

THE MONASTERY OF SOLOVKY

A sad song was composed by the prisoners on the Solovky Islands. It told of how, every year in the spring, the prisoners at Solovky awaited the arrival of new slaves. These new comrades, whose best hopes had already been blown away by the winds of the White Sea, had come to the accursed islands to increase the number of graves. These graves had no crosses, and no loved ones ever came to grieve over the dead. Brutal guards, represented as fearful dragons, watched over their helpless victims, taking the light of the sun and the hope of life away from them. The song ended, saying that the time would come when lightning would strike in winter, ice-bergs would split open, and new storms and winds would bring new days of freedom to the slaves of Solovky.

The ship stopped moving. It gave a last whistle and the engines were cut.

"The Bay of Felicity" announced the guard, not realising the unsuitability of the name.

"Come out, one by one!" he ordered.

Again there were lines of armed guards from the ship to the square near the harbour.

The roll call began.

"Ivanenko!"

"Present".

"Your name and the name of your father?"

"Petro Trochymovich".

"Get going".

And so it went, on down the line, to the very last one of the thousand slaves.

On our right, stood the Solovky Kremlin, looking grim, suspicious, and threatening. It represented a brutal force, hopeless darkness, and narrow fanaticism.

The Kremlin looked like a giant sarcophagus, built from cyclopic stones and made to stand forever. Its power, firm-

ness, and solidity were emphasized by the sharp contours and squares. The Kremlin glorified a god, not even a Moscow god, but the god of the Death Islands, stern and unmerciful. This was our first impression.

Later on, when I had become used to the life at Solovky and had become a regular Solovkian, I walked around this monstrous erection thousands of times. I studied it, traversing its paths and walks, but my first impression remained unchanged.

Often I climbed onto the roof of the burned Uspensky Cathedral. From there I could see almost all of the island, and often, as I watched, my thoughts turned to the Russian conquistadors who, in the dark years of the Tartar yoke, had begun their quest by slowly moving farther and farther north. These northern slavonic tribes, after intermarrying with the Finnish population, became known later as the Russians.

The free state of Novhorod, known for its bold ventures and its prospering trade, became stronger and stronger. The whole shore of the White Sea was colonised by its people. At the same time, however, another wave of colonists from the east was moving in. These Moscovites, famous for their craftiness, dishonesty, and cruelties, were pressing farther and farther north. They were able to secure the possession of all lands from Dnipro to the Ural Mountains and the White Sea by fawning upon the Tartar rulers.

Solovky Island had been settled by the Finns long before that time, however. Every one of the four hundred lakes scattered on the island, every river, every bay, and every place of distinction still has a Finnish name. At one time those islands had been prized among the Finnish possessions.

But a change took place. Gradually the fisheries and the plots of land became the property of foreigners. At first robbers and adventurers came, then traders arrived, and finally the harsh Russian conquerors took over.

In this way Saint Zosyma came to the shores of the White Sea, followed by his fellow worker, Saint Savaty.

Together they built the foundations of that bulwark of Russian piety and cruelties, the Kremlin.

From my roof, I could see the place where St. Savaty had built an earthen hut for himself so that he could pass his days in prayer and fasting. St. Zosyma lived near Sekirny Mount.

St. Zosyma sent out a call for others to come to the island and he did not have to wait long for them. The Solovky Islands were becoming important both for the great Novhorod and for its competitor, Moscow. Fanatics, visionaries, fugitives from justice and adventurers responded to the urgent call and a brotherhood was soon created around St. Zosyma and St. Savaty. This brotherhood, among other pious achievements, appropriated the Solovky archipelago forever from the Finns.

At that time, Marfa, a woman burgomaster (possadnitsa), the autocratic ruler of Novhorod, had bestowed all the Finnish islands, the main with its fisheries and villages, which were populated by Finns and Greek Orthodox people, upon the Solovky Monastery, with the pious wish that Greek Orthodoxy should bloom there.

The conquest of Novhorod by Moscow did not bring any changes at Solovky, except that the prior of the monastery was replaced.

Ivan the Terrible confirmed all the privileges granted before and demanded that the Kremlin should be rebuilt and turned into a real fortress and bulwark against the Latins (Western Nations).

The monk-priest, Tryfon, who was strict in fasting and prayers, as well as merciless in battles, offered his plan as to how to rebuild the monastery and the walls of the Kremlin. His plans included mighty towers, deep underground cells, and dungeons.

His draft suggested that the structure should be built from natural stones. Where they were hard to fit in, bricks would be used and the crevices would be filled with a cement made from "Egyptian earth".

The prior of the Solovky monastery was given the right

to conscript all Finns, settlers, burghers, and men of other estates on the shores of the White Sea for this work.

All necessary lumber was prepared at Archangel, Cholmogory, and even Ural. The brick was made on the island and there were enough stones at hand.

The plans of Tryfon required a moat and a rampart to be built around the eastern wall. The peat swamp was to become a lake, and there were plenty of rocks for the walls.

It took twelve years, from 1584 to 1596, to build this great, grim, inaccessible wall of the Kremlin. Near the north side, a lake measuring twenty hectares was dug. Near the east wall, a great rampart was built, and in addition, a moat about fifty feet wide was excavated. The lake, finally completed under great difficulties and with much suffering, was called the "Holy Lake" by Tryfon.

The wall was thirty feet high. It was wide enough to allow for the passage of two carts. In every corner a mighty tower was built. These towers had embrasures, vents, shooting posts, and other military accommodations from which molten tar could be poured and stones could be thrown. Along the wall, a large number of embrasures and nests for ambushes were made. Besides the common gates the Kremlin also had secret ones known only to a few. Underground passages and labyrinths were so numerous that only those who had the plans could use them.

When the building was completed the prior asked the king to come and see his "immovable fortress". The king sent out his "table deckers" (stolnik) and also a spy, to find out if the people of Solovky, after building the fortress, were planning treason.

The Czar's man brought gifts from Solovky, and the spy gave a good report. However, in spite of this, the Czar although recognizing the rights and privileges of the monastery, always kept certain monks there, whose duty it was to listen to, and watch the other monks and elders for signs of disloyalty.

Later on, to avoid any surprises, the priors and senior monks were appointed by the Moscow patriarch himself.

In this way there was no treason or disloyalty among the monks until the time of Peter the First.

When Peter the First dared to attack the old customs and prohibited the use of old church books, this bulwark of Orthodoxy objected. The priors and monks declared that they were ready to sacrifice their lives for their ideals, and that they would not obey the devil's Latin heresies which the Czar had learned beyond the seas. They would not obey the patriarch either and his letter of exhortation was burned publicly as being inspired by the devil.

The monks appealed to the people and they all immediately responded. Those suffering from exorbitant taxation, from oppression by the authorities, and from robberies, as well as those remaining faithful to the manner of crossing themselves with only two fingers, rallied to help the monks of Solovky. They took an oath by the holy cross and the Bible, that they would fight the Anti-Christ, Peter.

The war continued for ten years. Every spring the Czar sent an expedition to Solovky but was not able to conquer the fortress. Finally one of the monks betrayed the fortress and opened the secret gates. The Czar's streltzi (old Russian militia) under the command of Meshcheriakov, unexpectedly broke into the monastery and shot or cut down all the monks and their prior. They hunted the defenders of the fortress into the remotest corners and hanged them on the spot.

After despoiling the monastery and leaving some labourers in charge of the building, Meshcheriakov, covered with glory, appeared before the Czar with a report. The Czar promised him many rewards and granted him a higher rank. However, Peter learned later that Meshcheriakov had reported only half of the treasures which he had appropriated at Solovky. The Czar ordered him to be scourged and tortured without mercy until he revealed the whereabouts of the stolen treasures. After these were found, he was hanged and left for three days as a warning to those who might want to deceive the Czar.

After Meshcheriakov was hanged, all the affairs at the

Kremlin were carried out according to the Czar's wishes. The old church books were removed, and new monks and a prior, loyal to Peter, were sent to the island. A garrison was also stationed in the Kremlin. From that time on, everyone made the sign of the cross with three fingers. All those who opposed the Czar were imprisoned and put into the deep cells under the Kremlin and into the stone pockets of the towers.

Holovlenko Tower, Northern Tower, and the Spinning Tower were used for the schismatics who refused to cross themselves with three fingers. For this crime they were imprisoned in solitary cells, chained to their walls and were allowed only bread and water. They had to remain there until they repented. Most died in their chains which bound them by the hands and feet.

In this way a Don Cossack, Gryshka, spent 40 years in a solitary cell. He had been condemned for "blasphemous and offending words" against the Czar and the newly printed church books. He died in his cell, refusing to receive the Holy Communion. The records stated that before his death he "defiled the chaste eyes of the prior by spitting on him with aspic vomit".

When Gryshka died, the monks took his "diabolical carcase" to a rock called Nerpich near the island of Small Rabbits. There his body was thrown, to be devoured by wild beasts.

Mezherych, a burgher from Starodub, who had owned a trading enterprise at Trubchevshe, spent twenty-seven years in the Spinning Tower. He had attempted "to sow evil tares of Aryanism". He had been arrested by the Czar's streltzi and sent to Solovky. After his arrival, he had attempted to write "seducing letters". For that he had been imprisoned in a solitary cell and died there without "repentance".

Filimon, a Ukrainian priest, refused to accept the church books which were sent from Moscow, and insisted on using Ukrainian books at church services. He not only opposed the introduction of Russian books in the Ukrainian

churches but he blasphemed the Czar and the Moscovite books in front of Captain Speshnirov, other Czar's men, and the church members.

For this firm stand in the defence of the Ukrainian books, Filimon was defrocked and sent to Solovky for life imprisonment in a solitary cell.

Many men were sent to these cells. One of them was Teofan, the heir of a count, who had supposedly committed a felony when he acted as a dragoman during negotiations with the Austrian court. He was charged with treason and disloyalty to the Czar and sent to Solovky.

Trubetskoi and Volkonski were implicated in the conspiracy at Petersburg in the December of 1825. They were imprisoned at Solovky and two years later they died.

The last leader of the Ukrainian Cossack Knighthood at Sich Zaporozhska, Petro Kalnyshesky, spent 26 years, from 1775 to 1801, in the casement under the Uspensky Cathedral.

Every Ukrainian sent to the northern concentration camps, is always reminded at Petrozavodsk, from where one is sent to Solovky, that the last Koshevy Ataman of the Ukrainian Cossack Knighthood, died and was buried at the Kremlin.

Every Ukrainian, no matter what his position, whether an educated man or a simple peasant, if fate had sent him to the island, would always seek an opportunity to pay homage to the one who suffered so much for Ukrainian freedom and independence.

When I came to Solovky, my first question was about the location of Kalnyshesky's grave. This grave was known, not only to Ukrainians, but to all the other nationalities as well. A former Russian missionary of the Greek Orthodox Church showed me the place where the remains of our Koshevy Ataman rested.

There is a section of the Kremlin where a great roof unites Uspensky Cathedral with the northern wall. It looks like a huge tunnel and is wide enough for the passage of two cars. Under the walls of this tunnel are the graves of

many outstanding benefactors of the monastery. There lie the faithful servants of the Czar, his secret mistresses, and the nuns and laymen of the monastery.

Near the northern wall Kalnyshevsky lies buried.

For the last two years of his life he had been freed from the cell. But the old Ukrainian Cossack leader, who was then 110 years old, was too weak to return to his beloved Ukraine. In a truly Christian spirit he donated to his jail, the monastery, a large Gospel, encased in gold, and a large silver cross studded with diamonds, for the altar. After the revolution these fine gifts were taken to Leningrad, and in 1927 they were transferred to Ukraine and kept in the Historical Museum at Charkiv. This was done in fulfilment of a treaty between the Russian and Ukrainian Soviet Republic concerning the return of Ukrainian historical treasures. In 1932 the cross was stolen from the museum but there is no trace of the thieves.

The casement under the Uspensky Cathedral, where Kalnyshevsky had spent twenty-six years, was a stone box, six feet wide, nine feet long, and six feet high. The door of the casement was very narrow and had a small iron window. There was no ventilation except through a small opening in the thick wall. It was impossible to see anything through it but the prisoner could hear the liturgy, when it was performed in the cathedral.

When the aged Ukrainian leader was finally released, the Czar, Alexander the First, asked him what he desired most of all. Kalnyshevsky requested a new prison to be built at Solovky, where the poor slaves would not be buried alive in the stone casements, where he himself had spent a quarter of a century.

Alexander the First thought that the request of Kalnyshevsky was too revolutionary and therefore the casements of the monastery remained in use as prison cells for another hundred years. Only after the revolution of 1905, was it prohibited to use them as prison cells.

Peter Kalnyshevsky died at Solovky at the age of 113.

The missionary and I came to the grave. I knelt and

bowed before it. The missionary followed my example. A slab of black marble covered it and on top of the slab was a great cast-iron plate with the inscription: "Here rest the ashes of God's slave, Peter Kalnyshevsky, Koshevy Ataman of the former Sich Zaporozhska. He was sent to this monastery by the order (ukaz) of Her Imperial Highness, Empress Catherine the Second, that he might be subdued. He humbled himself and died in peace on July 26, 1803".

All the edges of the slab were broken off. I asked the missionary why. He told me that before the revolution, the pilgrims from Ukraine, and later the Ukrainian prisoners at Solovky, took a little piece of the slab with them when they left the island.

"I am not going to do it", I said.

"Why?"

"I do not believe that I will ever leave this monastery."

"Young man, God alone directs our lives, and you will die only where He wills. Do not tempt Him. Do not break down. Believe that you will overcome all, and God will help you."

I thanked the missionary and left him.

IN FRONT OF THE KREMLIN

It is easy to get into the Solovky Kremlin and very hard to get out. However, we got involved in a lot of red tape. It took more than three hours for the authorities to receive our group. They called the name of every one, in order, and the prisoner had to answer with his first name and the name of his father.

Those who were called forward were sent to a square surrounded by guards, where we could either sit or lie down. After a whole day in the hold of a coal ship, everyone enjoyed the fresh air. The earth was still wet, but was covered with grass.

Tired and worn-out, the prisoners lay silently on the ground. Only a few carefree "urki", who had come with us, were telling stories about the life at Solovky in the early years of the 20th century.

"This is not the real Solovky! This is nothing compared to what it was then," said one man.

"Solovky was certainly real in the past, little brothers", remarked another.

"Transport of prisoners? This is no transport. It was much different at one time. Take us, for instance. In 1929, our transport of three thousand men was sent to Solovky. Without any warning, we were commanded to get up in the dead of the night. The guards hit us right and left with their cudgels. At four o'clock in the morning, when we were still sleeping, the guards woke us up, telling us to hurry. Some of the prisoners left the barracks still in their underwear. In less than ten minutes the whole camp was out on the square."

"What happened to your belongings and bags?" asked a young man.

"Belongings and bags? You are a green one, brother. No one thought of bags then."

After we were told to stand at attention, in our ranks,

the guards walked between the rows with cudgels. If anyone moved or shifted his feet, the guard immediately hit him with his stick.

"Do you know where you are going now?" they asked. "You must understand discipline if you are to be sent to Solovky."

"We stood at attention from four to ten a.m.", continued our narrator. "Many fainted, and three died before the commandant came.

"Finally Kurilka made his appearance. Everything became so still that a fly could have been heard buzzing. The terror of Popov Island had arrived.

He was of medium height, and broad shouldered because of his military training. His face was pockmarked and swollen from drinking too much. He came carrying a big knotted cudgel in his hands, looked at us, and then bawled at the top of his voice, "Zdra, prisoners!" (Zdra is a shortened military greeting). We answered "Zdra!" with all our strength.

Kurylka's face darkened. He stepped backward and again shouted "Zdra, prisoners!" even louder than before. Our next attempt to him was obviously a failure too.

Kurylka, beside himself with rage, stamped his feet and then hit the guard from the barrack as hard as he could with his cudgel. The guard could scarcely stand from the blow.

"Why did you not teach the prisoners to shout 'Zdra'?"

Then he turned to the rest of the guards.

"Did you serve in the army?"

"Yes" chorused the guards.

"Did you serve the Czar, the throne, and the fatherland?"

"Yes" they shouted again.

"Then why don't you want to serve the proletarian state, the party, and GPU?" Kurylka demanded severely.

"We do", protested the guards.

"Then this is my order. If, after an hour, these enemies of the Soviet government do not know how to shout 'Zdra',

I will order them to hit you with your own cudgels until only a wet spot remains. Do you understand?"

When he shouted this, some of the prisoners laughed. Kurylka stamped his feet, roared curses, and then shouted, "Attention".

He quieted himself, and said, "Take two steps forward, you merry counter-revolutionaries." And you know, brothers, the reptile had notice three of those who had laughed. He took them by the collar and dragged them forward. Then he ordered the commandant of the camp to take them away so that he could speak with them alone. We never saw those three men again. He had them shot.

Kurylka left us, and the guards began to teach us to shout "Zdra" properly.

I will never forget that school. Not less than a hundred men were killed by cudgels, and many died later from the beatings.

Later Kurylka returned. Again there was silence.

Zdra, prisoners!"

We shouted with all our might, "Zdra".

Then Kurylka told us that we must shout so that all Solovky would hear us. He wanted us to be heard 65 miles away.

Near me a sailor from the Black Fleet stood. He wore the usual bell-bottomed pants that denote a sailor. Before he had been imprisoned he had known Lenin and Trotski, and had shaken hands with them.

This sailor stood silently, and would not open his mouth when we shouted "Zdra". His sailor's heart could not stand the shame. Kurylka noticed that he did not join in with the other, and ordered him to step forward.

The sailor stepped forward. Kurylka came nearer and shouted "Zdra". The man only lifted his head higher. The commandant cursed vilely and hit him with all his might on the face with his cudgel. The sailor staggered a little, but regained his balance and stodd like a rock.

Kurylka stepped backward, and again shouted "Zdra".

The sailor did not utter a sound. Kurylka saw that our

spirit was returning because of the example of this hero. Everyone felt like a man again. He realised that he and his helpers were in danger of being torn to pieces by us.

He quickly shouted, "Machine guns, forward!"

As if by magic, machine guns appeared on all sides. Then, taking out his revolver, and directing it at the sailor, he shouted, stressing every syllable, "Prisoner, Zdra!"

"Zdra" groaned the sailor, finally conquered by Kurylka and then began to cry like a child."

Our narrator did not finish his story, for we were ordered to get up and form our ranks.

"The governor of the island, Ivan Ivanovich Ponomariov, will now speak to the newcomers", came the announcement.

IVAN IVANOVICH

“Attention!”

We braced ourselves.

A few moments later, a pair of well-fed full-blooded stallions appeared, magnificently harnessed, drawing a carriage. The driver was dressed in a green coat which was girded with a red belt, and a rather theatrical hat. With his long well-kept beard, he looked as though he had stepped into the present from the days of the old regime.

Ivan Ivanovich sat behind him.

In the first World War, Ivan Ivanovich had fought for the Czar and the Greek Orthodox faith. For his loyalty, he was made a non-commissioned officer. Then the revolution erupted. At that time he had been serving in a Chuhuevsky regiment. The soldiers were ready to kill him for his inhuman treatment of them but he escaped with the other officers.

During his early life, Ivan Ivanovich had joined the white army of General Denikin and served him faithfully in punitive detachments. When he saw that his side was losing the war, he joined the Red Army. Here he became a member of a special detachment of Cheka (later the GPU, MVD). He kept all his past hidden. Now he was dreaming about the red banner star. In this way Ivan Ivanovich accepted the revolution, and fought for its victory.

In 1921 he became a member of the communist party and reached the position of commander of a “food detachment.” Later he became a manager of studs, and finally was appointed manager of the stores, for the horses of the GPU army.

Ivan Ivanovich was very careful not to be entangled in any deviations from the party line. He was faithful in fulfilling the direct orders of his superiors. He was strict with subordinates, and ingratiating with his superiors, but never intruded on them. If he noticed that some authority

was about to fall, he joined the winners, but always in a very tactful way, so that if the authority in question managed to survive, he could pose as one who had been doing his duty with regret.

Ivan Ivanovich had a splendid future before him. However, one of his countrymen who had a past much like his, appeared unexpectedly in his department. This man decided that it would be better to denounce Ivan Ivanovich to the GPU first, before Ivan Ivanovich could do the same to him.

The denunciation was timely. Just at that time there was a periodical purge of the party members. The denunciation referred only to the past. After 1920, his life, from the party point of view, was blameless. The GPU, taking his service into account, excluded him for five years from the party, and sent him as a governor to Solovky Island with the promise that if he was faithful and devoted to his work, the party card would be returned to him.

It was the third year that Ivan Ivanovich had spent on Solovky Island, and all the command of Solovky was in his charge.

Ivan Ivanovich, with the dignity of a Czar, slowly marched along the lines of the prisoners. He was followed by the less important officers. After finishing his inspection he said something to the chief of the third section, and returned to his carriage. He stood up in it, and, holding a whip in one hand, began to speak. In a hoarse voice, he said, “Prisoners, do you realise the blackness of your crimes against the proletarian dictatorship, party and government? Are you aware of our mercifulness which is possible only in conditions of proletarian dictatorship. Only due to it, have you the chance to stand here today and breathe this spring air instead of rotting in the cemeteries for the counter-revolutionaries.

“I want to remind you of the great mercy of the GPU. You should be aware of all the kindness which was shown to you by our leader and teacher, comrade Stalin. It was he who ordered us not to punish but to reform you. He

wants us to make out of you men who will be consecrated to the party and the government.

I want to tell you, once and for all, that all of you should have been destroyed like rags that are caught in the wheels of the great proletarian revolution. Your attempts to stop these wheels are doomed to failure. There is no power which can stop that wheel and all who try to do so will be crushed. And if those who started that wheel became merciful to you and did not allow the wheels to crush you, remember it was done only because comrade Stalin has the highest proletarian morality, goodness, humanity, and mercy towards you.

But you should clearly realise that you are limited here. The Kremlin and the Sekirna Mount will be your world. You must never forget that you should have been shot, and from the slightest provocation on your part, you will be liquidated, and your bandit bodies will be thrown to feed the birds and fish.

This is my promise to you. If you refuse to work, you will be shot. If you try to escape, you will be shot. If you conduct counter-revolutionary propaganda, you will be shot.

Remember! Obedience, hard efficient work, loyalty to the party, and a condemnation of your counter-revolutionary past, is the only way to liberty. There is no other. Do you understand me?" Ivan Ivanovich mechanically waved his whip.

"At ease" came the command.

Ivan Ivanovich was carried away by the thoroughbreds, and we remained, depressed by the prospect so vividly painted for us by the commandant.

WITH AND WITHOUT TUFTA

It was already night, and projectors and lamps were lighting the square. Our transport was still waiting near the bath-house. It was cold and damp out. All who had anything warm to wear took care of the less fortunate ones and tried to warm them up. We asked permission to make a fire, but were not allowed to do so. Late at night we were brought into large barracks. Tired, cold, and hungry, we went to sleep.

In these barracks we spent the whole week without working, receiving 600 grammes of bread and prison soup. This week was needed by the distribution section to assign us to different places and tasks. The assignment was done under the supervision of the third section, a special GPU establishment which took care of the welfare of the prisoners.

The transport of prisoners was divided. Some of us were sent to the secret isolation cells, others to various points of work, and still others to the three divisions of the Solovky Kremlin.

My first acquaintance with the Solovky Kremlin when I visited the grave of Kalnyshevsky, was of a general character. It took some time and study to penetrate into the mind and soul of the builders and creators of this structure. The Kremlin is a great historical monument. Like a mirror, it portrays a perfect picture of the Moscow mind during the last five hundred years.

It represents the development in the outlook on life of the ruling Russian classes.

The Solovky Kremlin lived through the revolution, the reforms, and the changes of the ruling dynasties. All these left their reminders in the form of additions, rebuildings and improvements.

But the one unchangeable thing remaining in this structure was the intolerant spirit.

Five hundred years had gone by. The Kremlin that had served as a place of sincere prayer and as a jail for forgotten prisoners, became an immense concentration camp. But the spirit remained the same. The fact that the cross on Uspensky Cathedral was taken down, and replaced by the red flag, did not change that spirit. The name of God and his saints was rejected. The Communists proclaimed new gods and saints of their own, but still the same spirit of absolute intolerance and fanaticism continued to reign. That is why the communists changed the monk's cells into jails without difficulty. This spirit was easily taken over by Ivan Ivanovich and others, because it was so akin to their own tyrannous and intolerant souls.

The new masters were bigoted fanatics and supporters of dictatorship just like the old ones.

When I listened to Ivan Ivanovich's speech, I thought that the prior of the monastery, long ago, had probably said the very same things to the Don Cossack, Gryshka, only on different terms, because when Gryshka spat in his eyes, he was not shot. Now, in my time, if anyone ever spat in Ivan Ivanovich's eyes, at least every tenth prisoner would be shot.

I did not stay long at the Kremlin. At the time of the Arctic nights, a guard came and told me to follow him. I took my bag and went to the North Gates with him.

"Where will they send me?" I thought. "To an isolation cell or to Savatievo?"

At the gates I met my friend, Genady Sadovsky.

"Where are we going?" I asked.

"The authorities know!" was the answer.

I had my bag with the remains of my belongings in it, while Genady carried his precious bandura, a kettle, and a spoon in his boot-leg. His bandura was a great consolation to him, and to other prisoners as well.

"Thirty-two", counted the guard, as the roll was called.

"Prisoners, forward!" We marched on, with only three guards.

It was the first time that I had walked along the Solovky

roads. Genady, who had spent many years on the Solovky Islands already, walked beside me.

"There is the prior's alley", he said. He showed me beautiful birch trees making a wall on each side of the path to the lake, and at the same time forming an arch over it with their branches. The lake which the path led to, was called "Crystal". The water in it was so clear that it was possible to see the bottom which was 90 feet deep.

The guards stopped, and allowed the prisoners to smoke.

"Could I pick that flower over there?" I asked.

"Pick it, but you will find that it has no smell".

I picked the flower and found that indeed it was without perfume. I compared it to our situation at Solovky. We could live, but life would be without joy.

"Forward march!" Our group moved silently onward.

The road was surrounded by tall fir and pine trees. The path grew more narrow, and finally became a bush trail that led to a peat bog, which was covered with smaller pines and firs. Beyond the bog we climbed again.

We did not see any more mighty pines, firs, or birches. Wet moss, stones, blueberry and blackberry bushes, and dwarfed birches took their place. We marched to the north-east side of the island.

This side has strong winds from the direction of Vrangal Island, Novaya Zemlya, and Matochkin Shar. The shore is rocky, and during storms the thunder of the breakers can be heard a long distance away.

Near the sea in a small bay, two earth huts, surrounded by trees, stood on a hill. There was also a small wooden building nearby. This place was called Pichuhy, the destination of our march. Here the prisoners had to gather the sea weed from the sea bottom. They preserved and dried it on the shore. Then the weeds were burned, and the ashes containing iodine were poured into a well. Later on, they were taken to a factory at the Kremlin. We had been brought here for this work.

One of the guards explained that we would have to live in the earth huts and that they would have to be repaired

immediately, as we had to start the process of making iodine the next day. He informed us that we would receive our food ration uncooked every week, according to the norms of our efficiency. We could prepare our food either individually or in groups. There was to be no help in cooking the food or for any other purpose. This arrangement met with our full approval. The guard also told us that one of the prisoners, Armenian Avakiants, would be our supervisor and representative.

Among the thirty-two prisoners we had men of all nationalities and ages. There were Caucasians, Uzbeks, Ukrainians, Russians, and one Jew.

Sadovsky, the Jew Moses Tversky, and I, decided to form our own little group. Our first task was to make roofs for the earth huts. We took spades and cut the sod which was to cover the huts. By night we had finished repairing our dwellings. We were now ready for work.

We had received our week's rations, which consisted of 600 grams of bread and some dry salted fish, in advance. If we were not able to fulfil our norms, we would receive only 300 grams of bread the next week. Three hundred grams was the minimum food supply which a prisoner could receive no matter how low his production was.

In the wooden building lived the guards, who watched the shores of the island. They had a radio station, telephone, two huge machine guns, and a motor boat. Their number was increased by our guards and Pichuhy became alive again, as it did every spring.

At other times there were two or three hundred prisoners, whose job it was to go out in large boats to gather the weeds from the sea bottom with special long hooked poles. When they returned to the shore the weeds were carried on stretchers about 150 to 200 yards inland, and put into piles. The weeds stayed like that all winter and fermented. In the spring the piles were scattered so that the weeds could dry. The next step was to burn them and finally the ashes were taken to the iodine factory.

When we arrived at Pichuhy the rules had been changed.

Now only Avakiants had the right to use the boat. He was very dutiful in his work, and had been sent to Solovky, not for some political reason, but for "economical counter-revolution". This sentence had been pronounced upon him because he had stolen 16 tons of flour. He received ten years for this, but was still trusted by the GPU, who saw in him the same type of man as themselves.

As long as the authorities were afraid to allow the prisoners to use the boats, no more seaweed was brought in, and our task was to dry and burn the weed already piled up from the year before.

We worked hard to make our earth huts comfortable, but in spite of all efforts, sand still fell from the ceiling when we moved, and the unavoidable bedbugs still attacked us. In spite of this, after a hard day's work, we slept soundly until the guards woke us up, shouting, "Get to work".

On the march to Pichuhy, the guards had treated us like humans, but on our arrival, they became brutal and extremely strict. We realized that they had been afraid of us in the bush, but became braver when they were backed by guns and more men. Even Avakiants shouted at us.

We went to work without protesting. The piles of seaweed was stretched along the shore about half a mile away from our huts. Each pile had a board which showed the number of tons it contained. Avakiants divided us into three groups. My two friends and I remained together as we had agreed. Each person had to dry, burn, and gather the ashes of 10 tons of seaweed a day in order to complete his full norm.

The work was very hard. We had to gather driftwood on the shore, saw it into pieces six feet long, make a special fire with the wood, and slowly burn the damp sea weed on it. It was simply impossible to fulfil the norm even during the working day of 15 hours. Everybody except Sadovsky and Avakiants felt greatly depressed. Avakiants took us to a pile of weeds marked "35 tons". Sadovsky ran around the

pile, hit it in a few spots with a pitchfork, and said "good". Tversky and I looked at the pile and then at Sadovsky. We could not understand how such an experienced prisoner could say "good", when the situation was so hopeless.

"We are check-mated here", said Tversky.

"Our situation can have no solution", I agreed.

"Don't get discouraged", said Sadovsky. "Everything will be all right. I will take all the responsibility upon myself. Today you will see how, under my leadership, you will not only fulfil your idiotic norm with which comrade Stalin has made you so "happy", but you will do far more.

"Let us begin our work. Moses and I will saw logs, and you, my Cossack, take the pitchfork and spread this "manure" so that we can turn it into ashes."

"Very well, but I still do not believe in your optimism, my old sea dog," I said, selecting a pitchfork.

It was hard work scattering the seaweed, but the more I spread it, the more I became convinced that we would fulfil the norm. Working together, we were able to spread the 35 tons before noon, and were waiting only for the wind so that we could start the fire. We were happy and hopeful, and everything was in the best order. Genady was telling us about his methods.

"All the work that you do, has to be done with tufta," he said. "Wherever the production cannot be finished tufta is used. When I had hit the pile a few times with my pitchfork I knew that it contained no more than 12 tons of sea weeds."

He was right. Under the cover of the weeds, were piles of branches, stones, and logs. It was so skilfully done that no one could possibly suspect any deception. Our predecessors had used tufta in making the pile and had so fulfilled their norm, which no human being could otherwise have achieved.

The gong sounded near the huts, and three new guards came to replace their comrades. They did not come near us, and only watched to see that we did not try to escape or stop working.

The wind on the island changed direction a few times

during the day. At one o'clock it became steady for several hours and we began to build the fires.

At night, tired but pleased, we returned to our huts. We had not only been able to produce our norm, but we had done far more. Avakiants and all the prisoners knew how we and other groups had reached the norm. As we passed each other among the piles of weeds, we shouted, "Comrade, did you get the norm?"

"Yes, norm and more", always came the answer.

"Without tufta and amonal we would never have built the canal", related an old man who had been returned to Solovky after working on the White Sea Baltic Canal. "This life here is tolerable. There it was not."

He was sitting near a pot in which "devils" were boiling.

The old man continued. "During my stay at the canal, if anyone had given me the type of work that we have been doing today, I would have been as happy as a child. There we worked for two or three days in the ice cold water, driven by blows and curses. Many men lost their lives there. Misery and dead corpses without end were our daily lot."

"Go to the devil with your canal grandfather. We were there ourselves and we know all about it", rudely cried some of the men. The old man was offended and did not say anything more.

We could not always work with tufta. Often we were not able to achieve the norm for weeks, and our rations were cut down without mercy. During such periods, we survived on the "devils" thrown up on the shore by the storms. We were especially thankful for a young whale. Some whalers had wounded it, and the waves threw its body up on the beach. Its meat had an unpleasant odour, and it was impossible to eat it. However the fat was edible, and although it was not tasty, we melted three pails of it for our meals. Occasionally we had the good luck to find a dead seal. Wild blueberries, blackberries, and red bilberries, were gathered to improve our menu, and sometimes we even had mushrooms.

We ate everything we could get our hands on, but it was to no avail. We were still hungry.

KHVEDKO

Our work at Pichuhy was coming to a close. One day the guards selected twenty of the men and announced that we were to go to Anzer Island for similar work. The rest of the prisoners were sent to the Kremlin.

We marched along the shore, guarded by five men, to a wharf where some large boats were kept. Solovky Island is separated from Anzer Island by a strait which is five miles wide. About two o'clock in the afternoon we raised our sails and headed for Anzer. One old prisoner, who knew Solovky weather, upon entering the boat, swore, and cursed his fate, saying that on account of idiots he would probably perish too.

We soon found out why he had complained so. Suddenly, when we were about two miles from the shore, a strong squall of wind hit us. Heavy black clouds covered the sky and it began to rain and hail. The storm caught our boat and drove it out to sea.

"Let down the sails", commanded the steersman.

While we were doing this, a gust of wind snapped the mast in two. The boat was thrown about on the waves as though it were a shell.

The guards were pale and frightened. One of them cried and mumbled something about his children, another secretly made the sign of the cross, and none of them knew what to do. Our boat, already half full of water, was being driven closer and closer to the rocks on the opposite shore. Suddenly we heard a familiar voice shouting above the howling wind, "Do not fear, boys, just hold on." Then we heard curses and a sardonic laugh.

I noticed that all the rest of the prisoners laughed too and were evidently not scared by the danger, because, after all, death would bring them nothing but relief from suffering. They had nothing to lose.

The one who had shouted the words of encouragement

was a shy young man called Khvedko. Now, in the time of danger he had turned into a leader. He shouted to the commander of the guards.

"Now what, commander? Are you afraid? Are you sorry for your wife and children? Don't you think that I am not sorry for mine too, when you keep me chained here? At least the fish will not see any difference between the guards and the prisoners. They will eat them both." And again his sardonic laughter was heard above the wind.

The commander, who was grasping the sides of the boat with all his might, did not even answer Khvedko's insults. The wind was howling stronger and stronger, and the skies were now dark.

"Bail out the water with whatever you can", commanded Khvedko. "Hold on and do not fear. Commander, do not be discouraged. You will live. After all, we would not want the state to lose such a valuable man."

Suddenly the boat was thrown against a rock, and turned over. We jumped onto the slippery stones, falling time and time again. Luckily the water was not too deep, and no one was drowned.

"Is everyone all right," came the question. "Where is the commander?"

The commander suddenly found his tongue.

"Hryhorenko, you are talking too much. Be careful, or I will make you be quiet."

As we stood on the rock we began to feel the cold. It penetrated to the innermost parts of our bodies and gave us cramps.

"Give us your orders, commander", shouted Khvedko. "Don't you see that we will freeze here?" He plunged into the icy water, struggling against the wind, and finally reached the mainland. The water was up to our breasts, and it was hard going, but we all followed him, and in about ten minutes were with him on the shore, dead tired. Luckily the bank was not steep and was covered with sand. Khvedko continued to give orders.

"Follow me quickly."

We gathered together the last of our strength and ran after him. Behind us came the guards who had now only two guns left. Soon we reached a large earth hut.

"This is Plotnichnaya, boys", said Khvedko, as we entered it. He immediately busied himself with the making of a fire.

"Tear down the sleeping platform and make fire-wood out of it", he ordered. We all helped him as much as we could. Finally the wood caught fire and a bright warm flame soon appeared. We danced before it like wild men to get ourselves warmed up. We rang our clothing out and took account of the belongings that we had lost in the sea.

The waves were becoming calmer, the wind quieted down, and the rain stopped. Finally the sun came out.

"Can you believe it? The storm carried us on the waves for three hours", said Khvedko, looking at the sun, which was setting in the west.

Two of the guards went to the headquarters at Anzer Island. After two hours they returned with three horse-drawn carts. The carts took us to the Anzer camp, where we were met by the commandant of the place, who treated us in a friendly manner.

"Take all of them to a warm cell and feed them well", he ordered the manager of supplies, who stood nearby.

Without delay we were taken to a warm room. We were given two large cauldrons of mashed potatoes mixed with seal fat, and a huge kettle of tea. After our supper, we immediately went to sleep. It was only in the morning that we learned that the guards had taken Khvedko away during the night.

Khvedko was sent to the Kremlin and imprisoned in an isolation camp.

KLIMA AND LEAH

Anzer Island has the same surface features as Solovky Island. The north-western shores of the island are low and covered with sand, while the north-eastern shores are rocky. Solovky Island, on the north-east side is covered with forests, while Anzer is covered with Siberian swamp (tundra), except in the centre where there are a few forested hills and some beautiful lakes.

On one hill, called Golgotha, a church was built. This church was made into a jail for prisoners. The plan of the building was similar to that of the main island only there were no forts or stone buildings, and the monk's chambers were built of wood. These monks had worked as fishermen from time immemorial and also bred reindeer and cultivated the land. The prisoners were employed in the same work. Anzer had well-sized bands of horses and reindeer. It also had large gardens where the prisoners cultivated potatoes, cabbages, carrots, turnips and radishes. Large swamps were turned into fields where Dutch clover, sowens, and tymofievka (phleum palustre) were grown. Rye and barley were also cultivated, but it did not have time to ripen and had to be cut green for sill.

There was no bush work on the island and the prisoners were employed mostly in the fields. Our group was sent to Anzer to finish burning the seaweed which had been drying on the shore for over two years. This colony had a small harbour and a chapel. The chapel had been built by the order of Alexander the Second in memory of Solovky's defence against the English in 1855. The prisoners lived in the chapel, and the guards lived in a small building nearby.

Anzer was a very comfortable place for us. Our predecessors had loaded tufta on a large scale and it was easy for us to fulfil the norm.

Every Saturday we went to headquarters to receive our rations for the week. It was during one of these trips that I

met Clementina Lanina. She was the wife of Karl Maximovych, the secretary of the Ukrainian Communist party in Western Ukraine. I had met her before at the Moscow Butyrki jail, but only for a short time. Clementina Antonovna was very glad to see me, and immediately introduced her Jewish friend, Leah Shmidt, to me.

As we talked we made certain that we were in full view of the guards, so that they would not have any reason to complain. Clementina, accepting it as unavoidable fate, told me that Karl, her husband, had been imprisoned in the Kremlin. However, our conversation did not remain serious for long. Leah, a lively and attractive young woman, joined in with jokes and laughter.

She had been accused of spying for Germany while she had worked for the tourists as an interpreter. She laughed at the accusation and asserted that she had never taken part in any spying. She liked the fine young tourists, and had received many small gifts from them. She spoke openly about her romances with them, and had even written a long letter to Stalin himself, describing all her love adventures and gifts. Leah always gave a copy of this letter to her friends to read. The letter was interesting because of the fact that it represented the point of view of a human being who did not have any traces of social morality. When I read this confession, I decided to have a talk with its author. Two weeks later I found an opportunity to do so. As we talked, Leah revealed herself, not as a light-hearted butterfly, but in an altogether different light.

According to Leah, the world was a creation of blind forces that had neither purpose nor sense. To her, man had become the leading factor in that evil show only by accident. Human beings were beasts of beastly origin, all women were courtesans, and men were the lowest creatures in the whole creation.

"I know men from every nation and country, and can not see any difference between them and animals", she said. "If there is a difference, it is that animals have a feeling of pride and selfrespect which is foreign to us."

This attack took me by surprise.

"Please, my colleague", said Leah, putting her hand on my shoulder, "Do not trouble Clementina Antonovna with your philosophies which are good for nothing and which will destroy you eventually. I heard how you contradicted Clementina when she told you that we should live in the present. Your insane oratory forced me to interrupt the talk."

I then remembered her tactless intrusion into our conversation when she had told us an ambiguous story of love between a rabbit and a horse.

"Tell me", she asked, taking my hand in hers, "do you really believe that the theory of living in the present is so terrible?"

"I do not think you believe what you say yourself", I said. I told her that I firmly believed everything I had stated to Clementina Antonovna, and that I did not share her views, but considered them wild, immoral, anti-social, and even abnormal.

She only laughed, in answer.

"I would like to know if there are many such men like you in the world, and if you speak sincerely. You are either a great scoundrel and liar, or you are a hopeless idiot. If you are a fool, you will perish in this forgotten place. If you were a married man, you would think differently about this matter."

"I am married and have a son", I said.

Leah laughed again.

"Tell me," she asked, "if I told you that what I just said were foolish inventions, that I was just trying to be original, and that in reality I was altogether different, would you like me? If I cried hysterically and fell on your breast begging you not to reject my love or trample my sacred feelings, if I told you that your wife and even God Himself, would forgive a small sin, would you refuse to embrace and kiss me? Would you refuse to caress me as you did your wife? Why do you not answer? If it were not for these idiotic guards, who watch us all the time, I would prove

the truth of my theories to you, and even you would become an earnest follower of them.

"You reject the theory of enjoying to-day, not because the idea is wild, but because you are unable to practice it yourself. You follow life like a beggar, and you cover your own inability to enjoy, with a special philosophy, which has to take the place of attractive women like me. Good-bye, incorrigible husband."

Leah shook my hand, and went to her barrack laughing.

"Hey! Deshovka!" Where are you going in such a hurry?" shouted one of the "authorities of Anzer", who was passing us. Leah stopped and called to me, "And you want me to respect these two-footed beasts?"

Leah continued on her way. The "authority" did not understand her remark, and laughing with satisfaction, sang a dirty verse, so that she could hear him.

In the meantime my comrades had completed their transactions in the storehouse, and had filled the bags with the week's rations, which were so meagre that we could have eaten them in one day. Returning to Kinga, I thought about Clementina Antonovna and Leah, and came to the conclusion that only the inhuman conditions of Soviet life could create such wild theories of life. I felt that I should not be surprised that serious Clementina, the scientific assistant of the Economical Department of the Marxian Institute at Kharkiv, had so easily accepted the views of the prostitute, Leah Shmidt.

Clementina not only accepted these views, but practiced them as well. I met her again about two years later, when the guards brought her the belongings of her husband, an old pair of yellow shoes, and an old suit. He had died a few days before in an isolation camp. She showed no signs of sorrow. Instead, after looking at the worn-out shoes, she pushed them under the bed with her feet, and said, "Sic transit gloria mundi".

THE EMPEROR

We did not stay long at Kinga. After we had finished burning the seaweed, we were returned to the Anzer headquarters. The life at Anzer was almost like that at Kinga and Pichuhy, except that the rules were more strict. We were sent to amelioration works. This labour was very hard. We had to dig trenches in peat-bogs, very often standing in the water with only bast shoes on. The norms were very high, and it was hard to use tufta. After the work with the seaweed this job seemed extremely difficult. We awoke at six and returned late at night. I again began to lose hope that I would ever leave Solovky. If I had to dig ditches in swamps for seven years I never would last that long. No one ever lived longer than two years at this work. Immense amelioration constructions of the Solovky Islands were accomplished at the price of thousands of lives. After two years in the peat-bogs, many were dragging out a miserable existence as cripples, while others died while working.

My pessimism increased, especially under the influence of the stories of the old timers at Anzer. They were men, old in years and spirit, who had been imprisoned in 1922 without hope of release. These men were Russian priests or officials from the time of the Czar government and from the time of Kerensky. They used the old rules of grammar that had been abolished by the communist government. They thought of all Ukrainians as traitors and they asserted that Ukraine had been invented by the Germans and Austrians.

This comparatively small group lived in a separate barrack. Some were suspected of acting as "stukachi" (informers) for the local GPU. No one trusted these men, as they often became agents of the secret police. The Czar's former officers and priests who were ready to serve the GPU for the smallest gain, were trusted least of all.

However, I liked to speak with the men from this group,

as I was attracted by them, and I always listened with interest to their long arguments.

“Well, you are a Little Russian”. . . . one of them would begin.

“The right name is ‘Ukrainian’.”

“My friend, what is the difference. Believe me, ‘Okraianian’ is only a fashionable name, but ‘Little Russian’ is eternal.”

“It is not ‘Okraianian’ but ‘Ukrainian’.”

“My Lord, how the bolsheviks turned the heads of these youngsters!”

This was the general style of our conversations. Every year, these defeated old men secretly had a requiem for Czar Nickolas Second on the day of his death, when he was shot by the communists. I was surprised to find that even those who had helped create the revolution and had been against the Czar, now condemned the revolution and called it a sedition.

The local GPU knew their views very well, but they did not pay any attention to them, as they knew that not only in Soviet Russia but even on Solovky those ideas would not meet with any sympathy. What was almost comical, was that every time a secret patriotic meeting was held, the GPU would immediately receive denunciations of the men who had taken part in the performance.

But in 1936, when the followers of the late Czar had a secret church service for the victory of the Spanish general, Franco, the GPU noticed it and scattered the members to different outposts for work. However, no one was sent to the isolation camp.

Among this group was the brother of the famous Russian minister, Stolypin. He was a wise Russian leader who could have saved Russia if the Czar had given him his support. His measures and reforms would have prolonged the life of the old regime another decade, and probably would have made impossible the communist victory.

It was rumoured that it had been Stolypin’s brother who had organized the “Te Deum” on behalf of General Franco.

When these rumours reached the ears of the authorities, he was taken to the Kremlin without delay.

An interesting character belonged to this group. Loktev had been born in the Province of Riasan in a family of Russian peasants. He was mentally retarded and his parents had placed him in a monastery to do certain chores in return for food and lodging. During the revolution the communists destroyed the monastery and drove the monks from it. Therefore Loktev was left without any shelter. His life became hard and he had to support himself by begging. One day he met Father Vasyli who was the former administrator of the monastery where Loktev had worked.

Father Vasyli, as he talked with Loktev, was struck by his resemblance to the late Czar. Knowing the ignorance of the Russian peasants, he decided to make use of this likeness in appearance. As he loved wine, women, and song, this was an opportunity to greatly improve his lot. He decided to make Nickolas the Second out of Loktev, and spread the news that the king had not died but had escaped from the prison where he was kept. Father Vasyli trained him how to act like a king for a few weeks. He made a gaudy uniform for him, and finally, one day, they started on their travels.

From 1924 to 1929 Loktev travelled in the provinces of Orlov, Penza, and Tambov. Father Vasyli would gather information about the most backward villages and monarchist priests. Then, arriving at a certain place, he announced to the local sympathisers that the Czar was still alive. With great secrecy he would arrange a meeting where the people could see him. When all who were deemed worthy of such a great honour gathered in some house, the Czar, dressed in his shining uniform would enter the room, attended by Father Vasyli. All would fall on their knees and kiss the hands of Loktev. He said only one sentence, “Be brave, Russian people, God is merciful”. Father Vasyli did not allow him to say anything more, but made a speech himself, and after half an hour, the Czar would rise and depart. He would change his uniform in another room.

Then the faithful subjects would bring their gifts to him. Such visits would take place at night. Horses were always ready to take away the "Czar" and Father Vasyli with all their gifts. This plan brought a rich and careless life to Father Vasyli. However, it ended in 1929, in one of the villages of the province of Orlov. A local priest, who had his misgivings about the identity of the Czar informed the local GPU about the meeting. Their agents were present when the people gathered at a house.

Father Vasyli was shot, and some of the outstanding members of the meeting met with the same fate. Loktev, saved because he was feeble-minded, was sent to Solovky with a few other ignorant peasants. He told everything to the GPU, even the places which they had previously visited. When the GPU made arrests, they brought the peasants to him, and he witnessed against them.

ESCAPE

While I was at Anzer, I heard about the comparatively recent escape of the prisoners from a camp in the winter of 1933.

The distance between Solovky Island and Kem is about 60 miles, while the distance between Anzer and the "Summer Shore" is about 26 miles. The narrow strait freezes once in fifty years and then it is possible to reach the shore of the mainland over the ice.

The winter of 1933 was unusually cold. The straits froze and the prisoners at Anzer learned about it. This was also known by the authorities and all the necessary precautions were taken on the island and on the mainland. In spite of this, a group of prisoners decided to try to escape. This group was lead by Commander Hres, a well-known leader of the insurrection detachment which became famous in the time of the Ukrainian president, Petlura. He was assisted by Abdul-Bukreev, a former student of the University of Kazan and a Tartar by origin. The group was made up of 31 Ukrainians, 7 Tartars, 2 Finns, 1 Tchetchenian, 3 Russians, and two men from Kabarda. There were 46 prisoners altogether.

They planned how to enter into the barrack where the guards lived and the commander had his dwelling. They were to seize their arms, and tie and gag them. Two Finns, who knew the surroundings, were given the task to lead the group to the mainland. After reaching the shore, they were to separate into groups of twos and threes and try to reach the Finnish border where they would surrender to the Finns as political refugees from Solovky. The two Finns, as Finnish subjects, would speak for the fugitives. Their friends and relatives in Finland would provide the financial support for the group. No one was accepted into the group who was older than fifty, and who could not ski. The whole group was made up of men who had taken an active part in

insurrections against the communists. Among them were former officers of the Kotovsky division and participants of Voroshylov's march on Warsaw. There were also a few men who had taken part in armed opposition to collectivisation in 1929, some members of the Ukrainian underground organization "Union for Liberation of Ukraine," who had been sent to Solovky instead of being shot, and a sailor who had participated in the sailors' insurrection at Kronstadt. They were all strong, active men. Many of them at first had supported the Communists but had later turned against them. In January, on a dark night, when everyone was sleeping, conspirators armed with well-sharpened knives, removed the watch and took the guards and the commander by surprise. It all took about ten minutes. Commander Seleznev did not have time to make even a sound. His body was left on the bed with a severed head. His wife, tied, gagged, and horror stricken, was left to look at her dead husband. The plotters secured two machine guns, thirty-seven rifles and a few revolvers with the necessary supply of ammunition. They also took sufficient quantities of food, and skis for all.

Without a shot, they disarmed the rest of the military GPU police. The guards were tied and gagged with the very same gags they had used for the prisoners when they tortured them. In about half an hour the group noiselessly left the camp, led by Hres, Abdul-Bukreev, and the two Finns. The silent stars in a cloudless sky seemed to promise a successful escape for the fugitives.

"Keep to the right all the time", commanded one of the Finns, who was looking at the compass which had been confiscated from a GPU officer.

When the group was about ten miles from the island, Hres gave instructions about what to do in case they met the enemy. Such a meeting was not expected, but for any occasion, he ordered them not to surrender alive and to give no quarter to the opposing side.

Everyone enthusiastically agreed with this command. The group continued to glide swiftly and silently over the

snow-covered waste. The Finns told them that they would have to run at least forty miles before the bush could be reached, as the shore opposite Anzel Island was a sandy swamp which was hard to hide in.

Before daybreak, the group began to approach the shore which was covered with coppice. Behind it, stretching on all sides, loomed the snow-covered forest. This was the place they were looking for. A fir forest would be the best hiding place for them. The four leaders stopped. Hres gave the command to check the machine guns and to spread along the shore line. The group spread in a line about 150 yards long, and, facing the shore, approached it cautiously. Every heart was beating rapidly. Freedom was so near. Some of them were ready to break the line, thinking that the danger was over. The group increased their speed, and, desiring to reach the forest as soon as possible, moved faster and faster, forgetting all danger.

Suddenly they heard a tinkling noise. Hres ordered the men to lie down. They heard the tinkling again and a muffled voice give commands. Hres ordered his group to get up and move five hundred steps backwards and to the right. When they got up, machine gun fire was opened up on them from the bush.

"Lie down and dig in", commanded Hres. "Machine guns, fire". Under the protective curtain of their bullets they had time to dig into the snow.

"Treason?" Hres asked the Finn.

"No, I don't think it was treason", shouted the Finn as he pressed the trigger of his machine gun.

About five hundred yards behind them shrapnel exploded, then more and more came. It turned into a regular cannonade at the line where the prisoners were. From the bush and coppice, GPU soldiers, dressed in white coats which blended with the snow, began to advance. They approached under the protection of machine gun and shrapnel fire.

The bombardment was so strong that it was impossible for the fugitives to retreat and they decided to fight to the

last cartridge. Soon Hres noticed that the Finn was slumped over the machine gun, killed by a shot in the head.

"You were right, comrade. This was not treason", he said, and removing the body, started firing the gun.

Resistance was hopeless. The group of fugitives was steadily growing smaller. Attacked with mortar fire and later with hand grenades, their fire was finally silenced. At dawn, all was over, and only the groans of the dying could be heard. Forty-one dead bodies and five badly wounded prisoners were brought back to Anzer. Two died on the way. The remaining three were imprisoned in the isolation cells under the "White House".

Not one of these men was liquidated. After recovering each of them received an additional ten years, which left them without hope of ever leaving Solovky. A Ukrainian, Petro Nesterenko of Mykolaiv, had to have his leg amputated, but he made good use of his hands, and became one of the best shoemakers on Anzer. Two others, a Ukrainian and a Tartar, were left in the Kremlin.

The new commander of the GPU, on his own responsibility took Nesterenko to Anzer so that he could repair shoes. So ended this first and last unusual attempt to escape from Solovky.

The question arose as to whether they had been betrayed, but the group had been destroyed due to their own oversight. They had overlooked the radio station at Anzer. After they had left, a guard returned from a remote outpost. He untied his comrades, and two hours later the GPU detachments were hurrying to the Summer Shore where they met the fugitives.

The attempt of the prisoners to escape was kept in great secrecy, and even the prisoners themselves were prohibited to discuss it. After these events, over 300 men were transferred from Anzer to isolation cells in the Kremlin. The Solovky Islands were visited by dozens of commissions.

Hundreds of the more unruly prisoners received additional prison terms, and stricter rules were introduced. The command of the island, wardens and other authorities, were

changed because of their lack of vigilance. The governor was dismissed, and in his place Ivan Ivanovich Ponamarey was sent. The chief of the third section was changed, and new GPU guard commanders were also sent in. One of the commanders who had been tied up by the prisoners, was condemned, for negligence, to ten years in the slave camps, and was removed from Solovky.

THE WOMEN ON SOLOVKY

I heard and saw many horrible things on Anzer. Solovky Island was visited often by the government representatives from the centre, and this kept camp authorities in check, but Anzer did not see outside commissions very often. The local governors, usually tyrants, had supreme power over the souls and bodies of the prisoners. The fact that they changed often did not make the life of the prisoners easier. When a bad man left Anzer, a worse man, as a rule, would take his place.

Before my arrival, sadists and perverts tortured their victims to death and then wrote reports that the prisoner in question had been killed while attempting to escape.

In my time, the authorities abstained from open brutalities, but the women, who refused to accept the attentions of the commanders were kept in isolation cells, and were used for the most degrading work. They were forced to realise, finally, that their only salvation was in complete surrender to the wishes of the authorities. But at times these officials met with unconquerable characters. These, however, became cripples, while some became sick and died from the hard inhuman work. Some even committed suicide.

Amalia Hartner was a young, well-built, attractive blonde. She was of Finnish origin and had lived at first in Leningrad and later in Moscow. She had belonged to the higher circles of the Comintern, and, suspected of spying, was condemned to ten years hard labour. Well acquainted with the history of the labour movement, she was antagonistic to Stalin's policy, and predicted the ruin of Stalin's communism and the victory of true communism.

When I asked her who was to bring about this victory, she said that it would happen through the purification and revitalisation of the whole movement, which would result in the expulsion of all hypocrites. No argument could change

her. If she was not able to answer the objection, she considered it as a reactionary interrogation.

As she was quite pretty, she was immediately noticed by the authorities. The citizen commander, Yanovich, bestowed his attentions on her right from the beginning. The first day, he took her to clean his office. Without any protests, Amalia went to wash the floors there. But on the third day she was sent to clean the cow-stall, and soon after that, the pigsty. Finally they forced her to carry human excrement to the fields to be used as manure.

Dressed in a sweater, small shoes, and jeans, she carried a scoop on her shoulder, and led a small horse called Meridian, who dragged the barrel filled with refuse. Sometimes I saw her as I was digging ditches in the field. She often took a small piece of bread from her bosom, and fed her only friend and helper, the horse.

It was clear that the authorities were making a game of Amalia. Often, embracing the old wise head of Meridian, she cried, asking him why they tortured her so.

Amalia was naive. When Yanovich found that she remained firm in spite of everything, he sent her to float logs. When this did not help he incarcerated her in the infamous cellar under the main building. She spent a few days there, and Yanovich spread the news that she intended to escape. No one believed him, however. A week later Amalia appeared in the yard. It was the beginning of September on the official day of rest, which was appointed arbitrarily, once a month, by the authorities. On that day, the prisoners took the opportunity to wash their clothing, write letters, and mend their coats. In the afternoon the prisoners were allowed to walk around a nearby lake. This lake had crystal clear water, and seemed to be bottomless. Around the shore, sorb grew, its branches hung with red berries, almost reaching the water. The banks were covered with grass and reed. In the grass, large cages were placed as special traps for muskrats.

The Solovky Islands have over four hundred fresh water lakes. When the slave camps were established on the islands,

Soviet agents brought live muskrats from North America. They were provided with feed, and a number of prisoners were assigned to look after them. In the fall, all the lakes were surrounded by traps baited with fresh carrots. The muskrats that were caught were killed and skinned. The skins were processed on the island and were then taken to the mainland. From there they were sent to the world fur markets as finished produce.

The former president of the Council of People's Commissars of Tartary was in charge of the muskrat industry while I was at Anzer. While a secretary of the Tartar Communist Party, he had promulgated watchwords similar to that of Mykola Khvyliov's "Away from Moscow". He had come to Solovky with Sultan Helev.

The prisoners walked around the lake. We watched the muskrats, looked at the berries of the sorb, and noted the bluish-green tinge which showed the depth of the lake. Exhausted by hard labour and slavery, we did not pay any attention to the towers with machine guns, which surrounded us. Every prisoner, in his thoughts, was far away beyond the accursed White Sea, which cut us off from the world.

The sun and warm weather did not soothe us, but only made our nostalgia more acute. Everyone felt the hopelessness of our situation and the cruelty of it. Neither the God-created beauty of the lake, nor the sunshine were able to drive away the depressing thoughts that reigned in our hearts.

Suddenly we were all startled by a heart-rending scream which came from the main building where the island's commander lived. We all started to run as fast as we could towards the sound.

Out of the building ran Amalia. Her dress had been torn off to the waist. She was crying hysterically, and screaming, "Beasts, bandits, swine!" Covering her breasts with her hands, she ran to the lake, and jumped onto the stone jutting over the water.

"Good-bye, comrades", she cried, and, taking her long

blond tresses in both hands, she jumped into the bottomless depths of the lake.

"May her soul find rest in the kingdom of God. May her soul find rest", said an old priest, who stood nearby. He took his hat off, and, crossing himself, bowed a few times.

"We should try to save her, you old mare, and not mumble about the soul's rest", shouted Ivan Barylo to the priest, as he jumped into the lake from the same stone where Amalia had stood a minute before.

"Everyone to his cell", ordered the commander of the guards. The guards drove the prisoners back with their bayonets.

About ten minutes later, Barylo returned, wet and numbed. He had not found Amalia. At night her body was dragged out with a net and placed in the morgue.

Yanovich was called to the Kremlin, and a new governor was sent to Anzer Island. We learned later that Yanovich was appointed the chief of the third station at the Baltic camp near Medvezha Mount.

The governor of the island was changed but not the life and treatment of the prisoners, except for the fact that we were prohibited to approach the shores of the lake, although the men who looked after the muskrats could. The sunny warm days were over, though, and no one was sorry not to be able to see the lake.

WOMEN CANNIBALS

The prisoners often talked about Golgotha among themselves. This was a place with a hill in the centre, where the monks had built a church and a hermitage. They called it Golgotha in memory of the place where Jesus Christ had been crucified. The monks worked for their salvation, and prayed for the forgiveness of everyone's sins, including their own.

In my time, 275 women and young girls from Ukraine lived at this church. They had all been condemned by the Soviet government for cannibalism.

Cannibalism in Ukraine during the artificial famine of 1932-33 was a frightful thing, but, inured to all kinds of horrors, the prisoners were not impressed by it, because it was a common occurrence on Solovky. The killing and eating of a human being was not considered as something extraordinary above the 65th parallel, as it was a matter of survival and was considered a more or less original way to procure food.

In 1929, in the period of the so-called "vilful arbitrariness", many cases of cannibalism were registered at Solovky. In the period between 1932-33 there were hundreds of cases, and many more remained unregistered and hushed up by the authorities. Beginning with 1934, the authorities used energetic measures to stamp out cannibalism at Solovky as no one could venture out without an armed guard.

Groups of criminal prisoners escaped from the camps into the forests of Solovky. There they formed bands, and as they were not able to secure any food, they tried to catch a man so that they could eat him.

I met some of these men on the continent later, who told me, as a matter of course, how they had killed and cooked other prisoners.

On Solovky, cannibalism did not surprise anyone and if

the prisoners talked about camp Golgotha, it was for a different reason.

Many prisoners were interested in the women themselves, and how they could get to them. The men who looked after cows and pigs, all those who were sent for lighter work, were the most anxious.

As soon as commander Yanovich's driver came to the barracks, he was immediately surrounded by the prisoners.

"Tell us, Aliosha, did he drive there to-day?"

"Yes, he went. I wish a bear would drive him", the phlegmatic Russian would answer. He brought all the news about the women and Yanovich, and told his friends about them. The friends, in turn, told the rest of the men.

From the news, it was clear that Yanovich, the chief of the third section, and the commander of the GPU guards, had a special residence on Golgotha where they repaired from time to time to drink vodka with the girls. They either went together or separately. As soon as one of these officials arrived, all the women and girls under 30 years of age, were brought in ranks. This was done by Pobedonostsev, a prisoner, who was placed in charge of the women. He was a sexual pervert and a former officer of the Czar's gendarmierie.

The communist overlords selected the girls according to their taste from the ranks. Among the women prisoners were fifteen girls between the ages of 10 and 15 years. Some of them were with their mothers or grandmothers. After every visit of the officials, Golgotha was filled with subdued sobbing. They had to cry quietly because if they were heard they would be punished without mercy by Pobedonostsev, who hated women. There was no one to whom the women could complain.

Once I had the opportunity to see Pobedonostsev. The prisoners showed him to me, so that I would know how this eunuch who was in charge of the harem for the representatives of communist authorities on Anzer, looked.

More than one hundred and fifty young women and girls were abused by these three communist leaders, who

were evidently perverts and sadists, but finally one of these women, Nastia Pleskan, exposed these criminal deeds.

As you have seen, soon after the death of Amalia, Yanovich was recalled, and his friends were removed. Only Pobedonostsev was left.

All the women accused of cannibalism were transferred to Muksolm Island a few weeks later, but the talks about Golgotha did not stop in our barrack.

One of these stories is worth recording because it reveals how the women were treated. Sashka, an expert women's shoemaker, said, during a talk about women cannibals, that for no price would he be interested in them in any way.

"Fellows, you should have seen them when they were brought over. I have spent over 15 years in prison camps but I never saw so horrible a sight before."

The prisoners asked Sashka to tell them about it. He made a cigarette and began.

"I suppose you remember when the news came last fall that women would be sent to Solovky. It was well known that everyone always . . ."

"Now, Sashka, please don't give us an introductory oration" interrupted one of the men.

"If you don't like it, cover your head with a coat", retorted Sashka, and continued. "So, as I said, we were not entirely against having women in our midst.

"The news was true, and at that time, I was in charge of the loading brigade at the port. I lived, as you can imagine, rather well, as I had connections with the sailors. Once I was able to steal and hide two crates of vodka under the electro-station.

"It was impossible to find an honest man anywhere. Every swine wanted to become a thief. If a man stole half a ration of bread, he called himself Pachan. I was not in charge of unloading very long, and was not even allowed to come near the port later, but the unloading of these beauties took place while I was still there.

"When the chief of the works section came, and shouted, 'Sashka, take your brigade to the port to unload

the women', my heart began to beat faster. The boys assembled like lightning. In three minutes we were already at the North Gates, and ran, not walked, to the port.

"When we arrived, we saw the ship 'Udarnik' tied up to the wharf. On the deck stood Ivan Ivanovich and the chief of the third section.

"'Come on board' came the command. We jumped onto the deck. Ivan Ivanovich then told us, 'Well boys, you have to unload the hold. Only you must be very careful. They have sent us precious wares.' He began to laugh.

"Then I noticed that a horrible stench was coming from the hold. I now knew what the matter was. I went down into it first, the boys following me. What I saw there was indescribable. I had seen many terrible things, but never anything as bad as the sight that met my eyes. My heart is hard like a stone, but when I looked at that horrible scene, I thought, 'You dirty reptiles! You stinking pigs! How can you laugh at them like that?'

"What I saw were not humans, but corpses. They had been sent from Archangel in the hold of the coal ship, and had spent ten days there. It was hard to tell whether they were human being or lumps of coal with eyes. I tried to lift one woman who was dressed in rags, and saw that she was dead. My boys had the opinion that there were more dead than alive.

"I climbed quickly up to the deck. The authorities had gone to the other end of the boat, because the smell was so strong. I shouted to those reptiles, 'Commanders! Whom should we bring up first, the living or the dead?'

"'Bring up those who are alive', said Ivan Ivanovich. 'Let them take the dead back from where they came.' The boys began to bring up the women. The smell from the ship was so bad that it spread over the whole port. All of them were sick with dysentery, and were covered with excrement. Three boys refused to carry them. It was impossible to remain in the hold longer than five minutes. Many of us were retching. Even I could not stand it. I am a hard man but I felt so sorry for them that when I saw

two of my boys behave like pigs with them, I hit them on the face so hard that their noses began to bleed. Ivan Ivanovich saw what I had done, and came over to me. The boys whom I had hit, turned around and ran into the hold.

"Ivan Ivanovich asked, 'Why did you hit them?'"

"'Let them behave like human beings with human beings,' I answered. He looked at me, blinked his eyes, spat and said, 'Where do you find your human beings?' and then went away.

"We brought up three hundred and fifty people alive. Two hundred and seventy-five were women, and seventy-five were men. It was hard to tell who were old and who were children. One hundred and ten were dead. Among those whom we brought up, about two dozen could scarcely move, and the rest lay about like logs.

"We took them and put them into carts, which took them directly to the bath-house. Ivan Ivanovich thanked us, and ordered an additional ration of bread to be given us and a package of cheap tobacco which was taken from the ship's supply.

"As I was waiting for it, I heard Ivan Ivanovich and the commander of the guards who had brought the prisoners, quarreling violently. The commander demanded that Ivan Ivanovich take the dead with him too. Ivan Ivanovich said that he would take only those who were alive. The argument grew very heated, and finally Ivan Ivanovich, losing his temper, ordered all the prisoners to be loaded back onto the ship, on his responsibility. The commander changed his tune, and in half an hour, the 'Udarnik', with the dead in its hold sailed on to Kem, and I went to the Kremlin with the tobacco.

"Five men and two women died in the bath-house. The remainder were imprisoned in the cells under the hospital. In October, as you know, the women were sent to Golgotha,

"And so, fellows", ended Sashka, "when I think about our cannibals, I do not think about kissing at all. All I can remember is their appearance on that horrible day."

This was the way that the women cannibals from Ukraine began their life on Solovky Island.

WHITE RUSSIANS

Unexpectedly our work at digging ditches in the swamps ended. Our group was increased by about two dozen prisoners, and sent to Pichuhy again. This time we had to pile up the float wood on the shore and prepare it for shipping. It was the middle of October and the time of storms on the White Sea. These storms continued without interruption until the winds piled up mountains of ice, and about twenty miles of the sea near the shores became frozen.

However, what did the authorities care about storms? The plan of lumber production was badly neglected, and it was necessary to catch up with it at any price. The work on all the stations began in earnest. The purpose was to reach, overtake, and leave behind, all former achievements in that branch. Although I had complained bitterly about ditch digging in the swamps, here the certainty of death seemed to be guaranteed.

On the first day of work I managed to fall into the sea, and found out what the water in the White Sea tastes like. However, my comrades did not let me die, and returned me to life after half an hour of resuscitation. The fact that I did not end my life there was due to the methods of my friend, Genady Sadovsky, who used all ways and means to transfer me to the Kremlin.

Alexander Navrotsky, at that time, became the chief of the agricultural department of the islands. He was my friend and protector even when I had been at Moresplav. When he learned about my hopeless situation, he demanded the authorities to appoint me as zoologist to the agricultural section. The personnel officer showed him my file in which it was indicated that I had never had anything to with zoology, but Navorotsky insisted on my transfer, and finally secured it by stating that it was definitely known to him that I was a zoologist.

One morning a guard told me that I was to go with him to the Kremlin. I was very happy. My friends asked me not to forget them, and to do everything possible to get them removed from Pichuhy. Everyone knew about my departure and once an old man with a fine, neat appearance, called me aside. Till then I had not noticed him, as he did not go to work and was considered to be an invalid.

He introduced himself as Zavitnevich, a White Russian who had been in charge of the Planning Department of the White Russian Academy of Science at Mensk. I asked him whether he knew other White Russians on Solovky. He said that he did, and that he would like to meet them at the Kremlin. Would I help him? I promised to do all I possibly could, but warned him not to put too much hope in me, as I myself did not know whether I was to be sent to an isolation cell or not.

The White Russians were a nation with its own history and culture entirely different from the Russians. Unfortunately their country was occupied by the Russians and the people were suppressed. They should not be mistaken for the reactionary Russians who fought against the communists and were also called white Russians to distinguish them from the red Russians.

In the winter of 1933, I was at Moresplav, which is not very far from Kem. This was a camp from which the prisoners were sent over to Solovky. Here I met a group of White Russians who had recently arrived from Mensk.

First I will mention the group which formed the White Russian National Centre. They were also former members of an organisation called Hromada. Hromada was active in the western part of White Russia, which was under Polish domination. The Polish government imprisoned them and later exchanged them for Polish prisoners in Russian jails.

With great triumph the victims of the Polish oppression returned to a "happy, free, and independent socialistic White Russia". They were lionized, sent to summer resorts, and given the best positions. Everything was for the service

of these martyrs of the Polish Fascism. It was not a life but a holiday. Rak Mykhailovsky, Dvorchaninov, Myatla, and Havrylyk were happy beyond measure.

However, this holiday soon ended, and the common Soviet life began. Former members of Hromada and members of the Polish parliament began to notice, with surprise, unusual things. The oppression of the people and the brutalities of the ruling communistic cliques made them change their views about the Soviet paradise. Not very long after, all of them were incarcerated in prisons at Mensk, the capital of White Russia. It was on White Russian land but it was not their now. Later, on Solovky, the White Russians warmly remembered the Polish jails and compared them with the wild and inhuman treatment of prisoners in Russian prisons.

Rak Mykhailovsky, Myatla, and Dvorchaninov were condemned for spying on behalf of Poland, for participation in underground nationalistic organisations and for preparing an armed uprising. To these was added the accusation that they had abused their official positions with counter-revolutionary purposes as well as terroristic actions against the representatives of the Soviet government. All these deeds were supposed to be undertaken by the organisation, the White Russian National Centre".

These White Russians now understood the nature of the Soviet government and the character of the Soviet socialistic White Russia. In Poland they were able to make speeches. In Soviet prisons they met with unlimited brutality. It was not enough that they were thrown into prison. They were forced to confess to all the crimes with which the GPU found it necessary to accuse them, and they were made to beg tearfully for mercy.

The White Russians spent a whole year in prison. The GPU henchmen not only tortured them physically but broke their minds and spirits as well. Unhappy and miserable, they were brought to Solovky. These former rulers now became lowest slaves. Only Rak Mykhailovsky remained firm and unshaken. I do not know his past or his

activities in Soviet White Russia, but I do know that this man said openly and sincerely without any regrets, that "we deserved it".

I had an opportunity to speak with him a few times and he left a good impression. It would seem that the head of any man packed with all kinds of Soviet garbage would not be freed so soon from it and come to its senses. It was different with him. The Soviet daze left him quickly. He condemned without hesitation all that he had so blindly believed and also condemned himself for his past.

While on Solovky he worked at heavy physical jobs, and always stressed his hatred for the communists and Moscow. In 1936 he was imprisoned in an isolation cell and after that, no one heard about him.

Myatla, a gentle, quiet man, was another White Russian. I listened intently to his stories about Poland, his reasons for becoming a White Russian communist, and how he had been sent to the horrible all-destroying Solovky tortures. Although he was tall and well-built, he had tuberculosis and a bad cough. In spite of this he was still forced to do hard work, and one time at Moresplav, while levelling some boards, he threw down the plane and said that he would never be able to reach the norm even if it was made smaller. On Solovky he had to dig ditches in the swamps. Finally he was sent to the hospital, where he died in the spring of 1936. No one knows where he is buried.

Dvorchaninov had a pale face and a small black beard. He reminded me of a college professor, although he never made speeches like Rak Mikhailovsky, and never made statements. He tried to evaluate everything anew, and was searching for a forgotten way to his people. At Solovky he worked on general jobs and the GPU did not persecute him. In 1936 he was put into an isolation camp and after that, nothing was heard about him.

Havrylyk was a typical village teacher. He was tall, and had flaxen hair, and a red beard. He was a White Russian, kind, hard working, and quiet-natured. He spoke with deep conviction as though afraid that his listeners would not

understand him. He loved to be alone and always looked sadly into the distance. The tragedy of Mensk left a far greater impression on him than on anyone else. He could not bear to hear about Mensk, Soviet White Russia, or Socialism, his hatred for them was so great.

The feeling of guilt was so deep in Havrylyk that he did not believe in the possibility of forgiveness. He often said, "I am the most unhappy man alive, for I have not the right even to lift my head and look at the stars with their eternal unchangeable justice". This former communist sincerely and earnestly prayed to God, asking him to forgive a miserable sinner like him.

In 1935, I met Havrylyk for the last time on an island called Mali Zaichiky. He was with a few prisoners who had been sent there for punishment. He was very tired and did not speak to anyone. At night he would go out of his barrack and pray on his knees behind a mossy rock. Finally he was taken to the isolation camp half-insane, and never left it.

Zavitnevich was the only one of the White Russians who earned himself a bad reputation. It was established beyond a doubt that he was denouncing his comrades with whom he had been imprisoned in Poland, to the GPU. However, it did him no good, as someone denounced him, and as a result he was thrown into a solitary cell. Later he was released for a short time, but was again imprisoned.

Adamovych, the people's commissar for education, belonged to this group of Soviet White Russians. I did not meet him at Solovky, but I know that he was kept in a solitary cell at Moresplav. There he was accused of every fascist crime and received an additional ten years of imprisonment.

The White Russian commissar of agriculture was imprisoned on the island at the work station of Filimonovo in 1937. He was a tall young man, strongly built, and filled with Soviet fanaticism. Accused with abusing his official position for counter-revolutionary purposes, he continually

wrote long letters to Stalin explaining that he had nothing to do with the counter-revolution.

There were a good number of White Russian teachers and among them, I recall the two Khomychi brothers, and the two agriculturists called Savych and Lashkevich.

Thus the White Russian "enemies of the Soviet system" were accounted for.