

Chapter V

The Mad House

By the time Zuka Ossinin had finished his classes in May of 1917, the new government, failing in everything else, had succeeded marvelously in “deepening the revolution” so much so, it drowned all order, security and law. Arranging to return home, Zuka had, as usual, made a reservation for the sleeping car, and arrived at the station in the best of spirits. There he got the shock of his young life. He had never expected the idea of “Russians, as the most free people in the world” would be carried so far. The station was crammed with deserters going home. As “free people” they considered themselves at liberty to leave the army at will. Also, as a “free people,” they considered themselves free to take any seat, in any car, in any train at any time, even the roofs of cars, thus solving the shortage in accommodations. The bourgeoisie had to pay for tickets but had no seats. It seemed that the new socialistic government considered this normal in this new, socialistic and free Russian state. Somehow Zuka managed to squeeze himself into his intended compartment, and was entertained during his long journey with demonstrations and conversations about the “blood-sucking capitalists.”

The monotony of the long and trying day in the car was suddenly interrupted by a series of frantic blasts from the engine, then the train stopped. Irrate soldiers rushed out immediately, mostly through the windows, to find out the reason for the delay. On the same track, facing theirs, stood another train. Both engines hissed and emitted white clouds of steam. In the next town a mob of impatient deserters had simply appropriated a train, manned the engine and started down the wrong track in the wrong direction. No one had bothered to inform the other stations along the route. Oh well, was not Russia a free country? What happens when two trains travel toward one another? They meet. Now, one had to backup, but which train was to proceed and which was to go back? This was decided not by railway officials, but by the strength of forces in each train. Luckily Zuka’s train with superior forces prevailed, although not without a few damaged jaws and missing teeth among combatants.

Bougoulma, being a small provincial town, was always behind in receiving the news. It was unaware of the “deepening revolution” so law and order still existed there. Life among the Tartars had not changed in centuries. The Tartars did not accept the Revolution so Moscow’s troubles were of little concern. Zuka was pleased to find his brother Matthew home on leave. They made a striking pair as they roamed the village.

Both had inherited the elusive handsomeness of the Ossinin family. Zuka was of a slighter build, wiry, lithe and agile. He favored fast sports, saber fencing, ice hockey and was an accomplished horseman. This came to him naturally. He had mischievous eyes, an oval nearly girlish chin, and sweet smiling lips. He had the habit of sleeping doubled up, knees to chin, with blankets all over him and only his nose visible. Matthew asked him why he slept this way and Zuka responded with a question:

Zuka and Matthew Belov in Bougoulma



“How did our far away ancestors, the Vikings, sleep in their Dragon Ships?”

When he was really angry, his eyes became dreamy and his face polite. At such times he was about as sweet and harmless as a disturbed rattlesnake.

Matthew was tall, over six feet, strong, with eagle-round eyes and magnificent black curls. He had a fitting figure for a military uniform. He was slightly arrogant and often too sure of himself. He did not care much for sports. He was good at them but not enthusiastic. Women found him fascinating.

Zuka knew very little about Matthew’s activities with the Litovskt Guard after the czar abdicated so Matthew brought him up to date. As it happened, he had been on guard duty at the Duma where all the new ministers were to be received with pomp. Each was supposed to be

saluted. Matthew particularly disliked a certain Victor Chernov, a member of the much despised party of the Social Revolutionists and a blackguard. Chernov was small, short and viperous. So Matthew simply ignored him. Chernov blustered “Lieutenant! Why do not salute me? I am Minister of Agriculture, Victor Chernov!” Matthew Ossinin, held his head high and looked down at him. “I know. That is why I am not saluting.”

What followed is hard to describe. Purple with rage, Chernov complained to his brother socialist, the minister of war. Matthew Ossinin was called in and interrogated immediately by the minister of war himself. Very calmly and nonchalantly Matthew Ossinin answered “If Russia was the freest country in the world and Russians the freest people, then I am free to salute or not salute, as I choose.” As a consequence, Matthew was relieved of his duty for the day. Officers could play this new game as well as civilians. It cut both ways.

Mother worried about her sons with particular concern for Zuka. She did not want him to return to Moscow High School. She wanted him to avoid potential mischief and so she decided to send him to her father, Grandfather Ben, who lived in Sochi, a summer resort on the Black Sea.

Grandfather Ben, sold all his considerable properties in Kazan and retired to Sochi in the interest of a better and warmer climate to pursue his hobby, gardening. He had been a life-long friend of grandfather Matthew Ossinin. In fact, grandfather Matthew had married grandfather

Ben's sister, Neonila Ossinin. Upon her death, he married Catherine Konobeiev of Penza. Zuka's mother was the eldest child of the second marriage. Although Grandfather Ben stood five feet five inches tall and weighed only about ninety pounds, he could easily match old barin Matthew in character and will. Grandpa Ben was stingy whereas grandfather Matthew was much more accommodating.

On the Volga

The journey from Bougoulma to Sochi was quite an affair. One had to go first by rail to Simbrisk, then by river-boat to Tzaritsyn (now Volgograd); from there to Taupee by rail, and from Taupee to Sochi by motor-boat. The Volga river boats were magnificent, and the last word in comfort, luxury and pleasure. A summer vacation on the Volga river was one of the favorites in Imperial Russia. Several river boat lines competed by advertising the best service. All in all, it took about a week to go from Bougoulma to Sochi.

Zuka was lucky as he was able to make a reservation on the most modern and newest steamer, the "Zarya," (formerly the "Empress Alexandra.") First class accommodations were a dream; all glass, brass and nickel - *non plu ultra*. On this trip, as usual, the younger set got acquainted and friendships were formed quickly.

The trip began well. Zuka was sitting in the dining room next to a glass wall, looking idly at another smaller boat moored alongside the "Zarya" when he spotted his friend Barin Roman von Pfeld. Roman was much older than Zuka. He was dressed in a uniform and had recently been called to active duty. He was a Lieutenant in the Infantry. Zuka ran to the other boat to invite his friend to have dinner with him on the "Zarya." The deck was crowded with flower girls selling the flowers of the season. Roman collected all the flowers and made as many bouquets as possible and then presented them to all the ladies on board, both young and old. Roman was gay, charming and irresistible and his gesture created a merry atmosphere among the passengers.

When his boat cast off, he tossed the last bunch of flowers playfully at Zuka. Zuka caught the bouquet and tossed it back, but missed. Someone else caught it and threw it to Zuka. Soon a "*batallie de fleurs*" was in full swing along both decks. It was a gay moment, and good while it lasted but unfortunately, it did not last long. The deepening revolution was felt on the boat as it had been on the trip to Bougoulma. As with the trains, the deck of the "Zarya" was crowded with deserters. For the time being, the mob was keeping clear of first class. The deserters strolled aimlessly about the decks but caused no trouble. One of the young people suggested their group stay out on deck all night so they could watch the sunrise over the Volga. They all agreed it would be a very poetic way to spend the night.

Madame Kollontay

Madame Kollontay, the widow of a well known Russian General, happened to be among

the passengers. She was once a member of Petrograd's elite. Now she was a rising star in Lenin's Social Democratic Party of Bolsheviks whose members were anti-militarists and wanted to end Russia's part in the war immediately "without any annexations or contributions" that would be profitable to Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm. Madame Kollontay tried desperately to look years younger than she was and often acted like a spoiled child. She had her secretary at her side, a young man of unmistakable Georgian ancestry, bejewelled, over perfumed and over dressed. There was not the slightest doubt about their relationship as they occupied the same cabin. They kept apart from the others and no one tried to befriend them.

As night covered the Volga with its soft fragrant darkness, most of the crowds deserted the decks. The romantic couples in Zuka's crowd settled into deck chairs to snuggle and wait for a new, glorious dawn. The couples could hear but not see one another. Nata, also a student, cuddled cozily with Zuka on a big deck chair and soon they were oblivious to the world. Nat's lips were soft, eager and responsive; her body warm and yielding. Stars reflected in the river and were absorbed in her eyes. The quiet of the night was disturbed only by the steps of a lonely officer who, unable to obtain accommodations, had to walk the deck. This Captain was a tired man, not in a romantic mood. He was annoyed by the couples just as the couples were annoyed at him. Taking pity at his plight, Zuka stood up and approached the officer offering him the key to his cabin. He gladly accepted as he badly needed rest. Nata and Zuka were consumed in the haunting spell of the glorious night. There was no moon, only bright, twinkling stars above. How wonderful it was to look into Natasha's eyes, to feel her lips and then with a sweeping glance notice millions of stars, far away. Were there countless worlds where other lips were meeting at that same moment just as tenderly and sweetly?

Attempted Rape

Suddenly a sharp, soul-shattering scream pierced the beauty of the night. It swelled and swelled. Zuka jumped to his feet and along with Natasha, rushed to the first class section. The door of a cabin from which the screams came flew open. Out dashed the disheveled figure of Madame Kollontay's young secretary. He rushed down the corridor toward his own cabin but at that same moment the door of Zuka's cabin opened and out stepped a very angry officer. He grabbed the secretary and held him firmly as other curious passengers arrived on the scene and began crowding around. A hysterical, beautiful sobbing woman appeared on the threshold.

Holding him by the collar and the seat of his pants, the officer walked the secretary into the salon. Soon the big room was packed to capacity. Madame Kollontay elbowed her way to the front and stood side by side with the victim of the attempted rape. Without makeup and with her dull, thin hair in paper curlers, she was a sight to behold. Upon arrival of the Captain the story unfolded.

The over dressed and over sexed secretary had noted the pretty solitary young lady among the passengers. She was expensively dressed, rather reserved and unquestionably of good financial and social position. The wily secretary, although opposed in principle to "dirty

capitalists,” could still appreciate clean and charming young capitalist ladies. Being a communist, he had chosen a communistic approach. He identified the lady’s cabin and waited until all was quiet. The night being warm, the lady locked her door, opened the cabin window onto the deck and lowered the blinds. She climbed into bed and was soon fast asleep. Under cover of darkness, the crafty secretary deserted the unappetizing presence of Madame Kollontay, and deftly raised the blinds and sneaked silently into the young lady’s cabin. It seemed he was quite accustomed to entering through windows, and not only for romantic purposes.

The young woman was fast asleep when she was suddenly awakened by a choking kiss. Her body was pressed hard into the bed and she felt the exploring hands of her attacker. For a second she was too stunned by the attack to do anything. Then, with the impulse inherited from a thousand generations of women, she freed her mouth and began to scream. She did a good job of it scaring “Romeo” out of his wits. He jumped off the bed and headed for the door forgetting it was locked. He bumped into it painfully filling the air with his curses. When at last the door opened, he dashed down the hall only to be grabbed by the angry officer. The poor frightened woman also ran out of the cabin dressed as she was. Expensive nightgowns were never made to conceal anything. Whether for the lady’s sake or for Zukas,’ Natasha ran into her cabin and grabbed a robe then wrapped the sobbing woman in it. Madame Kolontay looked old and wilted as she stood beside the pretty young girl. She looked around the room filled mostly with leering soldiers.

“Comrades, what you have seen here is nothing more than dirty provocation on the part of the dirty bourgeoisie to compromise the proletariat.” She could talk well and she talked hard. She drew a vivid picture of a poor proletarian mother with sick children, toiling in her cold room sewing the night gown for this woman of luxury and idleness. She painted her rival black, as black as possible. The soldiers grew restless. Under the spell of her voice they were ready to turn against the young woman. Madame Kolontay cleverly reversed the issue laying blame upon the bewildered young woman. The attempted rape was quickly forgotten. A new political focus had made a “blood-sucking vampire” out of an innocent victim of the secretary’s lust.

It would be hard to say how this incident would have ended if a strong hand had not pushed the men aside and a solid bear of a man confronted the speaker. He was a corporal. In contrast to the others his uniform was neat and tidy. His facial features seemed to have been chopped with a dull axe from one mighty block of oak.. The corporal stood before her excellency, not in rigid military attitude, but informally and at ease. He looked at her and said:

“Shut up you old bitch.” His voice was normal, not raised, but it filled the room. His words produced a colossal effect. Madame Kolontay’s eyes bulged in surprise, then flamed with passion. She raised her hand to slap the face of this presumptuous soldier. All her life she had been used to salutes from the ranks. It was hard to take such an insult but she did. With super human effort she checked herself. Then lowered her raised hand and clasped the neckline of her gown tightening it around her throat.

“Yes, your excellency,” said the soldier emphasizing her title and rank “you are an old jealous bitch. What does that damn bourgeoisie have to do with this pimp of yours trying to squeeze this woman. Who in hell wants your tripe? Get out of here, you whore!”

The soldier did not mince words. He called a spade a spade. Addressing the secretary he said “You’re a dirty rat. Today you want this bourgeois girl. Tomorrow you might want my girl, or some other man’s girl.” Then with his left hand he took the ‘rat’ by his shirt front and with one mighty swing of the other hand slapped his face with his open palm. The rat’s head jerked violently to the right. With a back swing, he hit the secretary with the back of his hand and the man passed out. The crowd roared with laughter. The tragedy turned into a comedy. Madame Kolontay stood looking at him, eyes filled with hate. It hurt her to be ridiculed in front of her equals and it hurt terribly to be insulted in the presence of these soldiers. But to be humiliated before her pretty young rival—that hurt most damnably. The crowd gradually began to disperse cracking a few good-natured jokes as they departed. The show was over.

Zuka watched the whole scene with consternation. How was it possible that such an incident could take place in the first class salon of a luxury river boat? How could a corporal use such language in front of ladies and assume the role of judge, normally the role of the Captain. But most incredible was that the incident was taken for granted and regarded as common place.

A small group gathered around the Captain who stood in the corner of the salon. “I am glad,” the captain said “that this episode ended quickly.” The last trip we had another communist on board. For no reason at all, he stirred up the soldiers against a wealthy merchant from Saratov and they threw him overboard.”

What happened then?” someone asked.

The captain shrugged his shoulders. “It was dark.. The Volga is very broad and the man could hardly swim. We could have rescued him but the soldiers would not let us, so he drowned. This time, thanks to the corporal, all ended well. I know of another case where the captain tried to oppose a mob of soldiers. They simply threw him and his officers overboard and took over the ship. Without qualified naval personnel they naturally grounded the ship and had to abandon it.”

“Is it still there? Hasn’t the government taken some action?” someone queried.

“Of course it is still there. The government intervene? Don’t make me laugh.”roared the Captain as he turned and left the salon.

The romantic aura of the night had been completely spoiled. Natasha remained with the badly shaken young woman. Zuka left the salon and went out on the dimly lit deck. He was too upset to sleep. What was going on in Russia? It seemed as if the whole nation had gone insane. It had become a mad house.

Ivan Koulakov

“Well, my young friend, it seems you are not sleepy either,” came a voice from a dark corner of the deck. Startled, Zuka turned and in the shadows discerned a man sitting in a deep deck chair wrapped in a dark blanket. Drawing closer Zuka recognized a fellow passenger. He was a man about sixty years of age, maybe older. It was hard to guess. The man had dark, deep set eyes, coarse hair once raven black, but now greying heavily. The face was deeply traced with wrinkles, the nose prominent and the lips a single straight line. He had a cruel and merciless mouth. Something hinted at a dash of gypsy blood in him; an atmosphere of authority and power radiated from him. He was a man used to pushing people around but he was not a Barin. He was neither loveable nor chummy. Zuka pulled up a deck chair and sat next to him.

“I think a scene such as the one we just witnessed is enough to make one lose sleep.” the man said. Zuka agreed, but waited for him to take the lead in the conversation.

“After all, even the best horse, without reins but with plenty of whipping is likely to run wild.” Changing the subject he inquired “Are you from Moscow, or are you of the Volga River?”

“I am both,” Zuka answered, surprised by the keenness of the observation. “I am Volga river born and Moscow educated.”

“I can see by your uniform you attend a Moscow High School. What interests me is your use of expressions peculiar to the Volga district. I am a Volga River man myself born and raised in Samara.”

“Oh, so we are neighbors,” Zuka said animatedly. “I am of Samara myself.”

“And what is your name, my young friend?”

“I am Sergei Ossinin.”

“An Ossinin.” The man stared into the night. “Any relation to Matthew Ossinin?”

“Well,” Zuka laughed, “I am a brother of one and a grandson of another.”

“So, you are a grandson of old Barin Matthew Ossinin,” muttered the man, concentrating his gaze on the dark surface of the river. The pause was a long one. It seemed that the stranger had gone back into the past and was living it over again.

“So you are old Matthew Ossinin’s grandson,” he repeated once again.

“Did you know my grand father?” Zuka asked, always ready to hear something about the grand old man.

“Yes,” he said. “It was a long time ago. I am Ivan Koulakov.”

To Zuka that name meant something big, something sinister, and perhaps even evil. In any case, it implied big money. “Did you know my grand father well?”

“No, I met him only once in my life. It was about thirty years ago. I am not ashamed to say that I was an orphan, a street urchin, and in my youth I had done many things outside the law. But I was moving up in the world. I was somebody in Samara thirty years ago.”

“ I met your grandfather shortly after the liberation of the serfs. It was easy to make money then with nearly all of the country gentry going under. Loans, timber, real estate were my meat. But I overstepped myself. I hugged too big a bear and was desperately in need of about 10,000 rubles in cash. That was a great deal of money at the time considering a good servant could be hired for twelve rubles a year. I had used up all my credit. Everyone would have liked to see the upstart, Ivan Koulakov, go under. I was at the end of my rope when I learned that old Barin Matthew Ossinin had come to town. I had heard about him. Who had not? He was the only man to help me out.” Koulakov shivered as if he were cold, wrapping himself closer in the blanket.

“Well, I decided to take a chance and go see him. I went first to his side-kick, Stephan. He listened to me and then went to the Barin. Shortly he returned. The Barin would see me. He received me standing by the window. He would not offer me a seat, for he was too big of a man to humiliate me by receiving me sitting down. I stood near the window.”

”Well, Ivan Koulakov, what do you want of me?” he inquired.

I told him everything. I hid nothing.

“So you want 10,000 rubles and you promise to give them back within one year, if you are still alive. You have no security?”

“That is right.” I said.

“I have heard something of you, Ivan Koulakov. If you, once a street waif, come to me for 10,000 rubles you must have accomplished something in your life. Normally waifs stay in the gutter. If you had come to ask for one hundred rubles I would have kicked you out, but you want 10,000 without security?”

“Yes, Barin!” He looked at me and I felt uneasy.

“I know little about you but I can judge for myself. I would not put it past you Koulakov, to turn a dead man out of his coffin and take it for his debts. Even the proverbial widow with a dozen children would have no chance with you. You will take any advantage. But I perceive one

thing you will not do: go back on your word, otherwise you would have stayed in the gutter. You promise to return the money within one year if you are still alive?" he asked.

"Yes." I responded.

He looked at me again and I stood naked before him.

"I will give you an open letter to the manager of the bank."

"I thank you ever so much, but what will be the interest on it?"

He turned away from me and looked through the window.

"Whom did you come to, Barin Matthew Ossinin or a usurer?"

"To Barin Matthew Ossinin."

"What did you come for, help or a loan?"

"For help."

"Well, Matthew Ossinin does not sell his help. I do not care what kind of a man you are, good or bad; you came for help and you've got it. If you default I will not take you to court. I will go after you myself, and when I finish with you there won't be much left of Ivan Koulakov."

"I knew he would too." The man in the deck chair was visibly stirred by these memories. "In about three months I pushed the deal through and could repay all the money. That was when I faced the greatest temptation in my life. I had nine months to go, and I could have done something with the 10,000 rubles, but I had promised to return them when this particular deal was completed. It had not been a loan but help. Barin Matthew Ossinin knew me better than I knew myself. I could not go back on my word. It hurt, but I paid him back."

"So you are the grandson of old Matthew Ossinin," he said for the third time.

"You do not look like a chip off the old block. One thing I am glad about is that Matthew Ossinin cannot see what is going on in Russia today. I do not like it myself, but I think neither you nor I can do anything about it."

Zuka Ossinin did not like the man, but against his will he was fascinated by the magnetic power Koulakov emanated.

"What is going on in Russia is all due to human nature and the nature of nations."

“Who would expect,” Zuka interjected “such cruelty from the Christ loving Russian people? Where did this cruelty come from? It is not in the true nature of Russians.”

“My dear young friend,” Koulakov turned facing his companion “that is where you are wrong. All nations, as all women, are alike. If you want to know real naked, human nature, without a fig leaf so to speak; if you want to understand the human heart, you have to be a money lender. Women are human. They may cheat a doctor or a priest, or try to play act before them, but not a usurer. They open their souls to me. There is nothing a woman would not do to borrow money - for herself or the man she sleeps with. Nations, like women, are different in dress only. Remove the fine gowns and you see her as she is in the bath house. All the glamour is gone and even a simple country wench might look better than a fine court lady. No woman has more than any other to offer a man nor can she give more. It is all in our imaginations. The same is true of nations.”

Zuka had the impression that the old man had never talked so freely in his entire life. Probably he was talking not to young Sergei Ossinin, but to his grandfather, the old Matthew Ossinin. Probably he had wanted to have a heart to heart talk with the old Barin all his life.

“A nation, like a women, prefers a gigolo to a good honest husband. Take Helen of Troy for instance. Whom did she choose? Why did she jilt a noble husband like Menelaus for a worthless heel like Paris? And Agamemon, that shining man of honor, the greatest of heroes, was he not poisoned by his wife because of a cheap lover? It would take hours to list all the women who cheated good men for worthless rats. Do you know who is the most faithful of all women my young friend? The common whore! She is really faithful to her pimp. She gives herself for money and brings it all to him. He treats her roughly and still she clings to him. The same thing can be said of nations, Russia included. It is self-delusion to think otherwise. Take history for example: Have not nations for centuries kicked out their heroes and saviors and followed the silver tongued wastrels like our Sasha Kerensky? Nations, like women, do not want good noble kind hands, they want strong ones. No matter if they be cruel, still they must be strong.”

Zuka had an impish impulse to kick him

“You seem to know so much about women. I assume you have been married for a long time?”

Koulakov stopped for a second and in the darkness he seemed to smile bitterly.

“No I have never married. I know women too well. I have seen too many women in the ‘bath house,’ so to speak. I have several children just the same.”

The darkness around the deck began to fade. The sky became light pink as the shadows receded.

“What will happen to Russia now? We have neither strong nor noble hands. You know how popular Mr. Kerensky is!” Zuka tried to tease the old man who was looking at the brightening horizon. He laughed softly.

“Sasha Kerensky? What a joke of a prime minister he is! We have history to teach us about the past and there is nothing new under the sun. History divides men into two groups: the clever ones who learn by their own mistakes and the other, the foolish, who must learn by repeating them. But there is another group sometimes called diplomats or politicians. They never learn. They simply cannot. Sasha Kerensky is a brilliant representative of this last group. Like any other nation, Russia can be swept off her feet for a while by a glib silver tongue. But like the rest of his kind, Sasha will get a kick in the seat of his pants. Kerensky is not stupid; he understands he is doomed. He is buying time at a tremendous cost to Russia! Mark my words, Russia will soon have a strong hand.”

“But we have no man of strong character in the imperial family that could take control of the country now.” Zuka responded.

“I am not talking about the Romanovs. They are washed up for good. History teaches us that no dynasty, once it has lost power, has ever made a come back.. We seem to have no one left but the communists and Lenin.” Kouklakov lamented.

Zuka was indignant at the very mention of the party that sent Lenin to Russia in a sealed train from their German headquarters in Berlin.

“I am not sure who will finally get the upper hand in Russia, Lenin or General Kornilov. I would bet on General Kornilov; at least he has the Russian Army behind him, while Lenin has denied his own class and continues to collaborate with the Germans.” Koulakov noted.

The first bright rays of the new sun were climbing into the blue sky. The shadows were all gone now. Zuka was tired after the sleepless night. Koulakov got up from his deck chair, threw the blanket off his shoulders and looked intently at Zuka.

“No, you are not a chip off the old block, but we need you. Maybe from your slim loins another oak tree will sprout. The blood of your race flows in you. I hope you will be worthy of it.” He laid a surprisingly strong hand on Zuka’s shoulder. “Anyhow, if you are ever in trouble, let me know. Ivan Koulakov will help you. Goodbye, my friend!” He turned and walked off along the deck, entered the lounge, and was gone from Ossinin’s life but not from his mind.

Zuka sprawled wearily in the deck chair and watched the glorious sunrise over the Volga alone. The sun was radiant; the mighty Volga River, beautiful. Early gulls were swooping over the water. Life could be beautiful too, but it was not, and Zuka could do nothing about it. His head nodded, then mercifully slumber brushed aside the worries of the day.

While he dreamt peacefully in the deck chair, Zuka could not have anticipated the future in his wildest nightmare: Madame Kolontay would again become an Excellency when she was appointed ambassador from the U.S.S.R. to Sweden. What would happen to her secretary? Ossinin would never know. Perhaps he, too, became an ambassador of the U.S.S.R. Later on, one of it's ambassadors did answer the description of this particular communist party member.