubianka.

As Zaitsev and Kudria previously, these investigators did not bring up any remarks regarding my previous activities in Lwow. Whether they had been in Lwow as had their predecessors, to gather any data about me or other arrested Lwiw Ukrainians, I don't know, but they were well acquainted with my case, and also knew that I had been sitting in prison without any specified charges. Initially, they questioned how it happened, that I have been sitting so long without any charges, in agreement, and if I was not disgusted in writing the continual "demands" that I felt I was not guilty, at so many instances. To that I replied that I am only taking advantage of my rights and requesting a hastening of my investigation which has dragged on into eternity.

Well into the period of their successive questioning I began to realize that my investigators were endeavoring to either set up a trap for me, or to put me through the test, one or the other. I frequently disclosed under questioning, always emphasizing my innocence, that I was not begging to go to Lwow, or above all, to Galicia, which in my heart I passionately desired, and pleaded only, that from a physical point of view, feeling somewhat weakened, to quickly finalize my case and give me the possibility to breathe some fresh air and to spend time under the sun. I well understood that if I had expressed a desire, of wishing to return to Lwow, that could have aroused a suspicion in my investigators, that after my liberation and return to Lwow, I would begin thinking of resuming connections with some of the people with whom I had worked till the war, and for my own sake, perhaps to escape beyond the Sian R., under the Germans. It is well known that during those times, the first months of 1941, the Soviet-German relations had substantially deteriorated and the Bolsheviks began to put up a somewhat greater readiness against the Germans. It was far from that which I had observed and seen in the early phases of my investigation, when my investigators were truthfully absorbed by the Soviet-German friendship, and the "armed fraternity" and sincerely stated, that with the established accord of Molotov-Ribbentrop the new borders of central-eastern Europe would be eternal, and that Poland, as an independent state, would be erased from the maps of Europe for once and for all. Now the investigators were singing a different song. They did not conceal the hostile relations against Germany, which summoned - fear - throughout the Soviet Union.

When my investigators now questioned me about my previous acquaintances in Vienna, I was well aware of the direction they were striving for. I told them that I did not maintain any ties with those Ukrainian-Viennezians which they called them, from the times after the First World War when I returned from Vienna to Lwow. And when I once sensed an unexpected query, as to whether I would have a desire to travel to my acquaintances in Vienna I rejected that same idea with indignation. I replied that I had the opportunity to acquaint myself with the Germans during the First World War and post-war emigration, and know well what kind of "friends" they are to the Ukrainian people, and to all Slavs, in general. As for the former Ukrainian acquaintances in Vienna, there are none to be found, and moreso, to me, they are strangers, as it is well beyond 15 years since I last saw them. My desire is to work amongst my own and for my own people on my own native land, and not wander abroad, where some unknown misfortune may await me.

I'm not certain whether the investigators believed my words. Probably not much, as in a few instances they desired assurances, if I perhaps was not a sympathizer of the Germans, which I positively never was. They then left the Germans in peace and began asking about my connections with the deceased Eugene Konowalso and people of the Ukrainian underground movements. I denied any knowledge, whatsoever, of the Colonel Konowalko, although I knew him well before the First World War, from my student times when he headed Section IV of the Ukrainian Students Alliance in Lwow, which was a university students' gathering of members and supporters of the Ukrainian National-Democratic Party (later the U.N.D.O.). I also denied any ties with Ukrainian underground organizations, although I was well acquainted with some of their leaders in some of the territorial regions.

Of the progress of investigation in my case I continually informed the prisoners in my chamber, who as I previously indicated, during the final months were only Colonel P. Shymanski and the deputy engineer Shteinman. The last, upon listening to me confirmed, that I would be either granted full freedom, or obtain an exile to freedom. He also told me not to worry, as with my knowledge, apart from foreign languages, I could find employment very easily: probably not in journalism, of which there was no possible speech, as in the Soviet Union workers in journalism are peculiarly trustful people, almost all exclusive members of the Communist Party, and as a teacher, and accountant, (during the period of the First World War in Vienna I completed a co-operative - accounting course), or in other fields of life. Shteinman often reminded me that in the Soviet Union there are still many good people who would certainly assist the repressed, such as I, wherever I would choose to live, and there is always sufficient work.

One day - it was during the middle of April - unexpectedly during the afternoon I was called in for "interrogation" and I was not led to the investigators in the upper stories, but to the barber who functioned in a nearby "box". He, surprisingly, did not cut the growth on my face with clippers, as it was always done, but shaved me with a safety razor, in front of a mirror. That was the first time during my 19-month stay in prison that I could see myself in a mirror, and looked at my elongated very thin and pale face and my loose hanging clothing. When I was brought back to the chamber, Shteinman and Shymanski both judged agreeably, that I would certainly be called to appear before some kind of "boss" (high dignitary) and therefore, I was shaved with a razor.

We had not completed our conversation on the subject of my youthful rejuvenation and its misfortunes, when a guard entered the chamber and said to again prepare for "interrogation". Identically, this time they did not lead me to the investigators above, but I went through some type of covered courtyard below and came into a wide room in front of some kind of a strange machine: was it an old-fashioned weaving loom, or was it a sling that they once used in the excavation of large rocks? They told me to remove my prison shirt which filled me with some fright. In a moment they led me behind a partition where on a string were hanging a number of many colored shirts and told me to pick out any one of them. I pulled off the first from the end and pulled it onto myself, thinking, that was certainly a shirt of some executed victim of the NKVD. They then directed me to another corner where also hanging on a string were many neckties, and told me to remove one of them. Later that ancient loom gave out a strange grinding sound, as if, a church belt, and I was ordered to stand before it. It was revealed that it was a "before the flood" photography apparatus. After my photographs, I was then told to remove the shirt and return it with the necktie, and again escorted me back to the chamber. Both of my companions in distress now decided that the photograph which has been made is required for a passport, meaning: that an exile to freedom, or the act of liberation awaited me, because in the Soviet Union a person cannot move anywhere without a passport.

Thus, again passed two weeks, and I wasn't called anywhere from the chamber. Until the day before May 1st I was again told to prepare for "interrogation", and again led me to the barber, who again shaved me with a safety razor. And I and both of my fellow-prisoners were convinced, that in a few short hours I would be called from the chamber, the chamber to which I would never return. I conferred with them many times and then couldn't sleep from the excitement almost all the night of April 30 - May 1. On May 1st at 10 o'clock in the morning, I was brought before the investigator Dickie who - according to his speech - spent an all night shift as a guard, and suffered all night from aching teeth. He ordered me a piece of

sausage, a cup of sour milk and tea, and two pieces of white bread, which I, starved to no end, ate in one motion (I had not seen such appetizers for 19 months). In the meantime, Dickie led a conversation with me in an entirely friendly voice, and amongst others, spoke about Korneychuk's drama "Bohdan Khmelnytsky" a show that he had then observed in a theater and was enthusiastic about. He then blurted out the words "Yes, we had Khmelnytsky, but we also had Mozeppa". Then as if to correct himself, he added: "There is not way Mozeppa may be compared with Khmelnytsky..." After that undetermined conversation Dickie soon dismissed me back to the chamber, as he was in a hurry to watch the May 1st proclamations in Red Square, at the Kremlin, with his tribunal. Entrance to the tribunal was insured with specially printed tickets with an artistic frame with a proper number: I saw that ticket in his hand.

On returning to the chamber (and often after that) I contemplated on why I was honored to be shaven on April 30, and secondly, what was the virtue of Dickie calling me on May 1st. What was the meaning of his entertainment at that time (the one and only time I had such a banquet at Lubianka)! And why did he then speak so strangely about Khmelnytsky and Mozeppa? I could never solve those riddles.

As to what was with Dickie, who perhaps was a teacher from Poltava, only God knows. In my memory, I recall one rare but typical scene: One time a lady-investigator from a nearby room came to his office for a short business discussion, during which time in my presence, she unintentionally, asked him if his only son knows the Ukrainian language. To that Dickie replied, that having lived so long in Moscow, his son had completely forgotten the Ukrainian language. In those words of Dickie's I sensed a shade of sadness, but the greatest sadness could be seen in his eyes.

A few days passed by, when I was again summoned to the same investigator Dickie. He politely spoke to me, and asked about a few Lwów citizens, particularly about Dr. Wolodimir Starosolsky and editor Ivan Kwasnycia, famous Social-Democratic statesmen. Finally, he gave me a piece of paper and an ink pen and requested me write both of their characteristics. Dickie clearly added "You may write everything that you favorably know about them. Generally speaking, such words were the first I had heard from the investigator, from which I drew a conclusion that Prof. W. Starosolsky and editor I. Kwasnycia were awaiting freedom. Evidently - I took advantage of an excellent opportunity and wrote both of their characteristics as favorably as I possibly could. I did not forget to add, knowing that it might make an impression on the Bolsheviks, that both of them were impoverished, and suffered from lack of necessities of life, because of which Dr. Starosolsky was not able to pay for entire months of his lodgings. Upon my departure from prison, and return to Lwów, I was told, as if, they had both been released to freedom and that due to the events of the war, were unsuccessful in returning to Lwów. There is awareness, that Prof. W. Starosolsky died later, as did his wife Daria, somewhere in the depths of the USSR. As to what happened to Ivan Kwasnycia there is no knowledge. Various signs indicated that my fate would be resolved in a very short time. In those days, an understanding point, I thought much about what awaits me. I took into consideration exile into freedom, but somewhere in the bottom of my soul there glimmered a ray of hope, that I will once again see the land of my parents, and my ancestors, where I was born, and which I loved so passionately, and that I shall return to Lwów. Subconsciously, I believed that my deceased mother who lived such a righteous and godly life who knew how to so sincerely pray, will from another world, seek humbly by earnest prayer, that what is the most dearest, that a person can have in this world - freedom. Such freedom I pleaded for myself to the Almighty, with the mediation of my guardian and patron - St. Ivan.

## **My Release and Departure to Freedom**

*In front of a fashionable civilian in black clothing. - "What would you say, if we released you?" - What I thought then, and why I didn't say it. - The prospects of my release. - Even the elder investigators are unfamiliar with procedures of prisoners in Lubianka. - In the box again. - Tortured all night. - Preparations for departure. - Passing through three control points. - On a lifeless deserted street. - Drive to the Kiev railroad yard. - The Moscow travelers. - Control to the end! - On the journey to Lwow.*

The day was May 12, 1941. At approximately 4 o'clock in the afternoon, I was called as I had been ten times previously, for "interrogation". Again I was led by two guides, holding tightly to my arms, through the labyrinth of corridors, traveling up by elevator, till we stopped before some doors. Quietly knocking, they led me to the room where I saw my elder investigator Kozlov, who was smiling, or perhaps, delighted. He bid my guides to wait for awhile and did not dismiss them, as it always was when the prisoner was brought for inquiry. From that I considered, that they would not hold me there for long.

My investigator opened the door to a nearby room and bid me to follow him. We walked through a carpeted walkway and a room adorned with portraits, and stopped before the doors of a third room. Kozlov knocked and we entered to a wonderful and more beautiful room, in the center of which I saw a desk, covered with red cloth. Behind the desk in an armchair sat a handsome dark complexioned man of middle or perhaps small stature, dressed in a black suit. To the right of the desk sat a second civilian, and Kozlov stood on the left. I stood in front of the desk, face to face with the handsome civilian.

He glanced at me with an inquiring look and did not put forth the regular request, "How is your family?" (in Russian), but asked in Ukrainian "What is your surname?" (For the first time in 20 months since I'd heard the request in the Ukrainian language). I replied Ivan Kuznick Nimchuk. To that he replied "Please have a seat." At that same moment my investigator set a small chair and I sat down.

After that the gentleman in the black suit stared at me for a long time, as if, he was gathering thought, considering how to begin his discussion with me. Finally, he began with the question:

-Well, what would you say, if we now released you?

Upon hearing those words, I did not have the energy to give him any sort of reply. An abundance of thoughts swarmed through my head. I heard that I was standing before my liberation, and asked myself: For what reason was I arrested and held in such terrible isolation from the world for 20 months? Why did I also suffer, and lose so much of my health and nerves? I tried to reply something, but with great sorrow and grief I was unable to open my lips. Something pressed in my throat and I was constrained from uttering a word.

The gentleman in the black suit, observed me very cautiously during the time, and probably realized my condition and could well see that I was unable to acquire one word from within myself. After a moment, not awaiting my reply, he spoke word for word:

-We are now releasing you in the certainty, that you will no longer be involved in counter-revolutionary activities.

He probably had the intention to extend his statement, but I regained my voice and there I interrupted his words with such a nervous - I heard it myself - response:

-I have never at any time been involved in any counter-revolutionary activities, and as the son of a poor peasant villager, who throughout his life experienced so much misery, I always stood on the side of the poor and the oppressed. When I was involved in any political actions, it was only against the lords of Poland, who persecuted the Ukrainian people, and not against the Soviet Union...

The gentleman in black, apparently, did not expect such language, and again began to think, perhaps, to find the words with which to reply to my statement. At that moment it appeared to me that he was totally unfamiliar with my case and was only chosen or delegated to happily proclaim my liberation. Finally, he replied with some uncertainty:

-Well, so much the better for you (that statement he repeated twice) therefore, you are from now on free, and it is now possible for you to travel to your Lwow.

After that I was able to utter only one word:

-Thanks!

I stood up and glanced at the investigator Kozlov and he was somewhat disturbed. I don't know why, that such releases occur so seldomly in Lubianka and, in general, in all Bolshevik prisons, or perhaps for some other reason. I gently bowed and followed my investigator. But there in the second room he stopped and said, as always, in Russian:

-There in the chamber do not mention neither a word about your release...

I replied:

-Certainly, I will not say anything, which I have always done after my inquiries, till now (which in itself was on the contrary).

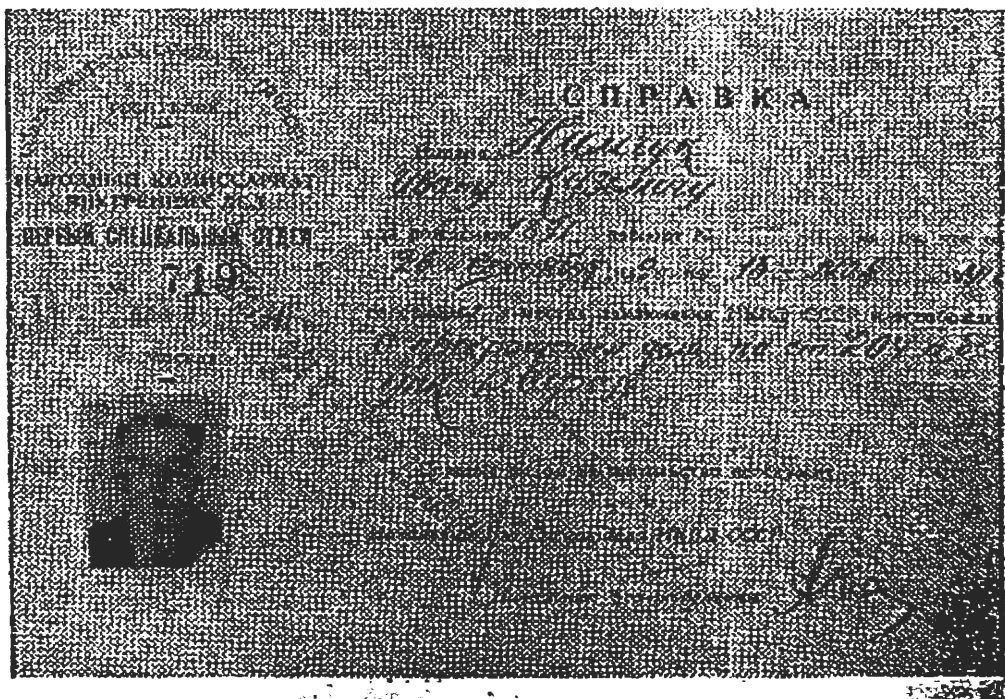
In the first room my two guides were waiting for me and again, as at all previous times, held me by the arms and led me through a labyrinth of corridors somewhere lower. And neither my chamber, nor Colonel Shymanski, nor the deputy Shteinman, would I ever see again, as I was led not to my chamber, but to a box similar to that in which I had spent my first night in Lubianka. From that I was able to make a conclusion that even the elder investigators are not familiar with the procedures concerning prisoners, when Kozlov thought, that after the announcement of my liberation I would be returned to my chamber amongst my fellow-prisoners.

Within a short duration, a mattress and a blanket were brought for the box and were placed on a wide bench - an indication that I would be expected to spend the night there. In the passing of a few minutes I was brought all my things from the chamber, and in a few moments two books for reading: short stories of the Russian author Kuprina and American writer Jack London. I tried to read but the letters jumped before my eyes, and I was unable to concentrate my thoughts upon what I was reading in the book. After the passing of about an hour, I was served my supper - that thick gruel and boiling water. Although I was extremely famished, I had to force myself to eat that gruel. It would in no way pass through my throat.

I calmly recited my evening prayer and tried to fall asleep. My thoughts changed one after another, but because of nervous tension I was unable to close my eyes for long. My entire life passed through my mind, remembering various times of my investigation and endeavored to remember not only the most important aspects during the course of my investigation, but also the surnames of investigators and my fellow-prisoners. I thought a lot about what destiny awaits me, what employment I will obtain, and if I will meet any of my friends in Lwow and any of those people who I often assisted.

Finally I yielded to God's mercy and then fell asleep. My sleep was nervous and short. I soon awakened and began thinking the same thoughts. Thus, I experienced with great misery my final night in a box in Lubianka from May 12 to the morning of May 13, 1941.

I was served my breakfast: a large piece of dark bread, one lump of sugar and boiling water, the same as any other day. After about two hours I was taken to the barber who shaved me for my journey with a safety razor and again did not reply with even a word to any of my questions. Later they returned my watch that had been taken away from me upon my being thrown into the prison chamber in Lwow. Neither my beautiful pocket knife, my written notes, nor my collection of Ukrainian goodwill stamps were returned to me. After some time I ate daily dinner (a thin soup with dry gruel) and waited for further occurrences. In the afternoon, one of the younger investigators brought me a document indicating my release with the following contents:



Am attaching a photographic imprint of that document, so that the reader would know of the true worthiness of the so-called Ukrainian Federation of Socialist Republic, and its particular importance in the entire USSR, as though it was an independent state. And I beg you to consider. I was arrested in Lwow as a citizen of the USSR and I was transported not to the Ukrainian capital of Kiev, but to Moscow. There I was held for 19 months and finally released, not on the principles of laws in the UFSR, and not even on the principles of law in the USSR. As can be seen from the document I was released in "accordance with page 204, paragraph "b" of the U.P.K R.S.F.S.R.", that is, the Russian Soviet Federation of Socialist Republics, which is an integral part of the United Soviet Socialist Republic as is the U.F.S.R. Thus in practice appears the "independence" of the U.F.S.R. about which the Communist leaders have the audacity to write in the Canadian and American newspapers, printed in the Ukrainian language.

One more item. Even in the document authorizing my release there is no mention of any charges of criminal law accusing me of any offenses, nor of any by-laws intimidated to me by any of the investigators with even one word during the period of my many month interrogations. Mentioned in my release

document the charge was taken from the penal code procedures of the R.S.R.S.R.. It states "to cease criminal investigation due to lack of evidence of any guilt."

After approximately one-half hour, the young investigator handed me 200 karbovantsi (Ukrainian currency term equivalent to rubles, for the purchase of my railroad ticket to Lwow, and for the trip in general, and also a document which would serve as to my identity at railroad control points and during my first days of arrival in Lwow till the time a passport may be procured. After that the same NKVD employee, who was dressed in civilian clothing took me through three control points till we reached the street. At each location he showed the guards his documents and only then would the barred metal doors open. At the last point, near the exit to the street I saw two very tall NKVD watchmen, who allowed both of us to pass and we arrived at the street.

For the first time I saw the walls of a Moscow stone building and Lubyanka itself, and before it was the great Dzerzhinsky public square, which - as was explained by the prisoners - was previously planted with a thick growth of trees, but now there was not even one small shrub, instead it was all glossy with asphalt. We walked a short distance on paved sidewalk to one corner of Lubyanka, from where I saw a section of the immense prison premises, and constructed almost to the roof, was an entirely new block of the same buildings. There was not even the slightest movement of people or automobiles in the area. There in the Lubyanka neighborhood, Moscow appeared as if it were extinct of all inhabitants.

The NKVD employee left me standing for a moment and jumped to one side and across the street there stood an automobile (apparently owned by the NKVD or perhaps, Lubyanka). Without delay he arrived for me, I sat inside, and he said he was transporting me to the Kiev railway station. Along the route from the car I was able to observe memorials of Ivan Fyodorov, a Moscowvite, and the first printer in Lwow, and the author Lomonosov, and further the university and some other large Moscow buildings. I saw the Kremlin only from a distance during our travel. We traveled over the bridge crossing the Moskva river where small ships were sailing, and further on the wide monotonous streets, along side long barrack buildings and arrived at the Kiev railway terminal.

My traveler guard took my 200 karbovantsi and ran to the ticket cash register, and told me to wait in the car with the chauffeur, who evidently was also an NKVD employee. (In a short conversation with him, it turned out that chauffeurs in Moscow receive very low pay, somewhat worse than it formerly was in Lwow. After a few minutes the NKVD employee came running back with a ticket and a seat reservation, and said to hurry as the rapid train to Kiev-Lwow departs in 25 minutes. I climbed out of the car and he returned the balance from the purchase price of the ticket and led me to the train. Along the route near the cash registers I saw masses of destitute, thin, and filthy people and all had either knapsacks in their hands or a bag over their shoulders. I did not see even a traveler with a suitcase which was a general phenomenon at all stations and trains in other European states.

We arrived at the train and my "guardian-angel" led me into the coach and sat me in my paid seat, and handed me my ticket and seat reservation. He himself stood near the window of my partition and did not lose sight of me till the departure of the train. Consequently, control till the end! I lost sight of him only when the train started out on the journey to Lwow.



## Returning to Lwow

*Together with Spanish Civil War invalids. - With what did the Bratishev villager return to his native village? - Miserable people and dull scenery. - Why I recalled the verses of proverbs from the bathhouse walls? - Other accurate proverbial sermons. - Unhappy thoughts of my immediate future. - At the Konotop border station. - A longer stop at Kiev. - A word about that district's inquiry office. - The loss of 24 kilograms weight. - What happened to the Ukrainian language in the capital? - What I observed during the crossing of the old and new borders. - Rapid construction of a second railway track. - Lwow and Lwiw.*

In the partition in which I had a place on the rapid train, traveling beside me were three individuals. All three are worthy of consideration, therefore, I will say a few words about them.

The first, the most significant of them - he was a Galician Ukrainian villager, a painful invalid from the Spanish Civil War, when he was recruited in France where he had been working. He entered the so-called international brigade which was organized by France against General Franco. In Spain this approximately 40-year old man was seriously wounded in dangerous battles: he lost not only his sight, but both of his arms. With some kind of miracle his companions removed him from the battle field, and when the Reds were soon forced to escape from Spain, he along with thousands of other "volunteer" members of that brigade and other military sections were all transported to the USSR. There he underwent medical treatments for a long time, and was later held in a sanitarium in Moscow, and now he was being discharged with a high pension in the sum of 800 karbovantsi per month to his native village Bratishev, in the Lowmach county. It appears that in Moscow it was resolved that the circumstances in our country were within limits stable and the sense of belonging by the Western Ukraine to the USSR was so certain, that it is certainly safe to send those people to the places of their belonging and to their families. The calculations were simple: before the preparations of the war against Germany it was necessary to secure the hospitals and sanitariums, therefore, they were purged of all the people, who with the devotion of their soul to the regime, could be good propagandists at their locations. That Bratishev villager left a wife and three children at home. With that high pension he should have been able to have a good and secure life, and it was about that life that he spoke, during the entire journey. He did not anticipate, nor did those that discharged him - so frightfully an invalid - to again flee far to the West, or to be left without a pension, and the uncertainty under a new occupation.

Assigned to him by the sanitarium, or perhaps provided by the Ukraine specifically, was a nursing-sister, who took very diligent care of him during the entire journey, as he was as helpless as a small child. She was a young, beautiful, and kindhearted maiden, who cheerfully spoke in the most beautiful Ukrainian language. Her job was to look after the invalid during the journey, transport him to Bratishev and hand him over to his wife and then return back to the East.

The third passenger in our compartment was a young Jew, also an invalid from the Spanish Civil War, who was also in the same sanitarium and was returning to a small town, Nadwirna, from where he originated. He was slightly wounded on the left arm, which he moved very weakly, but his pension was recognized as relatively high - at 500 karbovantsi per month.

I traveled the entire trip all the way to Lwow with those companions. We spoke about various matters, but most of the conversing was done by our Bratishev villager-invalid, who spoke much not only about his plans, in connection with his children, which he thought of sending to higher schools, but also about how he would convince his countrymen that the finest form of farming was for them - to enlist as a collective farmer and to labor for the common cause. Evidently, he was immensely thankful to the Soviet authority for his medical treatments and for his high pension, granted to him till the end of his life. As for the other invalids from the Spanish War, whom the Soviet authorities were discharging to their homes, and who

were traveling in the same car, I did not engage in any conversation. In addition, I did not admit anything to my fellow-travelers, that I was returning to Lwow after a 19 month stay in Lubianka, and to their questions I replied that I was returning from specialized courses. The blind invalid could not see me, and his guardian the very young maiden, probably, not that interested, believed what I was saying. But the sly Jew from Nadwirna, foreseeing the piteous state of my outward appearance, probably suspected something different. He tried to question me about some of those courses, but I changed our conversation to another topic, and he refrained from further questioning. But during the balance of the trip he observed me with some suspicion.

The journey itself was not without any particular observations. The people who boarded and disembarked from our train, and also those that I saw through the windows at stations, all appeared very pitiful. Thin and in very plain and filthy clothing, all with workers caps on their heads, and women with brightly colored head kerchiefs, all with bags or sacks, like our Galician beggars, who walked through the villages, begging for their livelihood. In Russia, the scenes were of neglect and poverty. The houses were weathered and scraped, such as the worst Jewish houses were in our village during the Austrian or Polish times. Also, it appeared that they had not seen whitewash lime for many long years. The roof coverings indicated that they had not been repaired for many years: there were almost no remains of previous thatches, as the houses were usually covered with straw thatch of some type or bulrush mixed with clay. As for around the houses there were then no other buildings, no fences, nor any shrubs, and all the villages which we passed by, appeared to be deserving of pity. As it was near the middle of May, snow was still lying in the valleys and ditches, and the rest was all mud. Everywhere along the route, poor, sad, and unfortunate people, in shabby and torn clothes and large rubber boots, or galoshes with twine attached to their feet, which were wrapped in dirty linen flap.

An interesting observation was the military movement to the Western Ukraine who were traveling in large numbers on that rapid train. They were all well fed and well dressed.

I observed it all and thought in my mind: What will I find in Lwow, and in our country? What kind of a new order, and what changes, in general? Is there already so much misery, and such unfortunate people?

Involuntarily I recalled the inscriptions on the walls in the bathhouse at Lubianka, (which I and my fellow-prisoners read), to which we were once brought from the chamber. This wasn't our regular bathhouse, but another where the walls were covered with surnames of people, and all kinds of proverbial verses. Amongst them I read the following thought (translated into the Ukrainian language):

Whoever was not, he will be  
And whoever was, shall never forget it.

And another:

Whoever enters - does not grieve  
Whoever departs - is not crafty

Did I have anything to rejoice in, that I entered into freedom from Lubianka and am returning back to Lwow? Considering everything beyond what I had endured and saw and heard, during my almost 20-month stay in Bolshevik prisons, I became convinced that my liberation is indebted to some final particular circumstance. I surmised, that besides me also released was probably the president Dr. Kost Lewitsky, about whom they asked very much during the final months and weeks and I always solidly confirmed the same as about myself: that Dr. K. Lewitsky acted his entire life against Poland, and not against the Soviet Union. I did not know, but I surmised that the Bolsheviks had arrested many people in our country. As they had now released me, and would release Dr. Kost Lewitsky and some others amongst the elders, those releases would be an indication to the Ukrainians in the country that they cannot be that terrible, as some of their distinguished citizens had been released. Do they not suppose that our release would unite them some Ukrainian circles?

One thing I was certain of, and of that there was no doubt: that as long as the NKVD has their central organization in Moscow, from which they govern the lives of the whole of the USSR and all of its nationalities, having literally full control under its supreme authority, it will be long before there will be any mention of any kind of a free Ukraine. I knew that any relationships with Moscow meant - certain death. During my lifetime I was imprinted with a proverb, that I once overheard from a fellow-prisoner:

Whoever enters Moscow,  
Carries his head.

And how many were there, the sons of different massacred nationalities who proceeded into Moscow, and there gave up their heads! And how many sons of the Ukrainian nationalities gave up their heads in that God-damned Moscow! About one of those, F. Palaschuk-Konar, an educator in the Ukrainian gymnasium (high school) in Rohatyn, later a Ukrainian Sitch Rifleman, who after the consolidation of the Bolshevik revolution played a major role in the publication sector in Kharkov, and later, one of the directors of the State Publication in Moscow, I sensed something while in Lubianka. He, along with thousands of other Ukrainians was arrested during the Jehovist times (or perhaps earlier) and was tortured for many long months until he broke down and signed his name to his own sentence of death, confessing, that he was ... a Polish spy. (Whoever of those, who knew Palaschuk could believe that?) And his local pilgrimage was halted in the basements of Lubianka - by a bullet in the nape of the neck.

Being now returned to Lwow, I was equipped with all kinds of knowledge of the USSR the name of which is mentioned by the four letters, which the prisoners deciphered very precisely: USSR - a country of sadness, suffering, death, and ruin. (Not translatable to English language). I was also well learned in Stalin's 6 testaments: 1. Do not think. 2. If you have thought - do not speak. 3. If you have spoken - do not write. 4. If you have written - do not print. 5. If you have printed - do not endorse. 6. If you have endorsed - retract! What could give me a clearer painting of the manner of life of the Soviet serf than those "testaments". And in what other country in the world could the national intelligence invent such a characteristic proverb: A person's greatest enemy - is its tongue!

No, the genuineness of the so-called Union of Socialist Soviet Republics is indeed wealthier than the greatest whims of imagination. Not in vain, I once heard the words from a Georgian fellow-prisoner: Brother, the USSR - is one nightmare. You there - as you have indicated - fought against the Poles, because they oppressed you. And the Poles fought with the Germans, and the Czechs with the Slovaks, and the Croats with the Serbs. And neither one of you knew, what kind of a hell Bolshevism would bring with them. Yet rising here without hesitation are the black, yellow, and red-skinned, if they could only tear themselves away from Stalin's Czardom...

From the other side, I believed, that the finger of God intervened in my case. To me it appeared, that my deceased mother petitioned for me by prayer from another world, who taught me not only how to sincerely pray, but also to love God with all your heart and all your soul and your neighbor as you would yourself.

I reminded myself of some other very accurate sayings which were often told to me by fellow-prisoners in trust:

*Sickle and hammer - distress and hunger.*

---

*When Stalin got up on his throne  
The people got up barefoot and naked*

---

*Rise now, Lenin, and admire  
How the collective farms have prospered:*

*A barn on the side, a field on the threshing floor,  
And a mare with one eye.*

---

*A house on one side, threshing on the other  
And a mare with one eye,  
One sheaf of grain in the house  
Burdened with taxes  
And now they are saying who is a wealthy farmer.*

---

*The tractor is plowing, the earth is drying  
Whoever is at the collective farm, will certainly perish.*

---

*Buckwheat, millet and oats  
Are taken by the MTS.  
Rye and Wheat  
Are shipped beyond the borders  
And the chaff and the stems -  
Are for the workers and villagers.*

---

*Nightingale, nightingale -  
A long road  
The heart is pining, pain in the chest,  
In the soul there is fear...*

And in the Russian language?

*Life for us is amusing, for there is nothing to eat...*

And a different variation:

*Life became amusing,  
Life became gay  
What was worth three rubles,  
Is now worth one hundred rubles...*

And many others similar.

Although I had reason for pleasure, as I was freely traveling to Lwow, none of that pleasure was with me. I knew that difficult times awaited me, but, as always, I said to myself: Let God's will prevail! When God's Providence tore me away from Lubianka, it will not leave me without any care and help in the future.

In the early morning of the second day out the train stopped near the Konotop border station, which lies near the town with the same name, on the territory of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. At the station were signs in two languages: Russian and Ukrainian. I remembered from history, that during the fortification of the town Konotop in the Chernihiv province, in the year 1659, the Russians were surrounded by Hetman Wihowsky (Cossack commander-in-chief) who in conquering them realized a great

victory, ~~about which~~ apparently, there is continued silence in all Soviet historical textbooks. Here the ~~passengers threw themselves~~ into the buffet, where it was possible to obtain something to eat, amongst others, a spoonful of warm cereal, and potatoes with small pieces of meat. Starved to no end, I didn't get even a piece of bread for the road, I quickly ate my portion and had to rush to the train, although I could have easily eaten several of those portions. But the pause in Konostop was of short duration.

About noon our train arrived at the large station in Kiev; which also had signs in Russian and Ukrainian. I left my bundle under the care of the nursing sister, and departed to the city as our train had about a six-hour wait in Kiev. Along the route I decided to go to the office of assistance in searches, which works in all large railroad stations, to find again two of my good Galician friends who were left in Kiev in the year 1918 - and I thought- live then and now. I filled out the customary questionnaire, but as I did not know neither streets nor the numbers of the houses that they might live in, after two hours I was told at the office in the station, that without more precise information about the people they were unable to locate the desired addresses. I recall that previously in Vienna, you could, in the course of less than an hour obtain at the railroad stations, any particular address, by only presenting the name and the surname of the appropriate person who lived in Vienna.

After that I sat on a streetcar and traveled throughout the city as far as Kreschatuk. Along the route I observed the streets and the Ukrainian capital's Parliament Buildings, and tried to remember everything interesting that appeared before my eyes. At one location I descended and went to a dairy where I drank 2 liters of milk and ate a whole loaf of white bread, to allay my hunger. Then I walked throughout Kreschatuk and in one location I saw a scale near a wall on the sidewalk, and proceeded to weigh myself. It showed that during my stay in prison I had lost 24 kilograms of weight, as before my arrest in Lwow I weighed 92 kilograms. and now I weighed 68 kilograms.

In turn I began to look about the city, to compare it with what I observed in Kiev in January 1919, during my period of employment with the newspaper Directory. (As to my stay in Kiev it was never admitted to my investigators). During the times with the Directory all the signs on shops and institutions were changed from the Russian to the Ukrainian language. Now I saw Ukrainian signs everywhere, with the exception of All-Union establishments, where the signs were in Russian only. I also saw the Opera House where during the latter half of January 1919 a session of the Labor Congress was held, in which participated a large number of delegates from Galicia and Bukovina (Bukovina, a province in Southern Ukraine since renamed to Chernivtsi). I saw the university and the Shewchenko monument, saw the Russian drama theater named Lesia Ukrainka, and looked at remains of the Golden Gates, the St. Sophia's cathedral, and the Khmelnitsky square and monument, and many other dear to my heart Ukrainian monuments. Finally I came to Wolodymers hill and sat near St. Wolodymer's monument where I looked at the beautiful panoramic scene of the Dnieper River and both its shores.

What now pained and hurt me the most, was that, not noticing the Ukrainian signs on the shops and institutions, at every stop, coming from the lips of the older and the younger, I heard the Russian language. Whereas, about 20 years earlier, during the Directory times, one could hear the Ukrainian language somewhat more frequently. Also printed Komsomol announcements and all the Kiev sports clubs and their competitions, and other appearances which I read on the walls in the city and on different sign boards were only in the Russian language. Therefore, in an immeasurably short time, the Soviet authorities demonstrated that in the Ukrainian capital wide circles of the Ukrainian population and even the Ukrainian school youth would utilize the Russian language somewhat more than their own lineage. It was evident that it was more practical and did not present any problems. Beyond that, to me it was beyond explanation.

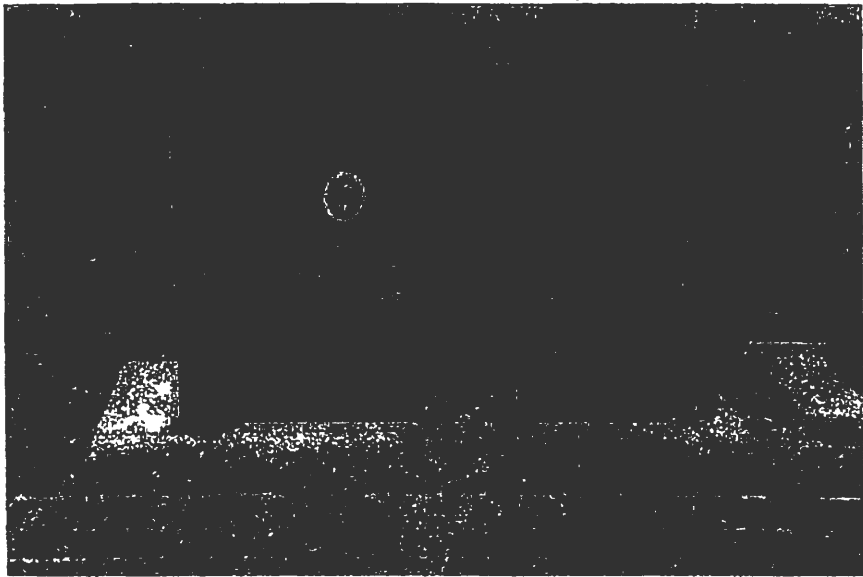
With sad thoughts I returned from the city to the train, and within an hour we were moving in the direction of Lwow. I began to think much about whether Lwow was experiencing the same extent of Russification of Ukrainians that I had observed in Kiev. Traveling on the train were also many military frontier guards and NKVD from Moscow, to "labor" on Western-Ukrainian lands. Along the route some of them spoke about the Ukrainian populations opposition against collectivization which was being enforced on our land by the new authority with the aid of those same uniformed personnel.

Amongst them they rebuked the Western-Ukrainian villagers who worked on such small patches of land, who did not want, he said, to agree to the sole dissolution of land transactions, that is, to collective farms, and to the satisfaction of their own situations.

I spent one more night on the train and on the dawn of May 15, 1941, we traveled through the old border on Zbruch River which separated Galicia from the USSR. It was a beautiful spring, and everything was in its fullest green. In Ternopil and at other stations along the route to Lwow it was possible to buy boiled eggs and small buns from the peasant women, from which the passengers benefited greatly, as beyond the Zbruch anything that good was not even evident. At various locations we observed the construction of a second railroad track, paralleling the old, endeavored by the Soviet authorities with immense amounts of labor and great haste in its construction. Thousands of exhausted villagers, from different adjoining countries throughout Galicia, dug the earth and hauled it with wagons or wheelbarrows and built a high embankment for the second track. Amongst them were villagers from the Volhyma districts, which could be recognized by their one-horse carts with their own particular arch for the horse. About the excavating and hauling of such masses of earth and the construction of such wide and high embankments, utilizing suitable machinery, as was customary in Germany and other states, not mentioning anything about the United States or Canada, there was no mention. Tortured were the people and tortured were the animals!

At about 3:00 in the afternoon our train arrived at the train railroad station in Lwow with a roar. I saw two large signs: Lwow, and Lwiw, but what first caught my eye was the sign: Lwow.

That was the 595th day from the time of my arrest in that Lwow.



# **595 Days**

## **A SOVIET PRISONER**



Lubyanka Prison Moscow May 1983

**By**

**Dr. IVAN NIMCHUK**