

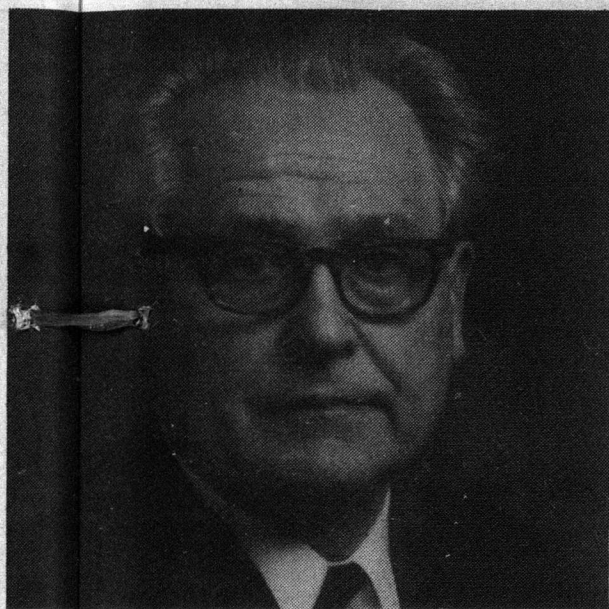
r and oppression *Destruction of a nation*

dependence proved in vain. Those who remained in Ukraine to fight were either exterminated by the Red Army, or killed in the 1950's by the KGB.

Since then, Russian has done everything within its power to destroy the language, culture, and religion of the 50 million Ukrainians. Stalin's torture chambers have since been replaced with "psychiatric hospitals," because it is more effective to destroy one's mind than it is to torture one's body.

Through the highly sophisticated spy network enforced by the KGB, calls for change or freedom can be quickly dissipated. Explained Soviet refugee Igor Mel'chuk, now professor at the University of Montreal: "The Soviet Union... is a huge prison where you can lose your life just for a word whispered to your wife," *Journal*, March 17/84, p. A2).

However, the struggle in Ukraine for freedom has continued to this very day.



Dr. Slavutych

Recently the Gateway interviewed one of about 100 Edmonton citizens who survived the Ukrainian famine, the Russian purges and the Second World War. Professor Yar Slavutych taught Slavic languages at the U of A for the past 23 years. Having lost 3 family members during the man-made famine, having been thrown in jail during the Soviet purges, and having his first wife and child burned alive at the hands of the Nazis, Dr. Slavutych's experiences are incredible to say the least. Even more astonishing, however, is how he managed to survive.

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U of A's Dr. Slavutych Nightmares of Soviet and Nazi atrocities.

INTERVIEW WITH DR. SLAVUTYCH

Three members of your family died during the man-made Ukrainian famine. How was the rest of your family able to survive?

Before I secured the job in the state dairy farm, I joined the underground. Because our families were on the verge of starvation, fifteen of us organized a raid to retrieve one of the huge piles of expropriated grain that was rotting at the railroad station. Fortunately, our group was able to persuade one of the three guards to help us. When the raid took place, the second guard fled while the third - a Russian communist and commanding officer - was slain by a woman after he had already shot and killed several men from our group.

After the ambush I took two sacks of wheat that proved critical to be survival of my family. Such raids were common at that time.

You see, there was resistance to the Moscow-made famine, but we did not have weapons to fight. The resistance that occurred, however, was not well organized because those who could have lead an uprising had been arrested by the communists one or two years before the famine.

Was your life ever threatened during the 1938 purges?

I believe so, yes. When I was 20 years old I was a student at the Pedagogic Institute. While I was there, I read poetry by the renowned Oleksander Oles and novels by Volodymyr Vynnychenko. However, in

Ukraine it was, and still is, a crime even to read such literature by authors living in the free world.

Once a man came up to me and said, "Here is the book by Oleksander Oles you wanted to read. Take it and be quiet." So I took the book and went to a room to read it. Just 15 minutes later I heard some knocking, so I quickly hid the book.

The men came in and asked me if I was reading the book which had been given to me. I told them I had never heard of such a book. They proceeded to make a search of the room, discovered the book, and arrested me for reading "anti-Soviet propaganda," although the book contained nothing more than love lyrics and songs! I realized that I had been tricked by the NKVD (Soviet secret police).

I was taken to a prison cell with 20 others. As it was built to hold just 7, there was standing room only. It was just one of many such rooms in that prison.

Fortunately, my mother was able to liberate me with her "bribe." She baked a duck with plums and macaroni, added some rare spice, and gave it to the regional boss of the NKVD. While laughing wholeheartedly, he could not resist a tasty meal! As a matter of fact, he ate the whole duck himself! "You are a good cook," he told my mother.

My mother begged and begged him to let me go. Finally, the provincial boss ordered my release. I had spent 20 days in the prison cell, and may not be alive today if it were not for my mother's good cooking!

My first wife and child were burned alive by the Nazis!

After the Nazis took control of Ukraine in the 1940's, a number of the mass graves of those who died during the purges were reopened. Did you see any of these graves?

Yes, I saw with my own eyes thousands of uncovered Ukrainian corpses that had been dug up at Vynnytsia. The Soviet NKVD herded over 10,000 anti-Communist Ukrainians to be killed and buried in what became known as the "Vynnytsia Massacre" (see picture attached).

These mass graves were uncovered in the spring of 1943 during the short German occupation of Ukraine.

I also remember seeing the exhibited documents with the names and addresses of those killed. They were recovered from the victim's pockets. A special commission investigated this atrocity and concluded that all the murdered Ukrainians had been arrested in the late 1930's by the Soviet secret police and "disappeared." Having covered these graves with earth, the Russians planted a park and arranged a dancing place for the communist youth!

It was only some four or five years later that the relatives learned about their next of kin. Many mothers, wives, and sisters came to weep over their dear ones.

However, I paid a heavy price for my involvement in the Ukrainian underground. As a commanding officer for our unit, I left one morning to lead an attack to stop one of the trains that was bound for Germany. That morning my wife gave birth to our first child. However, when I returned to my home in the late afternoon after our raid, I discovered that the whole village had been burnt down by the Nazis... including the wives and children of the men in the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. My first wife and three to four hour old child were burned alive by the Nazis!

This same German unit, however, was later destroyed by the Ukrainian underground near the Ukrainian-Byelorussian border. Nevertheless, I hated to see such atrocities committed on both sides.

The NKVD (today's KGB) set up torture and execution chambers in the basements of many churches..."

What happened to the captured German soldiers and Nazis?

The German soldiers were released after we took their weapons. In some cases, we took their uniforms in exchange for civilian clothing. This camouflage allowed us to appear like German soldiers, which helped us to acquire the most modern German weapons stored at the railroad stations. Because the Germans loved to eat eggs, those captured and released by us were given a Ukrainian egg as a present.

Those captured were taken as POW's to a special camp in the forest. After interrogation, most of the Nazis were sentenced to be shot. Nevertheless, I personally did not witness such executions.

What are living conditions like now in Ukraine?

In Ukraine, as in the rest of the Soviet Union, you are not even a human being. You are just like a little wheel in a machine, and must do whatever your master says. The freedom to choose does not exist.

With the exception of the military, police, and the government, the people do not even have enough clothing, footwear and food. Chronic shortages of consumer goods and long line-ups are a part of everyday life. You are simply a slave who owns nothing. As a result, almost everyone has to steal in order to survive. The black market is everywhere.

Many of the people's attitude in the USSR is to be quiet and put up with a minimal living standard because to complain would risk arrest. The Soviet Union continues to exist by exercising terror over the population.

In fact, there are currently thousands of Ukrainians and other non-Russians who were secretly tried and deported to Siberian concentration camps for hard labour. Their only "crime" was that they defended their mother tongues and their national cultures, and spoke against Russianization imposed by the Kremlin.

If a friend says "I don't like communism," you can sell him for a pair of shoes. That is, the KGB will give you an extra pair of shoes or perhaps some furniture, while your "friend" will be arrested and given perhaps 10 years of hard labour for "anti-Soviet propaganda."

Not long ago, the Soviets "improved" their "justice" system. They established many hospitals for "insane" people. The people are quite sane and normal, except that they hate the Soviet system and have the courage to say that.

Such men are arrested, put in psychiatric hospitals, and are given certain medication which eventually destroys their minds. There was a very good poet and intellectual, Ivan Svitlychny, who was saying what I am saying now. He was arrested and put into a Russian psychiatric hospital. He was heavily medicated until he became crippled and perhaps mentally unbalanced.

The Soviet government officials said, "Look, this man is mentally unbalanced as we told you. He is insane." After they gave him so many drugs, they killed his ability to move, to think, or even to realize what is around him. From a sane man, an insane man was created.

Recent Jewish immigrants who have come here from the USSR were in contact with such men and brought this news to us.

What can university students do to prevent something like the Ukrainian holocaust or another World War from ever being repeated?

First of all, we must know the truth about the millions of people massacred by the Russian and Nazi regimes.

Second, we must act to defend, not disarm, Canada's peace and freedom. Unlike the German Nazis, the Soviet communist system which also murdered millions of people is still in power today.

The Russians have not given up their crazy idea of world domination. Those who demonstrate for Western disarmament must realize that such action is more likely to bring war than peace. Disarmament would mean self-destruction because the Russians would invade us to complete their goal of world domination. It is no wonder the Soviet government and local communists are actively pushing for Western disarmament.

However, we can prevent another World War if we are militarily strong. The Kremlin has never attacked a nation that is strong enough to retaliate.

Look at what they are doing in Afghanistan. The Soviets are destroying the whole nation. We should be concerned and speak out more ardently about what's going on there.

We can act through our governments and the United Nations. We should also tie economic trade with human rights. That would give moral support to the 14 enslaved colonies called "republics" which have been forcibly incorporated within the Soviet Union. Countries like Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Armenia, Georgia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and all the other Asian and East European nations should be set free just as they were before Russia invaded them. I am sure the actions I suggested would also be detrimental to further Soviet expansion.