

## CHAPTER 6

# "BLOODY STATISTICS"

### *In the North*

*-On the ruins of the old - we will build the new.  
-With a sword we bring not a sword, but peace  
to the world.*

*Revolutionary Rhetoric*

#### **Part D**

We know about the "civil war" fighting in the North from numerous sources--the frightening rumors about the death squads of the CheKa Special Department under Kedrov in Vologda and other locations. The death squads were a new form of the expeditionary work of the CheKa Special Department.<sup>1</sup> Kedrov, who is presently committed to a mental institution, became notorious for his extraordinary cruelty. The local newspapers sometimes published thoroughly sanitized reports of those death expeditions, conveying very limited information about their nature.<sup>2</sup> Those reports listed hundreds of the arrested, dozens of executed by firing squad in the course of "administrative operations" and "military-revolutionary" head counts. Sometimes the information was very muffled: for example, that 1000 officers have been "re-evaluated." Many hostages were taken and sent to the capital during the Voronezh field expeditions of the CheKa Special Department under Kedrov.

Kedrov proceeded in a similar fashion in the North. He was replaced by the quite notorious Eydook, who executed the officers himself, but, compared to Kedrov, appeared as a humanitarian. Arkhangelsk "Izvestiya" published from time to time the lists of those whom Kedrov's death squad had sentenced to execution. Here is, for example, a list from November 2 of 36 people, among whom were peasants, co-op managers, and a former member of Parliament, Isupov from Vyborg. We have another list of 34 names of the executed by firing squad for "active counter-

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1 A. P. Axelrod writes in his book "Das wirtschaftliche Ergebnis des Bolschewismus in Russland." as an eyewitness, about a rail train-based death squad, that shuttled daily between Vologda and Cherepovets. It was composed mainly of sailors and Latvian riflemen. Acting on a tip or on their own accord, the "train" stopped at random stations and carried out searches, confiscations, arrests, and executions (p. 21).

2 For example. "Voronezh Izvestiya" No. 170, 12 August 1919.

revolutionary activity during the Chaikov and Miller government"; and finally a third one of 22 executed, including Arkhangelsk Mayor Alexandrov, *Northern Morning* editor Leonov, the manager of a post office, a booking agent, a store clerk, and many others. A reporter for *The Latest News*<sup>3</sup> testified that "there were cases of the execution by firing squad of 12 - 16 year old boys and girls".

Arkhangelsk is called "city of the dead." An informed reporter for *Voice of Russia*,<sup>4</sup> who visited the city in April 1920, "soon after the departure of the British troops" writes: "A massacre started after a pompous burial of empty red coffins. The city moaned under the burden of terror all Summer. I do not have the exact figure of the killed, but I know that all 800 officers to whom Miller's government suggested they should take a train towards London along the Murmansk railway (but tried to escape on an icebreaker instead) were all executed first."

The most numerous executions were carried out near Kholmogory. A reporter for *Revolutionary Russia* states: "September was a month of red terror in Kholmogory. More than 2000 were executed by firing squad. Mostly peasants and Cossacks from the South. There are practically no intelligent anymore, there are none left" (No. 7). Who were the "peasants and Cossacks from the South?" Those were the people transported from the South and imprisoned in the concentration camps of the North. CheKa loved to sentence people to the concentration camps of the Arkhangelsk region: "It meant that the prisoner was sentenced to a slow death in some horrible detention center." Later, we will learn more about what those camps were like. Those who are sent there never return, for they will be executed in a majority of cases. Often it was a method of delayed execution.<sup>5</sup>

Throughout Don, Kuban, Crimea and in Turkmenia they used the same method. A registration or re-registration was being announced for the former officers or some other categories, who served the "whites." Not expecting anything bad, people express their loyalty and show up, where they are arrested dressed as they are, immediately crowded into the rail cars and sent to Arkhangelsk camps. Wearing nothing but the Summer clothes from Kuban or Crimea, with no blanket, piece of soap, or a change of underwear, dirty, infested with lice, they arrive in the Northern climate of Arkhangelsk with only a slim chance of getting clean underwear and warm clothes, let alone of notifying their families of their location.

The same method was used in St. Petersburg on the commanders of the Baltic Navy. These were people who did not emigrate, did not hide, did not join (white armies under Generals) Yudenich, Kolchak or Denikin. All that time they obviously honestly and loyally served, as they were not

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3 8 November 1920

4 25 March 1922

5 "CheKa" almanac. "Sketches of Life In Prison." p. 119 - 120

arrested once in all the years of Bolshevik government. A re-registration was announced 22 August 1921, which was not unusual and implemented not for the first time. Each of them, dressed as they were, appeared at the registration point on the way home from work. Over 300 were arrested. Each of them was asked to wait in a room. They waited in that room for two days, then they were taken outside, surrounded with a huge guard, sent on foot to a train station, packed into cattle cars, and transported in various directions, - without a word of explanation- to the prisons of Orel, Vologda, Yaroslavl and other cities.

It was impossible to find out the location of any officers sent to the North according to the official publications. CheKa operatives frankly said in private conversations that none of them were alive.

Here is a scene from Kedrov's slaughter in the North recorded by *Will of Russia*<sup>6</sup>: Kedrov gathered 1200 officers from Arkhangelsk, locked them on a barge near Kholmogory and opened machine gun fire - "almost 600 were killed!" Do you not believe? Does it seem impossible, cynical and senseless? But that was the typical fate of anyone sent to the Kholmogory concentration camp.<sup>7</sup> There simply was no such camp before May 1921, and inmates arriving before then were mass executed by firing squad about 5 miles away from Kholmogory instead. An undercover investigator, who clandestinely traveled to the North to learn what was happening to the inmates, was told by the residents of the nearby villages that 8000 had been killed thus far. And perhaps that calamity was actually humane, for when the Kholmogory camp actually came into being, it earned the nickname, "Camp of Death." Entering the Kholmogory camp as a prisoner meant slow death in an atmosphere of complete humiliation and violence.

Human consciousness in the 20th Century refuses to believe the famous events of the French revolution were being replayed in the drownings off the barges. But not even rumors informed us of those barges. This is the second time we are mentioning them. We will mention a third publication of those events somewhat later: the methods remained the same. Vladimir Voytinsky wrote in his article, used as a foreword to the book "The 12 Condemned" (a trial of the SR party in Moscow): "The Bolsheviks sent 600 prisoners from several St. Petersburg prisons to Kronstadt in 1921; the barge was scuttled at a deep spot between St. Petersburg and Kronstadt: all the prisoners drowned, but one, who swam to the Finnish shore."<sup>8</sup>

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6 1920, No. 14.

7 "They disrobe, kill in the barges and drown in sea" - says "Voice of Russia" reporter, quoted above.

8 *The 12 Condemned*, p. 25.