



*No one
comes out
of here alive*

My father's uncle ALter was taken by the KGB in 1953 for learning Hebrew and Jewish history with an underground group of Soviet Jews. He was persecuted as a Jewish nationalist. Alter left a diary in Russian about his time in prison and the GULAG. Surrounded by murders and other criminals, communist party servants and fascists, he always defended his Jewish identity and provided a unique view from Jewish perspectives. It looks like some diary records were actually added by Alter from his memory, so they might not always be correct in chronology.

Alter Grinwald was born on Yom Kippur in Poland in the year 1922. He was six years old when someone hit him with a whip from behind, cutting his back leaving a scar for life. "Someone" was an adult, a Catholic, as Alter was an easily recognizable Jewish child with red hair. At twelve old he participated in a communist youth group. As he described this late "we wanted to make everyone in the world happy." The same year a new King, George the sixth, was crowned to the throne of Great Britain. Alter wrote a congratulations letter to the King. He completely forgot about that letter, but in several months he received an amazing invitation from the King.

He almost got permission from the Polish Government to visit London, but his record as a participant in the underground group prevented that. Alter also participated in another Jewish group learning Torah and Hebrew. By the way, this was typical for Jewish boys in Poland. For Alter learning Torah became a passion for life. It served him well later in prison when his life was gambled by criminals playing cards. He was supposed to be killed... unless he could tell an extremely interesting story. He would start a story from Torah and criminals would become all ears...

Read more from the memoirs [translated from Russian by Julie Zhuk]

Foreword

"No one comes out of here" - with these words and the cold, spiteful glance, the KGB Lieutenant Colonel Trofimov met me. He was the deputy head of the investigation department of the Kuibyshev Directorate of KGB (later KGB). I stood on the threshold of a large office where officers were waiting for my arrival. Trofimov wasn't sure if I took his words seriously enough and repeated them several times. "They don't get out of here and, at best, receive twenty five year sentences. Here they will learn what Soviet Power is." He spoke these words so convincingly that anyone who heard it would believe it.

These words were stamped in my brain and I looked for an answer to them. After the first difficult days of isolation, moral and physical pressure, when usually everyone falls into depression or even tries to commit suicide, I said to myself: "Well dear, you know you will die here. Your destiny is a foregone conclusion? Here you are." I tried to imagine what would happen to me, and how it was with my parents, and relatives, who obediently walked into gas chambers. I suddenly cried out - "No! This will not happen." As long as I had strength, I decided to fight, not to kneel. No torture should break me, I will not ask for mercy, I will not praise the Soviet government for its generosity and humanity. I wanted to remain human at least for myself. Thank the Almighty for giving me the strength to withstand the hardships. G-d saved me and gave me the opportunity to write about my experiences.

Alter Grinwald

I describe these events with a sense of duty to friends and comrades. Among them were young and old. I was associated with them in a common struggle against the widespread antisemitism at that time. Later, I was associated with an organization called the Group of Revolutionary Marxists (GRM), whose goal was to change the form of government in the USSR. I describe events that have captured a large segment of my life. In their practice of destroying independently - minded people, the security of organs of the USSR hardly met many well-organized groups that would set as their goal the overthrow of the existing regime in the country.

The organized movement functioned in a number of regions in our country and acted in such a way that it could not be destroyed at once, since such examples have already existed. I think that when the program and political

declarations of these organizations fell into the hands of the authorities, they were very surprised at this. The Group of Revolutionary Marxists consisted of people of different nationalities and from different social groups. Dotsenko-Rostislov - Ukrainian, student. Sukhodolsky Arkady - Russian, an officer from Krasnoyarsk. Dmitry Pisarev - Russian officer.

Mazur Davyd was a Jew, an aviation sergeant from Derbent. Abdul Barys is a Tartar, a cadet of a tank school from Sverdlovsk, Yanushkeviches Pranas is a Lithuanian, a student from Kaunas. Sergey Nickolayev - Russian a worker from Leningrad. These people of high moral character, of course knew what consequences awaited them, but the desire to free the country from the bloody regime gave them superhuman stamina and determination in the struggle.

In 1947 the war ended with destructive and grave consequences. Soviet citizens were tired and worn out by many years of hunger, hard work, and the loss of their loved ones and relatives in the war, expecting at least a little relief in their lives. Indeed, during the war, people resignedly all the hardships and hardships. The war was a kind of altar, to which they brought everything they had. Continued hunger and exhausting labor, well-remembered past repressions and all kind of purges, contributed to the fact that people did not ask themselves the question - how long will this continue?

In such an environment it was easy to work for those whose duties were to preserve and strengthen the regime. The organs of oppression grew very fast and became known to everyone. The long-term suppression of elementary freedoms, the systematic destruction of people capable of thinking, gave the authorities the desired results. Frightened and morally depressed citizens have lost their ability to defend themselves. They were unarmed and gripped by the fear of terror. As a result of the difficult and economic situation, the number of crimes in the country has increased. Theft of food and consumer goods has increased.

Such crimes were punishable by long sentences in forced labor camps. Camp towers spread across the country. Days of night, columns of arrested men and women, guarded by submachine gunners with dogs, appeared on the streets of the cities. They were taken to work in stone quarries, construction sites, and factories. Passers -by tried not to look at the unfortunate and only sighed sympathetically. But the suppression organs controlled by the authorities continued their dirty work. In their offices, furnished with massive- old style office furniture, meetings were held on methods of isolating potential dangerous people objectionable to the regime.

These gentlemen were much less interested in real criminal offenses. It was they who decided the fate of innocent people who were unaware of the impending disaster. The bodies of inquiry accepted denunciations of their paid and unwitting agents, whose networks were enmeshed in the whole country. The authorities tried to completely suppress the idea of freedom. This was called the "Potentially Hazardous Elements Operation". They adopted the experience of all bloody regimes known in history and successfully implemented it in life. The enormous apparatus of coercion and violence was maintained at the expense of the poverty of the population.

There was no popular control over these bodies and all material wealth belonged to them. The only thing that the authorities could not blame - bribery - they didn't need it; they already owned everything. The employees of the apparatus of the bodies of inquiry harbored a fierce hatred of ordinary people, and high officials, in turn, despised their subordinates. Top officials behaved like gentlemen who had received power over the entire people forever.

However, there is no doubt that the people behind the Kremlin walls were more realistic about the situation. They used the results of terror, misinformation, and deception, but of course they knew that these methods were not safe. They skillfully maneuvered in order not to let go of power from their hands. For this purpose, the next "disclosure" of sabotage and sabotage industry, agriculture and supply was widely used. Another liquidation of high-ranking businessmen accused of not supplying certain products to the population has become commonplace. But it didn't help, the situation did not change and there was this distrust of these messages.

The authorities did not have to look for new ways for a long time. From the archives they extracted an old but tried and tested tool - state and party anti-Semitism. It was a reliable means of warding off the discontent and anger of the people. Anti-Semitism was strongly condemned during the 1917 revolution. Now he had to do a useful service to the very power that he had won with the participation of the Jewish population of the country.

Apparently, the Kremlin has forgotten the lessons of history, when the rulers who used this method were shamefully failing. It is difficult to imagine that with such arbitrariness of the authorities and the suppression of any freedom-loving thought, contrary to the official course there were people who were ready to fight against the existing order. However, at different times, individuals and groups appeared in different regions of the USSR, who, at the cost of their lives, resisted the bloody regime. The action of such groups and individuals was short-lived. In most cases, they died quickly. Lack of a political platform and inexperience in conspiracy were the main

reasons for the failures. All these groups were united by a common goal - to return to Leninist norms. They did not yet understand that it was necessary to change the entire structure.

In 1955 there was a camp called 15/15. I met several underground fighters from the Young Leninists Group who had accidentally survived. This group operated in the districts of Voronezh, Tambov, and Krasnodar. By this time, they no longer believed in Lenin's norms and knew that Stalin's methods differed from Lenin's only in greater cruelty. The rise of antisemitism in the party's politics made not only Jews think seriously. Many, including myself, were looking for connections with like-minded-people. With people ready for any serious action. At the meeting, many young Jews expressed concern about the future of the people.

We decided to meet regularly to discuss the situation. At one of those meetings, it was decided to bring the consciousness of the Jewish population about the impending danger. This contributed to the rise of national feelings and national pride of the Jews of our area. We decided not to hide the fact that we are Jews and to speak Hebrew, not paying attention to those present. When I read a book in Hebrew on the tram, I was asked the question: "What language are you reading?" I answered loudly that this was a biography of our leader, Comrade Stalin, in Hebrew.

There were no more questions. Only a few passengers exchanged glances with each other. I felt that serious action was needed. I hated those in whom I was mistaken and severely disappointed. Since anti-Semitism and anti-Jewish actions became a fashionable topic, when meeting, when meeting with Jews it was possible to "feel" how the interlocutor was ready for decisive, organized actions in the circumstances.

To explain the situation, I will bring you back to the past. Russian revolution in 1917 allowed Jews to move from shtetls (special villages for Jews) to cities and opened access to education. This was the reason for enthusiasm and active participation of Russian Jewry in the October Revolution. Another reason was the lack of confidence of the new authorities in the Russian people, especially in the intelligentsia. This led to the appointment of people from national minorities, as well as Jews, to key administrative posts. Humiliated in the past, they accepted these appointments with satisfaction.

Jewish youth enthusiastically entered leadership with work with integrity, honesty, and dedication. No one suspected that they were used only for the period necessary to consolidate the new power. Later, dirty provocations were organized against them. In 1948, the Jews of the USSR as best as they

could, secretly celebrated the revival of the Jewish State of Israel. The security agencies reacted to this phenomenon as extremely dangerous.

At the direction of the party and government, the security organs began to resolve the Jewish question for the second time, but in a different way. First, the Jewish people were beheaded and all cultural figures destroyed, and the Hebrew language was banned. The possibility of spiritual life for the Jewish population was excluded and the result had been achieved. Fear gripped the Jewish community for its spiritual and physical existence.

A narrow circle of people from one of the districts came to a unanimous decision to get in touch with people from another and create an active group in Kuibyshev. While already under investigation, I was interrogated, in particular, "On the Zionist Center" in the USSR, although such a center was only in the imagination of the inquiry agencies. In reality, there were only separate groups and individuals. There have even appeared all kinds of groups of nationalist manuscripts with rather sharp calls for protests against anti-Semitic arbitrariness. They also demanded the legalization of the right of Jews to immigrate to Israel.

The papers were either anonymous or originated from supposedly well-known authors. This material had to be multiplied in various ways and disseminated carefully. All means were used to multiply the material that came to us, but this was not enough. It was necessary to urgently resolve the issue of increasing the ability to multiply the materials. As a result, a small group of people were united by a common idea.

Next, I will tell you how further events developed and which of us turned out to be "Judas". The Jew, Boris Shperber lived in the same house with me. He was originally from the city of Kolomeya (Western Ukraine). He was tall and clumsy with a dark pockmarked face and a characteristic Jewish nose. He burst heavily in his mixed Ukrainian-Russian language, dressed in the fashion of the time - in a military tunic, riding breeches, and high chrome boots. On weekends, he put on a harness. Back in 1939, with the arrival of Soviet "liberators" in those areas, he wore a red ribbon on his sleeve and took State Security officers to the homes of wealthy citizens, former leaders of the Jewish community and the Jewish administration.

In the year of 1942, Boris Shperber ended up in Kuibyshev. For well-known services, he was soon accepted into the party. In 1947, he already worked as the head of the supply of building materials plant and was a member of the party bureau of the plant. Given his position, we decided to use it for different purposes. He always talked with us about the interest on topics that worried us, spoke out sharply against discrimination, regretted that

there was no organized self-defense, similar to Zhabotinsky's organization in Odessa. His home was open to Jews willing to speak frankly with him. He was not privy to our secrets, but he obviously understood what was happening around. The authorities, apparently, had the information they needed but were in no hurry to act in the hope of obtaining more complete data.

In May 1951, I invited Sperber into my home and I had a frank conversation with him. It was there that I brought him up to a date on a case. We were alone in the house and a chess set was placed on the table for conspiracy. The fact was that Sperber was a member of the party bureau not bother me, since I knew many members who were honest and kind people. I hoped that he, too, was a decent person. Everyone knew that the membership card served for promotion and various benefits. Almost without preconditions, I openly enumerated my requirements for him namely, to find a suitable room, a typewriter, and a reliable person who could type.

I did not consider it necessary to explain to him that this was a dangerous business. He was not surprised at my proposal and immediately agreed. This made me doubt the correctness of my action. I did not limit him in time to fulfill my request. I told him that it was undesirable for him to stay with me any longer and he left. I was left with a heavy feeling on my soul, suspecting something was wrong. As it turned out, the cunning and insidious Sperber was instructed in the KGB and got into my trust because of my inexperience. After a short time, reasons arose to suspect this man. He became interested in too many issues, especially people involved in the acquisition and reproductions of materials.

My youthful experience could not compete with the experience of the KGB organization. My naivety also lay in the fact that I could not imagine the difference between the Soviet court and the court of Poland. The Soviet court did not take into account material evidence, testimony of witnesses, and other documents. In fact, all decisions were made by the bodies of inquiry and it was they who directed the sentencing. I began to worry about the consequences of my conversation with Sperber, suspecting that the authorities were using him. I took some precautions to divert the attention of the KGB from other members of our group. At this time, Sperber intensified his actions. He intrusively offered his services. During one of the meetings in my house with some people, he unexpectedly came to me with a "friend" and in a strictly "secret" form told me that a man had arrived from Israel to raise the spirits of the Jewish population of our area and wanted to meet with me. I laughed and repeated this message out loud to everyone who was present.

Then, unable to bear it, I said that these two had come to my house with a provocative purpose and looked us in the eyes without shame. I showed them the door and they quickly left. All those present immediately dispersed into silence as they were very alarmed. Meanwhile, the anti-Semitic riot took on a huge scale and it was not only the Jews who were frightened by all this; all honest Russian people were very surprised. KGB agents spread all sorts of provocative rumors in which they accused Jews committing heinous crimes. One example, it was reported that Jews had poisoned water resources, infected people with cancer, and killed newborns during childbirth.

Even the Jews were accused of food shortages. These rumors were loudly discussed at work, in trams, clinics, and pubs. And all this was part of the program for strengthening power. Along with the elimination of "potentially dangerous elements" for the authorities, ideological disorientation of society was no less important. Huge sums of money were spent on this goal. As a result of this activity, objective public opinion no longer existed in the USSR. The authorities resorted to the most vile methods of stupidity and moral decay of society.

One of the methods was the spread of alcoholism. With a constant shortage of food and consumer goods, alcohol was a good lightning rod, especially for a Russian. In the immediate vicinity of large enterprises there were all kinds of pubs that attracted working people. Here they drank their paltry wages on drink. In the days of her extradition, the wives of the workers came to the checkpoints of the factories in order to forcibly look for their husbands near beer stalls and in pubs pulling the resisting drunken husbands often soiled from head to toe, from these places. In such "institutions", as a rule, they did not talk about politics.

Everyone knew it was unsafe, but it was there that there was a favorite meeting place for people of a different kind. They spread slanderous tales of heinous crimes committed by Jews at different times. The plan for this campaign also included the removal of Jews from leading administrative posts and dismissals under various pretexts. The unparalleled slander against famous, distinguished Jewish doctors was the pinnacle of this slander. It became unbearable to work at the machine, even for me, a simple worker.

Back in 1951, I was fired from an aircraft plant for having connections with relatives living abroad. At the same time, my friend Wiener Abraham was also fired. As it later became known, at that time a case was opened against both of us under No. 1714 with the resolution of the KGB Directorate of the Kuibyshev region, Lieutenant General Gvishani.

After leaving the aircraft plant, I worked as an equipment repairman at a construction company. I had good relations with other employees, we talked at home and I felt good being their guest. Sometimes I sang them songs in Hebrew. I was approved and asked to sing more, although they did not understand the words. These were Russian people, they loved and had fun no matter what.

Among them, I felt equal among equals. So it was accepted, but unfortunately, anti-Semitic sentiments have penetrated even to these simple, good natured people. One memorable morning, after reports on the radio and in the press about the "atrocities of doctors", I came to work as usual, but not in a happy mood. My workmate and housemate Victor Andreev, a man of a heroic physique, came close to me and, in full view of all the workers of the shop, said loudly, angrily: " Well now it's no longer a sin to say loudly - beat the Jews, save Russia! This is our old Russian cry and now we will not be imprisoned for this."

I did not expect this and I felt uneasy. He was right and there was no point in arguing with him. However, not reacting to this would mean being a coward in the face of all the assembled workers in the shop. They waited with interest for my reaction. I did not want to leave silently, ashamed and decided to defend myself. I took one step towards him, remembering that next to him, I looked like a Pug and said: " Beat! Try it Black Hundred! I know your intentions. Don't you know that after Auschwitz and Majdanek there are no more Jews who will not defend themselves. And besides, they are protected by the law, which will not allow the rioters to roam. "Hit it, try it!" I shouted.

He nevertheless swung to strike, but suddenly dropped his hand and swore he left. I did not leave him unanswered in the presence of the shopworkers; a burning resentment filled me. I wanted to shout out : "Hey, Vitya, is it you, with whom I work together, live together, and walk? Did they do that to you? Afterall, you were born after the October Revolution, brought up in Komsomol; and now you are already a candidate member of the party." A little later, -Russian people - began to approach my workplace. They said they did not approve of what had happened. They said they felt guilty and tried to cheer me up.

I will not forget one of them until the end of my life. He was an older man of seventy years of age. He was a plumber, his name was Ivan Ivanovich. He came up to me, took my hand in his hands, looked around and said: "Alter, Abramich, Leshenka, don't worry! Hear me, old man. This is not the first time and not the first slander of your people. He will also pass, like all the

previous ones. All these bastards will still be on their knees before your people, they will apologize to your eternal people and ask for forgiveness, but G-d's punishment will not pass them." He continued quietly. "I know how hard it is for you, but spit on the villains, because for centuries there have been more difficult times, and this is all nonsense. Spit on them all and remain who you are, and they will remain villains until the Lord punishes them. You did the right thing. Do not be afraid of any of them, only G-d alone, but He is yours and ours - one."

He wanted to say something else, but tears flowed from his eyes. He suddenly took my hands, gently pressed them to his chest and with difficulty uttered the words: "Hold on, hold on Abramych! Your people was chosen by G-d and will remain eternal. For several minutes I stood thinking about what had happened, and the words of the Russian old man sounded in my ears- "Hold on, hold on Abramych!" On that day, I did not go home from work, but to the district party committee. My appearance there in my work clothes surprised the people who were waiting for the reception. I went up to the secretary and insistently said: "Report to the secretary of the district committee that a worker has come from the factory and asks to receive it urgently on an urgent matter."

The secretary looked at me in surprise from head to toe. She walked briskly into the office of the secretary of the district committee. A minute later, she came back and said: "Come in." In the office of the district committee, a meeting was taking place and there were more than twenty people sitting at a long table on both sides. They looked at me with curiosity, surprised that a working man in such clothes managed to get an appointment with the secretary of the district committee, and even during a meeting. Among those sitting at the table was Dr. Tsimerman, whom I knew, the head of the district health department. I said with excitement, as if addressing those present: "I want to get an answer to only one question - do I have the right, as a Jew by nationality, to live and work?" Everyone looked at me stubbornly, Zimmerman lowered his head blushing, and the secretary asked: "What's the matter? Who won't let you live and work?" I told him in full detail about what happened today at my workplace.

Everyone was waiting for the secretary's answer, but instead of answering he asked the question: "What do you think about the criminal atrocity of a group of Jewish doctors"? I replied: "I am a citizen of the Soviet Union, I live in this country and my opinion does not differ from the opinion of all honest citizens. But I came to you in order to receive from you confirmation of my right to live and work in accordance with the Stalin Constitution. The secretary wrote something down in his notebook and said: "I'll talk to the secretary of your party organization on this issue, and now go home."

Tsimerman sat with his head bowed, and the others began to whisper among themselves.

I walked home in a depressed mood and had no idea that this audience had precipitated my arrest. On the same day, the same thing happened in one of the hostels of our trust No. 11. At a construction site, a young woman, a Jewess of about twenty, worked as a plasterer. She was an orphan, who grew up in an orphanage. Her family fled from Poland to the USSR, after which they were exiled to the Komi ASSR. There they worked on timber rafting and from overwork and hunger, everyone except her died.

This young Jewish woman did not understand how she differed from her workmates and those with whom she lived. She was called Dvora, and at a construction site she was sometimes called a Jewess. She never took offense at this, but on the day of the shameful message about the "atrocities of doctors" she came home from work with surprise to see that her bed was in the middle of the room, and her things were torn to shreds. The roommates beat her severely and kicked her out along with the tattered things into the street.

This case received loud publicity and could not be silenced. This anti-Semitic was prompted by a report on doctors. The Russian people were ashamed to remember this later. The entire residential area was excited by this incident, but some people were overtly happy. Later I found out that a Russian woman had taken Dvora in, and taken care of her. The Jews also helped her, although it was not safe. A few days later, apparently on instructions from above, an open party meeting was convened on this issue with the participation of the asset of the trust.

The meeting was to condemn this hooligan act. The secretary of the party of the organization of the trust began his speech with words that reminded me of the pre-Easter stories of Polish priests in townships. They talked about Jews-Christ-sellers and murders, inciting their listeners to immediately run out of the church and take revenge on the Jews, committing robberies and murders. True, the priest nevertheless reminded that these were not the present Jews, but their ancestors who lived in Judea. The explanation did not always stop the pogromists and the Jewish population was subjected to pogroms and robberies. Our party secretary also began his speech with the fact that the Jews really wanted to commit various crimes, but immediately added that there were decent people who could not be blamed for this. The meeting at the suggestion of the secretary condemned the hooligan act in the relation to the worker.

In times of arbitrariness, the central authorities were interested in proving the public opinion of the free world that these repressions were directed only at Jews who committed crimes and were not the programmatic course of the party and government. They, in the opinion of many people who knew the essence of this existing regime, ordered the famous party and statesman, Mehlis to "die" in order to bury this Jew with appropriate honors. Beginning in 1948, there was a massive dismissal of Jews from work in defense factories, as well as from leading positions in enterprises. These dismissed people found themselves in a very difficult situation. Many of them were not used to physical labor and could not go to any job. The trouble was often aggravated by the fact that the dismissed were required, according to the law, to return to their living space to the enterprise. There were people on the street or huddled in barns. It was necessary to organize assistance for assistance to the needy families.

In the Kiryovsky district of Kuibyshev, on its outskirts, there was a small Jewish prayer house. It was semi-legal because authorities refused to give official permission. However, no one interfered with its existence. This prayer house was headed by its organizer, seventy-year old Nachum Lemberg. He himself huddled in a barrack with his old woman and his daughter's family. He was a disabled person without one leg, with a wooden prosthetic. He lived off the fact that he traveled very far and bought pieces of leather, and then sold them to shoemakers. He was a man with inexhaustible energy, and a beautiful soul, he knew and spoke little, asked a lot, and answered little himself. He understood very well that the KGB authorities knew what they were talking about in the prayer house and constantly urged everyone to "talk less".

He was outwardly calm and his face radiated kindness. This man helped poor families, he organized a base to provide assistance to the victims and those in need. His help was salvation and hope for many families. With his usual calmness, in a conversation with me, he asked what the name of the deceased first president of Israel was in order to read a prayer for the response of his soul. When Nachum Lemberg passed away, all the Jews in the area felt that they had lost. He was one of the noblest people, not broken by fear, danger and repression. He did not live to see the return of the repressed husband of his beloved daughter. This was also one of the reasons for his death.

The first victim of Sperber was the famous engineer of Construction Trust No. 11 - Kaler. People were afraid to talk about it and anxiety seized the rest of the Jews in the city. No one was sure that he would not be the next victim and everyone lived in constant fear. By chance I met a man who held a leading position in the party and economic apparatus. He was a person of

"regional significance" - Anatoly Nikolyavich Persiyanov was the head of the city planning department. We met him in a rest house on the picturesque steep bank of the volga. To my surprise, he was well versed in the Jewish question and was familiar with Jewish literature. He knew the names of the past and modern Jewish writers and their works, but avoided talking about Soviet Jewish writers. He believed that they were associated with bourgeois nationalism. This was the opinion of the authorities.

We quickly became friends, sympathized with each other and had friendly, rather frank conversations on literary and political topics. He recalled the names of prominent engineers of the trust who were nationalists. These people donated funds to help the family of the arrested engineer Kahler. It was especially important for me to know Persiyanov's opinion about some famous people whom I urgently wanted to warn. He explained the ongoing campaign to remove Jews from leadership positions by the party's desire to educate national cadres in each region in accordance with the percentage composition of the population. Our people heard such explanations more than once in different periods of history, but these explanations were not, as of now, a directive of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. I have continued friendly relations with Persiyanov. He tried to emphasize his affection for me and when he visited our enterprise he came to me to see and talk to me. The friendship of a simple worker, with such a person surprised many, and he continued to visit me until my arrest. Later he was interrogated by the investigator in my case and, as it turned out, remained a decent person and a real friend, what a Russian person came to be.

"Soviet Power is strong and there is enough room for everyone" said Trofimov. He was the head of the KGB investigative department. Then he added, "We have a lot of time". All of this was applied to me and was an explanation why my anti- Soviet activities were tolerated for so long. I was surprised that I had not yet been arrested, but I felt that it was coming. The surveillance of me increased at work, at home, and in pubs where I often went on business. My kitchen neighbor had a special task - to write down the names of our guests and eavesdrop on our conversations. My neighbor Aksynov Petr Prokofievich did it clumsily, reluctantly, and when under pressure. His brother was arrested back in 1937 and he never returned home. His religious wife, Maria Matveyevna was very upset by this and blamed her husband for the fact that her only daughter, died of dysentery, paid for his sins with her life. I didn't blame him, he had no right to tell his wife who forced him to do it against his will. Suddenly I was summoned to the secretary of the party organization of the enterprise. There was a man waiting for me, who was introduced as an instructor of the District Committee. He greeted me politely and explained that the purpose of his conversation with me was to recommend that I join the communist party.

I explained to him that I am from Poland and not sufficiently prepared and politically illiterate for this, and that I am very grateful for the honor and trust shown to me. Then the "instructor" asked me to name two old communists who knew me well and would be able to give recommendations. Without hesitation, I named two surnames - Salnikov and Cherepanov, two workers in our workshop, idlers, and drunkards, ready to recommend anyone. Looking at each other, the "instructor" and the secretary smiled and invited me to think about other candidates. This was the end of the first preliminary interrogation.

Immediately after the war, Jewish youth began to mistrust various false slogans about the equality and brotherhood of peoples achieved in the USSR. The question, "who we are" began to excite and occupy young people. They couldn't understand why their people were to blame for troubles in the USSR?

Why is the dignity of these people trampled on? And this is in a country where equality and brotherhood of all nationalities are so loudly glorified. Jewish youth were brought up by their parents without nationalistic convictions, without knowledge of history and even the recent past of their people. Now they were looking for an answer to their questions. Many parents believed that the Jewish question no longer existed in the USSR, and being disappointed, they didn't want to admit and correct their mistake in raising their children. And the children had no information about their historical roots and were unable to protect themselves from organized slander against their people. Then the young people themselves began to look for sources that covered these issues. There were people who helped them with their knowledge. They told about the past of their people, from secret places they extracted carefully preserved books on Jewish history - Sh. Dubnov and Grets, published in Russian.

These books were distributed with great care. It was essentially an illegal mobile library. People were enlightened in the national question. This gave them confidence. The people who participated in this work understood that sooner or later they would have to answer for this, but they continued their work. Many Jews have long lived the life of the Maran (Maran - Spanish Marranos, in the Middle Ages in Hispanic and Portugal Jews who converted to Christianity. Editor's note) And the people around them did not distinguish them from the rest of the population. It is surprising that these people, with great risk and love, preserved the literature that answered the question "Who are we?" Nobody hoped for a successful outcome. They didn't talk about it. Each participant in the common cause felt this.

On March 5, 1953, the chief executioner, Stalin, ended his existence. The fact that he was not immortal made many people happy. Naive people sincerely mourned him, but there were also those who pretended to be deeply mourning. There were also people all over the country who were sincerely happy about Stalin's death. For this they quickly ended up in prisons. The Kremlin has not yet had time to share power, and the authorities hastily began mass arrests of people marked as potentially dangerous. This wave of arrests in the camps was called the "March set". On that day, I came home extremely upset, as I was forced to speak at a memorial meeting on behalf of the shop workers and mourn the death of the leader.

My family went to bed early. I couldn't sleep and at 10:30PM, there was a knock on the door. I went out and asked, "Who"? This neighbor, living opposite, asked my neighbor Petya Aksynov. I didn't open it, but called Petya. He apparently was warned and quickly opened the door. Organization workers in civilian clothes and in uniform, with pistols in their hands, rushed into the corridor shouting: "hands up"! I am grateful to G-d for the possession that He gave me at that terrible moment. With my hands raised above my head, I stood at the door of our front room and asked them not to wake up and frighten the sleeping children. They promised not to shout and, holding pistols to my head and led me to a room. It was there they showed me a document and ordered me to read it. It was a search warrant from the regional prosecutor and my arrest.

It read something like this: "I authorize a search in AA Greenwald's apartment. And to prevent the possibility of escape, arrest him in connection with charges of crimes under Articles 58-10 Part 2, 58-11 and 58 -2. My wife was terribly scared. She kept saying, "For what? For what? Oh my goodness!" The quiet moans of the old mother, who looked at me with maternal pity, caused me deep pain. I thought that soon my family will say goodbye to me for the last time and they will not see me again. I kept my hands on my head, and the house was thoroughly searched. They tore the pillows and mattresses from the cribs, knocked on the walls, threw all the potatoes out of the basement, and collected every clean and written piece of paper. However, they didn't guess that in my right hand, which I was holding on my head, there were three thin sheets of paper with a typewritten text.

I was asked where I stored explosives and weapons and where the caches are. These questions struck me as so funny that I began to smile. In my heart I only prayed that I would have the strength not to lose human dignity in front of these monsters. They made an inventory of property, which included: an old sofa, a Baltika radio, and my shoes.

The search lasted more than five hours. Finally they ordered me to put on my coat, after having searched it, and go out. At that moment, my son shouted loudly: "Dad, where are you going? Dad!" I kissed him and said: "When you grow up, you will understand everything." I was allowed to take a piece of bread and sugar with me. I said goodbye to my wife, children, mother, and home, they took me by the arms and took me out of the house. They followed me with my radio. A heavy feeling fills a person when he is taken away from his family, from home and there is no hope of returning. A "Willis" (jeep) and a passenger car were parked not far from the house. They put me in "Willis" and the commander shouted loudly to those who were guarding me: "Look at both". The guards and I were apparently thinking the same thing, that I would not return home again.

In those minutes, I imagined the life of people in the free world and compared it with what is happening to me and millions of people like me in the land of "happiness". We drove up to the building of a district militia department and my guards went in and out in turn, dressed in the uniform of KGB officers. Then I was taken to the regional department of the KGB, located in a beautiful complex of buildings along Razin and Dzerzhinsky streets. Two guards and I were driven to the gate.

We waited a long time for them to open. It was dark and I imperceptibly threw the thin sheets of paper crumpled in my fist and trampled them into the snow block at the gate. Finally the gates opened and I was led through different nooks and crannies to a small house. There was a duty officer who checked me in and indicated the hour of arrival. Then I was led along long corridors that diverged in different directions. There was dead silence. The doors of office 81 opened. It was a long hall furnished with heavy tables and chairs. To the left of the door stood a tall round stool bolted to the floor. I was about to sit down, but I was told that you cannot sit here without the permission of the chief. Various officers came here and each one carefully examined me.

Probably, some of them expected to see a large bandit looking man, and in front of them was a thin average height, thirty-year old Jew with fiery red hair and in the clothes of a worker. Obviously I didn't live up to their expectations. Colonel Trofimov came up to me. He was short and stocky. Coming close to me, he said in an undertone: "Do you know where you are? People don't come out of here. At best they get 25 years and go to the camp to build communism."

"I am not surprised," I said. "After your explanation, it became very clear to me that I no longer need to worry about my future, now it is your

responsibility." Gritting his teeth, he ordered me to be taken away and "brought to human form." I was officially handed over to the prison authorities and they began to bring me into the so-called human form. I was stripped naked and two began to check every piece of my clothing.

They cut off all the buttons and laces, they took the belt, cut off the head and all the hairy parts of the body. They kept my clothes, and the soldier who cut my hair took me to the bathhouse. I asked him in a whisper how long they were keeping us here. He also quietly replied to me that they were being held sometimes for six months, and sometimes for years. After a short pause, he added that it could be worse. After the bath I was taken to a large cell with a temperature of about zero. There were rules on the doors that spoke only about punishments, deprivations, and etc. From six in the morning until ten in the evening it was impossible to lie down or close your eyes.

One should sit facing the door. At the door of the newcomers, near the top, there was a constant attendant who peered into the cell every minute. My arms are tired of the new duty of supporting the falling pants. I sat down and closed my eyes, but immediately they called me to the door and warned me that they were being severely punished for this.

Then the door window opened, as it was called here - "the trough", and someone's voice asked: "Who is here on G?" It was a rule here to ask such a question even if there was only one person in the cell. I was ordered to get ready and two guards took me by the arms. An office was walking ahead, we walked along the prison corridors, paved with red carpet so that no footsteps could be heard. In room 81 where the investigation was conducted, about a dozen officers of various ranks were waiting for us.

The main greeter was Trofimov, who sarcastically remarked: "Well, now you have become like a man - with a haircut and cleanliness. You will become a man; you are only thirty years old! I replied: "I haven't thought about what will happen according to your plans in 25 years, but now the important thing is that we are not yet. You and I are only getting to know each other starting today. More importantly now, I need you to appoint an assistant for me to support falling pants, otherwise you will see from my lower body that my father's name was Abraham." Those present did not know how to react to what I said - with laughter or anger - but since Trofimov said I was not devoid of a sense of humor, everyone laughed as if on command. The official conduct of the investigation was entrusted to Major Feoktsov.

Major Feoktsov introduced himself to me, asked if I did not mind. I did not expect to be met with such politeness, but in response I said that I do not

care who and what will ask me, but I am not going to answer any questions until I get enough sleep. To my surprise at Trofimov's instructions, I was sent to a cell, but not to the one I was at the beginning. It was a very small cell, two by one in a half meters long. My outer clothing was already there.

At first it seemed that the cell was warm. However, after half an hour it became so hot that I gradually had to undress almost naked. This did not help either, and then I stood near a small slit in the window to breathe air. I was finally allowed to lie down, but I could not sleep. I was almost unconscious, feeling my body to make sure that it really was me. It seemed to me that I was dreaming all this and when I wake up, then everything will be over and be as before. But, alas, it was not a dream, I was in the inner part of the prison of the KGB. At home, meanwhile, the situation was tragic. The authorities spread rumors that, under a normal social order, would have caused just laughter, but at this time they believed in everything.

It was said that a Jew was caught with a radio transmitter, that plans for military installations were found on him, and that he was arrested while transmitting signals to American planes. The city was seething with these rumors. People who knew me well expressed doubts and were scolded for this. "Jew, spy!" - they shouted after my five year old son and cut his head with a stone. People were afraid to sympathize with my family and provide any assistance to my wife. Things were so bad, that people were afraid to even speak to the spy's wife. On the night of my arrest, other Jews in the area were also searched. Only in place did they find one volume of Sh. Dubnov's "History of the Jews".

The owner of this book wasn't associated with us and agreed to help the authorities, in exchange for the freedom promised to him. It was the teacher of foreign languages, P.S. Fogel, who now lives in the United States. Searches served as a method of intimidating the population, to stop all activities to spread the truth. These measures brought about the opposite effect. Many people who had never had anything to do with nationalism suddenly realized that all these provocations were directly against them. They were looking for opportunities to help their fellows at least with money. It turned out to be difficult to suppress this solidarity, and in those difficult days, financial assistance was still provided to my family.

For a long time, the Kuibyshev administration was the center of cruelty and many famous people were tortured there. At the head, as I have already mentioned, stood a loyal student and close relative of Beria - General Gvishani and his deputies, colonels Kremlev and Timofeev. Timofeev had a typical Jewish face. Gvishani, according to his position, was at the same time a member of the bureau of the regional party committee. Justice, or rather

the powers of reprisals in the region, were in the hands of the regional, prosecutor for special cases, senior counselor of justice Belov and the chairman of the regional court, chairman of the special board of Puzanov.

During the unforgettable events of the 1930s in the USSR, he was the chairman of the notorious "troika" of the city of Sverdlovsk. The Kuibyshev administration was no exception. There too, there were "troikas" of their own consisting of officers and various kinds of employees nationalities, including Jews. But by 1953 there were almost no Jews left, there were such unrecognized Jews, Colonel Trofimov, and, who spoke Jewish, the head of the department for religious and sectarian affairs, Colonel Tartakovsky.

In Kuibyshev there were two more departments, parallel in the functions of the KGB. This is the army special department and the railway ministry of Internal Affairs. They had their own prisons and they were all commanded by General Givshani. The inner prison building was located inside a large complex of buildings that formed the letter "P". It consisted of one underground floor and two low above ground floors. In total there were about three hundred cells of various sizes and service rooms. The corridors were clean, the floor was covered with soft red carpet and absolute silence reigned throughout the buildings. The life of the prisoners proceeded according to a strictly observed schedule.

Sleep deprivation torture was applied to those with whom they decided to deal with delicately. It was cruel torture and it was necessary to have superhuman strength in order not to fall into complete indifference. This is exactly what the bodies of inquiry were trying to achieve. In most cases, they succeeded. The first night passed and in the morning, after the usual preparations, I was taken for interrogation. Feoktsov asked formal questions about my social origin. He wanted me to say that I came from a wealthy bourgeois environment.

In his opinion, a person of proletarian origin could not become an anti-Soviet. I remember my early years, when in autumn and winter I ran around the factory districts of Lodz and put up communists leaflets. Now, with bitterness, and shame, I recalled myself as a former member of a sect of idolaters associated with the execution of the design of criminal elements. I was ashamed of this past of mine, right now when they asked me what my grandfather was doing. I was aware of what lay ahead and realized that I had little chance of surviving.

There was a thought in my head to commit suicide, but the head of the prison, Major Kirponov, and two colonels were experienced enough and knew that many "newcomers" were trying to commit suicide. They followed

this closely and said: "You will live as long as we want." I tried to starve myself, but I could not stand it, as my strength was leaving me; I grew weaker every day. At first, they took me under their arms for interrogations, but then I was no longer able to move. On the fifth day, I thought that maybe I was wrong; I have to try to stand up and tell them everything I think about them. I thought to myself maybe I will even survive them, as I survived Hitler and Stalin.

It was a turning point, after which I somehow began to eat food of little use for humans. At every opportunity, I doused myself with cold water, did physical exercises, and gradually began to come to my senses. Spiritual strength began to return to me, which brought me back to life. In the meantime the investigation didn't progress, Feoktsov was nervous and frightened that he would use means of "persuasion" that would force me to speak and sign the protocols. However he did not resort to direct physical influence.

Feoktsov was short and middle-aged, he seemed weak with small female hands, somehow beautiful in a female way. His graying curls and glasses gave him the air of high society. It was hard to imagine that these weak hands, as I learned later, hit with a blunt hit with an iron object on the heads of the bound prisoners in order to force them to sign the protocols. Feoktsov was illiterate; he asked stupid questions, his handwriting was ridiculed even by his colleagues. He was the official responsible person for the conduct for the 1714 case. In addition to Feoktsov, Colonel Trofimov, who was the head of the Kirovsky district operational group, Timofeev and others were always present at the interrogations. For them the Jewish question had not yet been resolved, as it was officially advertised. They were just going to solve it and, for this purpose, armed themselves with the necessary knowledge. We must give them credit that their knowledge was at a good level. They knew the history and modern problems of the Jewish people, they knew about Rabbi Shlomo- Yitzchak - "Rashi" and "Maimonides - "Rambam", about Herzl, Jabotinsky, about Hasidism, about Kabbalists, and about the "Askala movement". It was clear that the study of such a specific topic was dictated by a development of a widely planned conspiracy against the Jewish people.

I didn't accept their compliments, that for them I, ostensibly, an individual from whom they can learn something. Nevertheless, I was doomed, like all those who were in great numbers before me. Few of the investigators were competent on the Jewish question. It was even interesting to talk to some of them, but most of the investigators were illiterate fools and worked according to a pre-compiled cheat sheet. The presence of important people during interrogations was probably intended to determine who I am and to

what extent I am dangerous to society. The agonizing days and nights passed, and the investigation was still fruitless; there was not a single protocol signed by me. The interrogations lasted eighteen hours or more. I fell from this damn stool in exhaustion. Finally they got tired of the fruitless spending of time and they used a cruel trick. Although I was sort of ready for all tricks and cruelties, but the method they chose, I did not foresee. My wife was summoned to attend the interrogation.

My wife naively believed that she would be able to alleviate my situation a little. She stated that some of the material seized in our apartment belonged to her. During the interrogation, she cried and lamented: "Oh my dear Mother, oh my G-d!" Her position was more difficult than my own. Not realizing she was making mistakes, she herself climbed into the wolf's mouth. She thought she could help me, but the authorities were not the least bit interested in my wife; they needed a tape recording of her sobs. They played this tape at night outside my cell door and the guard on duty allegedly loudly demanded that the "crying" calm down, and I heard a familiar voice. It was a long and painful night. I imagined a helpless mother with two small children on the edge of an abyss, and I cannot help them with anything. In the morning I was taken for interrogation and there I was met by officers I already knew.

They had asked if I had slept well, to which I replied in the affirmative. I saw a side table covered with various dishes and two chairs with it. Timofeev showed me a place at the table with his hand. I refused, saying I would not eat, as the food is not kosher. They smiled because they knew very well I had not been keeping kosher at the time. They knew a lot about my personal life - even what my wife did not know. When we sat down at the table, Timofeev began to remind me how, at the age of three, I was taken to the cheder and I was introduced to the nationalist worldview. Developing his thought he concluded that now I had the opportunity to atone for my guilt by confessing everything and betraying everyone who pushed me to commit a crime.

He threatened me that my resistance would mean that I remain anti-Soviet and that my wife will also be imprisoned, and the children would be sent to a boarding school so that they would not be brought up in the family of enemies of the people. I read her testimony that the libelous records seized from us belong to her and not to me. I saw the signature familiar to me and imagined how desperately she tried to help me, even sharing my fate. I said, "A woman loses her mind when she tries to protect her loved ones. How can you believe what she put her signature on? I want to offer you a deal. I will sign all the protocols that you require, on the condition that they concern only me, and for this you will leave my family alone. My proposal infuriated

the seemingly calm Timofeev, and something like this began between us. He said: "We have enough funds to make you speak." I replied: "In this case, I will be silent, like a dead man." He continued: "No, you will live as long as we need it and you will speak without any conditions."

Then we talked in turn, me "And I will tell only about myself, but I do know anything about others I and I will not sign anything about other people under any torture." When it was his turn he said, "Don't pretend to be a hero. On that couch sat Professor Funk, a well-known ear-throat-nose doctor, not a match for you. He confessed that he was a Zionist, told everything and went to the camp for twenty-five years. You will also speak and do not think that we will torture you, we are not the Gestapo. Do you understand?" I didn't quite understand, I am not a master of distinguishing who is who? In response, there was a shout: "What-oh-oh". Then I heard the rapid sound of boots behind me, it was Feoktsov. He brought his hands close to my face, as if he wanted to gouge my eyes out. Timofeev took his hands away and asked if they were hitting me here. I replied: "No, they do not beat me. You didn't bring me here to listen to my complaints. You are well aware of the physical impact applied to me. It has been developed and implemented by you."

My revelation made the investigators ponder. Timofeev was the first to understand that the aggravation of relations with me wouldn't give them the desired results. He threatened me with punishment for my insolence, never ceasing to stare at me. I said quietly: "I have no doubt that you will fulfill your promise. Now I am fully convinced of what I must do. For me it will be an example of how people have fought for two thousand years." From that day on, the interrogations became even more specific than before, but not all of them were recorded. Sometimes the officers present at the interrogations had free discussions with me. At times it seemed to me that I was at large and could express everything that I had been silent about for fourteen years in the USSR. I was so naive, that I did not think that this frankness led many to be arrested and placed in mental hospitals for "compulsion." Lieutenant Colonel Tartarsky was involved in the investigation of my case to provide technical assistance.

I objected to the correctness of the translation from Hebrew into Russian of the records seized from my house. During the translation, the texts were distorted and did not correspond to the true content of the originals. Once when I was being interrogated, Nazarov and Tartarsky suddenly entered the office. They sat down opposite me, Tartarsky handed me a Jewish prayer book, opened it on a page with a famous prayer. That prayer was called, "Aha Bhakartanu". He asked me to translate it into Russian aloud. I read the translation, and asked them to answer one of my questions: "Will I be

condemned as a Jewish nationalist?" Then I decided to explain to them why Jewish nationalists attribute special qualities to their people. I said, "The most important thing is the vitality of the Jewish people.

Since the day of losing their independence, during two thousand years of scattering all over the world, the Jewish people have been persecuted and persecuted. From slander, pogroms, the Inquisition, Khemilnitsky, Petliura, and even the tragedy of World War 2! However, these people survived and in a struggle again won their independence. They are again full of life and they defend their revived state. During the same period of history, there were other people in the country where you and I live. They weren't persecuted like the Jews, however they disappeared. Explain to me why the Jewish people were so resilient? I hope to receive a convincing answer. Maybe you will refute the claims of Jewish nationalists. Maybe you know the true reasons for this phenomenon and can explain from an ideological point of view?"

None of those present could say anything for fear of making a political mistake. Nazarov defused the atmosphere by saying that he didn't have a definite answer now, but we will come back to this question later. Then I decided to answer myself and handed Nazarov, brought by Tatarsky, an old prayer book with the words: "Here is your answer, keep it" "Do you think so? - said Nazarov and continued- "You are not religious, but you are hiding behind religion."

I replied: "Yes I am non-religious in the full sense of the word, but like everyone else, I admit that among the Jews this religion has always been a strengthening and uniting force of the people. As you know, I went to the synagogue, where every Jew utters the words of prayer "- Lord, all of us, gather us together, from all over the world". "Until now no-one has managed to wrest this faith from the people. This is why they continue to exist." Everything I said to them brought me great satisfaction and at the end of this conversation one of the officers said: "Yes, he could be very dangerous, more than we thought. I didn't return to the cell for a long time.

The interrogations lasted fifteen to eighteen hours a day. I was not taken out for a walk every day. Once I returned to my cell after being interrogated, a man who introduced himself as Mikhail Matveyevich Fedorov. I was glad that I would no longer be alone in the cell. Moreover, he turned out to be a nice and intelligent man. He easily understood me. However, I soon had to stop communicating with him. I learned that he served in the city administration during the German occupation of Smolensk.

I suspected that he was put in the cell with me as an informant. The officers wanted information out of me and thought they could get it out of me through this new man. I decided to do my own little investigation. I discovered that the organization dossier contained a note written by my wife's hand, which she confirmed. But there were also three copies trampled into the snow with the same content as in the note, but typed. I "secretly" told Federov that I was going to hand over to the investigation the three copies I allegedly had in order to take all the blame on myself. After a while he was summoned for "interrogation". When he returned, he received his "silversmith" - they brought him an abundant amount of food parcels.

That particular night they didn't interrogate me too much and the next day in office 81, the deputy regional prosecutor for special affairs Belov and his assistant were waiting for me. I was presented with an indictment. The charges were clearly listed on the letterhead. Keeping anti-Soviet nationalist propaganda among persons of Jewish origin; conservation, reproduction, and distribution of anti-Soviet nationalist literature; slander against the Communist Party and Soviet Government; slandering the fraternal communist parties of the People's Democracy countries; praising the Zionist leaders and the international bourgeois; liaison with international the bourgeois (correspondence with relatives living in the United States). All the charges that they found on me fell under Articles 58-10/ Part 2.; 58-11 and 58-2 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR.

Belov asked a formal question - do I confess to the charges against me? I stated: "No, the accusation is not true. I didn't conduct any activity against Soviet power and what you call activity actually was exclusively by explaining to Jewish citizens about their situation in the country and that there is a vicious, organized, and anti-Semitic campaign against my people. This is not, there was no intention to overthrow the government. I think that you see yourself as funny." Feoktistov interrupted my explanations with a shout that would not allow me to use consequence for anti-Soviet speeches. Belov allowed me to continue with a gesture and I said: "Yes, I confess that the materials seized in my house belonged to me. The radio "Voice Israel" I listened to only when it was allowed.

The assistant, Belov got up and took thin sheets of paper from the table. With the papers in his hands, he turned to me and asked: "Is this yours?" In short I replied back to him: "Yes this is mine, this is what I am. I handed this over to you through your attorney, a former employee of the GESTAPO." Belov got up and loudly asked, "Do you confess or not?" I replied: "No I do not confess. Feoktistov ran across the office and looking looking at the piece of paper, shouted: "At one of your gatherings you said that Hitler destroyed Jews with point blank shots, and in the USSR they are destroyed spiritually

and not the danger of reprisals on a massive scale is excluded. You also said that the book of B. Mark about the uprising in the Warsaw ghetto should be studied instead of the History of the CPSU and what should be done with appropriate conclusions so as not to remain defenseless and be prepared morally and financially for such events." These words were conveyed with precise directions, time and people present at the same time.

I was seized with anxiety by the fate of friends and presented them in my position. Belov continued to insist on receiving from me a positive answer, and I reiterated that I was alarmed by the anti-Semitic campaign carried out in the country and my activities against it had no anti-state direction. After a few more questions and answers, all this to me I was tired and I said: "Come on, I will sign that I confess partially to the charges". I signed under these words.

To avoid conflict between me and Federov, he was removed from the cell even before my return from interrogation. Again I was left alone with my fears. Interrogations were conducted at an accelerated pace, day and night, formal, and informal, and sometimes they were attended by strangers to me. They were interested in the Jewish problem informally. Apparently they were interested in this from the point of view of developing further tactics in relation to the Jewish question.

My friend, Viener Abraham was subjected at this time to rough pressure from the side consequences. Knowing well of his attachment to his family and his ignorance of everything that was happening, they tried to present it to him as if I were the culprit of his misfortune, and he may not be able to do with. The bait was simple and not everyone can resist before such a temptation - to get out of prison and free.

However, Viener figured out this cunning. He answered all the questions not on the point. As if he did not understand their meaning. Fortunately his attempt to committing suicide ended in failure. The authorities had the impression that he was an anti-Soviet nationalist. I felt sorry for him more than for myself. I said: "Judge me and do with me what you want, but Viener is not to blame; he doesn't even understand what he is being accused of. Viener's arrest was intended to break his old father-in-law Nachum, who actively helped people and they succeeded. Shortly after Abraham's arrest, Nachum passed away. Blessed memories of him.

The authorities knew a thing, or two about Viener's activities, but to prove it facts were needed. They blamed his uncle's discovered letter from the United States of America. In this letter, his uncle naively asked if it was true that in the USSR it was forbidden to say anything against the party and the

government, and those who did this would be imprisoned. This letter was seized from Viener during a search. Viener shouted that it was not he who was to blame, but his uncle, who did not know our laws and slanders against the KGB. He said: "Plant him, not me. He deserves this. He does not know our happy life. It was impossible to get his uncle involved physically, because he was living his life fearlessly in New York, America.

The jailers told Viener that they would get a hold of his uncle as well. They said it in a serious tone, believing that the whole world was already in their hands. They didn't think at all that they themselves would be destroyed by criminals like them, who will replace them. And so it happened, Viener and I fortunately lived to see this. During another interrogation, I was shown texts translated from Hebrew into the Russian language. It was a poem by I. L. Peretz - "Monysh", a popular old song "Leibke left for America" and other texts. The translation was illiterate and tendentious. I disagreed with him and therefore, Tartakovsky and I were involved in the re-analysis of the translations.

Feoktistov introduced me to an already familiar person with the words: "Here is Pyotr Moiseevich, also a Jew and not plain. He knows Hebrew, he studied at a Yeshiva and worked with us since 1919, despite the fact that he comes from a wealthy environment, not like you." I answered: "Yes, indeed, you rarely see such a person at the present time, but has this any meaning? After all, we all know people who not only walked with you, but taught you to walk and not from 1919, but from 1898. They were recognized as enemies of the people and were mercilessly destroyed, and people like Tartakovsky do not have to envy. Their fate is far worse than my own. I will be sent to the camp, but people like him do not get there.

Later, I learned that Tartakovsky died in a psychiatric hospital. I expressed it all in a calm tone and did not have much of a reaction, however, Tartakovsky approached me and in Hebrew said: "You, young man are playing with fire. Hold your tongue or you may regret it, but it may be too late, as there is no limit to the poor." Then, in an official tone he said in Russian that he was responsible for checking the correctness of the translations of my records with my participation. From that day on, we actually worked together, but we were not trusted and were not left alone in the office. In the course of this work, we spoke in Russian and Hebrew, but not always about business. During these conversations, to my surprise I received answers to some important questions. One of these messages sent encouragement up my spine, it stated that prisons were letting go of prominent Jews and there were to be no more arrests.

What concerned me is, I was guaranteed at least ten years. I had no idea who Tartakovsky had in mind when I spoke about "famous Jews", and only when we were led from the "funnel" to my court, I heard my sister's cry: "Hold on, the doctors have already been released!" After a while, I found out that Tartakovsky was a terrible sadist and drug addict, that he subtly mocked those who were under his investigation.

The feeling of constantly being agonized, interrogated, and sleep deprived my body weakened so much that I fell from a stool that was screwed into the floor. The chair was so tall that when her legs reached the floor it could not keep my body in place. Everything was thought out, the people working in the gulag referred to themselves as, "Specialists". These investigators turned out to be "generous" to me and allowed me to lie down to rest for one hour. We never did find out the reasons they put me in my cell. There was a second Jew there, his name was Loselevich. He was the former chief engineer of the oil refinery plant of the Volga town of Novo-Kuibyshevsk.

Loselevich was charged with sabotage in connection with the explosion of the tank with liquid gas. He was from Rostov-on-Don. His great-grandfather settled there, who received the right of residence after serving in the tsarist army for 25 years. Loselevich didn't know the Hebrew language at all. Nor did he know the customs of his ancestors. He was tall and overweight, he kept breathing with shortness of breath.

He had a hard time doing his duties in the cell, but when I wanted to do something for him, he objected. He explained this by the fact that he must experience everything himself in order to know how the treatment towards the prisoners affects them. We were distrustful towards each other and stayed away from each other. One night when I came back from being interrogated, he saw that I couldn't stand and hold my head. He helped me undress and lie down on the bunk, and then he put wet rags to my head and whispered: "Oh G-d, what are they doing to people."

I don't remember what kind of Sunday it was, when the first time I was not summoned to interrogation and Loselevich and I had a leisurely conversation. He told a story of one commissioner from Moscow who was looking for the cause of an explosion at the plant and he signed a protocol that stated, the only culprit in the explosion was the locksmith on duty. The locksmith was smoking in a forbidden area. After the commissioner left, they knocked on the locksmith at night, entered the apartment, made a search, and took him to the district committee of the party, where the secretary of the district committee was specifically waiting for them.

At the time he took the party card from Loselevich, and then he was taken to the KGB Directorate. There like everyone else, he was brought "into human form" and charged with sabotage. Eight months have passed, yet they continued to interrogate him and there was no end in sight. He was very naive and thought that someone who was an enemy to him was taking revenge on him. He hoped that the party organization, which he deeply trusted, would come to his aid. He didn't suspect that he was in the hands of a formidable, ruthless force that controlled everything in the country. Like many people, he didn't see the true reason for the things that were happening to him. Suddenly, the "feeder" opened and called me over.

The warden began to lay out the groceries, and I was so emotional that I didn't have the strength to take them. Loselevich came up to help me, but looking at me he cried too. I thought about how much torment my wife had been experiencing and how hard her life had become. I asked myself was it worth it to receive this transmission from me? Loselevich and I stood there embracing until we both calmed down. They also brought him a parcel, and although it was not the first time, we experienced it as well as the first time.

We found a note of some sort underneath the area we were sitting in and it stated: "death chamber #1". It contained a two person sentence, for political terror. There was a monotonous song that came from there: "On Sunday, my dear mother, I came to the gates of prison to his own son. I brought the transmission, take the transmission, otherwise people say that there are prisoners in the prison and they starve you with severe hunger." An old mother came to Loselevich. His wife couldn't stand the same hardship and left with the children to a distant Siberian village. Loselevich was threatened with twenty-five years imprisonment and it was necessary to support him morally. I decided to tell him about our Jewish people, from whom he was so far away and cut off.

I was constantly in communication with the Jewish intelligentsia. These were people with a high national consciousness: they quickly reacted to everything that was happening around us. Loselevich didn't know everything and it seemed to him senseless to continue the two thousand year struggle to preserve national unity of the Jewish people. Even now that there was a country specifically for Jews to go to, the state of Israel, he seemed indifferent to this historic event. He was an empathetic person, he continued to believe in communist morality, did not want and was afraid that his wife had shaken the faith in the honesty and humanity in the bearers of these ideas. He couldn't admit that he was wrong all of his life and had been a participant in the devilish dance under running the executioner.

Later, more than once I had to meet such people - naive, suffering in the camps. They were unable to understand the reasons for their suffering. Loselevich listened to my story about the struggle of our people for self - preservation in different conditions of dispersion and about the miracle of the restoration of our state, which we have never forgotten. I managed to succeed in showing him a small example of our solidarity. Usually near my camera regular soldiers were on duty. One of them turned out to be my fellow countryman. I knocked on him, and asked for a needle, although he knew it was forbidden. He politely told me he couldn't give it to me, I reminded him that we are fellow countrymen and I asked him for a small favor.

Everyone may be in trouble, no one is guaranteed from this. He closed the window and after a while brought a needle and a jug of cold water, which was also forbidden to us. He said that there was nothing else he could do for us. Loselevich shook his head and said: "Oh, you, nobody will fix it!" , referring to the prison authorities and the prison rules. Then he added: "Afterall, I myself am not devoid of feelings of compassion, and not only these young soldier troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs." In addition to this, I emphasized if we could be deprived of these feelings, it would deprive human existence of the possibility. And only I had time to dispel thoughts and sadness, as they knocked on the camera and ordered Loselevich to get ready with things. I was left alone again. This was done on purpose to show the prisoners that there is such loneliness.

Lately I was surprised that informal interrogations were related to the topic of "pest doctors". Previously, such interrogations were conducted for clarification of the connection between the Kuibyshev Jews and the shameful "Moscow affair". Wherein mentioned the surname of Ryskin-Belov, the former manager of Trust No. 1. He was convicted for nepotism at work, that is for attracting close relatives at work.

In the program of the investigation there was a task to combine into one "case" a whole group of those dismissed from their posts major administrative and technical leaders of the city's industry to open a branch of the anti-Semitic process. Among these people were directors and chief engineers of the largest enterprises of the city and region. They were mentioned in my interrogations, but I was not familiar with or associated with them, since they were high-ranking people, people and I was considered part of the simple workers.

They continued to keep me in lockdown. Communication between cameras was carried out in a primitive way and made it possible to find out only about the number of people in the next cell, terms, articles, and less often

surnames. As it turned out, prisoners throughout the prison knew that there was a certain prisoner named, Lyoshka Greenwald and under what articles of his accused. Although some already knew about the release of the doctors and felt some animation in the cells, I didn't get it yet. It was strange that they began to allow prisoners to rest, especially at night. One night like this, a loud male voice rang out who woke up all the prisoners. Cries were heard: "I'll fly away, give me a plane, start, I want to fly away, I will fly away anyway!"

These screams "I will fly away" were accompanied by a knock on the door, but all this did not last long. The guards ran in and the screams ceased. Shouted a civil aviation pilot charged with political charges. He is not

endured the heinous humiliation and went mad. After a few days went by in the morning, in the toilet the officers found scratched with a fingernail on the wall: "the pilot committed suicide in cell no. 7." It was clear that he couldn't do this without the participation of the organizations, otherwise they would have succeeded. The death of the pilot made a terrible impression on me, this was one case I couldn't forget. I feared the same ending could happen to me as well.

Part2: **Court**

However, the urge to survive prompted me to hold on as long as possible to survive and talk about all of the atrocities and everything that happened here in these dungeons, but there was little hope of survival. There was only hopeless darkness around, and at times it seemed that burning in a deep niche a light bulb mourns its dead man. The guards from the inner prisons were mainly from the other cadre security officers, and the old ones also by age.

They spent years dedicated to this service and developed to small ranks and remained almost ordinary, but they were like trained shepherd dogs, they sensed what was happening with each prisoner. They were not capable of earning of earning themselves living elsewhere; they had sadistic habits - desire at every opportunity to hurt their enemies.

They recognized my rebellious character and didn't react to my cocky behavior. Feoktistov said that the prison authorities would be able to calm me down. In order to speak about this I was summoned to the head of the prison, Kuznetsov. He behaved himself around me and said that the prison authorities weren't to blame for the fact that I am here - they are only doing their duty.

However, he added times may change and I can be set free. I didn't understand him and thought some change had already happened, otherwise they wouldn't stand on ceremony with me. In the middle of 1953 in the inner prison the KGB of the city of Kuibyshev languished over a thousand people. The first in number were those who let it slip or sat on a denunciation of a malicious neighbor.

There were also such prisoners who were caught for talking about the ability to listen without interference from western radio transmissions by attaching an empty tin can to an outdoor antenna. For KGB agents it remained only to see whose antenna it was and in this way they found out who learned information they weren't supposed to know.

These listeners were given, "tens" (as in ten years). In the camps above them they laughed and said that it was only necessary to listen to "father and teacher". Second, by number were former prisoners of war who survived in fascists camps. These prisoners preferred the concentration camps also known as Buchenwald and Auschwitz to cooperation with the enemy and to German Brigades of Former Soviet military personnel.

They were freed from the German camps in different parts of Europe and even Africa. They, almost all, wanted to get back to home. Being not guilty of anything before the Motherland, they were sure that with them nothing bad would happen. However, they were cruelly deceived.

They were "tested" in conditions that were no different from ordinary camps, but without a specific timeframe. After two or three years of "checking" some of the lucky ones were allowed to go home, and the rest were transferred to camps, with a term of imprisonment of twenty-five years. Third, there were those prisoners who collaborated with Germans, served with Bandera, Vlasov, in parts of the SS, in punitive detachments and civil administration of the enemy.

There were also those, who did not grieve over Stalin's death, instead they rejoiced. They were also called the "March Set". During interrogations they tried to prove to investigators their loyalty to the party and government by listing their merits. Their long-term deadlines have shaken their loyalty. The March action was like their last, crime of their formidable ruler.

Although claiming the place Stalin's leaders did not intend to change anything, nevertheless it felt that there would be changes. There was a certain lack of confidence in the apparatus of oppression. Waiting for change seemed long and difficult for the prisoners.

My investigation had accelerated, it had been organized for me to have my first confrontation with Sperber. When I was led into the office, Sperber was already sitting at a fairly large distance from my stools. Present: the prosecutor, the head of the investigation department, and a group of officers.

The rules of confrontation were explained to me. Sperber, without waiting for a question turned to me with words: "Greenwald, you see that you are caught, you cannot hide the fact that you are a Zionist and led agitation for the departure of Jews from USSR to Israel. You were going to create a secret for this purpose printing house library. Confess and the business is over!"

I smiled, without looking in his direction. On the question of one of the officers why I was smiling, I replied: "It's a pity that these types do not know an ancient proverb - if you drown, you will drown." Attending Tatarkovsky pronounced this dictum in the original language and explained to the others where this dictum came from.

Sperber talked a lot and lied a lot. By informal agreement with the investigation, I signed those clauses that only concerned me. This principle was strictly observed by me and no one tried to change it. I was worried that Sperber could go on to act freely among people close to me. However, he was no longer trusted by the Jews and Russians also began to fear and despise. It was hard for me to go back to the cell alone and remember what I heard from this vile man. I regretted not having unraveled his behavior earlier, for which I and other people paid off like this expensive.

Only Stalin's death saved many of us from physical destruction. I stayed alive, and remembering the experience, decided to describe everything in a language close to me, which was Russian and unfortunately I didn't have to study for it. I tried to do it without embellishment to the best of my modest abilities.

The next day I had a second confrontation with the chief power engineer enterprises by E.M. Kushpel. He was Ukrainian from the western regions. Back in 1929, he served in the Polish army near the border. He crossed into the territory of Eastern Ukraine, intending to stay in this free country. At first he served two years in prison, and then he was exiled to the Tambov region. He was lucky, he was able to study and become an engineer. He joined the party, but in 1937 he was again imprisoned for ten years on the suspicion that he was especially sent by the Poles.

We made friends with Kushelev. He knew Polish, was well-read and witty. I often went to his office and we discussed various topics. During the conversation, he did not mention a single name, which made the investigation dissatisfied. He however felt nationalist sentiments, but I didn't pay attention to them. I was very grateful to Kushel for this.

I could feel the arrival of spring in my cell. Especially when I sat near the window through which you could see a piece of blue sky. I watched the buds bloom on the branches. Feoktistov, knowing this, specifically opened a large window so I could see how beautiful spring is and how people are preparing to celebrate May Day. I pretended to not pay attention to his words. After this conversation, it was sad and hard for me to return to my cell.

Because loneliness and darkness reigned there. So the holiday came and it was impossible to imagine that in a country where the working class won power, where everything supposedly belongs to him, it was there that in prisons and camps millions of workers languished and were mercilessly exploited as slaves.

The prison authorities were preparing for the holiday. For three days, walks were cancelled. And on those days the cells were not ventilated. The security had been strengthened, but the food was better. I was first allowed to receive the book by an American author, Lewis Sinclair: "Royal Blood". I read as I walked across the camera diagonals, almost four steps.

This book describes the horrors of racial persecution in the United States, however it suggests the conclusion that the struggle for human rights is not illegal and for expression of dissatisfaction is not judged. I read a book and was glad that there are people in the world who live without fear; they can openly fight for their rights and beliefs. The book saved me from despondency during the days of the holiday.

I remember that on May 1, 1937, I was still the boy, the Polish police, was dragged out of the ranks of the demonstrators and taken to the police. I was released from there two days later, due to lack of evidence. Pro-Soviet slogans were not sufficient grounds for conviction and the prosecutor ordered my release.

This was in Pre-War Poland. During the rule of the Proletarian government, the authorities brutally dealt with their victims. After three days of "holiday" isolation, I was taken out for a walk and I eagerly swallowed fresh air and

looked at the blue sky. Two days later I was hooked up to a certain, Sergei Ivanovich Agafanov.

His comrade in business, Pushkarev was in an adjacent cell. They were simple village men and, like many, they got into German captivity in the city of Bryansk. Then they ended up in Italy fortification works. They were freed from captivity by the Americans, but they wanted to continue to fight the Germans.

For his heroism, Pushkarev was awarded the high award of the American army. After the end of the war, they ended up in France and strove for their homeland, despite persuasion and explanations of what awaits them upon returning home. Upon their return, they were convicted of treason and service in foreign army. They were sentenced to twenty-five years of imprisonment. Agafanov was a simple man, but he managed to know life in the west.

He bitterly regretted his return and he couldn't believe how harsh the punishment would be for him when coming back to his home country. Later he had torn out his hair, and mentioned a French woman who fell in love with him. It was his way of crying for help. Now he dangled around that small cell and constantly smoked "goat legs" from sturdy samosad. I didn't know how to help him and offered to read the book aloud. E Voynich - "The Gadfly".

He always looked for me after I was interrogated and would gently ask if I could continue reading to him outloud. It is possible that this was the first book he ever encountered in his life. He was often wiping his tears saying that in vain he believed that the motherland was waiting for him. We had just started becoming friends and just like that they took him away from me. In prison many knew me under the name, Lyoshka.

Almost no one saw me when they took me down the corridor and I heard how the prisoners in the cell said: "Lyoshka is being led." They recognized me by the creak of my shoes specially made by me. Once I tried to find Viener and for this, I tapped on heating pipes the national anthem of Poland.

To my surprise, Viener responded, he ended up in a nearby solitary confinement. We managed to talk a bit before he was transferred for punishment, downstairs in a cell where two bandits were sentenced to death. They immediately attacked him and tried taking away his food, but the guards miscalculated. Viener was in a box and quickly pacified both.

The guards were slow to intervene, hoping for a different outcome. The bandits had to apologize to him; they didn't know that he was his guy.

After a two day break, they took me to an office number 81 where Belov was already waiting with officers involved in the investigation. I was told that the investigation was over and I was allowed to read a thick volume of protocols and documents with different indications. An official denunciation written by Sperber himself said that in connection with the party's call for vigilance, he informed the authorities that Greenwald Alter is pursuing an anti-Soviet, nationalist propaganda.

Then there was a detailed description: "AA Greenwald I've known since 1948. In the period of strengthening the power of struggle against cosmopolitanism, he argued that this is aimed against the Jews. He tried to involve me and other people in creating a group for anti-Soviet nationalist activity. He distributed forbidden literature and anti-soviet libels written by unknown people.

He organized gatherings at home and with other people who shared his views. At the gatherings they talked about the alleged discrimination of Jews in the USSR, praised Zionism, its leaders, and the State of Israel.

Sperber spoke that the only way to solve the Jewish question by emigration of Jews from the USSR to Israel. At gatherings, he also read aloud anti-Soviet essays and quoted the libelous fabrications of Western radio stations. He slandered countries of people's democracies; the trial of slansky was described as dictated; bodies of the USSR and clearly anti-Semitic.

He spoke about the exposure of doctors pests is a pre-text for anti-Jewish pogroms." He wrote that his relationship with me was normal, that there was no friction and his signature was at the end of the text. I didn't know this at the time, but he had been writing it all down for several years. Some people pointed out to him that they held positions of responsibility at the enterprises of the city and their fate worried me.

From the testimony of some of them, which I happened to read, it was clear that during interrogations they behaved with dignity. From this, I concluded some changes. I read the testimony that was given by about twenty people who interrogated non-Jews. Some of them disagreed with me, however in general, all indications were unexpectedly positive.

This made me happy and proved that the organizations didn't manage to deprive people of consciousness. My shop manager Kozhokin didn't know he

was listed in a list of people close to me, by conviction. Although this was far from the case. According to his passport he was considered a Jew.

However, in fact, his ancestors were Russian people who adopted Judaism as a religion. He was born in the Voronezh region, where there were several villages that converted to Judaism.

Despite all the repression by the authorities, people continued to stubbornly practice this religion. Kozhokin was an exception, during the evacuation he married a Mordovian woman and his house was purely Christian.

The Russians considered him a Jew, but the Jews didn't feel the same way. He was a member of the party, but remained a conscientious person. In the organization he was listed as "OO", which meant socially dangerous. To the threats of the organizations, he replied that it was against his conscience to slander against anyone.

Viewing the documents of the "case" of interest to me lasted quite a long time, but no one tried to limit my time. Belov promised that the court would give me the opportunity to defend myself. I signed a document known as Form 206 and then I had to wait for the trial to start. I wanted to prepare myself, but having a piece of paper and a pencil was strictly prohibited.

I had no intention of defending myself in order to receive less of a punishment. I was aware that the court didn't decide this issue and this was all a foregone conclusion. I wanted to justify his actions in court, which had allegedly become illegal only according to Soviet laws. As a result, the charge excluded Articles 58-2 on the relationship with foreign bourgeois elements.

One little piece of paper caused my sharp indignation. From her I learned that all seized photographs, letters, and postcards were burned. There were papers that I had saved and carried across the German border when it was the war. There were postcards from the Lodz ghetto of my parents and my sister and those killed in the same ghetto.

It was my pain, later I told them my indignation about this heinous act. Now I am no longer disturbed at nighttime, but the days and nights dragged on indefinitely. Compliant with all prison rules, all prisoners got their haircut every two weeks from head to toe. And if you managed to have your haircut before it was considered a special forecast. On May 29, 1953, early in the morning I got my haircut.

And they were allowed to wash after that. This was usually not allowed, then I was taken to a room where there was an armed convoy waiting for me. I was handed over to this convoy who registered me. Not without incident after being thoroughly searched, I was approached by the chief of the convoy who was a young guy from a small rank. He looked at me from top to bottom and said: "You are political, I know you and I will beat you."

I stopped dressing and demanded to call the duty officer. I told him that with this convoy I will not go to court and if they are driven by force I will not answer questions. As a result of the ensuing conversation between them in another room, the chief of the convoy apologized and promised to behave correctly. He said that he thought I was involved in the murder of the warden. I saw "Viener" when they were leading us into the "funnel", but didn't understand where he suddenly disappeared to.

When they opened the door and I began to climb inside, I saw that he was there. I didn't understand how a person could fit inside. The car stopped at the central area of the city, near the regional court.

Among the people who were waiting for a sensational trial, allegedly over spies who committed various heinous crimes reported by the authorities, we saw our close relatives. They waived their hands at us, and my sister shouted loudly: "hold on the doctors were released and you will be free too!" Everyone saw that a strict convoy was guarding us, and the chief of the convoy was running around with a pistol in his hands.

Each individual was taken to the cell for waiting. I started having pre-trial excitement. I believed that, "they don't just leave here". I was guided by this guidance. I didn't hope for a good outcome of the process. Apparently at first, the authorities conceived to conduct a serious process, as befits a city like Kuibyshev. The release of doctors in Moscow forced Kuibyshev authorities to present our process as a local law.

Thanks to these events our investigation was urgently curtailed and they stopped interrogating us. The investigation were no longer interested in when and where I was in Moscow other than when I studied there. Other questions also ceased to interest consequence. We were led to a large room, where we were already sitting and there were prosecutors and defenders.

The secretary announced: "The trial is underway!" They all stood up and a woman and two men entered the hall. The woman was tall and slender and

used the surname as Tyutin and was a judge. The men were people's assessors. On the face of this woman people could tell she was not interested in being here. She was interested in love affairs. None of the relatives and unauthorized people were allowed in the hall.

While all the formalities were being carried out, we were waiting, strongly worried and often asked to use the toilet, and on the way back tried to see their loved ones. The convoy got tired of it and tried to refuse us from doing so. Viener reacted to this in his own way.

Turning to the wall, he began to unbutton his trousers. Then the chief of the convoy finally allowed toilet and ordered not to interfere with us anymore. Judge Tyutin acted as a learned role. During all three days of the process she read out the charges to each of us and asked everyone whether we plead guilty. The answer was, "no". In reality, the trial was led by a prosecutor, not a judge.

From the very beginning he warned the witnesses not to refuse from the testimony given during the investigation. However, two witnesses in the case that Viener retracted their previous testimony and stated that they had signed everything under threat. Belov jumped up and shouted at the witnesses: "You should be put on a bench next to criminals and tried for libel to the Soviet security organizations!"

Two simple men stunned by the impending danger and frightened, got up, bowed their heads saying that they agreed. They confirmed everything that was required of them. What a hunted people I thought, looking at these two frightened men the judge Tyutin, didn't show great interest in what was happening under her. Nor chaired the process, she smoked a lot, and talked with the jury and yawned.

After answering the question directed to me, I asked for the permission of the court to give me paper and pencil, but they refused to give it to me. They didn't expect people like Lyosha had a right to ask for anything, they expected complete and utter silence. Then I stated that I would no longer answer questions, reminding them that I have the right to do so. At that, Belov threw a remark that I have the right to be silent.

Without asking permission, I got up and said I was starting to exercise that right. That was when the judge showed slight interest in the case and yelled at me, "Sit down"!, but after consulting with partners the next day she said that tomorrow they would give me a piece of paper and a pencil.

They wanted to get testimony from me about the activities involving Viener. I said that Viener wasn't interested in politics. I said that he was very busy with his family, his entertainment, and he loved to eat well. With all his desire he couldn't express what is attributed to him. Again, Belov interrupted me with a shout saying: that the court didn't need me to protect Viener. I have to tell you about his criminal activities. I still hoped to somehow ease the fate of Viener, but everything was already in advance of a foregone conclusion, as well as about my fate.

Apparently I was still naive enough in assessing reality. To the answers of the witnesses we were both indifferent, and Sperber's crude fabrications provoked at the same time laughter and anger. Sperber acted like an experienced provocateur knowing how to pull off a learned lie. My defense attorney acted like an accuser. I told him that my wife had sold her only coat to pay him for protection and he was acting to my detriment.

He was displeased and smiled, but stopped acting as a prosecutor. All witnesses and the guards couldn't understand how these two pitiful Jews decided to resist the mighty power, because of some incomprehensible to them discrimination and anti-Semitism.

After opening the envelope I found the material was printed and some of it were handwritten notes in Russian and Hebrew and some of them were read. At 17 o'clock the first day the performance ended, called the court. When we were taken to the "funnel", our loved ones and a curious crowd of people stood nearby.

The convoy wanted to quickly put us in the car and one of them pushed Viener. Swinging, Viener wanted to answer, but stopped in time, seeing machine guns and bayonets. The second day of the play called the court began. From the very beginning, the relaxed attitude of the convoy was felt. The sentry who guarded me, smiling, said that now he already knows who we are.

They were told about our case, and that we were "Bundists". When the chief of the convoy had a break he came up to me and said: "I see that you are ordinary people and if it was my will, I would take you home, and not back in prison. At that moment, Belov started his speech again. Belov described our "subversive activity" as the most serious crime against Soviet power. Belov tried proving that we had no right to do such activities. Belov was politically illiterate and repeated learned phrases about equality and the like, which was nonsense.

Belov justified the closure of Jewish cultural institutions by the fact that Jews no longer need it. And who cannot do without it, let him go to Birobidzhan where there is everything connected with the Jewish culture. He insisted that Viener and myself did not go there, but here in the very center of the Socialist state, they are nationalist propaganda and spread slander against the Soviet state.

Belov also spoke of my criminal activity, which consisted in the fact that I bought a powerful radio without decent pants. I had to give him credit here, he was right since it was really hard to buy a good pair of pants. Clothing stores didn't have those even though people like Belov believed everyone should have a good pair of pants. Pointing at me with his hand, he said: "Do not think that a simple worker sitting here in front of you; under this guise a dangerous anti-Soviet criminal is hiding.

He continued saying, "His social origin is not entirely clear to us." After these words, Viener touched me and whispered in Hebrew: "You see, he pulls us, not otherwise than to be shot. You see his face is bloodshot like a bandit."

I replied, "That's right, but he will not end his career so smoothly. His friends will order to hang him without trial, and then their friends will hang them, and this will continue until they get tired of all this grace and they will put an end to the happiness they have won." Then Belov spoke about Viener.

It was said that Viener had spoken of the great leader with disdain, insulting the memory held by our people and the peoples of the whole world. Belov was followed by Kerimov, Viener's defender. He praised soviet power, quoting the words of the notorious Vyshinsky.

When Kerimov got to the point of accusation, which spoke of Viener's praise of foreign technology, he said that the whole world recognizes the priority of Soviet technology and Viener's words cannot change this opinion. Kerimov spoke for a really long time, his speech, probably, was approved by the authorities. Although it was difficult to know if he wanted to mitigate the punishment of your client.

My speech defender was heard on the third day of the trial and lasted only a few minutes. He said that I had committed serious crimes, but he asked to take into account my conscientious work in the past and good characteristics from my work, in the present. He said that mitigation of punishment would be perceived as a humane Soviet act of justice.

On the third day of the trial staging, the defendants were given the last word. Viener Abraham spoke first. Until that day, I didn't think he was capable of having such a serious and legally sound speech. He proved his innocence and, turning to the judges, urged them to be humane as befits such a lofty body, in such a free country such as the USSR.

The judge, Tyutina and her assistants listened to this speech with complete indifference. The next word was given to me and I was warned to be concise and not get distracted. I said most of the blame was based on false testimony from a witness guided by personal revenge and base feelings. I only confessed that there was material evidence and explained his actions as counteraction to breaking the law.

I added that such activities should not be considered a crime that is dangerous for such a strong and democratic state like the USSR. So I should not be kept in custody. After that, the court went to a meeting. After waiting some time, the doors of the large hall opened up for the reading of the ceremony of the verdict regional court.

There were no chairs or benches here and the hall filled up quickly. This audience was eager and filled with spectacles. Our relatives were there and the person leading them into the room was an old man by the name of Nachum Lemberg. Nachum stared at us and saw his son-in-law for the last time. And we saw this nice old man. We were mostly worried about the fate of our loved ones, they were still hoping for a some-what positive outcome of the case.

Especially, since our long term sentence meant we were torn apart forever. Looking at them, we thought about the misfortunes and pitiful existence. We felt guilty before them, nor did we before the court and society. The audience in the hall mainly consisted of Russian intelligentsia and Jews. Except for ours, there were no more relatives than those who came.

The authorities had taken care that this process was widely publicized to demonstrate that the organizations of KGB Kuibyshev are not mistaken and do not hide their activities. This was why the doors of the court were wide open and the hall area was filled.

Finally someone stated loudly: "Get up, the trial is going to start up again!" In a thin sharp voice, Judge Tyutin began to read the verdict in the case of

1714 Greenwald A.A. and Viener A.S.h, accused under Art. 58-10. Part two of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR. It was established during the trial that for a long time the defendants engaged in anti-state nationalist activities. These were conducted by anti-Soviet propaganda that were based on broadcasts of radio stations coming from, "Voice of America and Voice of Israel."

These radio stations seemed to praise the Zionist leaders of Herzel. The Soviet Union, Zhabotinsky, Ben Gurion, and others felt these praises were hostile towards them. The list of countries and the names of the leaders served as one of the reasons why the supreme court returned the case for secondary consideration in the regional court. This time it was in a different composition, the verdict said that the physical evidence had been seized.

This confirmed that Greenwald preserved, multiplied, and disseminated libelous literature. And Greenwald had distorted reality, slandered the countries of people's democracies, and criticized the trial of the traitor known as, R. Slansky. R. Slansky was known as the person who helped many Jews leave the Soviet Union and move to Israel.

The verdict was on three printed sheets and at the end it was said that the physical evidence and testimony was coming from witnesses. This accusation was not unexpected for us, but for everyone there in the courtroom it was like a bolt from the blue sky. People in the hall looked over in our direction with frightened eyes.

They listened to the verdict with surprise and pity for us. Judge Tyutina shouted sharply; "Court sentenced recognizes A.A. Greenwald and Viener A.S.h guilty on all counts and sentenced each to ten years imprisonment with confiscation of property, subsequent deprivation of rights and expulsion to remote regions of the USSR for five years".

The judge asked each of us if we understood the verdict. Having received from us in the affirmative, she announced that the trial 1714 was completed and that the verdict was subject to appeal. We were removed quickly from the hall and those who tried to stay once again looked over at us. At this time, the soldiers were rudely pushed out. Our relatives managed to shout to us: "Hold on, we will bustle further, we will write complaints!" There is a Jewish joke that reads: "On the second day in a coffin at home".

I was asked if I wanted to appeal the sentence. The head did not understand yet, but the numbers ten and five were spinning in my thoughts. I took the paper and pen I had brought and with indifference wrote out a complaint. The complaint was that the sentence passed didn't

correspond to the charge, especially since some of the charges were unfair and weren't proven. After that for many days they kept me in isolation.

I knew that the most serious criminals weren't kept in such strict isolation and were allowed a meeting with loved ones. I protested, demanding a meeting with my relatives and demanded to be transferred to a common cell. Then there was a man also a convict was put in my place. He was immediately mistaken for an intellectual. He was thin and exhausted. One could tell that he also got a very long sentence. He treated me with prejudice and was silent. I told him about myself. When I said about my sentence, he smiled woefully.

Part 3: **The second court and train to GULAG.**

Fate brought me to a man who made an unforgettable impression on me. His name was Ivan Ivanovich Osin. It didn't take long for us to get close. I discovered he was not just educated, but possessed all the best qualities a person can be endowed. It is impossible to break and conquer such a thing. He wasn't surprised to learn about my term, he himself was sentenced to twenty-five years in a closed prison without the right to appeal. At one point in his life, he had been a member of the Komsomol.

He believed that Stalin's party was a shrine to which people needed to devote their whole lives to. He volunteered for the army and worked as a technician builder in Brest Fortress in military construction work. At some point he became wounded amongst other defenders from the fortress and was captured. After being captured, he was placed in the famous White Polyansky camp. It was there under an open sky and barely any food or water available the Germans kept dozens of Soviets prisoners of war.

There was a mass escape, and he, like a few others, managed to hide himself in forests of Belarus. From there they were able to find partisans. When these areas were liberated, he again fought in the ranks of the Soviet army as a junior lieutenant. After demobilization, he got married and worked as a surveyor. After that he was sent to work in construction Kuibyshevskaya HPP. This was not how he imagined the first "Building of Communism". At home, he saw a new world - a world of slavery and bondage.

A world of abuse and defenseless people. Before him was a picture of a huge concentration camp that stretched for hundreds of kilometers. And it was fenced with barbed wire with watchtowers. The camps held people in conditions that were not humane. There were hundreds of thousands of people who had been turned into slaves. Among prisoners were killed for a piece of bread or for a more convenient place on the bunk. All of these things weren't happening in foreign parts of the world, but my own home country.

Ivan Ivanovich Osin said that the Russian people will wake up and give everyone what they deserve. In an iron cage, they will carry the great executioner and his accomplices to show the people who the monster is. Hearing such a speech, the prisoners tried to hide him, but immediately a black car from the KGB arrived, a reinforced convoy, he was stuffed into a car and was driven away. This event was told by people who were present at the same time and from whom I heard it. He was driven over a hundred kilometers in the "pocket of the funnel." Anyone who has experienced such a trip understands how tortuous this was. To take him alive in Kuibyshev, he was periodically pulled out of the car and doused with water.

When he told this testimony to the investigators, they were stunned. He denied nothing and called everyone using their names. They had never listened to a story such as this before. He was sent for research in a psychiatric hospital called, "Timashevo", where, after six weeks of unheard of - research he was recognized as sane. He had a strong spirit and didn't lose his mind, like others in similar cases. He didn't ask for mercy; he had an unbending will and a strong character. When the head of the prison Kuznetzov came into our cell, he continued to sit. Kuznetzov asked him why he didn't get up and greet him?

He told Kuznetzov that he didn't want to wish him a healthy and prosperous life. He didn't want to pretend that he respects Kuznetzov. He wanted to be clear with Kuznetzov about these things and so he told him the truth. Kuznetzov's response to this was: "The authorities in the prison are strong enough to break Osin's tenacity". In response, Osin said, "That this power is not eternal, but the time of troubles in Russia will sooner or later pass and rapists will be punished by the people. And then it is no longer enough to keep the Russian soul and the pillars in Russia are not enough for you.

I was alarmed and frightened at the same time for the consequences Osin could be facing because of this conversation. Kuznetzov chose to not react to Osin's last statement. He only asked Osin about how many years he was convicted of and whether he had appealed his sentence. Osin's answer was, one quarter and acting as a heretic, "I have no rights before the Inquisition." After this conversation Kuznetzov left and the guard closed our door. The next day I let the staff at the prison know I was going on a hunger strike. I would be on this hunger strike until they would give me a meeting on equal basis with other convicts.

This meant he was going to go on a hunger strike until they allowed him to see his family. I was given a piece of paper and a pen and I wrote about it. The warden to whom I was brought tried to convince me of the senselessness of going on a hunger strike, which would not give me the desired results and was considered anti-Soviet demonstration. He advised me not to do this and not to follow the example of those who were lost such as Osin was as the warden put it. His persuasion had no effect on me, then I was placed in a so-called "box", ordered to undress and I was left in my underpants and a T-shirt.

The camera box was small with a high ceiling and very bright lightning. The bright lights made my eyes closed. Then taking off my shirt I blocked out my eyes from the light. From what I had left they took the shirt and then they took my underwear. At that point I had nothing left, I was completely naked and there was nothing to hide. Then they took away the shield and I, naked, lay face down on the bare cement floor. But there was no limit to the humanity of the Soviet organizations. Food was regularly brought to the cell and carried away.

It was old and untouched and on the fourth day, my temperature rose dramatically. At times, I had lost consciousness; I lay covered in sweat and suffered from thirst and terrible heat. I asked for a drink of water and was told that a starving person is not allowed to drink. Caring for a person manifested itself at every step. The doctor came, checked my pulse, and persuaded me to end the hunger strike, emphasizing that she gives such

advice as a doctor. I reminded her that she is not so much a doctor as an employee of the KGB.

Continuing the conversation with me, she warned me that if I refuse the food, then I will be force-fed. On the sixth day of hunger strikes, at night I often woke up, regained consciousness and asked them to return my clothes. And at this time, outside the door, someone on duty loudly said that probably soon he would have to draw up an act of death, having me in mind. On the morning of the sixth day, they brought me a pair of clothes, helped me to get dressed, and took me to the head of the prison.

Belov was already there and both simultaneously began to speak to me. The conversation they started with me was about how senseless they believed I was when going on a hunger strike; which once again confirmed that I remain true to my anti-Soviet beliefs. They reported that the Supreme Court returned the case for further investigation and the consideration of the case by the regional court would take place in a different composition. They said that there is a softening of the international situation and this would affect the eternal life of the country.

Kuznetsov turned to threats and explained that in the worst case the hunger strike would draw up an appropriate act and no one will do anything to learn about the tragic ending. To this I said, that I understand I am not in Turkey, where the communist Nazim Hikmet was released due to a hunger strike. However, Kuznetsov continued to insist on his own saying: "Think about your wife; tomorrow she will come with the transfer, and they will say "no" to her. She will look for you and no one will respond to her. Here he got on a sore spot, and I thought to myself what is more important? Feelings of pity for the helpless family to get the better of me and I ended my hunger strike.

I was returned to the cell where Osin was. He gave me a very friendly and warm welcome back. He laid me down and wiped my whole body with a wet rag, and then fed me using spoons like a child. He said: "These are Hitler's relatives; that is what they are capable of doing to another human. Neither G-d or the people will forgive them, no excuses for these time beasts. When I looked at this timid-looking man he appeared to be a giant. For two days, Ivan Ivanovich courted me, until the guards called me and told me to get

ready with my things. No man knows where he will be taken, whether it is north, south, east, or west nor does he know what awaits him.

I was very upset about parting with Osin. Even already being in the camps, I had heard stories about this fearless defender of human dignity. Now again it was necessary for me to gain strength and resilience to withstand everything that lay ahead of me. This included the investigation, the courts, and different kinds of difficulties. Again, I had to deal with the black cars they referred to as "funnels" packages, Stolypin wagons, camps, and hard labor in the northern or eastern part of the country. All of these things are impossible to imagine, even having a very rich imagination, real life was so difficult.

The fact that the Supreme Court didn't approve the verdict, but had returned the case to an original investigation and re-examination was a slap in the face to the authorities of the KGB of Kuybishev. The motivation for returning the case indicated the fact that the verdict was drawn up illiterately. It gave me some kind of hope that the authorities first began to intervene and control the work of the KGB. It was stated that the seized manuscripts and materials should have been verified by specialist experts.

This decision was made, based on the fact of the arrest of Beria. On the night of Beria's arrest, a general had been arrested in Kuibyshev Gvishiani. Some people mentioned earlier in this story such as Timofeev and Tartarkovsky and others had disappeared. These people had received participation in my case. It became known that these deeds took over the headquarters of the Volga Military District. I wasn't sure about all of these events, but I still guessed that something was happening. Suddenly the attitude towards all of us had changed - the composition, as well as the quality of food and withdrawal from walks had become more frequent.

A sense of nervousness was felt among the staff of the apparatus. The chief of the prison, Kutznetsov had been transferred to work as a director of the regional State Bank. His place was taken by an artillery major. Bodies had received a "new", chief former deputy Gvishiani, colonel Kremlin. The deputy was a worker of the Central Committee sent from Moscow. I learned about the arrest of Beria from a man who was placed in my cell. He was brought

from Chukotka to Kuibyshev for "supplements". He worked his fifteen years and then was captured. It was a pity to let him go, he seemed too strong.

On the way to Kuibyshev, he learned that Beria had been imprisoned. I couldn't believe that this polach suffered the fate of his victims. He was dragged along the same basement corridors, through which he used to proudly walk. Beria disappeared and many human lives were saved, including my own. Despite all the changes our investigation was conducted as before. Without our participation, the case was being prepared for a rehearing in court. The prison conditions had not changed and I lost track of the days that seemed endless. As usual, at this time in the middle of the Volga Region the weather was hot with dry winds.

It was a hot day in July. We were sitting in a cell. For some idiotic reason they crammed five to seven people in a small space. There was no breathing room and we felt stuck to each other. I suddenly found myself in a "large society", which was a very happy one. However, soon the heat and stuffiness became unbearable. What we thought was nothing became something because someone fainted. The first person to faint was Ivan Vladimirovich Kostin. He was a former prisoner of Auschwitz. He was convicted of distrusting the Soviet press for ten years. He walked around the cell covering his mouth and nose with a wet handkerchief. He said he couldn't stand the smell of hydrogen sulfide.

This man correspondent of the local newspaper was very sorry, but no one could help him; we were all breathing this air. At night the screams were heard from other cameras as people were suffocating. I recognized the loud voice of Abraham. He shouted: "Gestapo, fascists, Hitlerites". He was put in a punishment cell that lasted three days. Sweat had started to pour out in a stream. Everyone had stripped naked. We demanded a doctor and when she came, through the "feeding trough" we showed her that even a match doesn't burn.

There was so little oxygen in the chamber. To this she did not react. She said that the weather was about to change and a cold snap was coming soon. There were also former soldiers in my cell who had survived the horrors of Hitler's camps.

There were also those who mocked people in the same camps. They participated in mass executions of Jewish population in Ukraine. During another interrogation I shared this bit of information. For that I was punished and placed in a cell that contained three bandits. These three were convicted of robbery and murder. One of them had demanded I exchange boots with him. In the end I refused and after they consulted with each other, they offered me a "deal".

This was a "deal" that I was not expecting, "Tell us a novel, but keep it interesting." I started thinking how one could go about this. The task was not an easy one. I remembered my mother who was very religious. She really wanted me to study the Torah. She would often say: "My son, you should learn Torah. It will come very handy in your life. Even if you don't believe me, the knowledge that the Torah gives you will become useful for you.

Remembering this I came up with an idea of how to share an interesting story for these bandits I was sharing space with. I told them, "You already know that I am a Jew. You know that the meaning of Jew is Yid. I want to tell you the story of my people." As I was about to share the story a thought came to my mind. Can I really be able to escape these animals by explaining the story of the Jewish people? The answer was they gave me a clear purpose. I started at the very beginning, with Adam and Eve.

I told them about the flood, the four patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Yosef, and the Beautiful Jacob. These so-called animals were intrigued, they lay around me and demanded that I don't stop. They sat quietly like children, holding onto my every word. For several days I continued telling them the beautiful biblical legends of Moshe, David, Solomon, the Wise and the Victorious Rebellious Maccabees. I went on to share about the conquest of the country Judea by the Romans and the appearance of the new religion, Christianity.

Finally, I got to part of the story of the revival of the State of Israel. Sitting there around these bandits sharing this information, I was constantly being treated with delicacies. At the time these special treats were hard to come

by, but they liked my story telling so much. Providing the treats was like giving fuel to me so I could keep going.

These criminal sons received from their wealthy parents in gears. I was very surprised by their interest in which they listened to me and they seemed ready to give everything they had to me. If only I would continue telling the story, honestly that was how I stayed alive. Being surrounded by these animals one would think they wouldn't last long because it was a hopeless setting. This didn't meet the plans of the author of this action.

----- Part 4 -----

When it was time for them to say goodbye, these criminals gave me a lot of food. They stated they regretted that I was leaving. After sharing this story with them, I was kept in solitary confinement for three weeks and then someone joined me. For several days I sat with the liberated from Buchenwald by a former Ukrainian officer. The officer's name was Nor. Then one more officer was placed with us, Gestapo officer, Brill. We knew about each other by hearsay. As soon as the doors of the cell were closed I asked German officer "Should we greet you with the word: Heil Hitler?"

Nor immediately exclaimed "This is Lyoshka!" Brill was silent, because it was his usual word when he worked in Belarus cities. He began to boastfully talk about his participation in anti-Jewish actions. Brill was not tall or handsome compared to the Nor guy. Brill was short and ugly. He was nondescript. Hearing his vile bragging, I declared that I prefer to resolve disputes on this topic in a physical way. Immediately he went silent, knowing he had no chance and he risked disgrace. Nor smiled as he liked every display of courage.

The KGB authorities in their usual practice, didn't separate the murders from their victims. On purpose they kept everyone together for moral pressure on prisoners. They did this especially to Jewish prisoners because they had a deep disgust for such inmates. The KGB authorities preferred to deal with punishers and the Gestapo, who served with the Nazis, rather than with ordinary men who were dissatisfied with the Soviet regime.

The pressure on them was much stronger. You can just imagine how Nor felt, he was an officer of the Soviet Army. He preferred Buchenwald, but didn't break the oath. In addition to that he didn't begin to serve the enemy. Now he had to sit in the same cell space as a Gestapo officer, Brill. The

Soviet government had their own approach to this issue. To the Soviet Union, slaves were needed. The organizations of the KGB were the suppliers of this product. Free labor, moreover in large quantities. Lately, for about ten days, I had to sit with Colonel of the Soviet Army Melnik-Glazovitsky. He was a bright representative of Soviet reality.

He was from the Vinnitsa region. He was Polish by nationality, his parents actively participated in the seizure of power during the Bolshevik coup. He himself had voluntarily joined the army at the age of seventeen. War found him on the Romanian border near the Prut River. Then he was a rank lieutenant. His part belonged to the rearguard and covered the retreat of the army. Retreating last, they destroyed everything in their own ways so that nothing got to the enemy. He personally distributed livestock and crops to the peasants. So, in battle he retreated to Stalingrad, and from there began his journey to Berlin, Germany. He got wounded several times. One time there was a very serious injury to his lung. He had fled from the hospital back to his unit. He completed his campaign in Berlin with the rank lieutenant colonel.

When he was arrested, his pistol got confiscated, eight orders and many medals. I happened to read a document with a list of things confiscated from him. He had been arrested at the end of 1952, for working in the Volga Military District with the rank of colonel. He was accused of slandering Soviet power and the collective farm reality. He was a tall, broad shouldered man with a military bearing. He had a uniform without buttons. The insignia was already falling apart from frequent roasting. Yet he tried not to lose the air of a gallant officer. His crime was as follows. He was on vacation in Ukraine. His sister's family was in a very difficult and deplorable condition. Her husband died fighting at the front and she was left with two children who were now fatherless. However, being disabled and almost blind she worked on a collective farm in order to somehow persevere. For three years of work, the collective farm didn't pay the collective farmers.

There was not a gram of bread given to these collective farmers for their intense labor. On top of that, the family of the deceased front-line soldier had perished from hunger. While Army Melnik was there he tried to help them as much as he possibly could. He had repaired their hut and bought everything they needed for the household. When he arrived home, he shared his impressions with a friend. After that it was dismantled at the

party bureau. Then he went to Moscow and was received by one of the secretaries of the Central Committee. Someone from the Central Committee advised him to go back home.

When he arrived at work at the headquarters, he didn't have time to undress as he was invited to the commander's office. There the officers were waiting to place him in a special department. They held him at gunpoint and ordered him to follow them. The court had taken into account his services in the Motherland. They made indulgence sentencing to imprisonment "only" for seven years. In the verdict that I read, it stated Melnik-Glazovitsky had used temporary difficulties in the work of the collective farm to slander the collective farm reality.

I had to see how this strong man, who participated in heavy battles and endured a lot, sat there crying. He was crying bitter tears when before leaving the cell he was allowed to write a letter to his wife. I was amazed that people like him, hardened when it came to hard battles on the frontline, were capable of crying just like children do. I was offended that many people including him, had to drink a bitter cup. This bitter drink seemed to sober up his mind and opened his eyes. This courageous man was afraid at first. Listening to me he realized it is not individual people who are to blame for what happened. It is the state structure that is to blame. It elected the method of government that came up with unheard ways of oppressing their people. They do this with the purpose of strengthening power over the people.

When we spoke I could feel a bit of distrust on his end. From our conversations I could sense a certain shift was taking place from his point of view. Before we parted ways, he pulled me close to him and said to me that now he has a clearer and better understanding of the situation in the country. At first he came off as malicious when looking at the column of prisoners who were led through the streets of the city as if they were criminals. Now he sees these prisoners the same as himself, that is an innocently affected group of people. To those, who after hard trials were able to correctly assess the situation, it was very difficult.

These kind of people endured not only physical hardships, but they also experienced a deep spiritual shock as their faith was being crumbled in front

of them. They didn't expect this to happen, because their sense of beliefs, how they were brought up, and what they were accustomed to from childhood was breaking into tiny pieces. It was a very disappointing feeling to see the disfigured human morality and the lives of people and understand that they themselves were idolaters. Melnik-Glazovitsky had a new perspective on what was happening in his homeland. Before leaving, he turned to me and said: "Thank you Abramovich, you helped me understand a lot and see everything in a different light. In this - I give great credit to you."

When I signed the Form 206 for the second time as preparation to the second court, I didn't go deep into reading the amended case. I only stopped at some new documents. One of these documents I noticed was a certificate of the literary department of Kuibyshev, in which there was. It said that Peretz- Marksih was recognized as a bourgeois nationalist and all his editions had been confiscated and burned. I was surprised that the official reference could be written out like that.

Apparently the person who wrote it was sure that it was only for court and no one else would see the paper. This man, for example, didn't of course distinguish Peretz Yitzchok Leibush from Markish Peretz. (Editor's note: Peretz Yitzchok Leibush was born in 1851. He died in 1915. He was a Jewish author and lived in Poland. Markish Peretz Davidovich was born in 1895 and he lived until 1952. He was also a Jewish author. He was a member of the communist party of the Soviet Union from 1942.)

He did not even understand my remarks that he messed up here again. He looked for help saying that everything was clearly written there. That every Peretz Markish's editions were seized and burned.

I said out loud that this is something new. So far all I knew was that in the USSR photographs of relatives were burned. However, if Feoktistov claimed that the books were being burned in the USSR, I said that I must believe him. After further investigation and adding more documents to my case N.O. 1714, it became even bigger.

On September 28, 1953, without warning we were again taken out to the regional court. There we were led directly to the office of the chairman of the court Puzanov. Puzanov decided to take on the case himself along with the

new accuser, hung on with orders on shining uniforms, were already in the cabinet. They didn't pay the slightest attention to a new "product" called "defendants". A new trial began and it was a dramatic presentation.

The old wolf, Puzanov knew how to conduct a court according to all the rules of Soviet "democracy". We were asked if we have petitions, comments, or objections to the composition of the court. I got up and stated that I am making a request that anyone with a dark past, who worked with Gestapo, cannot be the witness. I believe that the person with such the dark past offends us, defendants and everyone involved in this process. The prosecutor objected sharply. And, naturally, the court agreed with his opinion.

It was immediately obvious that Puzanov wasn't Tyutin. He wouldn't give us a chance to speak up and ask the necessary questions. He constantly said: "I am taking down the question. Sit down! The court rejects." The next day the expert was presented to the court with the appropriate ceremony. It was this expert who had to determine to what extent is anti-Soviet intention was in the papers that were confiscated from me.

The expert presented himself as Yakov Federovich Kalabin. It was listed ranks: candidate of philosophical sciences, head of the department of Marxism-Leninism at the Higher Party School and a member of the Society for Dissemination of scientific and political knowledge. At Puzanov's request, he read a long list of his scientific papers. Then he got down to business, he said my documents contained texts of anti-Soviet content and read out loud individual excerpts that were taken out of context.

Sitting there and hearing this, I wasn't allowed to object or say anything at all. Kalabin cited official data on the number of Jews that received the title, Hero of the Soviet Union and their place in percentage respect in comparison with other nationalities. He went on that this is not America which is dominated by racism and absolute poverty. And that in the USSR, there is no discrimination of people's and a happy life being created by all workers.

When the expert was allowed to ask his questions I had one formed already in my mind for him. I asked him if he considered the materials he was working with, which at that point he had already gotten acquainted with, confirm my crime in his opinion. I asked him, if he knew that such a conclusion would mean that my children would be left as orphans?

I also asked the expert if he knew that information about the Jewish Heroes is known to a few people. In different places you could hear a rumor about Jews buying all these awards. Puzanov wasn't interested in what I had to say. He quickly said in a loud voice, "Sit down, this isn't a question but a speech." The expert nevertheless replied that it is not he who decides the issue of the crime. In the end the court gets to make that decision.

My new protector was a handsome old man. His name was Prokofiev and he was known to be very noble. It was a big surprise for me. He had a bold and defensive speech prepared for the court. This could indicate that behind the walls that surrounded us, something had changed for the better. One example he used me in, he said using my name: "Greenwald declares that he loves his people and it would be strange if it were different."

This didn't contradict the constitution nor is the USSR prohibited by law. It's possible by all means that Greenwald allowed errors in our views on some issues. But he continued, comrades judges, we are with you witnessing important changes. These changes we couldn't foresee and aren't able to explain. My client understands these changes in their own way due to reasons we all know.

However, it is quite clear that this wasn't related to criminal intentions. It was only the result of certain events." Puzanov interrupted his speech saying: "Think about what you are saying, comrade, lawyer? The old man boldly replied: "Comrade, Chairman, see now I am not a boy. And before I give a speech I do think it over. And this time I made no exception." With a loud voice he finished his speech saying there is no excuse to keep under guardians of a person with the beliefs that were formed on the basis of real events.

These events are now officially and publicly condemned. He went on to say that he was asking the court to drop all the charges against Greenwald. Also to release Greenwald from custody. When Prokofiev finished his speech, I noticed that his hands were shaking. He had a hard time gathering up his paperwork. I felt really happy that there are still people out there for whom conscience matters more than their own well-being. This old man Prokofiev was one of those people. I was afraid for him and didn't put out my hand to thank him for his speech. I only bowed low to him. He answered me in the same way.

A part of me wanted to shout: "Glory to the brave man!". The defender for my friend, Viener, was the same Kirimov, not quite a convinced communist. Five years later, he met his ex-client on the street. It was there that he found out Viener was leaving for Poland. He looked around and said quietly: "Rather leave as soon as possible. Bye!". At the end of the third day, the verdict had been read. It was good this time and it was edited as well. But the output had remained the same.

Close relatives were allowed to attend the reading of court conclusion. Their hopes for lightening of sentences didn't materialize. At the very end of the meeting there was a small incident. I wanted to go up to Viener and tell him something. Before I could do so, one of the escorts stopped me and pointed their rifle at me. I lifted my shirt and the bayonet of his rifle touched the skin on my chest. I shouted at him, "Let's pierce it! This is your job, you are no stranger to it! What are you waiting for?" The soldier recoiled, and Puzanov, as if nothing had happened had left the premises.

We were quickly led through the side doors. This was their way of getting us to go in their black convoy vehicle. In November, the verdict was confirmed by the Supreme Court. They decided not to confiscate our properties. Apparently they didn't want to mess with our meager possessions. The prison authorities allowed us to have a date with our relatives. Two days before leaving the inner prison, each of us had been taken to room 81. My wife was waiting for me there. We were previously warned that we should speak only in Russian.

It was hard to see my wife going through all this pain and agony. I felt it was my fault, after all it was I who brought her so much suffering. We spent almost two hours together. Most of the time we stayed silent, both of us trying to keep calming the other one down. We knew that it was useless. I also tried to warn her about who she could and couldn't communicate with.

As I said my goodbyes to her, I shared that anything could happen to me. In the meantime, while I am still alive I will keep hoping to live. Viener was taken to a bathhouse and after a short while was transported to a transit prison. It was known as the W.R. 65/12. It was located closer to the center and occupied a huge territory. It was a long one story building with large chambers inside. There were two hundred or more prisoners placed in each cell. The two-tiered bunks were made of thick beams. They were two big barrels that served for restrooms. No regime was observed, day and night there was a noise and a cry. The guards played cards and smoked hashish. From the acrid smoke and the stench some people including myself often fainted.

The conditions were so awful, that no one paid attention to fainted people. The transit prison was grade zero in the general education system of the GULAG (Main Organization of Concentration Camps). Here a person receives initial skills and gets acquainted with camp life. With this knowledge a person will leave here, naked, barefoot, and without a grain of bread. The first thing that is told here to a newcomer, is that a thief is an honorable prisoner while everyone else is not. Especially low rank was for political prisoners.

Anyone who becomes a thief is considered to be at the top rank and the newcomer is obliged to obey him. An ordinary man is considered to be a nonentity. This nonentity was called a "fraer". Others are allowed to beat him, rob him, and fraer is forced to look after "thieves in law" who were considered the highest caste.

This word "supposed" (must do this according to the criminal order) was known in all places of detention in Russia. There were often bloody battles between peasants and criminals. Sometimes there were murders. There were fights for cancellation of the criminal order. But in most cases struggles

against criminal order was hopeless. Criminals robbed other prisoners, taking all they wanted and made money from these robberies.

The income went to the pockets of the authorities and guards in the camps. The guards would buy up all the looted drugs, vodka, and more things and give supplies to the thieves. This "order" started changing in 1948 after a huge influx of post-war prisoners who influenced the situation in the GULAG system.

There were hundreds of thousands of soldiers and officers as well. They had gone through the war and German concentration camps. There were Vlasovites, Ukrainian nationalists, and other categories as well. Most of the prisoners didn't want to agree with what was established in the camps "order". This arbitrariness was rebuffed at the cost of many lives. Thanks to brave and energetic people.

They made sure that they stopped demanding taxes. If someone tried to break this rule, he immediately received a proper rebuff. In the time that political prisoners were serving their sentence in prisons or camps, for the most part they felt protected. The significance of this achievement could only be assessed by the one who found himself in these conditions. Viener and I were placed in a cell with more than two hundred humans.

The first opportunity we had, we loudly announced what our crime was. This instantly gave the desired effect, we were immediately christened with a nickname. The nickname was "fascists". No one in that cell was like us, there were only six thieves in the cell. They liked to terrorize the much older men that were there. The thieves would sit in upper bunks, giving orders to their servants. They called these servants, "sixes". They told the sixes who to undress and from whom to take away what and how much of it.

The servants carried out all their cruel orders and were objects for homosexual relationships. All orders of the thieves were carried out openly without any hesitation. The servants were mostly young guys who had been imprisoned for minor offenses. They couldn't endure hunger and a sense of defenselessness led them to such a fall. We saw all of this on the first day of shipment. It was with grief that we thought about what would happen next.

And if this was just the beginning. At night these thieves searched the pockets of those who were sleeping.

If anyone was to resist, they could quietly strangle their victim. The rest of the convicts at this time pretended to be asleep. I decided to invite Viener to show caution. If the thieves came upon us, our pockets would be empty. Also this way, we wouldn't attract the attention of the bandits who would think that we have money on us. Viener was not so sensitive and he reacted to this situation.

Viener's hands were itchy as he looked at these scoundrels. He was a physically strong man and drew the attention of one very chunky man. The chunky man asked Viener if he would help him, if he was to be in the need of defending himself from these bandits. Viener immediately answered with consent. It just so happened that Viener wasn't in the cell, when this chunky man stood up for himself.

The man managed to disfigure one of these "sixes" beyond recognition. This happened with the guy who tried taking sugar from the chunky man. The man told him a story: "I'm a thief too. When I was on the collective farm, I stole wheat for my children."

When Viener was near me I felt very safe, the bandits didn't approach me. By the fifth day, Viener was sent to out. I took the news really hard, so I felt pretty defenseless among these animals. When we were together, no one touched either of us. I was thankful to the impressive physical appearance he gave off. Now without Viener around, I started to worry not knowing what was awaiting me.

An old man took notice of me. This man was tall and slender. He had a long beard and his hair was combed in the old fashioned way. This man was dressed in clean white pants, not wearing any trousers. He wore chrome boots and a vest from a suit. He was sitting in the corner of an upper bunk. From where he was sitting the whole cell was visible. There was quite a lot of free space, despite the area being extremely tight on the other bunks. He resolved all controversial issues. No one dared to contradict him. He didn't have any sixes and he hated them.

When giving out orders he looked at people briefly and sternly. Everyone who followed his orders considered it an honor to follow his orders. He didn't allow anyone who was a suck up to approach him. If any person like this tried to do so he would respond: "Get out of here you jackass!" He was called, "Godfather". Everyone gave into the road as he walked around the cell.

When I was left alone without Viener, he drew attention to me. He came up to me and asked if I wish to have dinner with him and drink some tea with sugar.

In those conditions, it was as if the prince would invite a beggar to such a table. From such an invitation and such an honor it couldn't be denied. Towards the evening I saw him spread a clean and white towel. He put cookies and crackers on the towel. When they started distributing dinner, he ordered for my portion to be near his.

Like a youth, he jumped off the bunk. He looked at me and said: "It's time brother, you are welcome", and indicated for me to follow him for dinner onto the bunk. There he sat down like one would if coming from the country of Turkey. He was wearing an embroidered long shirt that covered the upper part of the chrome boots. The old man looked at me closely and I felt that he was piercing me with his gaze. He pushed my plate of gruel and on the plate put crackers and biscuits.

At the beginning of our conversation, he asked: "What happened to you, dear? Did you want to find out about the political situation? Did you chat too much, feeling drunk? Now we don't have the time to chat. You need to know what and where to say. Now being in this group, you have to gulp down the gruel."

Sighing, he looked back and continued: "Yes, I still remember the tsarist times, when the political authorities themselves were treated with respect and better than we have been. BUT we adored them very much, they stood up for us and taught us. Now everything has changed. The authorities are on the side of these jackasses. Our man wants to be away from your political brothers. There is no unity between us. Your people don't know how to distinguish an honest thief from these type of scoundrels." He said these

words seriously. I've heard the words "honest thief" for the first time and wasn't sure what it meant.

I felt no need to hide the reason why I was put in prison. I told the old man everything about it. After hearing my confession, the old man took a deep breath. With that he said: "Brother, they mocked you a lot, sons of bitches, but I praise you". He said and held out his hand to me. He was gesturing towards me, "well done, that he withstood and didn't give himself a chance to fuck up. Know that even time has helped you, at another time a different fate could befall you. After all we saw a lot of how they destroyed your brother Viener. The article 58 known as Enemy of the State is equal to salt in their eyes, bastard. Do not blame my friend, G-d will give and this kingdom will come to an end, G-d alone is eternal!" Before late at night we drank tea and smoked strong samosad (home-made tobacco).

The old man continued to tell how he grew up as an orphan boy. Then he was dragged into a world of thievery. He wandered around the world without shelter. He also shared with me a story about a woman named Ninochka who fell in love with him. She was always waiting for him to return to her. She always accepted him back after he was released from the prison. According to him, Nina awaits him; she hopes that three years will pass by. And he will come back to her and they will heal their love like two doves and will live together.

When he spoke about his Nina, he spoke like a lover. He described himself back in the day, when he was a much younger man. He described her appearance and character and convincingly said that he loves her and only her. He proudly shared that he never was involved in any kind of a killing spree. He was always a kind person to everyone. He often gave his "trophies" to homeless people. At some point he wiped his eyes with a large white handkerchief.

I was feeling the old man had a desire to pour out his soul. Perhaps he was in need of a priest, instead of myself. A priest because he could listen to him and prepare him for a calm ending to a stormy life. We sat together until dawn and I kept listening to him sharing his stories. At the end he took my hand, pulled me close to him. He kissed my forehead. "I love such people,"

he said. "You are a kind person, and your truth will win, remember the old man." He also asked me to not condemn him. He said that G-d is merciful and will forgive him for the sins he made in his life.

Yes he lived a stormy life. Now that he was finishing his seventh decade, he wanted to evaluate it. The old man assured me that there was no one here and no one was going to touch us. We went to our bunks feeling respect for each other. This ended the meeting with the old man sharing that he was "an honest thief." I dared not to ask for his name.

A couple of days later I found my name on the list of sixty other people. We were ordered to get ready to be sent to work. One of the nominated supervisors announced loudly that those wishing to shave can do that. Immediately a line was formed there and people themselves lathered their faces. Many were covered in blood while shaving. There were about a hundred people who were shaved, but no one complained.

An officer approached me. I recognized him. He knew me from before as a housemate. At the time I didn't know that he was working in this system. He asked me if there was anything I wanted to report back home. At my request he told my wife where I had been sent. It turned out to be forty kilometers from my family's house. It was almost on the very bank of the Volga river in the camp branch called P / I. 65/6. The camp located not far from the picturesque locality called, "Administrative town". The headquarter of the camps were hosted here. A factory was built there only by the Germans. These Germans were brought from different cities of east Germany together with the factory equipment. On a high mountain above the Volga river, near the cliff stood a large palace.

Before reaching this beautiful palace, there was a bus stop under the name "School Gulag", and half a kilometer away from this palace there was an inscription. It read as follows: " Restricted area". Those who didn't know thought this restricted area was a military facility. In fact, not far away was the gate to a concentration camp. I involuntarily thought how such a place goes well with a scary establishment. During the three years prior to my arrest, I worked with female prisoners who were attached to our enterprise. I knew a little about their living conditions in their camps and in their work.

When these women were taken from work back to the camp, and I went home at that moment I felt happily free.

Now I stepped down in front of the same gate, which, as these women said: open wide only at the entrance. I was worried that now I would have to go in there. And that I would turn into a miserable insignificant camp creature. What I had to endure during the shipment added a lot of excitement. After a few short formalities, we were allowed inside. At the gate we were met by a group of suspicious types. They ordered us to go to the barracks and warm up. Unfortunately no one agreed, but everyone was frozen. We were taken to the bathhouse and shaved off.

Again these strange types appeared and began to ask everyone questions in a jargon that I didn't understand. They stopped around a young guy and I heard his answer: "Thief" At this moment other thieves started to pummel him. He didn't try to defend himself. He laid on the floor bleeding, and they continued to beat him. The worst part was that all the others who stood around didn't do anything to stop it. I was in horror and thought we should all go through this kind of baptism. Looking at the faces of people who didn't care about someone being beaten alive, I realized one wouldn't find protection here. The massacre didn't touch anyone. I didn't yet know the laws of the camp. They came up to me and asked what "suit" I was. I didn't know the answer and the prisoner standing next to me answered for me, "A-guy fraer", which meant "not a thief".

It was later I found out this guy had been beaten for calling himself a thief. In reality, he was really just a hermit. I was temporarily assigned to an invalid barrack. There I would be working with political prisoners. The barracks had different numbers addressed to them. This particular one was number ten. There I was greeted kindly and surrounded with care, since every person knew how anyone felt after a long stay in prison.

After that the camp appeared to be like paradise on earth. It had a lot of fabulous beauty to go along with it. The sky was visible here, the sun was shining brightly. When there was snow on the ground, you could take it in your hands and not breathe in the chamber stench. However, through all of this darkness reigned around this "happiness of freedom" feeling. It was here that I became an unwitting observer of life of the unfortunate people

who were doomed. Sometimes I keep forgetting that I too share the same fate as them.

There were about three hundred prisoners in barrack number ten. There were bunks that were connected in pairs to maintain higher stability. The majority of the prisoners in this barrack were over sixty years old. They lived together with those who were disabled, mentally sick, chronically ill, those who were blind, deaf, and considered dumb. There were even those prisoners who were convicted for showing gestures with their hands. By doing this they were expressing to others that the collective farms were bad and the government should dissolve these farms, otherwise there would be no bread.

The weak and old people slept on the lower bunks. Anyone who was stronger would climb up to the top bunk. At the same time, people in the lower bunks suffered from the cold. Those sleeping on the top bunks, suffered the spoiled air. The nature of their crimes were different. This barrack resembled an anthill. People were constantly moving, as if to prove that they were still alive. Throughout the night, the doors opened a lot making the cold air seep into the room. As an effect of this, the elderly people were always making their way outside when needed. And they were indignant.

These people dreamed of being warm and hoped to at least die in their bed. Many of them would pick up stray cats to pet. They became close with these stray animals and some even slept with them, fed them, sharing their own food. Anger for various reasons pushed the older people into arguments. Sometimes due to the stray cats, there were scandals that eventually led to fights.

There were people among the older generation, who occupied in the past responsible posts at the party and household work. Some of these people continued to study the science of Leninism. It was never clear for what purpose they were doing this. Maybe it happened for the reason as one of the old men put it, that this chronic disease isn't curable. However the guards said that everyone was the same. There was something to be terribly afraid of. A professor of mathematics from a university in Kiev told me about some of the prisoners, naming their former titles.

These were the people who were formerly involved in matters of national importance, heads of departments, and the like. Now these people were quarreling over places away from the bucket. They were morally destroyed and crippled physically. Former fighters for Soviet power and those who fought against her. There were Muslims, Catholics, Orthodox, and other clergymen. There were also burgomasters and policemen who served the German invaders, as well as former commanders of the Red Army and partisan detachments.

There was no unity between them. A few of them remembered the past. All thoughts were busy taking care of food and coming up with a plan to stay warm. Every morning and evening checks were carried out. Everyone lined up near the barracks. The guards demanded that the elderly people stand straight with their heads up and check often. This lasted more than an hour. We would stand there freezing until we heard the bang of the gong. The sound of the gong signified that the check was over.

Compared with our other barracks, this was a better one. I managed with the help of a friend to visit barrack number 13. Barrack number 13 was called, "Indo-cat". It's hard to imagine that something similar exists. This barrack consisted mostly of non-working people. Because of what was known as the "class belongings" these people weren't allowed to work. They were considered different kinds of criminals and had different kinds of leaders. They used drugs, developed plans for intra-camp robberies and murders. There were those who lost when playing card games and were assigned to the commission of these crimes.

Strictly revered the title of "thief". Those, who were awarded this high title, felt themselves to be lords. They dictated their will to everything in camp except for the "fascists" or political prisoners. They would terrorize anyone and kept at bay. They could even kill those who disobeyed against their will. In this barrack there were no beddings for the bunks. The bunks were pushed together, men of all different ages sat completely naked and played cards. Their bodies were covered with pornographic tattoos.

Some of them were homosexuals and performed unnatural acts. They served as a coin for a ransom lost when playing cards. I wanted to get out of there as soon as possible. Unfortunately an acquaintance of mine held me back so they would not pay attention to us. He told me that he was imprisoned because he worked on a food warehouse and the district authorities, including the prosecutor and judges, sent their people to him and they took everything they wanted.

When a shortage was discovered, he was sentenced to eight years. It was a common practice to rob each other. When I imperceptibly left there, I had full confidence that this was done under the patronage of authorities in the moral decay of people. The actions of the prison scum made it easier for them to rule. Little by little, I got used to my barrack. I found among the prisoners older people, interesting and educated people. One of them was gray-haired an old man with glasses was formerly a famous Moscow lawyer, member of the jury of the Moscow Law School.

His wife and daughter were forced to testify against him. They were crying at the trial, saying that he was campaigning against the party. It was obviously a repetition of one of Hitler's methods or maybe it was vice versa. After he arrived in camp he received the only letter in which his daughters wrote: "Daddy, don't blame us. We will not write anymore and don't judge us." After Beria was arrested, people came to this lawyer and told him that his relatives were forced to slander him. The lawyer asked them not to worry and to not go anywhere with requests.

This proud old man didn't want to beg for his freedom. His last name was Check. He worked in the camp on an assembly line in a garment factory. In the same place worked a former officer from Leningrad. He was given a ten year sentence for sitting at a table in a restaurant, when a foreigner joined the table. The foreigner was from the Italian Consulate. As a result this officer was convicted for links with foreign intelligence.

Another case surprised me, there was a peasant from the Smolensk region who received a term of twenty five years. He witnessed the barbaric extermination of Polish prisoners. They were Polish officers killed in the Katyn forest. This individual that witnessed such a horrible act, lived in one

of the villages located near this place. He was an eyewitness to the shooting of Polish people. I could not understand why he had been left alive.

As soon as I got to the camp, I came back to life. I shaved and began spending a lot of time outside in the fresh air. My complexion gradually improved and I felt like myself again. Work wasn't severe, although it lasted up to fourteen hours in one day. I helped people who helped me in ways that they could. Mostly I felt they were helping me morally.

They tried comforting me that they were in these camp conditions for ten years or longer and look, they were still alive. They said all the more so, over the recent years, the conditions had improved. There were also Polish people in the camp who had been convicted mainly for participation in Polish Armiya Kriova (AK). The AK participation took place in the eastern part of the regions of Poland and at the time belonged to the USSR. I grew especially close to a still strong old man from a town in Poland called Oshmyany located near Vilnius. He went by the name of Kazimir Motyl. He was very religious and like many Polish people was a patriot to his homeland.

The second person I met who was like this went by the name of Jan Tovianski. He was from the region of Lida. He used to be a strong young man, but got sick after bullying in the dungeons of the KGB.

These two people I will never forget, they also helped me. As I was getting accustomed to my surroundings and the people, I tried to figure things out myself. Before my arrival at the camp, there was an episode that was related to the arrest of doctors in Moscow.

The head of the educational and cultural department part of the camp called a meeting of all prisoners. They did this in an attempt to condemn Jewish doctors who tried to poison the leaders of the party and the government. A certified "educator", the senior lieutenant didn't feel that it was enough and he decided to conduct the same meeting in the medical unit for those patients who couldn't attend a general meeting.

The head of the hospital and the entire sanitary unit was a woman. She was middle-aged and her name was Maria Isaakovna. She didn't come to this rally, but the lieutenant called for her and forced her to be present. She had to listen to his speech, in which it was said that the Russians knew about the Jews being traitors. The Jews betrayed Jesus Christ, they killed Lenin, and now they wanted to poison our leaders. The Jews need to be closely monitored. To this, Maria Isaakovna fainted. She was carried out of the ward and the lieutenant calmly continued: "Well you see this is the best proof that here the same thing happened. Therefore, the Jews need to be watched." Many prisoners-patients were offended but no one dared to object.

After the doctors had been released the lieutenant was no longer allowed to calmly walk around the territory of the camp. After him, the people shouted: "Hey, what is going on with Jewish doctors?" Soon after that, he was transferred to another part of the camp. From then on, life began to take on some kind of a human form. All of my free time I spent reading old file sets of newspapers. Once, returning to my barrack I found a lecture being given by an officer. He was reading in the newspapers about the horrors happening in the Greek prisons. People who were under pressure from public opinion were treated horribly. Some of these people were sick political prisoners.

It was at that moment, that a bearded old man stood up to speak. He said excitedly: "Chief, why the hell are you here about Greece? Why do you think we need this Greece of yours? Can you not see how eighty year old men are being tormented in this barrack? These elderly people are blind, have tuberculosis, and are paralyzed. Is anyone planning to release them? I recommend you figure out a way out of this situation and then express your thoughts on what is happening in Greece!" There was nothing to answer and the officer only threatened his finger at the bolder peasant.

This was a guy who was an inexperienced prisoner. He was from Ukraine. Yang Tovianski wanted to prove to me that the Polish people were different from the Russians. He introduced me to a "stubborn Pole". The "stubborn Pole" was from the Poltava region. There wasn't any condition that this person gave up. They continued to fight in a solo mode. I came to the realization that he really was quite stubborn. One of the things he did was, in 1950 he decided to set the Central Committee on the correct path. He

sent a letter to the Central Committee. The letter was of anti-Stalinist content. It called for the election of another General Secretary. For doing this, he was given a sentence of ten years for "Trying to fix things".

In the stone quarries, where he was supposed to gain Soviet consciousness, in prison, he skillfully crafted tablets. He did this for the overthrow of the bloody Stalinist regime and the establishment of democracy. He attached signs to cars leaving the zone with stone load. He managed to send out many tablets such as these. He did it in different places, until the Kharkov Institute of Criminology got their hands on it. He got an additional sentence of ten years. Two out of those ten years, he spent in a closed prison. He still didn't give up, returned to the camp and continued his work.

He sent flyers in margarine boxes and cotton mittens, which were made at the camp enterprises. In the middle of our conversation, the warders came over and told him to pack up his things. He stayed calm, looked me in the eye and said the game was still not over. It is still difficult to paint a portrait of this human being. He was firm and believed that new times would come and would bring change. This dedicated freedom fighter was not able to raise his hands and surrender. He was a stubborn man who went by the name of Anton Chapitski.

My impression of being in this camp was not always pleasant. There was a sad episode in that camp life. On Sunday, as usual all non-workers went out to the gate. They were going to see who came out on a date or just to chat with each other. For me going out was to get a breath of fresh air. One day I saw a lot of people had gathered over at the gate. I was told that they were seeing someone off on their last journey. They said that relatives would receive a notice of a death for a loved one. Unfortunately where that person's grave lies, no one will ever know. For the person who had died, a carriage with a closed box appeared. It was accompanied by two soldiers who were escorting it. They were carrying the documents of the deceased person.

When the carriage stopped at the gate a worker from the camp came out. He was a supervisor and was holding a long handled-wooden hammer. He ordered for the gate to be opened and was hurrying the carter to get out with this load as soon as possible. For a prison this was a commonplace for these things to happen. I promised myself to not participate in such events.

People started to disperse and they were cursing anyone who mocked the dead.

It didn't take long for me to become friends with some of the Jewish prisoners. The percentage of Jews in the camp exceeded throughout the entire country. They came up to me and tried to cheer me up. They said that I was lucky, because here the resort was compared to other camps. They told me about a disabled person's camp on the opposite bank of the Volga river p/box 65/4 "Gavrilova Polyana", known as the "Glade of Death". There languished ten to twelve thousand disabled people and only one brigade of healthy funeral prisoners.

In this group, there were about fifty old Jewish people. They were mostly worshippers. I later made contact with them so we could stay connected. In the camp, people were grouped mainly according to whatever nationality they were. The Estonians were an especially group-knit community. They were all opposed to the Soviet regime against the Russians. Many of them, despite the punishment, categorically refused to work so as not to benefit their enemies. They openly expressed their hatred of everything that was Russian and were very militant. Even before my arrival at the camp there was an artist from Tallin. He was among them and at the October celebrations in public he sang the pre-war anthem Estonia. For doing this, he was sent straight from the concert to the prison. He was sentenced to ten years. When Stalin's death had been reported, this artist from Tallin was in the barrack. He was beginning to perform arias from operas. The chief of the regime forbade him to on the time of such a sad event. He didn't care, he kept on singing and shouted: "Hey you brutes! You need to rejoice that your tormentor is already motionless, that you miserable slaves, fear!" Again for this he was punished, by being placed in a punishment cell. From being in this punishment cell he was sent to a hospital and diagnosed with an open form of tuberculosis. He died from tuberculosis.

There were three western groups that were close-knit and friendly. They were Ukrainians, Latvians, and Lithuanians. They all scolded the Jews, who in their opinion, were to blame for all of their troubles. They stated that people such as: Marx, Lenin, Beria, and others were of Jewish descent. Without these kinds of people this regime wouldn't exist. One day, they called me back aside. There was a Russian peasant who said he wasn't an anti-Semite. He knew that Jews suffered just as much in this regime.

Unfortunately for him, when he was in Ashgabat he was arrested. This happened over a sanction of a Jewish prosecutor. Afterwards he was tortured and became unconscious under the guidance of the chief who was a Jewish investigator. Later he was judged again, by a Jewish. So now he was asking, how could he see Jewish people in a positive way?

He didn't believe that this affected the course of the case. His question was: can a simple Russian person treat this situation as an accidental coincidence? Keep in mind that the authorities supported his anti-Semitic sentiment. He let me read the text of the verdict, which confirmed his story. I was ashamed to look him in the eyes. He added to his story that, neither Jews nor the Turkish people had anything to do with this. It was the Russians who were to blame because they were the ones who tolerated this regime. People have become cowards. He looked at me and said: "Not for you Abramych should be ashamed, but as for me a Russian man, that on our land this is all happening."

I was surprised and at the same time happy about what this one person stated. He was an ordinary person that went through hard trials and in the end still remained sane. It is known that ethnic strife would never lead to anything good. When I started working in the camp, I was transferred to the barrack with working prisoners. I felt safer here than where I was placed before. The criminals there were afraid to come near me.

There was a time one of our people responded by force to one of the criminals. Immediately the relationship got heated. They called it, "an honorable" delegation had come from the criminals and to our barracks. Their leader said they had peaceful intentions. He climbed onto a table and started his speech. He stated, "Guys! We are thieves, we are always on the side of the hard workers and not letting anyone get offended by them. There was a misunderstanding and I personally wanted to come forward to you. Our legitimate thief was hit, which judge for yourself, was unheard of. It was at that moment that an elderly Ukrainian who had a long mustache stood up and shouted: "That's right! Where have you heard that they slapped a thief on the face?"

Everyone looked at him and he calmly continued: "In our Ukraine when people catch the thief, they don't beat him. Instead they put his naked ass on a sharp stake so he doesn't suffer for a long time." After that the criminals quickly left our barrack.

Gradually, I got to know all of the prisoners and why they had been placed in this camp. I thought they were all condemned unjustly and none of them committed any kind of crime. They didn't know in advance about the inevitable and serious punishment that they were in the camp for. A lot of these people had been known to have participated in an organized resistance group to the authorities. They were from the western regions and the Baltic states. It was hard to find pre-war convicts in the days of pre-war Russia. Serving their long sentences they didn't believe anyone could come and rescue them, so they learned to keep quiet.

The Western Ukrainians didn't hide their hatred of power. They were hopeful to get their revenge. They were so close together that it was worth offending any of them. As soon as the offender was found they would be punished in a very cruel manner. It had been assumed that they were led by people from the outside. The authorities succeeded in suppressing mass resistance in the west of Ukraine only by evicting a mass amount of people. In the spring of 1954 on the right bank of the Volga there had been an explosion. After the explosion it was referred to as, "Little Concrete Factory". It was believed that Western Ukrainians were behind this explosion.

After this explosion happened, the entire right bank of the Volga was cleared of political prisoners. Responsible facilities now worked construction battalions who were known as "black-footers". In what was known as the "resort" (p / box 65/6) consisted of people who were mostly incapable of working. Regardless, everyone worked except for those who were very old and those who were very sick. Some people who only had one leg worked as they stood on crutches. They would hammer together boxes for margarine. There were some people who only had one arm that worked, on the conveyor belt for a garment factory. These people were known to work hard for eleven hours straight in one day. People who failed to comply with the norm would lose their right for a date, obtaining clothing, and other things.

A lot of these prisoners who had only one leg or one arm to use, had been on the front line soldiers. Many of them lost their health as they tried to defend their homeland. There were three people who had cut off their limbs. The management claimed that they were freeing themselves from overworking. Those who were healthy, held onto their jobs. The criminals used other methods.

During the next recruitment, I worked at night. During the day I went to the barrack medical-part to find out the news. There I saw people writhing from the pain caused by nails and forks that they swallowed. One person was brought in with his belly ripped open. The leaders of the criminals didn't send anywhere. The administration was in need of them. It was from them that the administration was receiving their income.

When in the spring of 1954, the political prisoners wanted to deal with these bandits, troops were brought into the camps. The troops protected the bandits. They were taken out and sent to other camps. The administration was trying to constantly move prisoners from one place to another. Prisoners were moved from one barrack to another, without any rest. This caused additional quarrels and fights for a more convenient place or a wider passage between their beds. This was especially difficult because there was a general inventory that was carried out annually. It is a pity that neither one of the Russian writers didn't describe this type of execution. I think that for those who weren't among the prisoners or those who didn't participate in this process couldn't even imagine it.

I had to attend an event such as this in another camp. The specificity of this event in the camp ended in a really bad way. One day in April it was very cool and rainy outside. The officers in the camp announced they were going to be doing an inventory. The prisoners as usual were woken up around five in the morning. By six in the morning we had to leave the living premises. This meant taking absolutely everything. This included the mattresses used for sleeping. Everything that was due to forgetfulness or weakness of health was abandoned. Someone was subjected to a seizure. Everyone had to pick up everything at once. It was forbidden to return to the premises once any prisoner left for anything they had forgotten. Everyone was very careful about tying up their belongings in the heavy bags.

It was overwhelming for both the young and healthy people as well to carry these bags. It was a pity for every prisoner to throw a rag or even old shoes that were torn. From all the barracks to the gate people were looking at the prisoners as if they were packed animals. Everyone tried to get through the gate as fast as possible. This way they could grab a piece of the "rockery" that was on the wet ground. The political prisoners helped the elderly and those who were disabled to help carry things. They also helped them from

other possible attacks. It wasn't possible to make sure that everything would go smoothly. There was a constant commotion. All sorts of criminals picked up the forgotten or dropped things. The one legged invalids would drag their bags, cursing everything and everyone in the world.

I watched these helpless people struggling to raise their burdens, but it was no use because they lacked strength and willpower. They were completely exhausted, they were rushing out of the gate to find a good place to rest for a minute. They would fall apart and their crying wasn't consolable. The author of these lines sobbed with them. We must pay tribute to the believing Muslims who, in spite of all of that, kept all the commandments of their prophet. They would make all sorts of bed rags on the ground and knelt down to pray. Nobody dared to interfere with them because they didn't want to start any kind of altercation.

I was lucky because I was fast enough to quickly moved to the other side of the gate placing "my property" on a small piece of land. There were times when the whole day people sat on the ground, hiding with anything from the drizzling rain. There was an anticipation of a check or a search. People sat in groups mainly on the basis of ethnicity. I was a witness to all of these things.

I saw for the first time a rite of idolatry that was performed by the Kalmyks. There were checks, searches, and the procedures for registering things that went on late into the night. Some examples of this were, who had two pairs of foot cloths or boots, or if there was only one pair it was confiscated. The search was thorough and it was really hard for the prisoners to hide any of their belongings. People involved in conducting the search were numerous workers from the camp and troops from the ministry of Internal Affairs.

At this time, everything in the housing area had been turned upside down. The prisoners were removed from the housing area during the search. Any objects hidden by prisoners had been taken out and put in different trucks. After the search was over the prisoners were allowed to go back. As they made their way back they could tell that the zone had been plowed by tractors earth, stoves were dismantled, and the prisoners could tell that the items they hid had been spotted and were now gone. These items that were now gone, the prisoners used to protect themselves from criminals.

For the elderly people suffered a lot of grief seeing the destruction of their beloved animals such as cats. Despite the misfortunes the prisoners didn't lose their sense of humor nor the ability to joke to lessen their suffering. The generation of people who believed they were supposed to change the way of life on the entire planet. These people started asking themselves, "where did we come? Where did they take us? What have we achieved? And lastly, what have we become?"

The answer was pretty obvious, the country brought a dire sense of poverty. The people were in absolute lawlessness. Huge zones were built that were fenced with barbed wire and high towers. From these areas of barbed wire high towers prisoners could hear: "Stop, I'm shooting!" The people endured this for many years, and who knows how much more they will have to endure. Until the cup of patience will overflow and the people shake off themselves with this abomination. It was difficult for a small person to foresee when and how it would happen. It was clear that this couldn't be avoided.

Remember that woman, who was in charge of the hospital and the entire sanitary department, Maria Issakovna. She was mentioned earlier in this story where she fainted after hearing that Jews are responsible for all the problems that were going on. During a medical examination she wrote her diagnosis for me: "was suitable for intense physical labor." This was the conclusion for the basis of sending me from what was known as the "resort" camp to one in another location.

When Maria Issakovna was well enough to stand on her own feet after fainting and making decisions again, the first thing she did was get rid of me. She blamed the unpleasant incident that associated her with a Jew like myself. I was making my way to a patient in a ward with a pot of food for him. When she noticed me she threatened to have me moved. I tried to remind her of having human sympathy, but she ignored me.

After that kind of encounter with Maria Issakovna, I saw an opportunity that would not necessarily end well for her. I reminded her and everyone around her that she was an Issakovna. There was no guarantee that she would sooner or later not share my fate. A few days later I was summoned for a

medical examination. I was enrolled in the next camp, as usual, in an unknown direction. I along with others were collected from a gate. The gate was not far from the barrack that was fenced on all sides and similar to the other gates. It was inhabited by old people and left at the directions of the organizations for supervised treatment. The authorities had been right, by the look of the elderly people you were able to understand what torment they had been subjected to. The elderly people were already destined to die; the soviet humane bodies of the KGB take care of them for the rest of their lives.

There were ten of us, political prisoners. We were on the assembled group. Together with me was my friend Fyodor Petrovitch Arkhangelsk. The two of us met in the barracks, our beds were next to each other. We considered each other neighbors. He was a railway worker from the Penza region. He was an honest man with a sincere soul. For two whole years we were closely connected and stayed devoted to each other. When it came to emergencies, we both helped one another. It used to be his powerful fist that would resolve a dispute that I tried to discuss my origins. When on shipment and on the road, he took care of my safety. It happened that I owed my life to him.

Fyodor Petrovitch Arkhangelsk was an old believer. He would only meet Jews in the army. In a naive manner, he came forward to me asking what was the purpose of the authorities, they were inciting people to turn against Jews. He turned to me and said, "Don't be afraid. The Lord is on our side, He will help you as He helped Jacob and Joseph." Usually at this time our friends would come to the gate to see us off. Someone named Aaron Hopman said goodbye to me. Quietly in our ancient language, he says "Until the date in our state of Israel." I think he meant farewell until we see each other in our homeland Israel. In the end, it came true.

We were, according to all the rules, placed at the disposal of the convoy. We were put on a truck and taken to an already familiar shipment. The shipment was known as No. 65./12 in Kuibyshev, and from there, three days later we were sent to the city's railway station. Stolypin wasn't such a big bastard, compared to the current leaders. Stolypin cars weren't any worse than other sleeping cars; inside they were quite comfortable. The trouble was that the couples were designed for six to eight people. Now they had shoved as many

as possible. It felt like there was no breathing space for anyone. Landing took place with the use of fists and blows. The carriage doors closed with great difficulty.

Fortunately for us, we had arrived at the Syzran station. As we started to unload, it started to pour rain. We were ordered to sit down on the ground immediately, although there were solid puddles of water everywhere. We had to wait a long time for the arrival of another local convoy to take us somewhere else. This other place was a Syzran transit also known as a prison that had existed in Russia since time immemorial. Across the Syzran roads led to Siberia. In those distant times, going through Syzran territory wasn't an easy trip for the prisoner to make.

The town was small. The residents went to meet the convicts with dried fish and bread. It looked different than it had before. These groups took place every day or even sometimes more than once a day. Thousands of people were arrested, the prison worked like a mill, according to a given program. First they drove to the bathhouse and things passed frying. At this time, the officers were already looking through the cases and deciding who to send where and when. They always had large orders in construction. They were eager to replenish "Communism" with gratuitous labor.

It is necessary to admit that this whole apparatus worked accurately and intensively. This Syzrian prison occupied a large area. It surrounded a high stone wall with towers. The old buildings were multi-floors that were built in the form of the letter "p". The new buildings differed in their appearance and were scattered throughout the zone. There were buildings for women, men, and prisoners. Some were considered "political" prisoners, some were sentenced for ten years, others for longer than a ten year span. Before my time there, it was common for prisoners to be kept in one or two cells. Now that I was there, the policy was to hold four to eight people in one cell. Here was the USSR the head of all Western Countries.

The bathhouse attendant worked here since 1906 and he studied Soviet methods well. He liked to walk around the camp asking prisoners what they had to exchange for vodka. When the prisoners got their share of vodka, they had to be quiet about using it. For if one of the guards found the vodka on them, they would confiscate the vodka. The vodka would go back to the

attendant of the bathhouse and he would strike another deal with the prisoners. This way the attendant was getting paid not so much in finances, but the prisoners belongings. The attendant knew the whole time that the guards would find vodka on the prisoners breath or in their possessions and it would be taken away from them.

The prisoners were not getting much from all of this, on the one hand they were losing their possessions. On the other hand, they were able to get a drink in stressful times. After sanitization of all was led as predicted by, "the experienced", in so called "menagerie". This was a large crypt, illuminated by one small lamp that was located in a niche. For the whole day they fed us only once in the evening after being placed in the cells. They gave us each a piece of bread with hot water. Fyodor and I had asked to be placed together, but the request was denied. I got stuck with the Lithuanian losers who were known as Kazlauskas to the "fascist" wing of the prison. That same evening we were witnesses to an event to this day I can't explain.

The guard on duty opened the feeder, called us over and began asking strange questions. He asked about the number of prisoners that arrived and how many of us were political. And where we came from and how many people were like us. He gave us an eighth of handmade tobacco and asked what else we needed. The only thing we wanted from him was to find out the next destination that was in store for us. The next day again he appeared with the handmade tobacco and said they would take us not far. Wherever we were going, we would be around others like ourselves. Hearing this bit of news, we felt happy. The next day several hundred people gathered in a group. These people were put on trucks with such density. As a result, after three hours of driving on a bumpy road, no one was able to get to their feet without some help.

Finally I saw a real transit camp. There was a huge coastal plain that was covered with white sand. I saw tall buildings made of granite. Looking at these buildings it seemed there was a plethora of them. These buildings belonged to the Kuneevsky administration of camps. They were listed under p/I 15/14. Those who were considered convicts arrived here day and night. They were brought in by cars, by steamers, and by freight wagons. In the same manner they were transported in different directions. Full arbitrariness

reigned here. It was common for people to get violent and commit murder around here.

From here the workers were quickly distributed by force, but there were also prisoners who had been left here for a long time. These criminals were mothers, who on the instruction of the administration terrorized and robbed the prisoners. In a crowded barrack we sat apart from each other and our Lithuanian, Josek. He played folk melodies on a violin that parted. The people around called us "fascists". They treated us respectfully. Once Bashkir, Sultanov, approached me asking me to write a complaint. At the same time he said how much he loved redheads; so he chose me for this purpose.

It was later that I realized it turned out he had done me a great honor. Sultanov was known to be a famous repeat offender. He had great power in the camp. He had about a dozen different surnames. When I read to him what I wrote, he brought me a bunch of cigarettes along with sweets. He told me that no one would dare to join our group. Soon we were delighted with the arrival of the prisoners from the construction site of the Volgo-Don canal. There were about a hundred of them and they immediately joined us. They all looked strong with a military bearing.

They were mostly former front-line soldiers and even among them were Ukrainian nationalists. One day, a "buyer" came for us with two trucks and we joyfully left this damned zone where tens of thousands of humans were. It was here that these "buyers" completed documents regularly and received the required number of slaves. Along the banks of the big Volga the camp barracks stretched out in a continuous line. There were hundreds of thousands of prisoners who mined by using their hands. They built materials from the ground or deep mines without the use of any tools.

Here people worked in the felling of the forest. In factories for the manufacture of metal structures and concrete. Also at other enterprises supplying all the giant construction projects. The densest network of camps was concentrated around construction sites: power plant buildings, dams, and the bypass channel with its sluices. There on the left bank of the river, was PO BOX 15/15, where they brought us. The first evening that they

found me, I was visited by my friends and other relatives. Among them was a young man. He was a former prisoner of Auschwitz. He was a colonel from Leningrad. He had volunteered to go fight in Palestine. He wanted to participate in the liberation from British Imperialism.

My friends came to support me and brighten up my singularity. The next morning I was enrolled in a team of concrete workers working on construction of locks. The work was well organized. The prisoners themselves were in charge. There were more than eight thousand people living in two story Finnish houses. True life wasn't there, it wasn't a conflict free environment. There were no encounters of theft. The only problem I had was sleeping. My area of sleep was next to some former SS men. They were known to be punishers or policemen. The prisoners were grouped by religious backgrounds.

Despite the prohibitions, people got together and prayed. The most rebellious group were those of Jehovah Witness. They carried out active missionary agitation in camps, wherever they were not. Jehovah Witness as well as other religious practices were banned in the USSR. It was the Jehovah Witness who were especially persecuted because of refusal to serve in the army. They were distinguished by exceptional devotion to each other. Without fear of anything and proud of their ideas, they tried attracting even their pursuers. No matter how surprisingly, in the camp they had printed out literature. They had also published it abroad.

They knew the bible well and read to anyone who was interested in reading chapters of it. I communicated with these honest people and many times helped them hide their literature. The only group in the camp who were not called "fascists" were Chechens because of their hatred towards criminals. Just as much as they hated the Russians, on any occasion they grabbed their daggers. P.O. Box 15/15 contained people who were employed in heavy work. Here everyone was forced to go to work, except for those who are sick. Anyone who didn't want to work without permission was placed in a punishment cell for several days. At five in the morning they woke us up. They wanted us all to be at the gate by six in the morning. Each brigade knew its place and time of departure. At the gates we were quickly counted.

We had to hold onto five people for arms. We stood in long columns. There were a thousand or more of us. We were led along the side of the road. We were suffocating and blinded by the dust. It was for this reason we alternated everyday so that the last row in the column wouldn't turn out to be the same people. On the opposite side of the road heading in the same direction was often led by the military units of the "Black Drivers". We greeted them loudly with the words: "Hello, allies!" They worked at major facilities that prisoners didn't trust. The conditions there were harder than what we were going through. Unlike those known as the "household workers" we were accompanied by a weak convoy.

The attitude towards us was bearable. Apparently the device was not confident in itself. Inside of the working area, the guards didn't monitor the work of the prisoners. There were many dozens of thousands of prisoners. It was a complete nightmare. The criminals were playing cards. More than once did they happen to put someone's life on the line. They drank vodka and took drugs that came from the guards for large sums of money. This money was being looted from the prisoners doing the hard work. These criminals were settling scores for a few things. One of them was for minimal insults and the other was the belongings of another person who was in gangs. Sometimes people were sentenced to death or immediately killed. Sometimes people just simply went missing.

It so happened that these people had died in a horrible way. They were either drowned alive or the perpetrators waited until they were dead. They did this in a mass of concrete. The people who died were walled up in the thick walls of sluices and dams. The brigade I was in had to close up the cavities that were formed after freeing them from human remains. Woe was for the one who for some reason got hold of an enemy there. He kept all of these things in mind and was aware of his surroundings day and night. The biggest reason for many of the victims suffering was the lack of basic safety measures in the workplace. At every step, people were waiting in line awaiting their deaths. This didn't apply to me and my peers as much. The people in my group and myself were careful. We trained and warned our people. We felt it was too much of a risk for any of our people to get hurt. These were things that not even the most notorious criminals could afford.

Simultaneously there was construction going on for building a hydroelectric power station. It was a large housing construction project. All of the work

was done by hand. The main reason for this was, all the mechanisms rusted and turned into scrap metal. The number of houses that went under construction couldn't satisfy the huge number of settlers looking for. Many of those who served their time in prison had no desire to go back to the collective farms. Those prisoners who had the right to live close to the regional center, remained in place and created a new life for themselves. They created dugouts and hammered out what got some housing going. Some of these people managed to build solid houses from the bars. There were those who put log houses on strong ones. They used a sleigh that was bound with iron. This allowed them to change their place of residence.

Numerous families who came from collective farms also settled down here. They gave birth to animals: dogs, chickens, goats, and some even had a cow. When the summer came, there was a shortage of food. This especially applied to bread. Supply camps didn't stop and even received help from home. We didn't feel hungry and at the same time we were taken from work. This was a permanent route. When there was a shortage of bread and the settlers were starving, everyone suffered. This included both the people and the animals. Then they began to ask for bread from us when we were at work. We started to save the pieces of bread and give it away to the children. Soon it was not just the children who began to meet our column. They also ran after the goats, chickens, and the dogs. There were fights over a piece of bread. It was forbidden for us to throw a piece of bread. At the same time it was impossible to refuse the starving children. All of the efforts of the convoy were futile.

This went on for a long time and although it was sad at the same time it was funny to see such a strange accompaniment. At one time there had been a major scandal with a convoy. The convoy threatened to turn into bloodshed. The children were running away from the escorts who used whips to beat the children. Someone shouted: "Stop! Our children are beaten!" All thousandth of the column stopped. The convoy pointed machine guns at us, demanding to continue driving. We answered to the abuse and continued to stand there. Shots rang out and the convoy and the convoy commanded, "Sit down!" The children were scared in all directions. We continued to stand there. We were frightened, even though no one was firing. It was rare for any of these people to look at death in the face.

At the sound of the shooting there was a whole squad that rushed up on motorcycles. This was created for most cases. There were many motorcyclists and all of them were well armed. They reminded me of paratroopers. They surrounded us and pointed their weapons at us. There was a tall and experienced officer who realized that by force one couldn't do it here. He ran along the column and comforted the people. He promised to punish the guards for their cruelty. We obeyed again and got up in line and went to the camp. We walked in silence. Some of them said they called themselves heroes against the children. Instead they decided to scare us with their machine guns, as if we had never seen those before. The people doing the check-ins used the old methods where they didn't engage in open combat.

We didn't have the time to sit down and eat when we discovered that a dozen of our people were taken away to a closed prison. This was the first time I saw mass resistance in the USSR. There was another one that was a more acute case that occurred in late autumn. We were walking home from work when a girl came up to us. She came over to our column and wanted to hand over a bag of gingerbread to my friend. My friend was from my brigade and he was a young Armenian guy. The young girl had been a former prisoner, she was distinguished by courage. There was a soldier who grabbed her and she resisted scratching his face leaving it pretty bloody. The soldier got help from his comrades and they came running. Then they twisted the girl's arms and took her away with them. This meant that she again would have a long prison sentence.

It started to get dark outside. The marching at the head of the column didn't know that the rear part of the columns had taken a pause. Shots rang out and everything stopped. The column stretched for a long distance and the small convoy was powerless. Prisoners and young people approached the escorts and rested their breasts on the barrels of machine guns. They started demanding to let the young girl they had taken go. Someone called to disarm the convoy and release the girl. Suddenly we saw that the girl was running away and no one was following her. It was at this time that large forces of the Ministry of Internal Affairs arrived. There was no point in resting further, we obediently went back to the camp. This case demonstrated the solidarity of the prisoners who, all as one, defended the young Armenian man.

Life in the camp known as 15/15 was not monotonous. People were constantly going out trying to survive. Despite the hard labor, they tried to keep their appearance clean. Many were doing needlework, reading, or painting. A sense of humor never left the prisoners. Sensational light liberalism in relation to us gave hope for a better future. The camp population itself had established freedom of speech and intra-camp democracy. The camp authorities didn't even try to counteract this. They would pester the Georgians in a friendly manner, hinting at their "great" kinsman. Everywhere one looked in the camp there were images of the leader Stalin. They were on the walls or in the work areas. These images were cartoons of Stalin and they came with large inscriptions about him. It stated: "The great luminary of science, the leader of the peoples of the whole world and the torturers of the KGB". People were freely expressing anti-Soviet ideas and anecdotes. Previously none of this was allowed. The fear of being punished and psychological coup disappeared. People joked that in the "big zone," that is, free, they envy our freedom. They envied in many ways.

----- **Part 5** - Group of Revolutionary Marxists -----

Some examples to share here about these things. We no longer had to stand in queues for bread at night. There was a popular anecdote on this topic. Ivan wrote home about the conditions in the camp. In response his mother asked about his younger brother. She wanted the younger brother to have a suitable place for him. The younger brother would have otherwise stayed poor and left on the collective farm. The country started preparing for the "elections" of people's judges. They came over to us and lectured standing in a field. The lecture was titled: "Soviet law and its democratic foundations." More bullying was impossible to come up with. The prisoners were forced to listen to this lecturer in a large hall. The lecturer was going to speak about the superiority of Soviet law, according to which the prisoners present in the hall were sentenced to powerlessness. This large dining hall was full and the lecturer tried with all his might to prove that the life of people within the USSR is the happiest. Also that crime was constantly decreasing.

I asked permission to ask a question. When I was allowed I asked, "Since crime is decreasing, can a respected lecturer inform me of data on a decrease in the number of prisoners in the USSR within the last thirty years? The whole hall stirred and after a moment of silence there was loud

laughter. The lecturer replied that he didn't take statistical data with him. My second question was related to an article in the Soviet newspaper known as: The "Truth" I held in my hands. The title of the article read: "Strengthening Police Brutality In Germany." The article stated that fifteen communists were convicted of anti-state activities in the amount of nine months in prison. I said "how can you compare this to the fact that I am condemned to a sentence of a hundred and twenty months in prison? Is this called humanity or over-brutality?"

Everyone was alert and there was absolute silence that reigned in the hall. The lecturer started shouting in an angry tone. Saying that the verdict of the people's judges can't be compared with the verdict of the bourgeois court. This bourgeois court sentenced the workers for their struggle for freedom. The lecturer asked those present to not pay attention to provocative questions. The crowd shouted that "if they wanted to win such freedom, as we have, then they are out of luck." In the hall a commotion had been stirred up. Someone from behind me tapped me on the shoulder and quietly said: "You, young man shouldn't be so bold as to speak up too frankly. You could be more useful when it comes to a more serious fight." Immediately I understood what this man said to me in his accented Russian language.

Before I had a chance to look back, the man disappeared. I thought that there was still hope to find a thread which would connect me. I was looking for an organized group that would meet my views. I wondered to myself, how does one find it? This worried and haunted me. Slowly I started doing a search. I felt like until then, every day of my life was only hard backbreaking work. I came home from work feeling exhausted, I didn't even have the strength to eat. Sometimes my faithful friend Fedya brought me dinner and forced me to eat. He would also rub my sore legs. It was typical for the middle of the Volga region to have dry days and the sun to be scorching outside. The construction sites lacked drinking water. In the morning it was sultry and hot.

The temperature stayed like that until the evening. Water was brought out once a day, but it was never enough for all of us. There was a temporary bypass channel nearby and it had a body of cool water. There were cases when some escorts allowed us to swim solo. These were really rare chances because the benefactors were very few guards, and passengers from ships. People from the other side of Volga river could see us, practically naked. The naked people had been working in very hot conditions. Some people thought that these kinds of people were inspired by the ideas of building communism

and worked here purely voluntarily. We heard their greetings and slogans that were addressed to us as the members of young Communist party ("Komsomol"). The Komsomol members were the builders of communism. Except the bearded "Komsomol members" answered: "Greetings from fathers from prison!"

Our team consisted of fifty people. Most of these people were immigrants from central Asian republics. They had a foreman, he was a Jewish man from Caucus mountains, Zakhar Khizgiyaev. We called him "The Mountain Jew". He was a respected leader in the Asian community of prisoners that included a lot of Muslims. It is known that our Muslim brothers fought on the front lines without much effort; they quickly gave up or were captured. Many of them served with the Germans in punitive detachments such as Ukraine, Belarus, Yugoslavia, or Greece. They didn't hesitate to kill the partisans and mocked defenseless people for occupied territories. Our Muslim companions turned out to be smarter than us! They worked in a very slow manner. They kept saying that the deadline was long and wouldn't work out in time. In the heat they wound up all sorts of rags around their heads.

During the war the Mountain Jew, Khizgiyaev was taken by Germans as a prisoner. He knew what the Germans were doing with the captured Jews, he pretended to be an Azerbaijani, since he knew their language well. Although, outwardly he didn't differ from them. In France, he managed to escape from captivity and joined the French partisans. After the end of the war he was still in France, he was returned to the rank of senior lieutenant and was appointed commissioner for the repatriation of former prisoners of war. This all happened in the city of Lyon.

When he returned to his homeland he was put in a state prison and later in a camp for maximum term for the service in a foreign army. He was physically strong and a courageous person. Also he was distinguished by a sharp mind. In the brigade everyone had submissively obeyed him. People tried to kill him many times, one can easily tell by the marks on his face and body. He fearlessly appeared in the most dangerous places. He was confident in his strength, his dexterity, and ability to use a dagger.

The people around Khizgiyaev respected him and served him as the Crimean Khan. He had a personal chef and servant who waited on him at all times. He was religious and didn't eat pork. He observed the holidays and only ate matza on Passover. The matza was brought to him by his relatives from

distant Caucasus mountains. Our brigade was respected, this brigade in particular earned more money than others. Under his supervision everyone felt safe. There was a lot of equipment at the construction site. But all of these mechanisms stood idle and rusted. We used so-called hand bulldozers. We pulled funny looking aggregates that were made of boards and logs.

This was an invention of the prisoners themselves. We leveled the ground on canal slopes for concrete placement. It's impossible to imagine that one could see something like this. On a gigantic construction site, which was called "The construction site of communism." It is possible that someday there will be photographs capturing all of this. It was often that we received a construction technician who took pictures of us working. Unfortunately, we never saw these pictures he promised us. He claimed they never came out well. Senior officers and generals frequently visited the facility. These officers and generals were responsible for the use of labor. They saw mechanisms at a construction site. They saw us straining from the weight during the transfer of concrete onto a stretcher. As if this was the construction of the Egyptian pyramids. One of the highly titled chiefs told us that it wasn't so much our work, which was needed, as our re-education. This sign was held over the gates of the camp. This sign read as follows: "Your Labor Leads to Freedom". These same words were on the gates of the fascists camp in Auschwitz. The question arises who learned from whom.

Once instead of this slogan, another slogan was hung. That one read: "Welcome to the state of the flour mill." Everyone got a laugh out of that slogan, they didn't know how to explain it. It turned out that not far from where we were in a village known as Yablonkovo, people expected the arrival of an American agricultural delegation. The authorities had decided to disguise themselves. After some time passed a woman from the village came to our camp to visit her husband. She told us how the village was ready for the arrival of foreigners. For a long time before the arrival of these foreigners the village worked on major repairs of houses. Roofs were covered with slate and slag paths were provided.

The collective farmers were surprised when given new work clothes. In addition to that everyone received some grain. Along with a receipt of how much each person got. The village had a gorgeous look to it. When the guests arrived they noticed the happy Soviet peasants.

After the guests left, the collective farmers were presented with an invoice for repairs. The grain that had been poured in everyone's closet had to be returned. Nevertheless, the collective farmers were pleased with the new roofs that were made of slate.

They were not able to get slated roofs anywhere before. Everyone was laughing, imagining how Americans would come home with the stories about a happy peasant life in the USSR. Still some Americans weren't fooled. They realized it had just been staged. The visits of Americans has caused a lot of controversy and jokes among prisoners.

It is amazing how after hard labor, people were still capable of having an active life. As well as conducting political discussions. Originally, these political conversations had been conducted in secret. At this point, no longer were people afraid. People expressed their thoughts openly and thoroughly. One man had correctly noted something about Russia. He said that Russia had been silent for a painfully long time.

At this point people could express whatever they wanted as long as you have your soul. Freedom of speech was also used by former police officers, anyone in charge of conducting punishment, and the like. The former police officers, those conducting punishment together with fascists recalled their participation in mass shootings and repression. They did this without feeling embarrassed. One of them was nicknamed, "Mishka Kazachok" , stating he didn't understand why he was being held here.

Since he was not political nor did he ever conduct anti-Soviet propaganda. The only thing he admitted to doing was "cleaning" the city of Rovne from Jews and communists. Jews and communists were driven into pits and killed. Many people found this interesting as well as funny, but I didn't. Another bastard claimed he didn't do anything special at all. He only chased naked women and children with a dog in the city area known as Proskurov. He claimed that he quickly put them into pits.

This narrow path ran through a large ravine. In the middle of the path a metal plate was installed and was connected to a high voltage line. These women and children fell from the slab into the ravine. This bastard admitted to helping kill them. At work and in the barracks, I found myself surrounded by such "humane" types. Sleeping next to me there was a simple Ukrainian

man. His name was Ivan Dovbysh and he was from Vinnitsa. He was on the fence about loving or hating Soviet power.

He felt it was beneficial to him to serve the Germans and the former Komsomol member did it very well and with great diligence. He had been convicted for torturing and killing his victims. He beat them to death. He got extremely upset when discovered that one of the victims managed to survive. After that the victim lost his mind. During his trial he saw his executioner and didn't want to go into the hall. However, he still pointed to the offender and showed how Ivan Dovbysh beat him.

Some prisoners tried causing a quarrel between Dovbysh and myself. Sometimes they succeeded. For the prisoners it was amusing, for me it was a sense of relief. Everything I managed to say to Dovbysh involved the others who were like him. As a rule he always answered with jokes that contained the truth. He regretted that I didn't fall into his hands in the times he had weapons on him. Fate had decreed otherwise and we met under other circumstances. We were supposed to work together to help each other defend against dangers. I can say that he honestly fulfilled this duty.

The attitude towards me of all these types, was to some extent friendly. They respected my straight forwardness. No matter how unpleasant it was to them to hear it. It happened a lot that when I opened my bedside table, what I found there was a piece of bacon or anything else edible left there by someone from the brigades. At work people often helped me out if I wasn't able to complete something. People weren't offended by criticism, but my answers to their questions didn't raise doubts in them. Several hundred other people lived next to us. Some of these were Crimean Tatars. They lived in the same premises, they preferred to live in cramped quarters, but without strangers. They didn't know Russian and naturally spoke in Tatarian.

They strictly observed their religious practices and prayed together. They all carried sharp edged weapons with them. Criminals avoided meeting with them. They entertained something every night in their premises, they told me that sometimes dancing was involved. Some of us wondered how after a long hard day of work they were able to arrange these gatherings that went late into the evenings. They used homemade mandolins and bells when playing, singing, and whirling. Sometimes in their songs a person could hear Russian words saying: "She loves me, she waits for me." I didn't know whether to feel sorry for these people who yearned for their loved ones. Or to pity those of them who helped to the Germans. Or have themselves

mercilessly killed. Their behavior in the camp was worthy of respect. They weren't humiliated before the oppressors or before another force. It was impossible to tell about other ethnic groups.

At the beginning of the so-called liberalization and more humane treatment of the prisoners, we were allowed to visit our wives. For this, the goal was to build a small house with separate rooms. We were allowed to stay from the evening until we left for work by five in the morning. It wasn't long before the authorities decided this house could bring considerable income. They turned into a real house of tolerance. They brought in women off the streets who were charged. Anyone who wished were secretly enrolled in the queue of the warders and could visit this lodge for a set fee.

Sometimes these women wouldn't leave the house for days. Those were the women who wanted to get to know men, in the hope of starting a family in the future. Unlike the houses it happened in a completely different way at work sites. There prostitution was a real trade. It was like a monopoly, it was in the hands of the supervisory staff. The supervisory staff couldn't tolerate any kind of competition. The supervisory staff brought prostitutes into the working area. They took away a large part of their earnings. There was the woman who made her way there without their knowledge. She was usually caught and was quickly tried. She would be reported on the radio in the camp bulletin. The camp guards profited from the sales in the work areas. They sold vodka, drugs, and they delivered prostitutes. Many murders took place here and it was often that bodies were found.

Participants in orgies were men and women. On our site an unexpected accident happened to one of our prisoners. His wife came from far away. She wanted to see her husband at night, but unfortunately didn't have the time to get permission first. She snuck into our work area and waited for her husband to arrive. On this particular day, he happened to be at another facility. Suddenly an Armenian prisoner rushed to the woman by himself. He tried to rape her and ended up wounding himself with his knife. She was crying and the other prisoners came running.

After that, the supervisors took the barely living Armenian to the medical unit. The Armenians in the camp were outraged by the behavior of this Armenian. At night several people entered the medical unit and left it only when the rapist was no longer breathing. No one felt pity for him. After that there was another incident that happened. A group of prisoners, who were from the Bendera army, caught a thief. Without hesitation they cut him into pieces. They did this to scare the criminals who committed horrible acts.

Our safety was ensured in a cruel way. For those people who never experienced these acts with bloodshed and murder it was difficult to be in such situations. It's hard to say which season was the hardest for us. In the spring, when the snow melted, many of us got sick. The lack of vitamins and hard work knocked down the strength of many, even the young ones.

We weren't even allowed to part ways with our loved ones as they were dying. Those in charge had a statement about the dying: "They have already freed themselves." In the winter we weren't spared. Come to think of it now, the worst season was the fall. The reason for this was from early October to December it rained constantly. After the rain everything was covered in sleet. Regardless of the weather, we were expected to dig into the ground. Due to the rain we returned soaking late into the evening. We put on our wet clothes as a first layer and then their dry clothes on top. This way at least a little of it would dry up. In reality, this didn't help much and we only had wet clothes to wear.

The barracks weren't heated, people barely spoke due to the cold. They smoked a lot of makhorka and thick tobacco smoke that took up a lot of space. One day as we were returning from work during a heavy rainfall, we saw something out of the corner of our eye. There were young men shivering from the cold in the wasteland. They had just arrived. They were surrounded by a reinforced convoy. These young guys went here voluntarily, on Komsomol vouchers. It was there that they became rapists, robbers, and drug addicts.

For some reason on the way here, they managed without the help of an escort to sell almost all of their clothing. Now they were standing barefoot next to each other. Passing a cigarette filled with a makhorka to each other. As we passed by, they begged us to throw over a piece of bread and makhorka for wrapping. Marching next to me, the Russian peasant Garyaev nudges me with his elbow. He said, "Look Abramich, our future generation. This is all that remains after us. If you manage to get out of this country don't hide the truth. Tell everything that you saw here. Let the whole world know which our fathers won our freedom." I didn't hope to ever live in a free world. It was too surreal.

I answered Gariev as follows: "My dear friend! If a miracle happens and I find myself in the west, I will try and tell everything we have seen and experienced here together. Is there a normal person out there in the free world able to understand and believe this?" At this, Gariev got angry. He started scolding everyone in the world. He was annoyed and said, "Are they fools or do they live on another planet? Wouldn't they believe it if you told them?" Gariev thought and feared how any negative information from the

West would be perceived. He thought the West would see it as propaganda directed against the Soviet building itself.

Winter had come and the Zhiguli mountains were covered in snow. The green shaggy branches of coniferous trees peeped through the snow. For me this was an incredible beauty. Sometimes I managed to stop whatever I was doing to admire this scene. For the prisoners the season of winter was considered bad luck. We were lucky at first; more than two thousand people were sent to work at a tractor repair plant. I was among these people. What a happiness it was to work in a warm environment. Another good thing that I was able to meet free people. They treated us like free people. I milled and turned parts with great pleasure. My high qualifications were appreciated. I was respected by even the friendly sympathetic local workers. We had advantages over them. We were given bread out of line and were fed lunch every day. They had to spend a lot of time buying the food.

Sometimes freelance workers ate from our cauldron. Often we gave them our portions. Unfortunately this lasted only two months. The authorities decided we represented danger to others. We were removed from this plant. When we learned about this, we started to say our goodbyes to those workers we became attached to. I will never forget how an elderly female storekeeper came up to me. She hugged and kissed me making the sign of the cross. She asked: "Lyoshenka, where are they taking you again in such frosts? Do they really have no pity? May the Lord keep you and your children! I will pray for you." With that I saw tears in her eyes. I started crying myself. I felt thrilled and I wasn't able to answer her. I tenderly kissed her hands and said through the tears: Thank you Sofia Andreevna, thank you!"

Nothing could be done, because someone needed to dig trenches under foundations for some new object of the "Building of Communism". Doesn't it sound ridiculous that communism is built by those who hate it? That year, winter started late. It started almost at the end of January. They took the prisoners out to the wasteland and instructed us to build a fence with a barbed wire around it. The only salvation from the frost was to work. Heavy with sledgehammers and wedges, we hollowed out the frozen ground. Everybody tried digging deeper as soon as possible to escape the frosty wind. The ground wouldn't cooperate, it was as hard as granite. Steam rose over the trench from the sweaty bodies. Even in these conditions, prisoners shared jokes with each other.

Someone asked why he was digging into the ground so deeply? His answer was he was looking for his passport that had gone missing ten years before. Another prisoner added onto the joke, to take their time as there were still

fifteen years of excavation ahead of them. And when he would be on it, there would be a little side note. The side note would read: "Grant the right to dig the earth until the end of life a hundred kilometers from the regional centers." Our duty was to heat the convoy that was guarding us. We procured firewood and burned fires. Sometimes we were allowed to warm up by the fire. There was only one prisoner who didn't come to the fire nor did he work. His name was Zakhar and was known as Bashkir. He was convicted as a terrorist. In October during a holiday he had knocked down all of the portraits of the leaders using a stick with a flag. Then he posted it on the main square in the town. He was sentenced to twenty five years for this insult of the members of the Politburo.

Some criminals committed terrible violence against him. At this point he lost his mind, but was recognized as "dangerous as a criminal in society." We felt sorry for him and wanted to help him, but he wouldn't allow anyone to go near him. We just wondered if he wasn't frozen yet.

Once when lunch was brought out to us, we stood in the open air. We ate the lukewarm food and an open car appeared on the horizon. In the vehicle several officers were present. One of our guys jumped out and barred their way. The car stopped; several young officers came out of it. Behind them, was a tall older man with a red face. He was wearing a general's uniform. At that moment one of the prisoners started shouting: "Look at the life of these unhappy people! See how a Russian person suffers! At home our families are starving and freezing!"

The general looked around and said that in his mind everything was okay: everyone was fed, clothed, and given work to do. Families were living on state support. The prisoner didn't calm down and continued to speak out that he is Judas Georgievich Grigoriev and that he protested against the fact that the people are treated like cattle. He added that his family is starving at home. All of this is true and he wants someone to give him an answer.

At this point the general became indignant, quickly got into his car and drove away. People shouted after them: "KGB is filthy! Damn you!" On the radio as usual transmitted arias from operas. I especially liked the words: "Oh give, me, give me my freedom! I will be able to atone for my shame". And in response, Grigoriev shouted: "They will never atone for their shame, but Russia must be saved from them!"

Grigoriev was a monarchist by conviction. He believed that without a tsar, Russia wouldn't have any order. He claimed that he does not need America, because Russia should be his homeland and not a camp zone. The country shouldn't be ruled by just anyone, but Russia itself. I became friendly with

him. In a joking voice he said to me: "Let's go Zhidyara Lyoshka, let's wash each other's backs. I love you." I've met only a few monarchists like Grigoriev.

After the completion of the construction of the Volgo - Don Canal the survived prisoners had arrived to us from the city of Kalach. They told us about a young locksmith who was a welder. He went blind and resigned to his fate, he refused outside help. He always managed to get by on his own.

Once he dressed himself in everything clean. He took his stick and bowler hat, as if he was going to the dining room at lunch. As soon as he left the house, he turned sharply to the left. He went inside of the forbidden zone. He found himself in front of a thorny fence. He could hear a shout: "Stop, I shoot!" He took a step and instantly a shot rang out. He fell on a barbed wire fence and this ended his suffering life.

One winter night, I was awakened and two strong hands grabbed me by the shoulders. I opened my eyes feeling stunned, because it was Viener. He had just arrived. We were both so happy and there was no end to our conversation. He was brought from the U.R. camp. 65/4, which was actually a convict camp.

Prisoners in the mines mined stone for future constructions. The prisoners had dug many kilometers of tunnels going deep in the granite mountain. A rock was used for construction purposes. The tunnels were concreted and adapted for military purposes. There were norms underground. Large trolleys with quarried stone were dragged by the prisoners. Only as strong as Viener could withstand for a while and remain alive. Now we went to work with him in the same column. We saw each other daily. We both looked forward to seeing our wives.

I told him that the KGB had not finished with us yet. I added that in our life anything was bound to happen. We dreamed that someday we would be able to walk together through the streets of Jerusalem. And remember everything that we had experienced here. Viener laughed like a child and said: "Don't you see how people here are dying? And if we survive, who will let you get out of here? I stuck to my strong inner feelings and was vocal about them, that anything could happen to us. Miraculously my predictions came true. We both remembered everything when we met together in the holy land.

There were camps known as Kuneevsky. They were popular because they built the Kuibyshev hydroelectric power station. These camps could also serve as an excellent tool for studying events occurring in Russia and the USSR from the beginning of our century. Here it was possible to obtain

information from primary sources about prominent past party leaders. Such as participants in the storming of the Winter Palace about former secretaries, regions, and territories. There were also participants who were ordinary peasants and workers throughout the vast country. Many of these people had already been in the camps for twenty years or more.

From these participants I happened to learn about Times of Troubles. The period of collectivization and about the notorious activities of the "Union of Atheists." The truth about the construction of the Belomor - canal had come out. I also discovered about the giant transportation of people near the bay Nakhodka and about a big city called Magadan.

Most people didn't have any idea that there exists another kind of life. Only those who had visited Europe during the war. Or new citizens that were born after 1940 had an idea of another life abroad. The brutal dictatorship was successfully introduced in all areas of life. The government spent huge funds on disinformation and washing brains. The population of the country had no idea about free society and human rights. They believed that there is no order in the West.

People in the Russian government truly say whatever they want and choose whomever they want. These anti-Western ideas persisted and were successfully infiltrated into our heads by the KGB. By doing all of this, they were able to turn people into obedient slaves.

In the fall of 1955, I became close to some people younger than myself. We discussed many topics; at the time we were especially worried about the political situation in the country. At the same time we weren't completely sure of each other. We knew that KGB can infiltrate our ranks.

It wasn't long before a certain individual met me apparently on behalf of GRM. He was a young man from the city of Derbent. His name was Mazur David. He had some knowledge of Jewish history, but had a poor idea of the position of Jews in the world. He very interested in this. He was convicted with a group of servicemen from the Orenburg military. These servicemen were sentenced for anti-Soviet agitation. By this time Mazur David already had experienced what life was in the camp. After several meetings, I realized that David associated himself with a group that had a program and charter. He wanted to know if I had such connections and at the time I didn't have any connections. I was only interested in inner-camp life.

In one of the brigades there was a Lithuanian. He was a former student at Kaunas Polytechnic School - Janushkevichus Pranas. He was a serious but very calm individual at twenty years of age. In his spare time, he enjoyed

reading scientific literature on economics, sociology, and philosophy. When people would discuss these topics, he didn't participate. In the winter of 1955, I found myself often working with him. I will remember the time when he once criticized me for my behavior. He said that he believed my experience could be more useful for a lot more serious matters than what I was doing. What I was doing at the time was conducting discussions with semi-literate people. His advice for me was to find a society with definite goals.

I believed there was no such society that would delve into the essence of the Jewish question. He felt that the situation was similar in his home country, Lithuania. People there believed that they can fight alone. But later they understood that only together with other nations they can be successful. First of all, with the Russians, every nation can win back their rights. He said that if I wanted to get serious and down to business, then there would be people who would back me up. It was clear that I had to answer and take on responsibilities. Doing this would limit my freedom of communication with people. Coming to terms with what he said, I understood that there wouldn't be any freedom on the other side of the fence. Besides I didn't know the program of this group. In the end I refrained from answering.

In the Kuneevsky administration of the camps there was only one political camp that we knew of. People were working at different sites and were distant from each other. The winter of 1955 will forever be memorable. The work was intense, the weather was cold, and everyone was fearing for their lives. Clashes resumed with organized gangs of criminals. They were slaughtering our people for no reason. By doing this they demonstrated their heroism. Especially since they were doing it under the influence of drugs. We felt our lives were being held on by a thread and therefore we hoped to survive and save ourselves.

The leaders of our political group decided to give a serious fight to this criminal gang. Our guy worked for the material responsible area. One time he turned down one extortionist request from the criminals. To get revenge the thief broke his arm. An alarm went off and everyone ran to the pre-designated place for workers with their tools. Pranas, Michael and I captured our instruments. We made a dash to the same place where the "front" was planned. In the front we were presented with a picture reminiscent of the uprising of farm laborers in the past century.

We arranged in a semicircle, there were between two to three hundred people. We had shovels, crowbars, and iron pipes at the ready. Some of these people carried on their shoulders sledge hammers and picks. Opposite side from us about a hundred meters away stood the same crowd of

notorious bandits and forcibly driven men. We made a move decidedly towards them. I didn't know about the others, but I thought to myself where am I going with my scrap? Our formation was silent and amicably moving forward.

The noisy crowd in front of us had already half scattered. Suddenly several people came out of this crowd and one of them raised a white flag on a stick. Our foremen who were walking with us ordered us to stop. Anyone carrying the white flags came up. Right away we had them surrendered by a dense ring. They pretended to not understand what was going on; why we were going to fight them.

We didn't respect thieves or their camp laws. Suddenly there was a cry - hit! The leader of the bandits was hurt with a half-pound hammer rose. At the last second, there was a sharp jump. One of our foremen jumped up to the worker and pushed him. After that everyone condemned what the foremen did. Even civilians, the people in charge, said that one gangster's head could be out. The bandits took it for our weakness and began to threaten us even more.

In the summer of 1955, most prisoners in our camp spent time rejoicing. There was a decree of amnesty for all prisoners who deserted or went over to the side of the enemy, served in the SS, punitive troops, and etc. They were all expected to be liberated immediately. This decree didn't apply to those convicted of personal participation in torture or political prisoners. It's hard to imagine what was happening in the back of the barracks.

Everyone who was freed had fun. People kissed, cried, sang, and danced all night. The man I mentioned earlier, Mishka Kozachok was among these people. He no longer boasted about how he killed communists. He moved on and now was only speaking about Jews. He emphasized that people like him are constantly needed by the state.

The amnesty also applied to honest people who were prisoners of war and ordinary citizens who had found themselves in the occupied territory. Anyone who was taken due to an error were disappointed. They began scolding the authorities that such loyal servants (and, probably not bad informers) had been completely forgotten. Only those who stayed calm understood this was natural. We explained these events in our own way. We didn't expect pity from our pursuers. Together with hundreds of daily freed people, the most notorious thugs were participants in numerous murders. They laughed and gloated over the political prisoners. Then there were only a thousand prisoners left in the camp. At that point we were ordered to pack up ourselves along with our belongings. They lined us up in two columns.

One was sent to P.O. 15/16 and the other to P.O 15/3. I said my goodbyes to Viener and my devoted friend Fedya. I was very upset about this. Later I received a letter from Fedya saying how he cared about my fate. He offered to send my family to him, to a village where they would be safe. Fedya didn't forget our common experience in the camp. When he came to the camp he completely lost his voice and to cure his voice, I gave him a little bit of honey that was brought to me by my wife. This wasn't any ordinary honey, but a special kind to maintain one's health. He and I went through many difficulties and stayed close friends.

Our column walked several kilometers with our heavy bags on our backs. Finally we came to a new place. Nobody knew what was awaiting us there. We were placed in a barrack for four hundred people. In the end, we decided to accommodate everything there together. This meant another hundred would join us making it five hundred. No one had to live along with the bandits. With so many people in one area, it got so hot. There was no fresh air to breathe. No one complained, they knew how to endure it. Order in this new location was different than before. There were fifteen thousand people here.

They were terrorized all the time by a small group of bandits who were supported by the administration. We were faced two choices; either obey the orders or to stick to our old rules, despite the consequences. After a long discussion, it was decided we would stick to our old rules and do not follow rules made up by criminals. We represented a well-organized force in a residential area.

In the work area, we got divided into small groups. Our electricians had to use high voltage electric wires to protect us from these uninvited guests. Once a dump truck drove into our site. The chauffeur didn't respond to the question of who came with him. Since there was no doubt that the visitor was a criminal, he was pulled out of a cab and a dozen people beat him, saying: "Such guests shouldn't come and go from here." After that he was thrown into a drainage pit.

They beat him with long pipes until he stopped moving. For some people, it was creepy fun. It's scary to think what atrocity people could have here. This was the reality in the GULAG. In the Autumn of 1955 at night, the criminals fueled the barracks with gasoline and tried to burn us all alive. By chance, at the last minute we managed to escape. After that we refused to go to work. The authorities were forced to accept some measures and send the initiators of the arson from the camp. A friend of mine, Viener, had the idea to study

the Marxist theory. Viener compiled a synopsis of one of the chapters of the book of Marx. Later he found that his notepad had been stolen.

It wasn't long after that someone, named Krotov, invited him to join a secret organization that had allegedly received large funds from abroad. Viener told me about this. It was clearly a provocative proposal. It turned out that this Krovotov was really a provocateur. He was the former Major in KGB. He was caught stealing, he escaped from the camp, but was caught once more. He was convicted under article 58-14. That was how he ended up in the same camp as us. In the past people tried to kill him in the Zlatoust prison for denunciations. He managed to escape. It became known that he had stolen the "Program and Charter member of the organization", which rendered a great service to the authorities.

I had this information from Konstantin Zakharov, a former midshipman of the Black Sea Fleet. By the end of the summer of 1955, I was already involved in some way in a secret organization of the Group of Revolutionary Marxists (GRM). I perceived the organization, as perhaps, a serious Center of resistance of the dictatorial regime. I believed that the head of all the camp cells of the Kuneevsky Administration was a former student of the Kiev Institute, Dotsenko Rostislav. He was not tall, blonde, and with blue eyes. He wore glasses because he had severe myopia.

He was never seen in anyone's company, he was constantly reading something. He never participated in the camp's social life as if it never concerned him. Sometimes he was approached by a tall slender Sukhodolsky Arkady. Every time this happened Rostislav would reluctantly break away from his reading material. He would communicate with Sukhodolsky indifferently. There was no liveliness in Rostislav's character, but in general he gave the impression of an intelligent, restrained, and determined human being.

I never got a chance to communicate with Rostislav. I was surprised that in those conditions this man retained his intelligence and nobility. Sukhodolsky Arkady, was a former officer. He was from Siberia, where his ancestors moved to Poland. He considered himself a Russian, although for him that wasn't an important aspect. Great Russian chauvinism wasn't inherent in him. Speeches for this topic were the reason for his condemnation of ten years. To the freed members of the organization, he gave instructions. And he helped them find contacts with the right people at large. Sukhodolsky concentrated extensive connections where I also related as a member of the organization.

I received letters from different regions of the country. They contained, in a hidden form, complete reports on completed orders coming from members of GRM who lived in different places. There was also a description of the economic situation in the areas where they lived. One of the leaders from the group was a young man. He was a former military man named Pisarev Mikhail. I must admit I wasn't happy with the timing of the program. However, I was attracted by the main goal, which was to overthrow the bloody regime that punished many countries, people, especially the Jews. In order to achieve this goal I was ready to everything.

In 1955, I met with Sukhodolsky. He finally decided to ask me something. He asked about why I joined the Group of Revolutionary Marxists and perform my correspondence duties for that. I strove to participate in active resistance to the government.

I was depressed that all my past activities turned out to be a toy for comparison with what was to be done. Complete and unconditional obedience within certain limits and unquestioning fulfilment instructions - was the main condition for the members of the organization. When I felt like a free bird at the camp, these responsibilities fell on me as a heavy burden. I lost the habit of discipline and obedience and used "camp democracy". I wondered if I could change my lifestyle to be silent and not react to any events. "You have a heavy hat of Monomakh". But I dressed it with anxiety and satisfaction. I still go by the name of Lyosha Abramych. I was listed under the name Kuzmich. I got acquainted with the program and charter. I will cite some items from there. I will cite some items from there. The text of the program took up almost the entire notebook.

"In Russia, in 1917, the regime of the semi-feudal lords and "bourgeoise" was overthrown by the hand of proletarians. According to the laws of development, power should have been transferred to a more progressive system of a bourgeoise character, which, after fulfilling its role, had to give way to the people's power with far-reaching social reforms. Events in Russia disrupted this pattern, when trying to move from feudalism to a socialist system. It wasn't matured economically and politically. The transition wasn't justified.

The proletariat that created this structure in battles found itself deceived. The hope for a life without human exploitation with complete freedom, turned out to be in vain. Proletariat of Russia didn't get rid of exploitation and didn't receive freedom. Instead they got spiritual oppression. The country became a police state with a monstrous apparatus of oppression. The worst situation was with the peasantry, which after forced collectivization, actually ceased to be a class unit in society.

As a result, the country formed a large proletariat, consisting of city dwellers and villages. The revolution in Russia had a huge impact on the International labor movement. Transformation of Russia into a police state led to a split in the labor movement. The brutal terror in Germany and in the USSR in the 1930's, was equally directed at two groups. The working class and the physical elimination of its leaders. The exploitation of its workers in the USSR far exceeded exploitation under the previous regime in this country.

The workers lost their elementary rights. The only weapon the workers had was to strike. As industrial development in countries began, there was a movement of impoverished peasants into cities and workers' settlements. To the peasants the class struggle and workers' solidarity were alien. Transformation of peasants into the mass of workers was used by the authorities to weaken its political activity. After the elimination of the leaders of labor movement, the authorities turned this movement into a controlled one by the security authorities."

The program of the Group of Revolutionary Marxists stated: "The USSR is a policeman state. It is based on privilege layers of officials, state and party apparatus. "On the National question." The national question in the USSR didn't find its solution. It complicated public life in the country. The so-called "voluntary connection" of the Baltic countries and Moldova to the USSR was their obvious capture and enslavement. Population of the captured territories are hostile to occupiers and their orders. "On the peasant question". The peasants, themselves, having received freedom, will decide their ownership on their land. The peasant representation will be restored in the government of the country. The outlined active "industry development program" led to an even greater enslavement of workers in the country. Workers were assigned to factories, as in the days of slavery. The government started an apparatus of violence. It was replenishing the forced labor camps.

Conditions of nationwide resistance were brewing to overthrow the regime that was hostile to the people. The program of the Group of Revolutionary Marxists (GRM) provided for the establishment of truly popular authorities, the power that will free the people from cruel exploitation and lawlessness. One that would create a real opportunity for self-determination for all of the people in the country. This opportunity would call on them to actively participate in the struggle to overthrow the bloody regime and the establishment of a democratic system. The aspirations of the people will be carried out by this new democratic system."

Naturally GRM was calling for a new revolutionary movement. In the USSR, workers and peasants were called to help with the new movement. The aim was to renew the folk tradition of resisting violence. The KGB authorities, in all likelihood, knew what was going on. They understand that there were workers who knew about what happened in the forced labor camps of GULAG.

As a member of the GRM, I began working on improving the system conspiracy. Sukhodolsky paid close attention and developed a communication system between cells and higher rank members. It wasn't easy for the KGB to understand activities going on in the Group of Revolutionary Marxists (GRM). As it turned out later, the authorities created a large operational group of employees of the regional department of the KGB with unlimited powers.

In shape and scope, initiated by the bodies of this KGB operation, one can judge the value that they attached to identifying our secret organization. Despite what they previously knew about the existence of the secret cells in the camps, they probably lacked accurate information. They sent their men to our construction site under the kind of engineering and technical personnel and employees.

Among them were women with good looks. On the same site there was a new worker for technical norms, Pisarev. Arkady Sukhodolsky soon him for some services. A young woman with attractive appearance offered Pisarev her "love". Obviously, Pisarev received permission to be in an intimate relationship with this woman. Pisarev took advantage of this in extraordinary romantic conditions - inside of the wire fencing. Soon, this connection ceased to be a secret. This surprised everyone. "Good services" of technical standardizer, Rava, (the name of this woman may be inaccurate) were also suspicious.

However, they were very tempting and difficult to refuse. Subsequently, it turned out to be a big mistake, which was impossible to fix. In the fall of 1955,

Davyd Mazur was informed that his case had been reviewed. Soon after he should be released. The reason for his release was included in the operational plan of the organization. The reason for this was to identify the activities of the Group of Revolutionary Marxists.

In the camp they had raised some funds for him to make it look passable. On the day of liberation he came to the gate working area to speak to me, but we didn't succeed. He didn't say goodbye, instead he waved his hand to me. I looked after him for a long time and felt happy for him. He had been

an honest man and devoted his time to us. The last note I received from Davyd was, "I deliberately gave myself up to the struggle we had begun. I am ready to start living my own life".

A bit of time passed and letters arrived from various cities he was instructed to visit. They came from Sverdlovsk, Yerevan, and other cities. The content of these letters was on the view that was purely on the household. At that time in our camp, known as number 15, there were few political prisoners. They had been scattered in different departments and placed in separate barracks. It was easier for the authorities to monitor activities of the members of the Group of Revolutionary Marxists (GRM) and their every movement.

(To be continued...)

References:

1. <https://arch2.iofe.center/case/6126> - Group of Revolutionary Marxists (GRM) and the court case