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The Stalin famine

**UKRAINE IN THE YEAR
1933**

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by

F. Pigiolo-Pravoberezhny

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J. B. LEWYCKYJ

HALIFAX

ENGLAND

**THE STALIN FAMINE
UKRAINE IN THE YEAR 1933.**



A girl lies by the wayside



An aged peasant has perished

YOUNG AND OLD PAY THE PRICE

THE STALIN FAMINE

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by

F. PIGIDO-PRAVOBEREZHNY

July 1953

With a Foreword

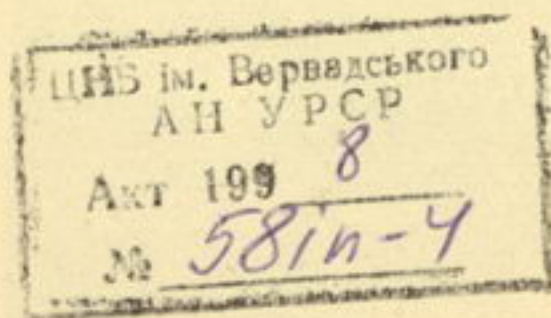
by

MOIRA ROBERTS

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To
my relatives and millions of compatriots who fell as
victims of the artificially created famine in Ukraine
in 1933, this work is dedicated by
the Author.

EDITOR'S NOTES.

1. **Place Names.** We regret that, owing to differences of alphabet as between Ukrainian and English, there may be variations in the spelling of place names. We have preferred to preserve spellings as submitted to us.

E. G. Charkiw (v) - Kharkov.

2. **Administrative areas.** Those in eastern Europe do not necessarily correspond to English ones. Thus a district is a large area including several divisions, and all of these are 'local authorities'. A division is an area within which each town and village is a unit, while a district is roughly comparable to an English 'county'. Several districts may comprise a region.

Contents

Foreword	11
Preface	13
 PART ONE: THE SETTING		
I. My Native Village	17
II. The 1917 Revolution	18
III. "War Communism" and N.E.P.	20
IV. Collectivisation	23
V. Again "One Step Backward"	27
VI. At the Ideological Front	30
 PART TWO: THE PLOT		
I. Stalin's Famine	33
 PART THREE: THE TRAGEDY		
I. Overstocked Moscow	47
II. The Final Act	50
III. The Unconquerable Peasant	56
IV. Even yet—Rebellion	58
V. Two Sides of the Picture	59
VI. The Aftermath	63
Supplement.	Appendix A. An Estimate of the Number of Famine Victims 65
	Appendix B. The Area of Arable Land and the Crops of Ukraine in 1932	66
	Appendix C. What is a Collective Farm?	67
Index of Ukrainian Place-Names	72

List of Illustrations

	Page
YOUNG AND OLD PAY THE PRICE	Frontispiece
1. A girl lies by the wayside	
2. An aged peasant has perished	
3. Dead peasant in Charkiv 	36
4. A waggon collects the dead bodies of the previous night	37
5. Hungry peasants in 1933 	39
6. Dispossessed peasants seeking work 	39
7. A 12 year old boy whose parents were deported	46
8. On the steps of a church	48
9. Communal graves 	50
10. Hunger death in the field 	51
11. A mass cemetery 	71

Foreword

This short book is written and published in memory of the grievous famine that almost drained the life-blood of Ukraine, twenty years ago, in 1933. The famine was engineered as part of the Soviet leaders' plan to eliminate opposition to their policies.

In these bleak days of economic fact and atomic threat, it is reassuring to consider the phenomenon of Ukraine—the survival in her people, through many centuries of external domination, not only of a thirst for independence, but also of a spirit eager and ready to acquire and be worthy of it. The notion of political freedom, of cultural autonomy, does not, as in many so-called 'colonies' and dependencies, merely offer to Ukrainians an outlet for the less responsible elements in the localities concerned, a hot-bed for the frustrated strivings of the "intellectual" indigene who has lost his native intuition in acquiring a foreign logic and an alien materialism. Rather is it true to say that the essentially self-reliant ways of these men and women of Ukraine who produce the world's food have remained incompatible with the hierarchical administrations of Russia, under whatever outward forms these have appeared. There is an all-or-none-ness in the Russian temperament which seems to suit state bureaucracy of one sort or another, but the Ukrainian does not withdraw part of himself from public affairs in this way: he is able to play a moderate role in many of the aspects of his social life, without burning to dominate or to immolate himself in any one particular field.

It is always wise to review those periods of contemporary history which are as yet hardly subjected to the scholastic research that is the creator of "the past". I have been very glad to correct and to some very small extent to re-arrange the present text, which is written in English by a Ukrainian. I have not wished to reduce the force of that writing by precise grammatical and syntactical adjustments, but merely to aid lucidity—enabling the unquestionable sincerity of the eye-witness to reach the British reader unimpeded by unfamiliar construction.

MOIRA ROBERTS

Preface

This year is the twentieth anniversary of one of the most tragic events in the history of the Ukrainian nation: the famine which in 1933 held the entire population of Ukraine in its clutches—the population, that is, of the most fertile land in the world, land which has through the ages been renowned as the “granary of Europe”. The famine raged also in certain areas of the Crimea as well as in the northern part of the Caucasus which is inhabited by Ukrainians.

Other countries have been grievously afflicted in the past by famine: Russia, which has occupied Ukraine for over 250 years, is one of such countries. But the famine in 1933, named by the people of Ukraine “the Stalin Famine”, was a special kind of famine. It was not brought about by a failure of crops or by any other straight-forward disaster: it was deliberately and artificially organised and planned by the Kremlin, as a means of intimidating, combating, and suppressing the recalcitrant Ukrainian peasant.

In organising the famine in Ukraine in 1933, the Kremlin had two aims: first, to drive the refractory peasants into collective farms, and in that way to turn them into slaves who would obediently serve the insane Communist idea of conquering the whole world; and second, and a very far-reaching aim, to cast at Moscow’s feet the freedom-loving Ukrainian nation which was and is hated by imperialistic Moscow. Thus would have been solved once and for all the entire Ukrainian question, and an end brought to the incessant struggle of the Ukrainian people for the preservation and development of their national culture and for economic and political independence. Although the Kremlin succeeded, at least partially, in attaining the first aim, the second one remained unachievable. The struggle of the Ukrainian nation for independence continues until today.

I shall now tell the story of the Stalin Famine in Ukraine, an event second to none in human history. I do not intend to present here a systematic and detailed treatise on the struggle of the Ukrainian people against the Bolshevik occupation: in this short essay I shall acquaint the reader merely with the events which took place in my native village and in other

neighbouring villages. I myself was a witness of most of these events. The happenings in my native village are characteristic of what occurred in tens of thousands of other villages in Ukraine and the Kuban, and in that way they provide to a certain extent a sample of the struggle of the Ukrainian people against the Russian Bolshevik occupation from 1918 to 1934, that is, until the time of the alleged completion of so-called "collectivisation".

Proof that the following narrative is not of my own mad dreaming, but is fact, can be found by the reader in the testimony given under oath by many witnesses of the tragedy. Much of this testimony has been published by Ukrainian newspapers on this side of the Iron Curtain; and similar evidence is being collected and published in the U.S.A., England, Australia, Germany, and other countries where Ukrainian refugees have settled.

In world literature, too, much evidence can be found about compulsory collectivisation and the famine. I can only note some of it here. The famous writer, A. Koestler, in an essay in the collection recently published under the title, *The God that Failed*, writes: "I saw the ravages of the famine of 1932-1933 in the Ukraine: hordes of families in rags begging at the railway stations, the women lifting up to the compartment window their starving brats which, with drumstick limbs, big cadaverous heads and puffed bellies, looked like embryos out of alcohol bottles; the old men with frost-bitten toes sticking out of torn slippers . . ."

Another political writer, William Henry Chamberlin, who was in the Soviet Union from 1922 to 1934 as a correspondent of the *Christian Science Monitor* published in Boston, writes in a Foreword to Harry Schwartz's *Soviet Russia's Economy* as follows: "One could search almost all Soviet publications in vain for references to such indisputable historical facts as the famine of 1932-33, the vast forced labour system. . ." And again: "At a terrible cost, including the deportation of hundreds of thousands of peasant families (kulaks), many murders and executions as reprisals, a tremendous famine in 1932-33, and the destruction of a large part of a nation's flocks, collective farming was imposed as a way of life on the Soviet peasants."

A German writer, Theodor Plivier, author of two recently published and famous war novels, *Leningrad* and *Moscow*, paints an especially glaring picture of the famine of 1932-33; he puts into the mouth of the peasant Shulga, one of the charact-

ers in the novel *Moscow*, the following words: "What a monstrous impudence. To think that a single man born of woman should rise against all people. . . and make famine his ally so as to achieve his aim that the peasant should lie at his feet like a worm. People speak of eight millions, even of ten millions, no-one counted them. . . We ate dogs, cats, bark of trees, we were swollen with hunger. . . Corpses lay everywhere and no-one buried them, no-one had strength enough to do that." The author declares again and again that the Russian Communists make use of hunger as "an essential means of Soviet rule."

Finally, Stalin himself, the instigator of the famine, bears testimony to the collectivisation nightmare. We find this in Winston S. Churchill's *Second World War*, vol. 4, book 2, chapter XXVIII. In August 1942, Churchill visited Moscow, and on August 15th, during a conversation with Stalin after many hours spent in consuming a richly prepared meal with choice wines, he asked Stalin this question:

"Tell me, have the stresses of this war been as bad to you personally as carrying through the policy of the Collective Farms?"

"Oh, no," Stalin answered, "the Collective Farm policy was a terrible struggle."

"I thought you would have found it bad," said Churchill, "because you were not dealing with a few score thousands of aristocrats or big landowners, but with millions of small men."

"Ten millions," said Stalin, holding up his hands, "It was fearful. Four years it lasted." And then later in the conversation he remarked: ". . . many of them agreed to come in with us. Some of them were given land of their own to cultivate in the province of Tomsk, or the province of Irkutsk or farther North, but the great bulk were very unpopular and were wiped out by their labourers." That is, they were wiped out by the N.K.V.D. police.

Properly speaking, the famine of 1933 was only one of the many stages in the long struggle waged by the Ukrainian peasants, as well as by nationally conscious workers and intellectuals, against Bolshevik occupation. The attack against the ruggedly individualistic villagers had already been launched in 1929 with the aim of driving them to collective farms. When the peasants refused to join the collective farms voluntarily, putting up a desperate resistance to the Kremlin's efforts to deprive them of their right to work freely, then the new slogan,

“the liquidation of the kurkul* as a class” was proclaimed by the Kremlin; and compulsory measures, including the pre-arranged famine, were applied to that end.

The famine of 1933 was the climax and the most tragic moment of all; it was the diabolical answer of the Kremlin to the inflexible struggle of the Ukrainian people for the right to their soil and for freedom to till it, for their native language and for an independent national existence.

Therefore I shall first present a short review of events in the fight against collectivisation, mainly as seen in my own native village—the fight, that is, against the compulsory imposition of communist forms of agriculture—and after that, I shall pass on to the famine itself.

* * *

* A “Kurkul” (in Russian “Kulak”) was a well-to-do peasant, before the Revolution the owner of from 5-10 hectares (one hectare - about 2½ acres). In sparsely inhabited prairie areas he might own from 15-30 hectares of land. The majority of them cultivated the soil with the help of their families, using hired labour only during the harvest. A very small number of kurkuls, the richest ones, could keep one or two farm labourers all the year round.

PART ONE

The Setting

I. My Native Village

My native village of Stayky, in the Rzhyshtchew division of Kiev district, differed little from other Ukrainian villages. It consisted of about one thousand farmhouses with a population of 6,500 persons. In the centre of the village there was a big three-story school built by the "zemstwo" (the district assembly), fine church, and a well-supplied dispensary. We were mostly small peasantry: the average holding would be five acres. About 30 peasants had from 20-25 arces, about 100 had 12-15 acres, and the rest 1-1½ acres. The system of economy existing at that time, the great distances from large towns, the absence of adequate roads and other means of communication, did not allow producers to sell their vegetables, dairy produce and cattle at a town market, so that the smaller plots of land could not yield their owners a tolerable standard of living. A large number of village dwellers, therefore, had to look for some additional source of income, and this was found mostly in the goods traffic on the Dniepr river. This was seasonal work. People would leave their homes in early spring, one or two weeks before the ice broke, and would come back when the Dniepr froze. They worked as raft pilots, as helpers and sailors on barges and ships, and some of them became chiefs of barges, or mates and even captains on other craft.

Far be it from me to idealise village life in Ukraine or in Russia before the Revolution. Russia was "the Prison of Nations"; her rule implied mass illiteracy, the subjugation and oppression of nationalities, anti-Jewish pogroms, and so on.

Our children did not hear a word in their native language at the schools, which were turned into Russification mills—of course, without success. Besides enormous estates—up to 90% of the land being in the hands of Russian and Polish landlords—we had peasantry with but small holdings, or even without any land at all. At the head of the state there was an autocrat with an immense bureaucracy known throughout the world for its wilfulness, arbitrariness, and corruption. All this could not but promote the growth of opposition and resistance among the masses of the population, and explains why the Tsarist Empire broke to pieces so easily under the violent revolutionary blow it received during World War I.

II. The 1917 Revolution

In the bloody imperialistic war of 1914-1917 my village lost 15 young men who were killed and 20 who came home crippled, but that other "bloodless" war, the so-called "proletarian revolution", was paid for by my village with almost three thousand victims in the period from 1918 up to the beginning of World War II: this number is made up of those who were killed, who died of hunger, who were tortured to death in the polar slave labour camps, or who disappeared without leaving any trace.

With the March Revolution of 1917 and the subsequent downfall of the Tsarist regime, there followed the Ukrainian National Revolution which liberated Ukraine after almost three hundred years of Russian Occupation. The Ukrainian Central Council (the Parliament) and the Ukrainian Government were established in Kiev. The administration, the schools, the Church, the army and the police shook off Russian shackles; Ukraine rose up, stood upon her own feet and breathed freely at last. On November 7th. 1917, in Petersburg, and later in Moscow, power was seized by the Communists. The fear of losing Ukraine with her fertile soil and mineral wealth kept sleep from the eyes of the new red imperialists. So masses of hungry Bolsheviks and down-and-outs were sent to fight the young Ukrainian State. Ukrainian towns and villages were flooded with thousands of communist agents. Their slogans, "peace to the huts—war to the palaces", "land to the peasants—factories to the workers", and "rob what was robbed from you", echoed everywhere.

The Ukrainian War of Defence against these Bolshevik bands that, under the command of Muravyof, attacked the Ukraine at the order of the "revolutionary" Petrograd regime in January 1918, continued for three years. Without any support from the Western Powers, without ammunition and weapons, without any drugs to combat frequent epidemics such as typhus, cholera, dysentery and so on, the Ukrainian National Republic was not able to withstand the pressure from the Eastern aggressor. The main part of the regular Ukrainian Army was compelled on November 21st. 1920, to withdraw to Polish territory where it was interned. The Government of the Ukrainian National Republic emigrated at the same time. But armed resistance against the Russian Communist occupation did not stop. It took the form of a National Partisan War and continued up till 1924.

Intelligent peasants and most of the village intellectuals understood well enough from the very beginning the hypocrisy of the communist slogans that outwardly appeared so tempting. At that time not much attention was paid to those people. But as early as 1919 the vast majority of the peasants understood clearly the meaning of the "common kettle", and resistance to Red Moscow grew spontaneously. Partisan skirmishes and powerful uprisings spread over the whole country.

One such uprising flared up in my district, which included the large territory from Kiev to Obushkiw, down to Wasyliw and Pereyaslav. Great masses of peasants armed with strong iron or beech forks, with axes and scythes, some of them with sawed-off rifles and even machine guns—later on with guns taken away from the Reds—rushed into the woods and other hiding places from which they made incessant sallies against the Communists. The organizer and commander of the partisans in our district was Zeleny, whose real name was Danylo Terpylo; he came from the small town Trypilla, about 40 miles south of Kiev. On one occasion a whole regiment (about 4,000) made up of Kiev communist youths was cut to pieces and utterly annihilated by Zeleny's partisans. Only one boy, a Jew, Nisha Fastovsey, was able to escape alive. My wife's brother, who took part in that fight, told me all about the massacre of the young communists. The Bolsheviks in their official history have named the battle as the "Trypilla Tragedy".

No sooner had one uprising been suppressed with sword and fire, than another one flared up in some other county or district. In the dense woods of the Trypillia-Obukhiw-Kozyn triangle a large detachment of insurgents was encamped and kept annoying the communist occupiers for almost three years. The partisans

would appear where they were least expected, would exterminate small communist detachments, extirpate all local Soviet supporters, burn stores of grain, and disappear suddenly—but only to appear again in some other corner of the country or district. For a long time Soviet rule existed only in large towns and cities; in the villages it was but nominal. And yet the long and bloody period of the imposition of Soviet rule on the villages, the period of “taming the Ukraine”, was started. “Revolutionary Committees”, “Committees of the Poor”, and communist youth organisations (Comsomol) were formed in villages and towns; while from Headquarters in Moscow came continuous “food delivery orders”, carried out by supply detachments and punitive expeditions composed of Russian Red Guards, which already here and there included a number of our local communists.

III. “War Communism” and N.E.P.

In 1920-1921 we had the famous “War Communism” and with it plenty of requisitions and compulsory “contributions”, accompanied by the efforts of the Moscow rulers to pacify and subdue the Ukrainian villages. It was not an easy task. When once, for instance, a food requisitioning plenipotentiary came to our village, he was shot. Soon afterwards a punitive expedition arrived; it consisted of a group of cavalymen under the command of Romanenko. Five of our men were shot by them, ten others arrested and taken away. A new plenipotentiary arrived. On the third day he was found dead together with some of his assistants. Again a punitive expedition, again a new plenipotentiary who was murdered, and so on in a vicious circle. A large cemetery with the graves of the plenipotentiaries and other communists murdered in the village spread over the meadow by the windmill. After 1925 that cemetery became a sort of rostrum and meeting place on May days and the anniversaries of the November Revolution.

The economics of “War Communism”, which destroyed all private initiative, brought about a catastrophe. Factories stood still. In the cities only Party bosses* had enough food and

* The author’s word here and elsewhere is “bonz”, meaning locally boss of an evil type. Thus a gangster boss would be “bonz”, an employer a “boss.”—Ed.

even wine at their disposal. The workers and officials were lucky if they got a little porridge for dinner. There were no goods for sale in the markets. The peasants could get nothing in exchange for their produce: no clothing, no shoes, no ploughs. Instead, all produce was snatched away from them by the Bolshevik plenipotentiaries without payment. The result was that the peasant grew only as much food as he needed for himself and his family. With his own hands he started to make shirts, clothing, shoes and other necessities. It was a form of "passive resistance".

The hunger of 1921 which claimed about two million victims in the whole Soviet Union was the result of the "War Communism." Ukraine, in spite of being until that time the "granary" of Russia and of Europe, suffered hunger too. The drought of that year was only a supplementary cause of the hunger. The primary causes were the communist requisitions and the peasant's "passive resistance". Of course, the communists would not aid the sufferers. Even the relief sent by Hoover's A.R.A. was diverted, thanks to Party organization, to the further benefit of the Party men, who were suffering no hunger at all.

To avert a complete catastrophe and the breakdown of the revolution, the New Economic Policy (N.E.P.) was inaugurated by the Bolsheviks in 1921. Its aims were: first, by restoring a large measure of individual initiative to the peasants, manufacturers and merchants in economic development, to revive the industry and agriculture of the country, which because of the Civil War, "War Communism" and requisitions had been utterly ruined; and secondly, to take advantage of this "breathing space" to strengthen Soviet power locally by organizing everywhere a powerful apparatus of coercion. It was a foxy "one step backward" in order soon to take "two steps forward" in accordance with a favourite slogan of the Russian Communists.

Actually a great revival in the country was to be observed in connection with the launching of N.E.P. Thousands of small industrial establishments and artisans' workshops, as well as privately-owned stores, were opened in the cities. Consumers', as well as agricultural and loan, co-operatives began to grow rapidly in the villages. Loans granted to farmers from local funds, as well as by the newly established central Farmer's Bank, greatly stimulated the regeneration of an agriculture that had been smothered by "War Communism." Co-operative dairies and grain cleaning enterprises, oil-pressing mills and other undertakings for re-making and refining agricultural products were opened in

almost every village, as well as great numbers of privately-owned shops. After four years of N.E.P.—which released private energy and initiative for creative work—fields were blooming, the amount of live-stock had increased immensely, there was plenty of bread and fats, consumer goods appeared in the markets and necessities were available for everybody.

But the Kremlin rulers were not wasting their time, either. Throughout this period there were preparations for the “two steps forward”. After Lenin’s death in 1924, Stalin seized supreme power and the general offensive against the powers of resistance was launched.

Everything began to roll now in an opposite direction. Financial inspectors began to turn the tax screw tighter and tighter. Private industrial and commercial establishments started failing one after another, and their places were taken by branches of government-owned and government-controlled establishments. In villages, associations for common tilling of the soil and then for collective farms (kolhosps*) were formed. Individual farmers could get no more loans from co-operatives or from the Farmers’ Bank. In their stead the newly formed agricultural communes and kolhosps were flooded by large loans. Well-trained leaders, mostly from Russia, were imported into Ukraine. They were generally workers from workshops and, of course, members of the Communist Party. They did not know anything about agriculture and by their ignorant decisions they usually ruined what progress the local peasants had managed to make. But they were trusted by the Kremlin—and that alone counted. They were put at the head of the local administration in a typically communist way: a meeting of the peasants was called to hold elections; the imported candidate for the local chairmanship of the village council made a speech; then the delegate of the Party District Committee nominated the candidate in the name of a group of Party members. Casting threatening looks into the faces of those assembled, he would ask:

“Who is against the Party proposal?”

* “Kolhosp”, in Russian “Kolkhoz”, is a collective farm where all implements, domestic animals, etc. are collective property. The land belongs to the State. Dairy produce is common property. The producer—the kolhosp worker—receives pay for his work calculated according to “workdays” at the end of the year. The pay is very low. Individual members have small parcels of land for their own use; each may keep one cow, and calves and poultry in limited quantities. See Appendix C of the Supplement for further details.

If you voted against the "Party proposal", you had then to step upon the speaker's rostrum and explain your vote. Naturally, everything you said was put down in black and white. So there were no votes against the "Party proposal", and the imported candidate was elected "unanimously". . . .

IV. Collectivisation

The Soviet government took good advantage of N.E.P., the years of the "breathing space", in order to strengthen its grip on the population, especially in the villages. During those years many thousands of communist cells and communist youth branches were formed in cities, towns and villages; a huge apparatus, the "Workers' and Peasants' Militia" was organized; the whole country was wrapped in a dense net of public and secret police agents; an army of hundreds of thousands of specially trained soldiers for "combating the counter-revolution" was built up. Now was the time for taking "two steps forward."

Having strengthened its forces sufficiently, the Kremlin proclaimed the slogan "Liquidation of the Kurkul* as a Class", but, in fact, the attack was launched against the peasants as a whole. The well-to-do peasants or kurkuls were considered by the Soviet Government to be the basic and most dangerous enemies of Communism, particularly of collectivisation. In Ukraine, in addition, these men formed the hotbed of Ukrainian national spirit and traditions. Therefore a general crusade against them was decided upon. It began in the early spring of 1929.

As soon as the peasants had paid their tax in kind (the food tax), the richer ones were notified that they would have to pay an additional one, the so-called "expert tax", that is, the tax which was supposed to have been calculated according to the paying capacity of each individual farm. The peasant sold his hog, then his cow, and paid the tax. Within a week a new "expert tax" was levied on him, this time still higher than the previous one. This tax having been paid, the third one came, and then a fourth one, if the peasant was still able to pay. If not, then the police appeared at his home and all his chattels were sequestered, taken away and sold. The peasant with his family was sent to Siberia. His land was added to the collective farm land. In this way, in my village, nearly one hundred peasant families

* See note to page 16 above.

were sent to the Vologda forests in the North. They were allowed to take with them nothing but the merest necessities—clothing and some food.

“Dekurkulization” (dispossession and deportation) was being executed by special brigades formed of imported Russian, as well as local, communists and activists. The brigades, accompanied by detachments of N.K.V.D. and militia, went from one farm-house to another with lists prepared in advance, driving out the “kurkuls” and their families, including babies and old people as well. Half-clad and, as usual, barefooted children were thrown out into the yards like dogs, although it was winter and a very cold winter at that, and then taken to the railway station. Here all of them were stuffed into freight cars, which were not heated, and, accompanied by a strong guard, they were taken far away beyond the Urals to Siberia, or to the Vologda, Archangelsk or Murmansk region in the North. It is therefore no wonder that as a result of such transportation at least 15 to 20 % of those deported, particularly children, died on the way before reaching their destination. Their corpses were thrown out of the cars into the snow-drifts.

In this way W., a sixteen-years-old boy, was deported with his dekurkulized parents to Vologda. Next summer, however, he and four other young boys succeeded in escaping from the camp. After many adventures and much suffering he found himself at last in Bavaria (Germany) in a DP camp. Here he told me much about Vologda. He said that in the winter of 1930 not less than 250,000 of the exiled were placed in Vologda, and in the forest triangle of Murmansk-Archangelsk-Vologda-Kotlas. There were approximately 6 million. “On arriving in Vologda”, related W., “we were literally stuffed like sardines into St. Mary’s Church. The church was not heated although the cold reached 40 degrees Celsius. The sanitary conditions were awful. The sick old people and children relieved themselves in the church. The dead ones lay there until the next morning. Dozens of people died daily in our church. During March, April and May, nearly 25,000 children died in all the churches in Vologda . . . In May my mother and sister died. In the spring, typhus took thousands of victims. The people were dying like flies in the fall. . . Many of the deported tried to flee, but most of them were caught and sent back to the camps.”

In the period of the dekurkulization about 5,000,000 peasant farms were ruined. At least 20 million people were thus deprived of their means of living and deported, usually to forced labour camps in the North or East.

After the kurkuls, the turn of the "sub-kurkuls" came in the spring, of, that is, nationally-conscious, poor Ukrainian peasants and village intellectuals; now they were snatched away and carried into the unknown. Then the "kurkul supporters" followed, and finally simply "class enemies" and "enemies of the people." This "purgative" work by the N.K.V.D. continued until the outbreak of World War II. In this period also the arrests and deportations swelled from time to time to mass proportions. These planned campaigns for slave workers coincided as a rule with the starting of some "cyclopean" construction work, for instance the White Sea Canal or the Volga Moscow Rivers Canal, for the realisation of which many millions of unpaid slave labourers as well as a huge technical personnel were needed.

Here is one example of the recruiting of slave labourers. I remember it well, it was at the beginning of 1931. A N.K.V.D. plenipotentiary came to our village from the local land administration. He spoke for a long time with the chairman of the local soviet in a separate room. The chairman was a candidate for Party membership. He was my neighbour and, a few days later, becoming frank with me after several drinks, he related to me his secret conversation with his visitor.

"Comrade Starovoyt", said the N.K.V.D. messenger, "your village has to deliver a quota of 50 kurkuls".

"Where shall I get them from?", asked my neighbour. "You know that all the kurkuls have been deported from our village."

"I don't care, I have the order."

"But you know, comrade plenipotentiary, that in our village only poor peasants are left; where then shall I take kurkuls from?"

"Well, if you don't know where to get them from, I shall have to find them myself. But be careful, you might be sorry later", threatened the agent.

"I can't help it. You may look for them yourself. I really don't know where to find kurkuls for you."

"But I know where to find them. You will be the first one on the list. Your father-in-law will be the second one, and the rest I shall find in a similar way without your help. Let me have the list of the inhabitants of the village."

The agent took the list of the inhabitants and on a sheet of paper began to write down the names of the "kurkuls". The first one on the list was the chairman of the local soviet, the next that of his father-in-law.

"Which peasants in your village were in Zeleny's partisan bands in 1919?" asked the agent.

"You know very well, comrade plenipotentiary, that the whole village was with Zeleny, the old as well as the young ones."

"That's very good. See that there are fifty names on the list by tomorrow. If you find fifty of them, you can drop your name and that of your father-in-law. Get busy if you don't want to perish in Kolyma."

Next morning the N.K.V.D. agent had a list of fifty "kurkuls" . . .

To exert a continuous pressure upon the village, a special army of agitators, the so-called "Twenty-five Thousand", was organized out of city communists, and detachments of that army were sent to various villages to take care of collectivisation work. Special brigades for agitation were formed out of the local elements; while, in order to strengthen their authority and at the same time to drive a wedge between the peasants and the village intellectuals, all teachers and dispensary workers were compelled to join the brigades. The agitation for collective farms was increased immensely, but it did not help much. The peasants listened to the speakers, but did not join the kolhosp. Then further pressure, including terror, was applied.

Here is one example of the method of "recruiting" for the kolhosp. The chairman of the local soviet in Hermaniwka (not far from my village), a certain Nikiforow—a Party member imported from the Moscow district—went through the village to conduct propaganda work for the kolhosp. He came up to a peasant who was not yet in the kolhosp, sent his family out of the room and began to talk to the man.

"Well, what do you say, Kindrat, are you going to join our kolhosp?" said Nikiforow, knocking upon the table with his gun. Kindrat muttered something, did not refuse categorically, but he did not sign the declaration.

"Will you sign it? Better hurry up, I have not much time to lose, I must visit many others."

"Well, you know, comrade Nikiforow, I am not against the kolhosp . . . But you know it is not for me . . . My health . . ."

"Sign it right here, I advise you", insisted Nikiforov, pushing the declaration closer to Kindrat. "If you don't sign it, then get ready to go to Siberia together with your family." Rising from his seat he added in a commanding voice: "The transport for Siberia leaves tomorrow afternoon. You are not al-

lowed to take anything from your home. You will get everything there."

Dekurkulizations and deportations, the extreme arbitrariness of the local executioners, cruel terror and the above mentioned methods of pressure succeeded in driving a large number of peasants to the kolhosp.

V. Again "One Step Backward"

But the screw was pressed too tightly, the Party bosses evidently went too far, and the terror reached too large dimensions. In addition to that, news was coming through from Murmansk, Archangelsk and Siberia telling about the death of great masses of the expropriated and deported peasants and their children. All that sent the temperature up to boiling point in the villages. There was danger that the peasants in a moment of anger and despair might dare anything. The situation in Ukraine and in several regions of Russia was such that at any moment one could expect a spontaneous general uprising.

The Kremlin evidently became scared to death by such prospects and Stalin again took "one step backward". He wrote an article under the title "Dizzy with Success", which was published in *Pravda* on March 2, 1930, in which we read: "Who benefits by these distortions, this bureaucratic decreeing of the kolhosp movement, these unseemly threats against the peasants? Nobody but our enemies. What may these distortions lead to? To the strengthening of our enemies and the discrediting of the idea of the collective farm movement." The order was issued by the Kremlin "to stop" and even "to retreat". Peasants were actually allowed to withdraw from the kolhosp if they so wished. And many peasants took advantage of that supposedly new turn in the collective farm policy of the Kremlin. Between March 1st. and May 1st. 1930, the number of peasant households belonging to the kolhosp dropped from about 14,000,000 to about 5,800,000. There took place at that time the famous "Women's Rebellion" in the area comprising the southern part of Ukraine and the Kuban. Within 48 hours most of the kolhosps were looted by the women who had belonged to them.

That was not all. Orders were sent to the northern forests (Murmansk, Archangelsk, Vologda) and to Siberia, that the children of the dekurkulized should be returned to their villages. Special commissions began examining the complaints of

the expropriated against the arbitrariness of the local authorities. Delegates, especially designated for that purpose, brought back from exile the children who had been forcibly taken away from the dekurkulized. The children were placed in the homes of their relatives or of some other "good people." Many of them, particularly the older ones, were scattered over all the territory of Ukraine and the Crimea, filling up cadres of homeless children and colonies of "youthful criminals".

In the campaign against "Dizzy with Success" the local leaders of the Party as well as of the soviets and kolhosps were not spared in their turn. Many of them were arrested and thrown into jail for "deviation from the Party line". It was done, to be sure, for the purpose of showing the people that the local executors were to be blamed for everything that had happened, not the "leader and teacher" who takes good care of his people, protecting them against the domination of both small and great satraps, and against various types of deviation. That is one of the most characteristic moves of the Kremlin tyrant in his domestic as well as foreign policy: when some of the Kremlin's measures evoke too sharp a reaction, when it is necessary to retreat a little in some matter, then, for the preservation of the authority of the Kremlin and its leader—who, as is known, can never make and never does make any mistakes—and at the same time for the purpose of increasing that authority still more, a hysterical noise is raised about local bosses having "bent the club" too much and heads begin to roll.

Very soon came proof that the latest move in regard to collective farming was only a provisional and temporary tactical move, "one step backward" in order to be able to take "two steps forward". The best proof, indeed, is the premeditated famine of 1933 of which I shall speak shortly. Meanwhile other measures were being taken. First of all solicitude for the existing collective farms maintained at Government expense was increased to the extreme. Almost unlimited loans and subsidies were granted to them, supplying them exclusively with agricultural machinery, seeds, etc. On the other hand, the taxation screw in relation to individual farmers, which actually differed from confiscation only in form, was also tightened to the extreme. New pressure upon the peasants was taking various forms, including provocation even by such "big guns" as Molotov himself. The following story about Molotov was told me in Germany by my good friend L. W., a D.P., a former officer in the Red Army, who was a peasant in his earlier years and later an electrician.

Pishtchanka, a village in the Newmoscow county division of Zaporozhe district in Ukraine, was one of the areas of the more cruel collectivisation practices in 1929-30. After Stalin's famous letter about "Dizzy with Success", all the peasants who had been forced to join the kolhosp withdrew from it, leaving behind them a part of their agricultural implements and cattle. There remained in the kolhosp a small group of loafers, mostly "activists" and Party members. The kolhosp would have died a natural death had it not been artificially fed by the Government with loans both in money and in kind, and supported in all other possible ways. In 1930-31 the situation of the kolhosp was hopeless. At that moment Molotov visited Pishtchanka, stopping there on his tour through Ukraine. He at once ordered the arrest of the local and divisional Party workers responsible for evil practices. It caused a great sensation. He called a meeting in the house of a peasant named Bilous, not in the public meeting house. In his speech he thundered against the local Party leaders who had broken the Party line in collective farm policy, assured the listeners that according to Lenin-Stalin principles, collectivisation must be voluntary, stressed the superiority of collective over individual farming, and finally advised and exhorted the peasants to join the kolhosp. There would be no more arbitrary force applied against the peasants, he assured them. The peasants, encouraged by Molotov's speech, opened their hearts and mouths. One after another took the floor and told the story of his intolerable suffering, of the cruel exploits and practices of the local soviet and Party leaders. On leaving the village Molotov was given a warm send-off. The farmers did not think any more of joining the kolhosp; on the contrary, they were sure that now they would be able to till their own parcels of land peacefully, without Party bosses and other scum interfering with them. Was it not Molotov himself who spoke against compulsion and arrested their tormentors? . . .

What a cruel awakening awaited them! A few days later news came to the village that all leaders arrested by Molotov's order had been set free. A week later a detachment of police came to the village and five of the speakers at the Molotov meeting were snatched away; within a month all the other speakers, including the widow Shkoda who had been very talkative at the meeting, were arrested, taken away and nobody has seen them again. Five small children of the widow Shkoda were scattered to the care of "good people". The communist principle of stopping short of nothing for the attainment of one's ends was well demonstrated in the methods of inquiry adopted by that arch-executioner Molotov.

VI. At the Ideological Front

The "breathing space" after Stalin's letter on "Dizzy with Success" was also exploited by communists to make advances on the "ideological" front. Public reading rooms and communal houses were taken over by the Party and by communist youth organizations. Teachers and other intellectuals were pushed aside because they were not to be trusted in questions of public education. The Party now demanded an aggressive communist spirit in cultural and educational work among the masses, as, for instance, the compulsory learning of the Russian language. The peasants' answer to such new measures was to boycott them.

In schools children were organized into groups of "Octobrists" and "Pioneers". Participation in those organisations soon became compulsory. The children were now taught that there was no God; that religion was "the opium of the people"; that they, the children, were the bearers of the revolution, not their fathers; that leadership in life belonged to them, to the pioneers; that they should not obey their parents who were enemies of the revolution; that they must inform their group-leaders about their fathers' conversation and about their counter-revolutionary deeds; that they, children, were the guardians of the revolution and therefore they must track down and help to expose all deviationists, fascist spies, and other enemies of the people. Thus new cadres of informers were being reared, thus the Soviet leaders were endeavouring to disrupt the family, to implant in young people's minds a taste for eavesdropping, spying and denunciation.

Anti-religious propaganda was elevated to become a most important department in communist educational work. Anti-religious lectures were regularly given in communal houses. These lectures, of course, were not based on any scientific or philosophical arguments; they consisted only of vulgar, mean, and brutal mud-slinging and ridicule of the religious canons and the religious customs of the people, rather in the style of the atheistic Soviet poet Demyan Byedny. "Religious carnivals" were arranged on the more important holidays in order to interfere with the celebration of High Mass in churches. Comsomols (communist youth groups) masked as God-the-Father, St. Mary, and angels, as well as devils with horns and long tails, marched through the streets to the accompaniment of cacophonous music, often entering churches during Mass, dancing there and singing shameless anti-religious songs and finally firing off their pistols in the air to strengthen the "psychological effect".

Another aspect of the anti-religious campaign was the pressure exerted by the local authorities with the support of the Central bodies upon the church buildings which were now the property of the State. The faithful had to pay rent to the State if they wished to use the church as their House of Prayer. The story was the same with the church rent as with the land tax: it was raised more and more until the possibility of payment no longer existed. At that moment the church was closed by the Soviet authorities. Fairly soon it was opened again, this time not as a Temple of God, but as a store for grains, vegetables, and fruit. In this way, the fate of the church in my own village was sealed. A few months after its closing by the Soviet officials for non-payment of taxes, it was pulled down (it was built of wood) and the materials were used for building a large communal house in which the local soviet, the Party branch, comsomol and the public reading room were located.

The work of the organisation known as "The Atheists" was considerably strengthened and broadened. Workers and office personnel had to join that organisation if they did not want to be accused of counter-revolution and Petlurism*. Monthly contributions to the organisation of "The Atheists" were obligatory in the same way as were membership dues to the trade unions, or subscription to the compulsory "Five Year Plan" annual loans.

In addition to this "ideological" anti-religious campaign, inspired baiting of the priests took place. Priests generally were accused of anti-Soviet propaganda, of counter-revolution, and as the "enemies of the people" many were sent to Siberia or other slave camps in the North, or exterminated in other ways.

In Ukraine the attitude of the Bolsheviks toward the church was particularly cruel. If in religion generally the communists saw "the opium of the people", in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church they saw something more subtle and dangerous. The regenerated (after its de-Russification) Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church was for Moscow first of all a *Ukrainian* church preserving Ukrainian rites and customs and embodying the striving and ideals of a freedom-loving people.

At the end of 1926 the Ukrainian church had 32 bishops, about 3,000 priests, and 2,160 church communities with more than 6 million members. There were in Ukraine about 700 Communist Party cells with about 300,000 members in 1933; in 1926 the figure must have been much less. To be sure, on the eve of the general attack upon the property-loving village, and especially

* See note to page 38.

upon Ukrainian culture and the very existence of the Ukrainian nation as such, the Soviet rulers could not suffer such a situation any longer. That explains the unparalleled sadistic cruelty with which the occupying Bolshevist authorities liquidated the Ukrainian church—the priests and the faithful. Out of 10,657 priests ordained within the ten years of the existence of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church there were left alive literally only a few dozen; of the bishops only two survived, and they are the present Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church in the U.S.A, Ioan Teodorovych, and the present Ukrainian Orthodox bishop in Chicago, Hryhory Ohiychuk. All the others were sent to their everlasting rest in torture chambers of the N.K.V.D., or in the North Siberian forests.

Throughout cities and towns churches were ruined and priests liquidated in the same way. Churches by the dozen were blasted into the air, including such famous monuments as the Desyatynna Church in Kiev, whose history dates from the time of Prince Wolodymyr the Great (10th century), at well as the equally renowned Mykolayivsky and Bratsky Monasteries. By 1935 in Kiev, which had had hundreds of churches, only two small churches were left active: the Ilinska Church in the suburb Podola, and the Solomyanska Church. Six or seven cathedrals were also left—to be soon transformed into “museums”. What kind of museums they really were could be seen from the condition in which the famous Wolodymyr Cathedral in Kiev was found, whose mural paintings by such world-famous artists as Wasnetsow, Wrubel, and others were almost completely ruined under “socialist vigilance”. The same thing happened to the Spaso-Preobrazhensky Monastery in Novgorod-Siversk: it was half ruined and the splendid old wall paintings of the church were smeared over with lime or paint. The name “museum” was perhaps vindicated by the fact that the Bolsheviks kept under lock and key in the cathedral those museum pieces—rare indeed among the Ukrainian population—potatoes and grain.

* * *

Such were the ways and means of exploiting the “breathing space” after the publication of Stalin’s “Dizzy with Success” article in March 1930. Meanwhile in the Kremlin fox lairs a new weapon against the inflexible and indomitable Ukrainian peasantry was being forged, a new plan for breaking Ukrainian resistance was being plotted: *this was Stalin’s intentionally planned Ukrainian famine in 1933*. How it was brought about I shall relate in the next chapter.

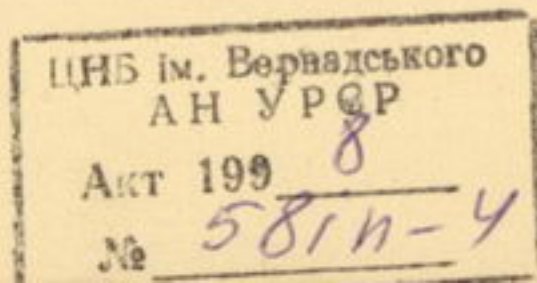
PART TWO

The Plot

Stalin's Famine

It must be stated clearly here that in what was ethnographically Russia as well as in other parts of the Soviet Union resistance to communism occurred also from time to time in the form of fierce and bloody struggles. There, too, the uprisings continued for many years. The collectivisation and "dekurkulization" (the expropriation of the well-to-do peasants) was accompanied by cruel and bloody terror. And yet, up to 1932, in most of the Russian districts collectivisation, on the whole, was achieved. Only large masses of the peasants of Ukraine and the Ukrainian population of the North Caucasus (Kuban) offered stubborn resistance to all attempts of the Kremlin in this direction.

But in the year 1932, the Kremlin tyrant resolved to take a last decisive step in order to subdue the Ukrainian peasants and to drive them all into kolhosps. He was firmly determined to harness all peasants to the yoke of communism, for he knew that without such harnessing all the bolshevist plans for the industrialization of the country, i. e. for the preparation of the next war, could not be realised. For the Kremlin fanatics there were two alternatives: either to subdue the elemental possessive impulses of the village and thus gain about a million new slaves, and thus enable an advance toward Communist domination of the world; or, failing this, sooner or later to start moving backward, which would mean an unavoidable catastrophe for themselves.



During the breathing space of nearly two years, from the moment of the publication of the famous "Dizzy" letter by Stalin in 1930 until 1932, there was being hatched in the secret lurking places of the Kremlin a terrible, devilish, inhuman plan that was intended to smash with one blow the peasants of Ukraine and the Kuban—this time finally and irrevocably. In agreement with the known communist principle that "the end justifies the means," no matter how cruel and bloodthirsty those means might be, the Kremlin decided upon using a means of compulsion unheard of in human history up till now, namely the depriving of more than 40 million peasants of Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus of all foodstuffs, and with the help of the ensuing artificial famine to humble the disobedient "khakhol" (the contemptuous Russian name for the Ukrainian peasants) and to stampede them into kolhosps.

The organization of the famine was worked out very carefully in advance. That could be seen from the fact that even spring sowing reserves, which were always kept in the special granaries of each kolhosp, were this time as early as the autumn of 1932 carried away to granaries in large cities, mostly outside the boundaries of Ukraine. This was done, no doubt, for the purpose of preserving the sowing reserves which in the event of widespread hunger could be plundered by the peasants. In the spring of 1933 the sowing reserves were brought back to kolhosps under strong guards of the special G.P.U. police detachments. But since the reserves were brought back with considerable delay, in spite of a large quantity of sowing, the kolhosps had but little profit that year from their spring sowing.

In August 1932, notices were sent to each farm about the quota ("the norm") of produce, that is, of grains, vegetables etc., to be delivered by each individual peasant. Those quotas were fulfilled by most of the peasants. But in October my village was alarmed by the frightful news that an additional food delivery quota would be imposed. And, in fact, within a week, some district officials came to the village with the announcement that an additional delivery of food would have to be made by individual farmers, namely, a further half of the basic quota. Everyone was buzzing round with dissatisfaction like bees in a disturbed beehive . . . The richer peasants delivered their additional quotas, the poorer ones started to hide their scanty provisions. They hid them in barns, under their ovens—for indeed what other hiding places could they find? Then the plenipotentiaries for food collecting—or rather for food extortion—arrived in the village. The local brigades of comsomols and activists were cal-

led out. General searching followed. Comsomol brigades armed with iron bars, prepared especially for that purpose, accompanied by militia and members of the N.K.V.D., went from one peasant to another, overturning and ransacking everything in pantries, trunks, in lofts and cellars, tearing away the floors in pantries, knocking and beating with hammers at ovens, walls and floors. In the living rooms, barns and gardens, they examined carefully every inch of ground and walls to see if perchance any foodstuff was hidden there. From time to time they found some.

At the beginning of January 1933, one more schedule, the third one that season, for the delivery of agricultural produce was announced. Collection of scraps of food continued until spring. Everything fit for consumption was being snatched away, even old oil cakes that were kept for cows. A one-litre bottle of millet groats was found hidden under my cousin's barn, and it was taken away. Three or four kilograms of buckwheat groats were buried under my neighbour's cupboard—comsomol found it and removed it also.

In the neighbouring town, Obushkiw, the brigade visited a farmer, a former butcher, who at that time was a widower with five small children. They searched his house very carefully. A few miserable scraps were found and taken. The leader of the brigade persistently urged the farmer to reveal where he had hidden his barrel of fat. The peasant swore that there was not a bit of fat in his house; he added that he had sold it long ago to pay his taxes. But the commander would not believe it; he shouted to his N.K.V.D. companions standing outside to arrest the peasant. The peasant then turned his face toward the ikons on the wall, crossed himself, made the sign of the Cross on the huddled group of kids by the oven, and, seizing the broad heavy butcher's axe in his hands, swung it deftly on to the commander's skull. The butcher was a very strong man—God rest his soul . . .

The food requisitions were called by the Ukrainian peasants the sweeping of the "red broom". And indeed, with extreme scrupulousness and toughness the "red broom" was sweeping away everything. Very few persons succeeded in hiding any food. Hunger in the villages was the unavoidable sequel. There was no bread left there at all. The miserable remainders of potatoes and other vegetables were consumed before Christmas and then people began to eat anything they could get hold of in order to still the pangs of hunger. They cut straw into chaff and together with husks and bark crushed it in a mill. All this was mixed with potatoes or potato peel and out of that mixture

“bread” was baked. Cats, mice and dogs were now articles of food, and when spring came, frogs, snails, ground squirrels, tortoises, nettle and sorrel were added. Diseases of the digestive organs in their severest forms, very often fatal, became the order of the day.



Dead peasant in Charkiw

Great masses of peasants moved toward large cities. All the roads which converged upon Kiev were filled to capacity with wandering people, all of them with inflamed eyes, parched lips and completely exhausted bodies. They were hastening to towns where perhaps they would somehow be able to get something to eat for themselves, and a crumb of bread or a few potato peelings to carry home for their hungry children.

Here and there by the roads corpses of the “pilgrims” were lying: worn-out men and women were falling down to die on their way to the towns, or on their way home empty-handed, having found not even a slice of bread or a few potatoes to carry away with them.

In Kiev, the capital of Ukraine, one could see the streets littered each morning with corpses, and vans gathering and carrying away the bodies of the peasants who had died during the night. One morning on my way to work I saw the corpse of a young woman lying on the corner of Lviv steet by Sinny Market. She was lying with her eyes wide open, and her baby was creeping over her dead body trying to find its mother’s breast . . . The driver of the truck, who was collecting the corpses, was standing by awkwardly and helplessly. What should he do? To throw the mother into the van—what, then, to do with the child? To throw it in, too? . . .

Mothers driven to the brink of despair were bringing to the town their babies, and sometimes their older children too, in order to leave them unnoticed at the door of a shelter, a hospital, or even at the private door of some "good people", and thus to save them from certain death. Leaving her baby on a doorstep, the mother herself would retreat hastily and hide behind the next corner, and fearing for the fate of her child would watch anxiously until the baby was "found". From time to time a mo-



A waggon collects the dead bodies of the previous night

ther was caught on the spot while committing her "crime." She had then to take the child back home with her. Later, during the years 1934 - 38, I came across many mothers passing from office to office in Kiev trying to find out what had happened to the children exposed by them in 1933. Many hot tears were shed by mothers who did not succeed in finding any trace of their lost children.

The town populations of Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus were also suffering under the unbearable conditions of the dreadful year 1933, but townspeople were not dying from hunger, with the exception perhaps of those who were called in the Soviet terminology "non-labouring elements", chiefly intellectuals. The workers were getting relatively good rations of bread, the office workers not so much—almost famine rations—but at least they were receiving something each day. They had also the chance to buy some bread at black market prices—if I remember rightly at three roubles a kilogram. But those office workers earning three to four roubles a day could hardly take advantage of that theoretical "chance".

Of course, certain store managers, supply officials, members of the Party, Red Army, N.K.V.D. and their stoolpigeons did not feel the effects of the general calamity. They were receiving from special closed stores much more than they needed. All these soviet "aristocrats" profited as never before by exchanging their surplus for everything the peasants were bringing to town: splendid carpets of their own make, shawls, embroidered shirts and so on.

Neither by day nor by night were the roads deserted. Thousands of breadseekers moved in both directions in endless waves. There were no robberies or murders on the roads, as there used to be in the years 1920-30. In suburban streets, in market places, masses of sellers tried to squeeze themselves through with their wares. Beautifully embroidered shirts of wool or linen and shawls, remnants of the peasants' former prosperity, were exchanged for one or two loaves of bread or for a small basket of potatoes. Golden crosses and earrings were carried to "torg-sins" (special stores dealing with foreigners) to exchange for a few kilograms of flour or fat. More masses of peasants were standing in lines before the shops that sold "commercial" bread without foodcards. People used to come to those shops in the evening and wait there all night until morning in order to be able to buy a loaf of bread. They were not always successful. It happened very often that local speculators—the lowest scum of society who naturally felt themselves masters of the situation— assembled before the bread stores in the morning, pushed the peasants out of the line and drove them away saying:

"Go home, you Zelenist*, you Petlurist, you bandits."

"Get out of here, you lazy louts! Go to work in your kol-hosps!"

For their part, the so-called "workers' and peasants' militia" also hunted those miserable, barefooted, ragged peasants waiting outside the breadstores and drove them like cattle out of the city to die of hunger. The city speculators were able to take their turn in the same breadline three or four times, and each time buy some bread to sell in the black market, or even to re-sell there by

* Zeleny, a partisan leader in the Ukrainian War of Independence, 1917-1921. See also p. 19.

Petlura, the Commander-in-Chief of the Ukrainian National Army, and the Head of the Ukrainian National Republic up to 1920, when the Army had to retreat to Poland before the onslaught of the Bolsheviks. In 1926 Petlura was shot to death in a Paris street by a Bolshevik agent.

the same store for 25 to 30 roubles a kilogram, they themselves having paid three roubles for it in the store.

Railroad trains and river boats in that spring were crowded with peasants trying to go somewhere to find a slice of bread. At



Hungry peasants in 1933

first sight it would seem strange that these streams of people were flowing eastward and northward to regions that had never had enough bread of their own. The fugitives from Ukraine, the land of death, the searchers for bread, were heading toward the Mos-



Dispossessed peasants
seeking work

cow district, toward the Ural region, the Caucasus, the Homel district and farther north. What drove them toward those usually hungry lands? They were driven thither by the generally known fact that just at that time there was no hunger in those usually hungry regions. Just at that time all grain elevators and other kinds of granaries were bursting with wheat and other sorts

of grain which had been carried away from Ukraine and Kuban. In Novorossiysk and other Black Sea ports hundreds of foreign ships were being loaded with Ukrainian and Kuban wheat at the very time that masses of peasants were dying of hunger in the streets of Ukrainian villages and towns.

The later spring brought a certain "relief". In waste places there grew nettle and sorrel. People could rush also to the fields to dig out rotten and frozen potatoes which remained here and there in the soil from the crop of the previous year. But that was "stealing socialist property" and those who were caught by the police were sent to Siberia. Together with nettle and sorrel the people were eating, as I have already pointed out, frogs, snails, tortoises, ground squirrels, etc. Stomach diseases increased and the mortality rate rose steeply.

At this time the villages were combed by fat, gluttonous communist agitators calling upon the hungry and deathly emaciated peasants to join the kolhosps. They went from one house to another promising 100 grams of bread daily and a cup of hot soup for those who would join the kolhosp. A slice of substitute bread and a cup of "soup" made of sorrel were given only to those who actually worked for kolhosps; for wives and children the workers were not getting anything. The peasants were joining the kolhosps, for to die of hunger is a terrible death. Many of the newly recruited members of the kolhosp after a week or so of work toppled over and never rose again. Nevertheless not an inconsiderable number of peasants were tempted into the kolhosps by 100 grams of bread.

* * *

That the Stalin Famine had been planned and organized in advance is proved also by the fact that factories in Ukraine refused to employ local peasants as they did those from adjoining regions. That was evidently done to prevent the local peasants from getting bread at their place of work, which would help them to avoid the necessity of joining the kolhosp. A special inspection was ordered in the villages near large cities and industrial centres; the inspectors' duty was to see that the local population did not obtain jobs in their neighbourhood. Similar orders were given to the administrators of factories and works. The control was strengthened by an order that no one without a pass should be given a job, not even a temporary one. In my village there were at that time three large half-mechanized brick and tile works which used to employ over 500 workers during the summer season. In 1933 a factory worker was getting as pay 400 grams

(about 15 ounces) of bread daily—some queer substitute bread—and a plate of murky fluid that was supposed to be soup. For his family—his wife and children—the worker was not getting anything. That meant that with 15 ounces of ersatz-bread a worker had to feed himself and his family, no matter how large the family. No wonder, then, that the mortality rate among the brick workers was not lower than among the kolhosp workers. In the spring of 1933 our brick and tile yards gave employment to regular workers only, that is, to those who had worked there in the previous season. The rest, about half of the whole force, was made up of workers from Byelorussia, who had been recruited and contracted in that country by special recruiting agents, although here, on the spot, in the actual neighbourhood of the works themselves, there were more than enough peasants willing to work.

The following facts will show that the above mentioned measures were not merely of a local character, but applied elsewhere, too. An acquaintance of mine, Miss Anna Kasha, who was a teacher in the village of Obushkivtsi not far from Dniepropetrovsk, a large industrial centre, told me that in the Dniepropetrovsk area, as in that of Kiev, local peasants were not given employment in the industrial establishments, although more workers were needed at the factories than were actually employed at that time.

Miss Anna Kasha, as a Displaced Person in Germany (she is now a physician in the U.S.A.), gave her evidence upon oath before a public notary in Munich in 1948. Her evidence furnishes a good example of the events taking place in another region, far from my region of Kiev, namely, in that of Dniepropetrovsk. I shall quote a few excerpts from that evidence*.

"I, Anna Kasha, was born on Dec. 23rd. 1910, in Hladosy village, district of Kherson. My father was dekurkulized (deprived of his 10 or 20 acres of land.—F.P.) in 1929 and exiled to the far North. I have never heard from him since . . . My brothers wandered about for many years all over Central Asia and the Ural; I myself succeeded in getting forged documents and establishing myself as a teacher at the primary school in Obushkivtsi village near Dniepropetrovsk . . . Many of those who forged documents had to "change" their nationality, because it was safer to do so. Ukrainians were treated badly everywhere; the

* One copy of the evidence given by the physician Anna Kasha is now at the Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre in Winnipeg, Canada.

authorities did not trust them and arrested them at the first opportunity . . . In 1933 I entered the Dniepropetrovsk Medical Institute. . . In the spring of 1933 I decided to visit my acquaintances in Obushkivtsi, namely those whose children had once attended my classes there. Disembarking from my ship I noticed at once that there were no children at the Dniepr harbour. In former years there always used to be a whole lot of them. In the village I did not see any other people in the streets except those who were going to work or whose parents were working regularly for the Dniepropetrovsk factories and receiving food rations.

"I did not see anyone on H.'s courtyard; no child was looking out through a window—as it was customary for the children to do. On entering the room I heard someone groaning. Advancing in the direction of the groaning, I saw two children lying on a bed. One of them tried to speak to me. I recognized her as the elder girl, one of my former pupils. "I am afraid of the rats", she said, "they run all over me. Tania died a few days ago, the rats have eaten her eyes out; now they run over me. Mother and the children are on the oven*; they stopped talking the day before yesterday. Father and Peter were taken away on Sunday by some strange people. They had died a long, long time ago . . ."

"In the next street I looked in on the Shtch. family. Emptiness everywhere; the courtyard covered with ergot. A woman who was passing by said that in that street all the people had already died in winter, for they did not join the kolhosp and they were not allowed to work in the factories. Then I went to see the school. I found no children there. The teachers had gone in all directions. Only the principal remained and he took care of a few pupils whose fathers were employed at the factories. The majority of the population had died. Only those survived who worked regularly at the factories and received workers' food rations. . ."

"Returning to Dniepropetrovsk, I met there a colleague, a teacher from Vodyane village by the city of Nikopol. She said: "I don't work any more; there are neither children for teaching nor many older people left . . . Out of the population of five thousand there remain alive four to five hundred souls. A few hundred more of them were dispersed all over the country fleeing from hunger; from two to three hundred persons were arrested and exiled probably to Siberia. The rest died from hunger . . ."

I shall quote a passage from other evidence, given under oath on March 19th. 1948, before a public notary in Munich by a pea-

* A large oven, usually of bricks, built in a corner of the room so that several persons could lie down or sleep on it.

sant, Petro Kryvonoh from the village of Pisky, in the Lohvytsa division*. He had been exiled during the dekurkulization with his parents to Vologda forests; his parents died in the forest concentration camp near Kotlas city; after their death Petro fled from the Vologda region in the summer of 1930, and under various assumed names he worked in different places until World War II. He worked in factories and construction enterprises first as a common labourer, later as a foreman. His declaration gives a lurid picture of the events in the Kuban district that is, in the Northern Caucasus.

“In the spring of 1933 I was summoned to serve in the Red Army for a three month period of military exercises. I was assigned to a Communications Company. There were 112 men in the Company, and 70 of them were swollen from hunger when they joined. Therefore, instead of military exercises we had only political indoctrination. Each day we were told again and again that there was no hunger in Ukraine, but only some “difficulties” caused by intentional destruction of crops by the “kurkul scum”. We were told that much food had been sent to those regions and now everything was in order. Our food was not bad, comparatively speaking: it was dolphin meat and fat. We were stationed in Novorossiysk in the city barracks. We were restricted all the time and not allowed to go to town. Very soon we began to believe that there was really no hunger. Among other things, the political commissars kept saying that there was hunger in all capitalist countries and especially in the U.S.A., and that at the same time the bourgeoisie was carrying away surplus food products and sinking them in the sea. Swinging some foreign illustrated magazine (which he probably could not read) in his hands before our eyes, the commissar spoke of the news printed in the magazine about the situation in the New York schools, where, according to a medical statement based on close investigation, 75 % of the pupils were suffering from T.B. After about one and a half month I was transferred to the Crimean Post of the War Commissariat. Arriving there, on my way from the railway station I saw about a dozen corpses lying under the fences. Next morning on my way to the War Office I saw a mass meeting of about three thousand people taking place in a public square. A delegate of the Propaganda Department of the Crimea Divisional Party Committee was speaking. He was hysterically exhorting the listeners to be vigilant. “Don’t sell food to the dam-

* A copy of the evidence is to be found at the Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre in Winnipeg, Man., Canada.

ned diversionists and saboteurs who in an avalanche are rushing on us from Ukraine," he was shouting; and pointing to the corpses lying under the fences he proceeded: "Those are kurkuls, enemies of the people, Petlurists. Intentionally they let their crops rot and now, at the orders of the counter-revolutionary Ukrainian Centre, they are flooding the Kuban and Caucasus by the thousand in order to bring hunger here too. As long as we did not have this khakhol rabble here, everything was going well with us, but now, thanks to them, we also have difficulties. Thousands of these saboteurs carry away from us each day from two to three thousands poods of food (a "pood"—16.8 kg.). Comrades! Not an ounce of grain for the saboteurs. Away with them!"

I must add that it was strictly forbidden to use the term "hunger" to denote what was happening in Ukraine. In the newspapers not a word about the hunger in Ukraine was printed at that time, and in ordinary conversation as well as in propaganda speeches the term "difficulties" or "difficulties of growth" was used. For using the term "hunger" one was deported to the North.



Hunger increased ever more until it assumed huge proportions. The divisional, district and national leaders acted as if they saw nothing. But that was not all: anyone who lived at that time in Ukraine will surely remember the dissolute orgies which were being arranged during the dreadful spring of 1933 by the Party bosses. I shall mention only one of them, the "Paradise Evening" arranged in May, 1933, in the city of Zaporozhe, to take place—if I am not mistaken—in the "Intourist" hotel. In arranging that party the following persons were particularly active: the secretaries of the Divisional Party Committee, Budny and Leibeson; Rohachesky, director of the Zaporozhe Steel Works; Kuryluk, secretary of the Steel Works Party Committee; Porokhnia, secretary of the Construction Works Party Committee, and others. Through the open window of the hotel there flowed out into the streets and to the ears of those sleeping in a hungry stupor the drunken songs and wild laughter of the leaders of the city as well as of the famous Party nymphs who, naked as on the day they were born into this world, were dancing gracefully on the tables among the bottles of champagne. It was possible for the ruler of the Dniepropetrovsk region, the notorious M. M. Chatayevich, secretary of the Party District Committee, to be ignorant of this "Paradise Evening Party," but as he was whirling at that

same time in drunken fox-trots somewhere else, he did not want just then to hear anything about the "Paradise Party." Not until 1937, during the so-called Yezhov* period when it was necessary for reasons unknown to the public to "settle" with the above named Party secretaries, were the details of the "Paradise Party" dragged out into the glare of publicity.

It is interesting to note that one evening, when the Zaporozhe leaders were amusing themselves in a "cultural" way, as described above, dozens of peasants in the village of Mala Lepetykha in the neighbourhood of Zaporozhe were shot down like so many mad dogs. This is how it happened: in March 1933 a horse died in the local kolhosp. As was learned later, the cause of the horse's death was glanders. The horse was buried, but the hungry peasants, unaware at that time of the cause of death, dug out the corpse and a whole section of the village tasted the horsemeat. After a short time several cases of glanders appeared among them. The Zaporozhe authorities investigated the matter and found out that the sick people had eaten horsemeat. It was decided to liquidate all those who had consumed the dead horse. It is not known how or in what minutes' book of a meeting that decision was written down, but the results, at least, are known. One evening that section of the village was surrounded by a detachment of N.K.V.D.; a few N.K.V.D. men went then from house to house and all people—young and old—were shot to death. That job was entrusted to first class specialists, amongst whom was Alexander Rezenov, the inspector of "Workers' and Peasants' Militia", well-known for his foaming rages. In that fearful spring of 1933, when masses of people were dying of hunger each day, when on the streets and in houses thousands of corpses were lying for days and days without being carried out for burial by anyone, at such a time no-one paid any attention to the "little" affair in the village of Mala Lepetykha.



It will be, perhaps, not easy for a normal human being to believe these events in the village of Mala Lepetykha to be true. In corroboration of their accuracy, I shall later quote some evidence given by other eye-witnesses, which shows that the instance just described of extreme, inhuman, bestial cruelty on

* Yezhov was the Commissar of N.K.V.D. (the secret police) in 1937-38 when a monstrous Party purge in the whole U.S.S.R. took place, with murders and concentration camps as usual. Yezhov himself fell a victim to that purge in the end.

the part of the Red satraps is not the fevered imagining of a would be author, or merely an isolated phenomenon. I now quote from the evidence of Peter Pivnenko, recently published in European newspapers. He tells a similar story about the children's shelter in Lebedyn in Ukraine. In this asylum there were homeless orphans who had lost their parents during the first World War and the following revolution. His younger sister was also there. His father had been shot by the Denikin-Drozd bands, and his mother had died of grief.



A 12 year old boy whose parents were deported

"In Lebedyn", declares Peter Pivnenko, "in the orphan asylum where my sister found shelter, 75 children were shot to death because they were infected with glanders after being fed with horsemeat*. Among those murdered was Pivnenko's sister. The execution was performed by the Red Commissar whose name was Bezuhly.

* "Ukrainski Wisti" (Ukrainian News) Jan. 1953; No. 5. P. Pivnenko's address can be obtained from that paper (Ludvikstrasse 10, Neu-Ulm, Germany) or from the author.

PART THREE

The Tragedy

I. Overstocked Moscow

In April 1933, I was attached for a time to the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry in Moscow. I stayed there for two weeks. I had a written recommendation to the manager of a hotel not far from the Kremlin, and without any difficulty I got a room there. The hotel was situated just behind the Moscow river bridge at the Basman turnpike. On the fifth floor there was a large restaurant where I had supper each night. In that restaurant it was possible to order almost anything a capricious Soviet citizen could desire, including caviare, beefstroganow, chicken-cutlet, soft, tasty white bread, and so on. The orchestra thundered on until long after midnight, and many well-dressed Muscovite couples danced around from one side of the hall to the other in a whirl of pre-revolutionary dances alternating with modern foxtrots, tangos and the rest. I had my lunches in a lunchroom "for the broad masses of toilers" in the neighbourhood of the Commissariat of Heavy Industry; I had always enough to eat there and it did not cost much. I was shocked by this striking contrast between surfeited Moscow and starving Ukraine. Of course, I did not see emaciated, ragged or dead people on the Moscow streets.

A son of my Kiev friend, Ivan Kariv, was studying at the Machine Construction Institute in Moscow. He told me that one could see masses of people at the Moscow railway stations, especially at the Bryansk or, as it now is called, the Kiev Depot, coming from Ukraine in search of bread. As if to make a mockery of the hungry and half-starved bread-seekers there was,

hanging over the door of a breadstand opposite the station, a signboard with the inscription (evidently to catch the eyes of the visiting foreigners): "Tasty rolls for sale here! Treat yourselves to some, you Muscovites!"

The breadseekers or, as they were called, "the sackers" (because they carried sacks with them) were picked out quickly and thoroughly by the "Workers' and Peasants' Militia," and in overcrowded already-loaded freight cars were sent out eastward.

At the beginning of May I started from Moscow on my way home. At every station I saw numbers of people in Ukrainian costume. The nearer I came to Ukraine the more people I saw,



On the steps of a church

emaciated with hunger and always with sacks on their backs. These were the Ukrainian peasants carrying the remnants of their former "prosperity" (rugs, silk skirts, home-made linens, necklaces and other "luxuries" of peasant life) to large cities in order to exchange them for flour, bread or potatoes.

Before returning to Kiev I had to go to Charkiv (at that time the capital of Ukraine) to report about my work in Moscow. At many depots I saw heaps of green germinated wheat and other cereals. The immense quantities of grain requisitioned in Ukraine could not be stored in the existing granaries, so it was exposed in great heaps under the sky in rain and snow. I saw great quantities of grain in sacks covered with thick, green, bristling sprouts; in a few cases sacks of grain encircled the heaps of grain on the ground, which were covered with rags instead of canvas.

At all the small stations on the way from Charkiv to Kiev my train would be surrounded by hungry peasants and children, often with swollen legs and faces. With outstretched hands they would beg for a slice of bread. The militia tried to drive the hungry mobs from the train—but in vain, there were too many of the unfortunate ones.

I arrived in Kiev just after midnight. Although the trees were already budding, the night was cold. The large square in front of the station was filled with hundreds of peasants. They were those who had somehow succeeded in reaching town and in buying or exchanging something for bread, and were waiting for a chance to go home. The militia would not let them enter the station, so the masses of weak and often sick people were compelled to remain outside and camp amid the filth of the dirty, cold, stone square.

Each summer I used to send my family to my native village Stayky where I had my own little house with a garden and orchard. In that dreadful year of 1933, however, in view of the poor condition of my daughter's health, I brought my family to the village at the beginning of June.

I was pretty well informed of what was taking place in the villages, I saw everything that was happening in Kiev, as I was living there continually, and on my official travels I had the opportunity to see what was happening in the cities and towns. In Kiev we were often visited by our relatives and friends from Neshtcheriw village (Obushkiw division), my wife's birthplace, as well as from my native village Stayky. There were eyewitnesses of the hopeless struggle of the villagers against starvation. But I could only reach full comprehension of the horror in all its monstrosity when I myself went to the scene of the tragedy, to one or other of the Ukrainian villages.

II. The Final Act

To the accompaniment of the drunken, savage shouting of the leaders, the last act of the tragedy of the starving Ukrainian villages was taking its course. People walked through the streets as if half-asleep, supporting themselves on sticks or leaning upon walls of stables or upon fences—wherever any of these were still standing. Most of them had swollen legs that looked like heavy logs of wood, as well as swollen hands and faces. Very often the swelling would burst and then a white fluid would flow out. Legs



Communal graves

and hands were covered with numerous tumours; they were strange tumours and people called them "hunger tumours". Those who had died lay on the very spot where death had overtaken them; they would lie there, side by side with those yet living, for days and days, sometimes for over a week.

Once a week, and sometimes more than once, men and women were driven to a burial ground to dig common graves. Waggons passed through the streets of the village picking up the corpses and carrying them to the common graves. From twenty to a hundred corpses were thrown, like so many pieces of wood, into each grave which then was covered with earth. There was no Christian burial for them—these victims—they were tossed away like

animals, not human beings. In any Ukrainian village you will be shown dozens of such common graves, stacked up with corpses and then covered with earth in the year 1933.

Members of the kolhosps were buried separately from the "indus" (individual farmers). In Hermaniwka, a large village about 60 km (about 40 miles) north of Kiev, not far from my village, the corpses were being carried one day to the burial ground and piled up by the grave. When about sixty corpses had been thus piled up, they were thrown into the grave. At dinner-time comrade Nikiforow, the head of the local village council, (mentioned above on page 26) happened to come to the burial ground, and, seeing the corpse of an "indus" in the grave of a peasant who during his lifetime had refused stubbornly to join



Hunger death in the fields

the kolhosp, he ordered the corpse to be thrown out as not being worthy to lie in the same grave as members of the kolhosp. By Nikiforow's order a man was lowered into the pit to bind a rope to the foot of the poor "indus" who then was pulled out of the kolhosp grave and thrown aside; there he lay for a week or so before that notorious village satrap would allow anyone to throw him into an indus grave.

The percentage of hunger deaths was very high, especially among middle aged, physically strong men, and among children. Women and older men appeared more hardy. As to the proportion of deaths between the collective farm hands and "indus", the absolute and relative numbers were much higher

among members of kolhosps. This can be explained by the fact that "indus", that is, individual farmers, could dispose freely of their own time, and so could look for tortoises and frogs, catch fish, hunt with poles for storks and crows, search for wild duck eggs in meadows and swamps, go to White Ruthenia for potatoes, get something in exchange for the remainder of their belongings, and so on. All these things the indus were free to do, while the collective farm workers had to work hard on fields for one hundred grams (about 3.2 ounces) of bread and a cup of sorrel soup, and their children were left to their own fate—as I stated above, 100 grams of bread and some soup were given only to those who actually worked.

Domestic animals did not fare better than human beings. Dogs and cats were totally exterminated, being killed and eaten. Horses were dying in masses. To keep weakened horses in a standing position, it was ordered that ropes hanging from crossbeams be tied around their stomachs. It did not help much but it was done frequently.

There were inevitably cases of cannibalism. This appeared in the most horrible forms in Southern Ukraine where, as is known, hunger victims were the most numerous. In our district there were not many cases of cannibalism. In a village near Rzhysh-tchew (I regret I cannot recall the name of the village) a woman, whose husband and two small children had died of hunger, fell into a fit of madness one night, cut to pieces her dead three-year-old son and began to roast a piece of the flesh in the oven. Then in a flash of clear understanding of what she was doing, she hanged herself right there by the oven, tying the rope to the crossbeam.

In my village of Stayky there was a similar happening. The peasant Jacob Neyizko killed and consumed his old mother. He lived in a house by the pond, at a distance of about a quarter of a mile from some other houses. His mother had rarely shown herself outside and no one noticed that at last she did not show herself at all. In any case, it was usual for some persons in every house to lie in bed and never get up. It was only by a chance that this case of cannibalism was discovered some time afterwards and this is how it happened. A few pieces of flesh and some bones had been buried by the peasant in the meadow by the pond. Whether on account of indolence or exhaustion, he had not covered the remains properly. Someone from the village chanced to find the bones and thus the whole tragedy was exposed. Jacob was arrested and sentenced, as it was rumoured, for three years in

prison. But after one and a half years he came back to the village. Nobody knew what he had done in prison. He came back healthy, strong and fat. It was a great surprise to everybody, for if anyone returned from prison he was always so emaciated that he had to recuperate in the sunshine for at least half a year. Jacob, however, did not need such treatment.

He now began to loaf round the village. Where there were two or more persons standing and talking—lo! our Jacob was there, appearing suddenly as if from underground. He joined in the conversation, freely criticising various decisions of the ruling bodies. He was always saying that it was necessary to organize, or else all would be destroyed by the damned commune. Within a month of Jacob's return, N.K.V.D. agents fell upon the village, and three persons, former Zeleny partisans, were snatched away.

Two more weeks passed and another peasant, Maxim Syvolap, was arrested. He was a poor wretch of a man: small, meagre, thin, still without a moustache or a beard—there was nothing to shave although he was then about 40 years old. But how skilfully that "wretched" man could operate a machine gun in Zeleny's partisan division! Lying on the ground, with his hands on the gun he would spit incessant fire—zip! zip! zip!—into the enemy ranks. Four or five others together could rarely do more than he could alone. Indeed a superior artist in his work! In the village he was a mild, quiet man, working hard for his daily bread, attracting to himself as little notice as possible. Everybody in the village knew who he was and how much he was worth. His service to the village and the nation was appreciated by all and he enjoyed the sincere respect of everyone. There was no Judas in the village. Even the local Party members kept silent, and the outside communists did not know anything about him. It was Jacob who sent him to his doom.

The same thing happened with a former priest who had fled from persecution in 1929 from some other village and settled in Stayky. His house was situated by the pasture. He called himself a tinker from the Kherson district, but in fact he had been a priest in a village near Stepantsi, and had participated actively in the Ukrainization of the Orthodox Church*. He was one of

* During the Tsar's regime the church in Ukraine was Russified and served as a valuable means of reaction and Russification in general. Nevertheless the lesser clergy very often sided with Ukrainian people against Russification and reaction. During the first years after the revolution, during the independence of Ukraine and after, the church in Ukraine was derussified.

the participants at the first Conference of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church in Kiev in 1921. He was said to have been a good and conscientious pastor, a good shepherd to his flock. His wife had been murdered by a punitive Bolshevik expedition, his son had fallen in the war. The father saved himself and, as I said, settled in our village as a tinker. That priest—or tinker—was a nice man: quite, not troubling or getting in the way of anyone. His clever hands could make or fix anything that happened to come to them: a wooden tub, a petroleum cooker or a watch needing repair, shoes or harness to make—he could do it, if only there were materials. The peasants loved him and guarded him carefully against various N.K.V.D. representatives. They did this for two reasons: because he was really a master of all trades and was ready to help everyone, and also because he was an honest man. Jacob called on him a few times on business, and then, within a week, our tinker was arrested by N.K.V.D. agents. From the divisional prison he was transferred to Kiev and we heard no more of him.

After two more months Jacob disappeared. He will be remembered for a long time as one of Stalin's meanest tools in the crime of genocide.

In 1938 there were rumours that some of our people had seen Jacob Neyizko in the Don Basin and in the Crimea. There were many refugee peasants in those places at that time. They were the grown-up children of dekurkulized and other victimised peasants, of fugitives from Murmansk, Vologda, Archangelsk, Siberia and other slave camp places*. Later we had reports that many of those who had seen Jacob in Donbas and Crimea (and Jacob

* Stalin's well known maxim that "children are not responsible for their fathers" is one of the most cynical of his pronouncements. Actually the children of victimised fathers have experienced the severest persecution during Soviet rule. Wives and children of the "enemies of the people" were deprived of work, students were removed from secondary and higher schools. Thousands of children of the dispossessed and of those who had died of hunger filled up the cadres of the homeless and of the detention centres ("colonies") for youthful criminals and offenders. Children of "socially hostile fathers," that is, of former officers, priests, manufacturers and merchants, underwent continuous persecution. It did not matter at all that those "children" were already 50 or more years old and had children or even grandchildren of their own, or if their "criminal" and "socially hostile" fathers had died, let us say, at the end of the nineteenth century: they had to suffer for the "sins" of their fathers.

surely had seen them too) were soon "found out" and sent back into the polar circle.

In the summer of 1933, as after dekurkulization in 1930 (the year, you remember, of Stalin's article about "Dizzy with Success"), there came a great wave of punitive measures against divisional and district Party leaders for "exaggeration of, or deviation from, the Party line" in the matter of confiscating the rest of the peasants' agricultural products. But punishments on the whole were not so severe as in 1930. It was a gesture, evidently, of precaution, a sop for the future historian.

My village paid dearly for dekurkulization in 1929-30, but much higher was the price paid in the hunger years of 1932-33. In 1934, the population of my village was about 4,000; in 1929, it was about 6,500; that means that the loss in the five years period amounted to 2,500 persons, not counting the increase in population that within these five years should have been between 600 and 800 persons. Out of this number 1,000 died of hunger, and the rest—God alone knows where their bones lie at rest. It may be supposed that about half of them are scattered all over the huge Russian Bolshevik Empire.

Our own relatives also paid a high price to the Red Moloch: five persons died of hunger in 1933, three of them my wife's relatives (two sisters and a brother-in-law), two of them my own relatives (uncle Andrew Huryn and his wife Anna who used to live opposite the Huryn cemetery); three relatives were shot to death, among them my younger brother Nicholas, executed for serving in the Ukrainian Liberation Army—for "banditism", as it was called by the Cheka, the N.K.V.D.; while four were exiled "without the privilege of correspondence". Among these last were my wife's brother Andrew Khrystenko exiled for "fascism and demoralisation of the members of the kolhosp", and her son-in-law Mocal, a Red Army captain, sentenced for espionage. He was a former peasant, having worked in his youth as a farm labourer for a landowner; his "espionage" consisted of the fact that he corresponded with his father living in Poland near Grodno. Similar accounts of other families could be reported by millions in "flourishing" Ukraine.

In the autumn of 1933 about 50 families in our village died off without one single soul remaining alive; and yet our village had comparatively fewer losses than other villages. According to various calculations, from seven to eight million persons died of hunger in 1933 in all of Ukraine. A great number of villages perished completely—not one human being remaining alive.

III. The Unconquerable Peasant

In spite of all they were suffering, the Ukrainian peasants did not consider themselves vanquished. Driven to kolhosps by barbaric means, suppressed by the powerful Kremlin police and military machine, the peasants yet continued their desperate struggle for freedom and for bread.

In effect, consolidated collectivisation, reported at the convention of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. in 1934—it was called “the Convention of the Victors”—was not accomplished, at least in respect of Ukraine. One can speak at the most of the consolidated collectivisation of the land as much, without reference to the peasants, owners of the land, joining the kolhosps. It is true that at the beginning of the nineteen thirties almost all land suitable for cultivation was owned by the kolhosps and the Soviet State farms. But can any one on that basis speak of the consolidated voluntary collectivisation of the peasants? Not at all. Here one can speak rather of the forcible and complete annexation of lands and chattels—at a terrible cost to the peasants.

There was no “consolidated collectivisation” in the sense given to it by Soviet propaganda, namely, that the Kremlin had succeeded in collecting all peasants into kolhosps. Such collectivisation existed only in the Soviet newspapers, and in the falsified statistical reports of the National Planning Commission. The facts are that in spite of all the oppression and suppression many millions of Ukrainian and North Caucasian (Kuban) peasants remained outside the collective farms. Nearly 8 millions of those who died of hunger in the dreadful year of 1933 belong in this group. They preferred to die and be buried in a “people’s grave” rather than to submit to the occupier-collectivizer. It means that more than one million farms (if we count 5 persons to a farm), or 20 % of all farms in Ukraine, refused to join the kolhosps. Further, between 3 to 4 million persons were scattered all over the Russian empire. Some of these, as “enemies of the people”—because they opposed collectivisation—were deported by the “Workers’ and Peasants’ Government” to the forced labour camps in the farthest northern corners of Murmansk, Kolyma and other places; theirs was a slow but sure death. Others tried to escape from hunger, death and persecution at the hands of the secret police by fleeing to large cities, industrial centres, mining

regions, building works, etc., with forged documents that guaranteed safety for them. The remainder of those who kept outside the kolhosps remained in their villages, surviving by a miracle, and still refusing to join the kolhosps. There were about a million of those heroes of resistance according to Soviet statistics, and as a rule they were the poorest peasants in the village, the well-to-do having been almost utterly exterminated or exiled. They persistently stuck to their individual farms (that's why they were called "indus" in Soviet terminology). They were deprived of their own parcels of land and instead were allotted plots in ravines and gorges, mostly unsuitable for cultivation. In spite of continuous severe oppression and persecution by the State police organisations or forces, the last survival of the "indus" could be seen in villages even up to the beginning of World War II.

There was no longer any possibility of organizing and maintaining an open armed struggle against the Soviet regime. The whole country was in the clutches of the State police, crowded with militia and full of secret agents. The Russian forces of occupation in Ukraine at that time were several times as large as the German forces in the years of 1941-43. For an armed uprising or for partisan warfare adequate weapons are needed; without mechanized automatic arms no fighting is possible. There were no such weapons in the peasants' hands during the hunger years. The years from 1930 to 1934 cannot be compared with the years of the Ukrainian uprising during 1919-1923; for at that time people had the weapons left over from the first World War. These had been augmented by such "peasants' infantry" weapons as scythes and axes; and indeed the enemy's detachments were not better armed. In the years 1930 to 1934 the situation was quite different. On one side were: the well organized Red Army, the colossal police apparatus, the militia and secret agents. On the other side was the whole of Ukraine almost entirely denuded of able-bodied men. This was the result of the Ukrainian Liberation War (1917-1920) followed by the five years of partisan warfare, and finally by ten years of cruel communist mass terror. The young and middle-aged men were annihilated in the long struggle. The Soviet terror, with its murders and deportations to forced labour camps, was turned first of all against the active elements of the nation—intellectuals and recalcitrant peasants. As to arms, nothing could be hidden from the eyes of the secret police; even the old hunting weapons were taken away. The manufactured Stalin famine of 1933 with its eight million victims in Ukraine, the price paid by the Ukrainian peasants in their resistance against collectivisation, seemed to have left fighting Ukraine prostrate.

IV. Even Yet Rebellion

Nevertheless there were uprisings in several districts in Ukraine: Poltava, Kherson, and Kiev. The peasant leader Ivan Kozlow led risings in several divisions of the Poltava and Sum districts. The insurgents succeeded in wresting wheat from a guarded transport and so they were able to supply food to the hungry peasants for two weeks, parrying off at the same time the attacks of special detachments of State police. Another uprising, starting in Zaslavsk and Slavutych division, spread over to those of Antoniiv and Polonne, gripping almost the entire Shepetiwka district. The "women's rebellion", an uprising that started in Oleksandriwka village, spread within three days all over Birsul county. The most loyal of the frontier detachments of the G.P.U. (State police) were sent to quell that rising. Another powerful upsurge burst into flame at about the same time in the Kuban region, and, in order to suppress it, a corps of regular army troops was sent in. There were many more such risings and rebellions but all of them were brutally put down from the start.

The rebellions once suppressed, the peasants were then nailed fast to the kolhosp. No one could leave a kolhosp without permission from its management and the local soviet. In most districts the peasants could get identification papers (for leaving) only by special permission. Without such papers no one could register and live in any community or get a job there. For not appearing at one's place of work, or even for being 15 to 20 minutes late, the punishment was one year's imprisonment and very often deportation to the Siberian forced labour camps for "sabotage". To take the places of the deportees and of the eight million Ukrainian peasants murdered by the Stalin famine, large masses of colonists were brought in quietly and noiselessly, in a thievish way, from Ufa, Viatka, Ryazan, Kaluga and other districts of Russia proper.

Now, when it becomes clear to everybody in the western world that the communist empire is only a new form of the old Tsarist Russian empire, it will also be clear that the murderous "crusade" of Russian communists against the Ukrainian population was the same old Tsarist crusade against the never-dying Ukrainian spirit of independence. In applying economic terror and

continuing the fiendish struggle against the anti-collectivisation stand of the peasant masses and against those who in spite of terror and hunger kept on cultivating their tiny individual parcels of land, the communists carried on the campaign against Ukrainian culture, aiming at the annihilation of the best of the Ukrainian patriots. The struggle was said by the Kremlin to be against "The Counter-revolutionary Private Property Psychology" or against "Psychological Kurkulism", and against different kinds of "kurkul scum" and their supporters. In order to mislead the Ukrainian population as well as, and especially, foreign public opinion, the Moscow rulers built a splendid monument to the greatest Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko who died in 1861; Kiev was made the capital of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic in place of Charkiw on June 24th. 1933, and its rebuilding began after many years of destruction in war and revolution; the Moscow satrap in Kiev, the secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine, P. Postishev, appeared almost daily at the Kiev Circus clad in an embroidered Ukrainian shirt . . .

V. Two Sides to the Picture

The realities of the year 1933 and after give the lie to the empty declarations of the Bolsheviks about "consolidated and voluntary collectivisation." The picture has two sides: on the one there were hysterical shouts from Soviet loudspeakers about the "joyous and happy" life of the population in the country of "victorious socialism"; Stalin's slogan that "life has become better, life has become merrier"; the mockery of Molotov's boasting (he was Premier at that time) of "successes" in socialist construction and especially in agriculture, saying that "this is called our socialism in action, this is our free socialist life." And on the other side, answering the hoarse shouts of the loudspeakers and the cynically lying slogans, were the fires continually blazing up at night and reaching into the sky of the "flourishing Ukraine"; ricks of the unthreshed kolhosp sheaves were burning, and kolhosp barns and stalls as well. In that way the "happy" kolhospers, heavily oppressed by the Stalin military and police machinery, were demonstrating in their powerless wrath their "love" of collectivisation. Incessant acts of sabotage, the wilful damaging of tractors and other complicated agricultural machines were a common mass occurrence. The years 1934 to 1941 form the period of hollow, muffled resistance against the Soviet regime, of continuous sabotage and diversion in various forms, including

from time to time the killing of particularly virulent communists.

The Soviet Government, for its part, answered these "crimes" by applying an increasing terror. People were arrested, brought before a "court" and sentenced for "stealing socialist property" or as "enemies of the people", "saboteurs" and "kurkul scum". The slightest critical remark was considered to be a "demonstration of the class enemy". What was meant by "kurkul scum" or "psychological kurkulism", can be seen by the severe fate meted out to my wife's brother Anatoly. In his town he once in the presence of the local druggist said that his sister had died of hunger, and that the cause of hunger was the forcible seizure of all articles of food from the population. Within a few days Anatoly was arrested. An encounter with the druggist was arranged by the State "attorney". The druggist reiterated his denunciation. Anatoly was sentenced—not of course by a court, but by an N.K.V.D. triumvirate—to ten years' hard labour without the privilege of correspondence as a "kurkul sympathizer", for "fascism and the demoralisation of kolhosp members". He was a physician in the city of Dniepropetrovsk. Now his family was thrown out of the house. They found shelter with me in Kiev until the following summer. As for Anatoly, we heard nothing from him or about him from that time on. Evidently, "exile without privilege of correspondence" took the same course in his case as in all others similar: a bullet in the nape of the neck in one of the N.K.V.D. cellars.

It is true that there were never-ending deportations of various "enemies" to the Far-Eastern Construction Works, to the Moskva-Volga Canal and White Sea Construction Areas and to other "shock" labour construction projects. But at the same time vast numbers of "enemies" were liquidated on the spot. In this group were included those who were considered real ideological enemies, whom it was necessary to remove for good for various reasons, mostly personal. For the purpose of mass liquidation a new method was invented, namely so-called exile to distant forced labour camps "without the privilege of correspondence" with one's family. The "exiled" individual disappeared forever and when his family urgently demanded information as to the fate of those arrested, they were told that the "criminal" had been exiled "without the privilege of correspondence". In fact that exile proceeded as follows: the arrested were murdered, usually with a shot into the nape of the neck, in any one of the many secret N.K.V.D. cellars, and at night the bodies were carried to burial places set aside especially for them. As a rule, such places were fenced all round and very carefully guarded. On the gate

of such a site there would hang a sign with the inscription "Prombud" (Industrial Construction), or some such wording. After a year or so, when from 20 to 30 thousand corpses of those "exiled without the privilege of correspondence" were buried in the soil of the "Prombud", an order of the local authorities would liquidate the "construction site" and in its place a park would be built. Several hundred trees would be brought in and, within a week, using the unpaid labour of the local prisoners, there would appear in all its beauty a park with walks, football fields, flowerbeds and many other amenities for the recreation of the people.

In the year of the German occupation one of these "parks" was dug out in Vinnitsa and thousands of human corpses and skeletons were found there. Many such "parks" and "sporting fields" are still waiting to be discovered. A friend of mine told me once about a sports field in the city of Zaporozhe where he lived. It is to be regretted that the site was discovered only in the summer of 1943 and there was no time to dig it out before the Germans had to retreat.

The park was discovered by chance. In 1943, during the German occupation, the Zaporozhe authorities accidentally found a woman from the village of Mykolaivka, who said that she had worked as a charwoman in a N.K.V.D. garage in Rosa Luxemburg street. To my regret, I could not find out the name of the woman. In this garage liquidation of people "exiled without the privilege of correspondence" used to take place. The charwoman described the procedure as follows: the condemned, with their hands tied with a wire behind their back, were brought to the garage about midnight. The motor of the five ton truck was started up and while it was thundering, the condemned, who were usually lying on the floor, were murdered by a shot into the nape of the neck. At about two o'clock the corpses of those murdered were thrown into the truck which was coated with zinc so that the blood might easily be washed off, and taken away to the above mentioned "construction site". At this "construction site" two men worked, one of them the charwoman's husband, and the other a young Russian from the Northern Ural by the name of Plakhov. That Russian had worked till the end of the Russo-Finnish War in the Brickyard N. 1. nearby. Both men were now busy digging large common graves. When a grave was filled up with corpses, they covered it with earth and rammed down the earth so that the newly covered grave was on a level with the rest of the ground. When the grave was not filled on one night, a cover of twigs was placed over the corpses and so it remained until the next night, when it was filled up and covered with earth. In 1939

it was announced that the Electrical Transformer Substation would not be built on the above grounds as planned. Evidently the place was filled up to the limit with corpses. In the spring, cinders and sweepings were brought there from all the neighbouring factories and a part of the site came into use as an exercise field for the Red Army. The charwoman's husband, being rather drunk one day, blabbed out the secret of his work at the "Transformer Substation". Within a few days he was taken by the N.K.V.D. and liquidated in the same garage as a dangerous witness. His wife was told that her husband had been sent to Siberia. His fellow-worker Plakhow was drafted into the army and sent to the Finnish front; from that time on he was never again seen in Zaporozhe.

The job of the Mykolaivka charwoman was to scrub off traces of blood each morning from the zinc-coated truck, as well as from the asphalt floor of the garage. She washed everything with water, wiped the blood off the zinc with a rag and then let the bloodied water out into the sewer. Later the water hole for washing the lower part of the truck was refilled with fresh water from a waterpipe.

The "construction place" site in question is situated about 120 meters from the Jewish cemetery behind the railroad tracks, by the road leading to the Baranow Airplane Factory N.29. While this "business" was being carried on, the place was surrounded with a high wooden fence of closely fitted boards.

* * *

Had you seen any of the villages of "sunny flourishing Ukraine" in the years of the "accomplished collectivisation" (1934-1941), the following picture would have been presented to your eyes: the houses tattered, with their thatched roofs torn from the once-white walls, broken windows stuffed with rags; no barns in the courtyards, no granaries for grain, none of the fences with which the peasants used to encircle their farmhouses so carefully; the "happy and merry" collective farm workers with wasted, lean, earth-coloured faces, with an uncommon weariness in their eyes, mostly barefooted or in old rubbers remaining from the time of N.E.P. fastened to their feet with strings, or in the well known Soviet bast shoes; the women with cut feet, with flat breasts, grown old too soon, totally exhausted; had you seen that picture, you would not for a moment have doubted the truth of their "happy" collective farm life.

VI. The Aftermath

If any one still doubts the truth that no collectivisation, no famine, no amount of terror, could break the extremely hostile attitude of the Ukrainian people and of all other peoples subjugated by Russia—including to a great extent the Russian people themselves—towards the occupying communist regime, then the events of World War II. should dispel that doubt.

The events of 1939-41 were understood by the great majority of the population of the U.S.S.R. as a sign that the moment was approaching for squaring up accounts with the repulsive red occupiers of the country. No one believed in the sincerity and durability of the Stalin-Hitler alliance of 1939. Impatiently and with ears tuned, as if it were, everybody waited for the "start". The news of the "victorious" march against Finland coming from the war front, and the nervous Soviet preparations for a general war, were received with reserve, but from the mischievous and carefully hidden glimmer in people's eyes one could judge the true attitude toward these events.

One should not be surprised that the Soviet peoples had illusions about the intentions of Hitler's Germany. A tormented slave has only one thought in his mind: to get rid of his tormentors. That Hitler was no better than Stalin, we could not know at that time. We learned it a little later.

At last that which had been long expected happened. On the morning of June 22nd. 1941, Molotov's speech was listened to by millions of men and women, particularly by those of the subjugated nations, attentively, silently, but with the mischievous glimmer in their eyes no longer hidden.

The answer to Stalin's order of July 3rd, 1941, demanding that only denuded and burned fields be left to the approaching enemy, was sabotage or even open resistance. Workers, peasants and intellectuals risked their lives in the most dangerous efforts to save from destruction, to hide and preserve until the proper moment, everything that the Soviet authorities tried to destroy or evacuate to the East.

The answer of the Red Army to the communist slogan "for our fatherland, for Stalin" was the wholesale desertion to the enemy of nearly seven million soldiers and officers in the first

half-year of the war. Very often in an outburst of "patriotic enthusiasm" Red soldiers would beat their way to the enemy lines and into his prison camps by aiming their machine guns and grenades at the special military detachments of the N.K.V.D. troops, compel the "traitors of the Stalin fatherland" to join in the retreat, and by marching over the corpses of the political commissars whom they murdered, when these communist watchdogs tried to escape eastward.

Only the colossal stupidity of Hitler's leadership and also—since we must face the truth—the large-scale misunderstanding and disregard of the situation on the part of some of the Allies, saved Stalin's Fatherland from collapse.

The eyes of the people were soon opened by the extreme cruelty of the German Nazi occupation, and the merciless and inhuman mass annihilation of war prisoners who had voluntarily capitulated, so that a fatal turning point was finally reached in Hitler's victorious march eastward*. The soldiers of the Red Army were no longer going over voluntarily into the enemy's prison camps by the hundred thousand, as previously; now, in small groups, or even singlehanded, they were putting up a stubborn and bloody resistance to avoid capture.

The German occupying forces, having so easily conquered the whole of Ukraine, Byelorussia and other large Russian territories, now threw away the mask of "liberators" and started on the murderous road of suppressing even the slightest manifestation of any movement towards independence, in the same way as the Russians had always done. The news about the shooting down of the leaders of the Ukrainian national liberational movement in Zhytomyr, Kiev and Tchernihiw made an end to hopes of a common struggle against the Stalin tyranny.

In the Western provinces of Ukraine—in the Volhynian forests, Polissyan marshes, Galician forests and mountains—the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (with the Ukrainian initials known as U.P.A.) was organized for the purpose of conducting partisan warfare against both occupying enemies, Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia. It was the rallying point for partisans from the other Ukrainian provinces: Kiev, Poltava, Charkiw, etc. According to documents of the German High Command, the Ukrainian partisans numbered over 250,000 in 1943. The Soviet rulers had not been able entirely to suppress the Ukrainian freedom loving warriors.

* See the Third Molotov Note on German Atrocities. H.M.S.O. 1942.—Ed.

Supplement

Appendix A.

An Estimate of the Number of Famine Victims

As to the question of the number of victims of the famine of 1933, nobody could count them, and the Soviet authorities would hardly have wished to do so. My neighbour in a D.P. camp in Germany, I., who had been working during those years for the Department of Hygiene at the Ukrainian Academy of Science in Kiev, told me that this Department did not receive statistical data as to births and deaths in Ukraine in 1933 and during the following few years. Naturally, no statistical data were then published.

We must arrive at the number of victims, therefore, by inference. According to the testimony of thousands of eyewitnesses, now refugees from the U.S.S.R., the death rate in villages during the famine was from 10 % to 70 %, reaching in many villages to 100 %. In my native village of Stayky the population decreased in 1933 by 35-40 %. We have a similar picture in most of the villages of the Rzhyshtchev division (my homeland) and in the neighbouring one of Obukhiw. In the southern provinces of the Ukraine—the most fertile area by the way—the death rate was much higher. It is, then, not too high an estimate if we calculate that the death rate on an average was 25 % for the whole of Ukraine, that is, about *eight million people*.

There is another source of information which leads us to the same estimate of the number of famine victims. The Ukrainian economist, Professor S. Sosnovy, using the book, *Collection of the Statistical and Economical Information about Ukrainian Agriculture* (published in Charkiw in 1939), comes to the following conclusion in regard to the losses of the Ukrainian population in the hunger year 1933: On Dec. 17th, 1926, the population of Ukraine, according to the national census, was 29,042,900. According to the figures of the above mentioned *Collection*, the population of Ukraine on Jan. 16th. 1939, that is on the day of the census, was 30,960,200. If we take the

annual increase of the population of Ukraine as being 2.36 % (it was the average increase during the years 1924-1927, according to the *Collection*), then the population of Ukraine on Jan. 16th, 1939, should have been 38,426,000. That means that during 13 years (from 1926-39) the Ukrainian population decreased by 7,465,800. If we take into consideration that within that period about a million Ukrainians were deported to the North, then we must consider also the fact that about two million Russian colonists arrived in Ukraine in the same period from the ethnographic Russian districts in order to settle in the denuded Ukrainian villages. Thus the net result is that there were about *eight million victims* of the famine in the Ukraine.

One more fact has to be mentioned: in the years following the famine in almost all the villages of Ukraine there was a school crisis: there were few or no pupils in the lower classes of the elementary schools. Many classes of the same grade had to be consolidated, and an especially sharp decline in enrolment occurred in the years 1939 and 1940. It was caused evidently by the high death rate in 1933 among children as well as by the extremely sharp decrease in births in 1933-34.

Appendix B.

The Area of Arable Land and the Crops of Ukraine in 1932

The arable land in the Ukraine in 1932 measured 26 million hectares (1 ha - 2,47 acres); it was one million hectares more than in 1928. The land under grain was somewhat less than that in previous years; it was 18,124,200 ha. as against 20 million hectares previously. (See *The Outline of Agriculture of the Ukrainian S.S.R.*, Kiev 1935.*)

According to official figures, the average grain yield was 16,25 per ha, and according to the statistical book of reference, *The Ukrainian S.S.R. in Figures* (Kiev, 1936), the general grain crop in 1932 was 894 million poods (pood-16.8 kg.) or 14,656,000 tons. It is about 200 million poods less than the average of previous years, but quite enough for normal livelihood. It is worth recalling that the general crop in Ukraine in 1928, when 5 million hectares of winter crops were killed by frost, was 800 million poods and in 1924, the year of drought, the grain crop was only 651 million poods (*The Collection of Statistical and Economical Information about the Agriculture of Ukraine*, Charkiv,

* The figures taken from an article by the Ukrainian economist, Prof. S. Sosnovy. (*Ukr. News*, No. 10-11, 1950).

1929). And yet there was no famine in the Ukrainian S.S.R. either in 1928 or in 1924.

Here is a convincing calculation:

Grain crop in Ukraine in 1932 . . . 824 million poods.

Seeding requirements (20 million ha, at 8 poods per ha) . . .
160 million poods.

After reserving a certain amount for the city population (12 poods per person), there would remain for the villagers 25 poods per person (400 kilograms). That is more than enough for the maintenance of the population of Ukraine and of all livestock. But the Russian communist rulers grabbed from the Ukrainian peasants all articles of food to the last grain, thus bringing about a disastrous famine.

Appendix C.

What is a Collective Farm?

A collective farm (in Ukrainian "kolhosp", in Russian "kol-khoz") is a large estate where the land, which is state property, is cultivated in common by its members. All mobile means of production, that is, agricultural implements and machines, as well as livestock, are the property of the kolhosp. In joining the collective farm the peasant surrenders to it all his land, implements, draught animals and cattle.

This large farm can be compared with a large factory, but with one substantial difference: a factory worker receives at least a minimum wage and is sure to get food rations for himself and for the members of his family, even though the ration may be at starvation level, but the collective farm worker receives nothing of the kind. His hours of work are indefinite. He has no fixed wages. During the existence in the U.S.S.R. of the food ration system (and it has existed there almost all the time), the collective farm worker did not get any food ration. He received for his work a small wage in kind, the amount depending on the number of "work days" he put in and on the extent of the crops, with, in addition, a little cash.

The collective farm worker receives his pay in the fall after the harvest. The kolhosp has to satisfy first out of its crop the following demands: 1) to pay in kind to the State, taxes which are relatively very high; 2) to pay in kind to the Machine Tractor Station (M.T.S.) for ploughing and other labour done for the kolhosp; 3) to sell a certain amount of produce to the State at a very

low fixed price (for instance: rye at 3 kopeks* a kilogram, later at 6 kopeks; wheat at 6 kopeks a kg., later at 9 kopeks; the State then sold bread at three roubles a kilogram); 4) to put aside some grain as seed; 5) to pay for implements, and 6) to pay for capital buildings; what was left went to the workers as wages according to the amount of "work days" of each particular worker.

"A work-day" is not a certain amount of hours of work, but a unit of work, arbitrarily fixed, to act as a measure (or a norm) of the work performed. For instance: for weeding a hectare of onions may be counted 20 work days, and for weeding one hectare of potatoes, 4 work days. In 1948 the Soviet Government fixed nine different rates for different kinds of work, the lowest rate, for the least skilled kind of work, is half a work day, the highest rate is two and a half work days. As can be seen, it is a sweated piece-rate system which has for its purpose the squeezing of the highest quantity of sweat and blood out of the worker at the least possible cost to the bolshevik exploiters.

The value of the work-day in wages is calculated thus: the value of the amount of produce that is left after satisfying all the above named demands is divided by the sum of work-days actually done by all the workers of the kolhosp. The result is the value of a work-day.

Before World War II (and almost nothing has been changed since the war) the value of a work-day was from one half to one kilogram of grain in the Ukrainian kolhosps in such districts as Tchernyhiw, Poltava and others; from one, and one and a half, to two kg. work-days was very rare, and a three to four kg. work-day could be found only in the "model" collective farms which are shown by the Kremlin cheats to visiting foreign workers and Parliamentary delegations in order to demonstrate to them the happiness and abundance of the lives of the collective farm workers.

In addition to grain, the kolhosp member received some potatoes, some straw after threshing, some hay if there was a meadow, and from 20 to 80 kopeks per work-day in cash.

The collective farm worker received no dairy products, or poultry, or honey, though many kolhosps had large poultry farms and beehives before the war; these luxuries were all delivered to the State (for the Party bosses). Highly profitable plants as those of oil, flax, etc, were also set aside for the State.

* 100 kopeks = 1 rouble.

The average daily wage of a collective farm worker, if we consider a farm with the highest paid work-day, that is, 3 kilograms of grain per work-day, was 1 rouble (computed as follows: 3 kg. rye - 18 kopeks; 1—1½ kg. potatoes - 5 to 6 kopeks; in cash, 75 kopeks). If we evaluate everything that the worker received at its market price, then it comes to 4 roubles a day (while the average wages of a factory worker amounted to between 12 to 14 roubles per day before the war)*. For his small children and old parents the kolhosp worker received nothing.

The real, economic value of the wages of a collective farm worker can be seen from the following officially fixed prices:

Shoes, with rubber soles	136 roubles
Shoes, leather, better quality	250 to 450 roubles
Boots	300 to 700 roubles
Cotton percale, one metre	3 to 5 roubles
Sugar, one kilogram	3,50 roubles**

It was necessary for many kolhosp workers to buy additional bread for their families at the so-called state price, which was 3 roubles a kilogram and thus equalled 4 days' work on the farm. Just before World War II., when the food card system was abolished and bread was sold at uniform state prices, it cost 90 kopeks a kg., and that represented one day's work. The kolhosp worker, having sold at between 3 to 6 kopeks a kg. to the State the grain which he had produced, now had to pay to the State from 90 kopeks to 3 roubles a kg. for bread. That means that the State made from 2,900 % to 10,000 % gross profit!

The collective farm worker had also a small farmhouse parcel of land (a garden plot) for his individual use. The plots in various districts were from one quarter to three quarters of an acre. A part of it was occupied by the buildings, the rest was the garden where the housewife grew a little of everything: potatoes, beets, cucumbers, onions and, of course, flowers. The farmer could also keep a cow, some calves, sheep and goats, and a few chickens. Even if the farmer had some spare produce of his garden for sale, it was not an easy matter to market it on account of the great distances from large cities and the lack of transport.

* According to Soviet statistics, the average pay of a Soviet citizen, including the highly paid Soviet officials and specialists as well as the poorly paid factory workers and office workers, was 300 to 350 roubles monthly.

** The production cost of a shoe is equivalent to 6-7 roubles, of one kg. sugar 24 kopeks.

People had to walk to the nearest railway station which was usually 15 to 20 kilometres away; they had no draught horses of their own.

The farmhouse plot was, I might say, the only means of support for the kolhosp worker, although at the same time it was the source of constant torture. He had to deliver in kind to the State from his plot as follows: 1) from 10 to 15 kg. of meat (depending on the size of the garden); 2) from 80 to 100 eggs; 3) milk; 4) wool; 5) hoofs, horns, feathers etc. He had to deliver these things whether or not he kept a cow, chickens and so on. In most cases the peasants contributed to a pool, bought a calf and delivered their quota of meat to the State. The price of meat on the market was from 7 to 12.50 roubles a kg., and that meant that the peasant had to work almost a month for his meat delivery quota. For 10 delivered eggs the peasant received from the State 15 kopeks, and the State then sold these eggs for 2 roubles, that is, with 1,233 % gross profit! In the black (or free market 10 eggs cost 5 to 6 roubles. If the peasant had no eggs of his own for delivery to the State (and there were many such peasants) he had to buy them in the black market, paying 6 roubles for 10; then at the State supply store he would receive 1.50 roubles for the same 10.

From the income of his tiny garden he had to make "voluntary" contributions to the street building fund and to other village and divisional needs; further, to subscribe to the "Five Year Plan" loan; pay dues for the "Ossoviakhem" (Aviation Society), "Autodor" (Motor Highway Society), "M.O.P.R." (Political Prisoners Relief Society), for the "Society of Atheists," etc. The same garden had to provide for clothing, shoes—at least for the schoolchildren—for petroleum, salt, etc.

It is true that for the produce delivered the kolhosp worker had the right to buy goods at fixed State prices. He had the *right*, but he could not take advantage of this right because: 1) of the general scarcity of consumer goods; 2) if some goods were sent to the village for the delivered produce, they were grabbed by the village and kolhosp "aristocracy" (Party bosses and their followers, that is, by 10 to 20 % of the population); and 3) the state prices were fixed on the same principle as the price of bread, sugar, shoes, etc, (see above), which meant that they were beyond the paying capacity of the collective farm worker.

The above picture of a collective farm shows into what misery and slavery the peasants of the U.S.S.R., and especially of Ukraine, have been thrown. If we add to this the love and affection of the Ukrainian peasant for his soil and for his personal tilling of it, then the long and stubborn resistance to the collective farm system may be understood and justified.



A mass cemetery

THE END

INDEX OF UKRAINIAN PLACE-NAMES

- | | |
|---|---|
| Antoniw div. 58 | Olexsandriwka vil. 58 |
| Birsul div. 58 | Pereyaslav tn. 19 |
| Charkiv tn. & admin. centre
48. 49. 64. 65 | Pishtchanka vill. 29 |
| Chernihiv—see Tch. | Pisky vill. 43 |
| Dniepropetrovsk tn. & admin.
centre 41. 42. 44. 60 | Polonne div. 58 |
| Hermaniwka vil. 26. 51 | Poltava tn. & admin. centre
58. 64. 68 |
| Hladosy vill. 41 | Rzhyshtchew div. 17. 52. 65 |
| Kherson tn. & admin. centre
41. 53. 58 | Shepetivka tn. & admin.
centre 58 |
| Kiev tn. & admin. centre 17
19. 32. 36. 37. 41. 49. 51
54. 58. 59. 60. 64 | Slavutych div. 58 |
| Kozyn tn. 19 | Stayky vill. 17. 49. 52. 53. 65 |
| Lebedyn tn. 46 | Stepantsi vil. 53 |
| Lokhvytsa div. 43 | Sum tn. & admin. centre 58 |
| Mala Lepetykha vill. 45 | Tchernihiv tn. & admin.
centre 64. 68 |
| Mykolaivka vill. 61 | Trypilla tn. 19 |
| Neshtcheriw vill. 49 | Trypillia vill. 19 |
| Newmoscow div. 29 | Vinnitsa tn. 61 |
| Nikopol tn. 42 | Vodyane vill. 42 |
| Obukhiw tn. & div. 19. 65 | Wasyliw vill. 19 |
| Obushkivtsi vill. 41. 42. | Zalavsk div. 58 |
| Obushkiw tn. & admin. centre
19. 35. 49 | Zaporozhe tn. & admin. centre
29. 44. 45. 61. 62 |
| | Zhytomyr tn. & admin. centre
64 |

5810-4

T3(4YKP)
P-62

