THE WHITE RUSSIAN ARMY IN EXILE 1920–1941

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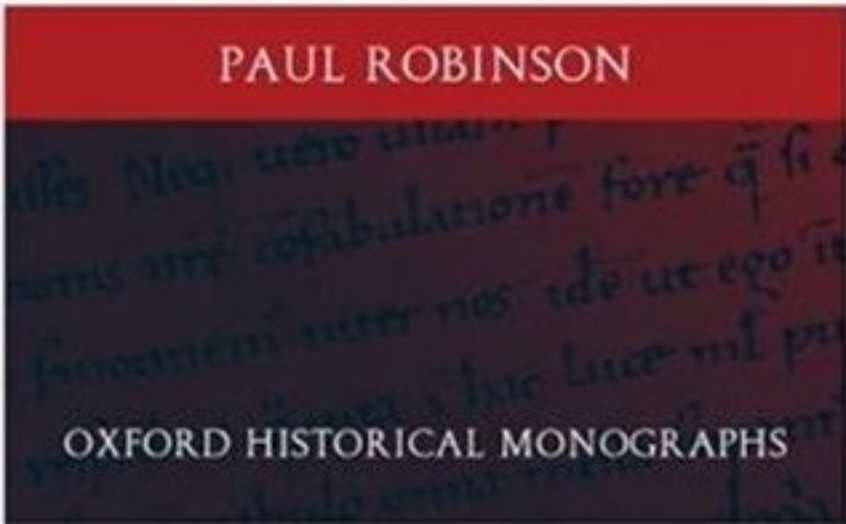

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PREFACE

In the aftermath of the Russian Revolution and Civil War, hundreds of thousands of Russians fled their country and went into exile, where they formed their own society, commonly known as 'Russia Abroad'. Scholarly interest in Russia Abroad has expanded rapidly in recent years, and scholars have published numerous works outlining the cultural achievements of Russian émigrés in the period between the two world wars. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, many historians have also shifted the focus of their studies away from the victors of the Revolution and Civil War—the Bolsheviks—and onto those who opposed them, especially the White armies who fought the Red Army in a bloody civil war from 1917 to 1920.

To date, studies of the inter-war Russian emigration have focused on the social, intellectual, and cultural élites of Russia Abroad. There are good reasons for this. The achievements of émigré artists, composers, and writers, such as Chagall, Rachmaninov, and Nabokov were remarkable. On the other hand, the emphasis placed on the lives and works of these famous few masks the fact that the great majority of Russian émigrés were neither artists nor intellectuals. Most of them were soldiers. More than anything else, Russia Abroad was a society of military men, and the largest organizations within it were military ones. The history of these soldiers and their associations is by and large unwritten, and indeed when I began my research on the White armies I had no idea that segments of these armies continued to exist in exile for years after the end of the Civil War. The more that I then learned about the armies in exile, the more fascinated I became by the untold story of White soldiers waiting all around the world for the day when they could strike back against the Soviets. That day never came, but along the way White military organizations played a central role in the life of the Russian emigration, furnished substantial humanitarian aid to tens of thousands of displaced Russian soldiers, and provided invaluable support to Russian culture abroad.

This book aims to provide a better understanding of the White movement and to fill a gap in the history of the Russian emigration from the end of the Civil War to the beginning of the Second World War. I hope that it will interest not only those wanting to know more about the inner workings of Russia Abroad, but also a wider audience interested in the dramatic events of the Russian Revolution and Civil War, and the remarkable

human story of the White Army in exile. History tends to be written not only by, but also about, the victors, but to understand the past one needs to understand not only the victors, but also the losers, which in the case of Russia were the Whites.

In the years since the Soviet Union collapsed, Russian historians have shed their communist aversion to the Whites, and adopted a far more positive attitude towards them, sometimes to the point of uncritical adulation. By contrast, many Western historians still emphasize the supposedly 'reactionary' nature of the White movement, its anti-Semitism, corruption, and brutality. These interpretations are based almost entirely on studies of events during the Civil War of 1917–20. As this book shows, however, the White armies maintained a shadowy existence for many years after the Civil War, and an examination of their activities in this period suggests that the most negative interpretations of the White movement need to be modified. A review of the post-war documentation casts light backwards on what the Whites really believed and fought for, and provides little to suggest that the Whites offered a more terrifying prospect for Russia than the Reds.

The main sources of information for this book are the archives of émigré military organizations, especially the army of Lieutenant General Baron Petr Nikolaevich Wrangel, and the largest émigré veterans' association, the *Russkii Obshche-Voinskii Soiuz* (ROVS: Russian General Military Union). These archives are enormous in scale, consisting of hundreds of boxes of official circulars, orders, reports, and information bulletins, as well as thousands of letters and some diaries and memoirs. Émigré organizations also published large numbers of journals, newspapers, and pamphlets, which provide a valuable supplement to the archival materials. Together, these sources allow one to create a comprehensive picture of the activities of the White Army in exile and of the attitudes and beliefs of its members.

In the absence of any external funding, I could never have carried out the research for this book without the financial assistance provided by my wife, Chione, and my parents, Michael and Ann Robinson, all of whom also aided me by reading and commenting on drafts of my work. I am greatly indebted to them. I also wish to thank Murray and Lucy Adams of New York City, and Luke and Ginny Vania of Menlo Park, California, and Paul Dryden of Oxford, who kindly accommodated me in their homes for prolonged periods, making my research trips much more comfortable than they otherwise would have been. My thanks also to Janet Clark and Vahe Aslanian for helping me to arrange these stays.

On the academic side, Dr Catherine Andreyev of Christ Church, Oxford, played an invaluable role in enabling this book to see the light of day, first as supervisor of the doctoral thesis on which it is based, and second as sub-editor for Oxford University Press. I am also extremely indebted to all those who aided me at the numerous libraries in Britain, France, the United States, Russia, and Canada, where my far-reaching searches for new materials took me. Among them I would like to single out Richard Davies of the Leeds Russian Archive, whose help, friendship, and encouragement were a great source of support. I am also particularly grateful to Dr Paul Mogren of the Marriott Library at the University of Utah, who came in one Saturday to open up the library's rare book section just for me. Thanks are also due to Aleksandr Ivanovich Ushakov, who pointed me in the right direction in the archives in Moscow, and to Baron Alexis Wrangel and Count Nikita Cheremeteff for giving me access to the unpublished memoirs of General P. N. Shatilov.

All dates in this book are New Style.

Transliterations of Russian names follow the Library of Congress system, except in instances where an alternative transliteration is already in general use—thus *Wrangel* not *Vrangel'*.

P. F. R.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BAR	Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University
BAR, ROVS	Bakhmeteff Archive, ROVS Collection
COC	Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre, Château de Vincennes, Paris: Archive of the Corps d'Occupation de Constantinople
ENA	Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre, Château de Vincennes, Paris: Archive of the État-Major National des Armées
GARF	Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii
HIA	Hoover Institute Archives
HIA, WA	Hoover Institute Archives, P. N. Wrangel Archive

I

Civil War

In a quiet corner of the Ste Geneviève-des-Bois cemetery on the southern edge of Paris lie the graves of the Alekseevskii Infantry Regiment, a unit of the White Russian Volunteer Army. In the centre of their ordered, well-maintained plot is a tall monument capped with a stone cross dedicated to the commander of the regiment, Colonel S. A. Matsylev. Around it the graves of Matsylev's junior officers are laid out in a tidy square. Typical of them is the resting-place of Second Lieutenant Georgii Ivanovich Kononovich, whose tombstone stands near the junction of two gravelled footpaths. Kononovich was just seventeen when the Bolshevik revolution plunged Russia into civil war, and barely into his twenties when the Alekseevskii regiment ceased to exist as a recognizable military unit, some time in 1922 or 1923. Scores of his comrades lie near him, their tombstones marked with their ranks and regimental badges, just as in war cemeteries all over Europe. But the man buried under the inscription 'Peace To The Remains Of The Warrior Georgii' died in 1983. He had been a civilian for sixty years when he was laid to rest with his regimental comrades and with his military rank inscribed on his tombstone.

His grave and those around it testify to the unwavering determination of thousands of Russian military émigrés who left Russia in the aftermath of the Civil War to maintain their identities as soldiers, even after decades of life in exile. As one such veteran wrote in 1939, 'The officer-émigré is above all an officer, and will remain so, regardless of all the misfortunes of refugee life.'[1] This book examines this phenomenon during the period between the Civil War and World War Two. It studies how and why Russians maintained their military organization in exile, what they believed in, and what they hoped to achieve.

The first of the White armies came into being in December 1917 in response to the chaos which had engulfed Russia in that year. Three years beforehand, in August 1914, thousands of Russians had thronged into the squares of their capital, St Petersburg, to celebrate the start of what became the First World War. They expected a quick and easy victory, but

[1] S. Nozhin, 'Ofitsery-emigranty i budushchaia Rossiia', *Signal*, 55 (22 Sept. 1939), 1.

were to be gravely disappointed. By 1917 millions of Russians had been killed and wounded, the Russian Army had suffered a series of terrible defeats at the hands of Germany, and enthusiasm for the war had vanished. The Russian economy was unable to cope with the strains of modern war. Prices rose dramatically, and the cities were short of food. In February 1917 hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets of the capital, now renamed Petrograd, to protest against the government of Tsar Nicholas II. From his military command train in southern Russia the Tsar ordered his troops onto the streets to quell the crowds, but the soldiers instead turned their guns on their officers. One small detachment under Colonel A. P. Kutepov of the Preobrazhenskii Guards Regiment (an officer who will play a prominent part in this book) tried to resist what had now become a revolution, but it was soon overwhelmed, and Kutepov was fortunate to be able to slip away alive after his troops deserted him.[2] The Tsar raced up to the capital by train, hoping that the army would march on the city and restore his authority. But the generals now believed that only a change of government could restore order and allow the army to prosecute the war successfully, and instead of helping Nicholas they persuaded him to abdicate.

A Provisional Government led by a liberal politician, Prince G. E. L'vov, took over. A few months later L'vov resigned, and his place was taken by the socialist Aleksandr Kerenskii, who was in turn overthrown in November 1917 by Vladimir Lenin's Bolshevik party. The Bolsheviks were ruthless revolutionaries, determined to establish a communist dictatorship in Russia, and unwilling to share power with anyone. Opponents of Bolshevik rule raised the standard of rebellion almost immediately, and formed the White armies to oust Lenin's government. A bloody civil war followed, and after a year and half of struggle, by the middle of 1919 the Whites seemed to be on the brink of victory. Unfortunately for them, their position was much weaker than it appeared, and a few months later the White armies were in retreat everywhere. A year later, in November 1920, the last major White force was driven out of Russia, and although some scattered fighting continued for several months, the Civil War was effectively over.[3] Bolshevism was triumphant, and the surviving Whites fled abroad.

At that point the Whites disappear from most history books. If most people have any knowledge of their fate it is in the form of anecdotes of

[2] *Kutepov: sbornik statei* (Paris, 1934), 159–78.

[3] For histories of the Russian Civil War, see: W. Bruce Lincoln, *Red Victory: A History of the Russian Civil War* (Reading, 1991); R. Luckett, *The White Generals: An Account of the White Movement and the Russian Civil War* (London, 1987); E. Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War* (Boston, 1987); G. Stewart, *The White Armies of Russia* (New York, 1933). For historiographical surveys of writings on the White armies see G. A. Bordiugov, A. I. Ushakov, and V. Iu Churakov, *Beloe delo: ideologiia, osnovy, regimy vlasti* (Moscow, 1998), and V. T. Tormozov, *Beloe dvizhenie v grazhdanskoi voine: 80 let izucheniia* (Moscow, 1998).

generals driving taxis in Paris. But the White armies did not vanish when they went into exile. This book details what happened to them, and examines the significance of their actions.

The White movement was born in the broad valley of the Don river in southern Russia, a rich agricultural region which once marked the border of the Russian Empire. This was the homeland of the Don Cossacks. The Cossacks were originally runaway serfs who fled to the edge of the empire and adopted an independent, freebooting existence. The Russian state eventually brought the Cossacks under control, and they were given land along Russia's southern frontier in return for defending that frontier against outsiders. Divided into thirteen 'Hosts', each led by an 'Ataman', Cossacks were allowed some political autonomy, but had to keep a horse and weapons ready at all times so that they could go to war whenever the Tsar called on them. The Cossacks regarded themselves as somewhat distinct from other Russians, and zealously guarded their autonomy.

In November 1917 the Don Cossacks refused to accept the authority of the Bolshevik government. Under their protection, the 165,000 square kilometres of the Don region became a safe haven for other opponents of the new regime. Within two months, two former commanders-in-chief of the Russian Army, Generals Mikhail Alekseev and Lavr Kornilov, had made their way to the Don. The son of a peasant, short, bespectacled, and unassuming, Alekseev resembled a librarian more than a general. By contrast Kornilov, also of peasant stock but a Siberian of Mongolian appearance, was very much the fighting general. The two men arrived in the Don region in December 1917, and announced the formation of a Volunteer Army, whose purpose was to inspire Russians everywhere to rise up and overthrow the Bolsheviks. Alekseev took responsibility for the administration of the army and Kornilov for military operations.

Initially the Volunteer Army was a tiny force of only 4,000 men, most of whom were either former officers or teenage schoolboys. By 1919 it had grown into an army of over 100,000, the most powerful threat to Lenin's new regime.[4] Together, the Volunteers and similar anti-Bolshevik

[4] For the history of the Volunteer Army, see: P. Kenez, *Civil War in South Russia, 1918* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1971), and P. Kenez, *Civil War in South Russia, 1919–1920* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1977); G. A. Brinkley, *The Volunteer Army and the Allied Intervention in South Russia, 1917–1921* (Notre Dame, Ind., 1966); V. P. Fediuk, *Belye: anti-bol'shevistskoe dvizhenie na iuge Rossii, 1917–1918* (Moscow, 1996); A. I. Ushakov and V. P. Fediuk, *Belyi iug, noiabr' 1919-noiabr' 1920* (Moscow, 1997).

groups in other parts of the country were known as 'Whites'. Nobody knows why they acquired this title, but it was probably meant to contrast them with the Bolshevik 'Reds'. As Bolshevik power faltered in 1918, new White armies sprang up in other regions of Russia. The most significant of these were the armies of Admiral Aleksandr Kolchak in Siberia, of Lieutenant General Evgenii Miller in the far north of Russia, and of General-of-Infantry Nikolai Iudenich in Estonia. Together these constituted the so-called 'White movement'.

Nearly one half of all White soldiers were Cossacks, and a disproportionate percentage of the rest were officers. The original Volunteer Army contained only a handful of private soldiers, and even senior officers had to serve in the ranks as ordinary infantrymen. Apart from schoolboys, only a few non-officers volunteered to join the Whites. Likewise, although some civilians helped the Whites in political and administrative matters, the White movement was always firmly under the control of officers, and its aims and ideals reflected those of military men. As the liberal politician N. N. L'vov put it, 'The White movement is above all a military campaign, a struggle for the army.'[5]

Relations between the two halves of the White forces, the Cossacks and the Volunteer officers, were never good. Although the Cossacks made up half of the Whites' strength, their numbers did not translate into political and military authority within the movement. White leadership stayed firmly in the hands of Imperial officers. These officers came from a wide variety of social backgrounds. Even before the First World War a shortage of officers had meant that the army had commissioned many children from poor families, and the armed forces became something of a ladder for social mobility. This process was accelerated by the World War, in which casualties among officers were enormous and many men of modest social origins were commissioned to replace those who had been killed in battle. Almost no officers possessed any property. Even before the war, only 15 per cent of generals even owned a house, let alone any land.[6] Thus the officer corps could not be said to have risen up against the Bolsheviks because of their decision to nationalize industry and redistribute land. Many officers welcomed the original February revolution which overthrew the Tsar and only rebelled when the Bolsheviks overthrew the Provisional Government and took power for themselves.

[5] N. N. L'vov, *Beloe dvizhenie* (Belgrade, 1924), 7.

[6] A. K. Wildman, *The End of the Russian Imperial Army: The Old Army and the Soldiers' Revolt* (Princeton, 1980), 23.

The Cossacks, by contrast, were fighting for their farms and their traditional privileges, which they feared the Bolsheviks would take away. They only reluctantly accepted the Volunteers' leadership, and had little interest in what went on outside their home region, so as a result did not like to fight beyond its boundaries. Later, when defeat and exile separated them from their native land, their will to continue the struggle diminished markedly. In addition, they were hard to discipline, and suspected the officer class of harbouring reactionary political opinions.[7]

In fact, the White leaders were not as reactionary as the Cossacks feared, not so much because they held progressive political opinions as because they had almost no political opinions at all. Most Imperial officers had started their military careers as young boys at cadet schools and spent nearly their whole lives in the army. Their education was extremely narrow, and entirely avoided political matters, with the result that they tended to display 'political ineptitude' and 'naiveté',[8] which left them ill-prepared for the tasks they faced in a time of civil war. They tended to view their struggle with the Bolsheviks as being purely military and when pressed on political matters would insist that solutions to these could not be pre-determined and would have to be postponed until a freely elected national parliament, known as the Constituent Assembly, could be called. This policy became known as 'non-predetermination', and it is often argued that this refusal to tackle political issues meant that the Whites were unable to win support from the Russian population as a whole, and that this fatally undermined their military effort.[9]

Non-predetermination is sometimes described as a pretext to put off right-wing reforms until officers felt strong enough to impose them.[10] Some historians claim that although White officers considered themselves to be above parties, in reality they wanted to restore the old Imperial system, and belonged to the 'reactionary right'.[11] In fact, non-predetermination was an unavoidable consequence of the deep divisions within the White movement, which made it desirable to put political matters to one side, rather than risk a split by taking a firm stance on any

[7] Kenez, *Civil War in South Russia, 1919–1920*, 110–37.

[8] O. Ray, 'The Imperial Russian Army Officer', *Political Science Quarterly*, 76/4 (Dec. 1961), 584, 590; P. Kenez, 'The Ideology of the White Movement', *Soviet Studies*, 32/1 (Jan. 1980), 67.

[9] e.g., O. Figes, *A People's Tragedy: The Russian Revolution, 1891–1924* (London, 1996), 587–88.

[10] Kenez, 'The Ideology of the White Movement', 74. J. Smele, *Civil War in Siberia: The Anti-Bolshevik Government of Admiral Kolchak, 1918–1920* (Cambridge, 1996), 185.

[11] G. Swain, *The Origins of the Russian Civil War* (London, 1972), 246.

issue. There was little ideological unity among the White officers. Most probably had authoritarian tendencies, but others were democrats. Many were monarchists, but others were republicans.[12] The song of one of the foremost units of the Volunteer Army, the Kornilov Shock Regiment, even contained the line 'The Tsar is not our idol'. Divisions among the Whites were generational as well as political. The pre-war Imperial officers formed a distinct group from the younger officers commissioned in the First World War. During the Civil War some officers reached very high rank while still very young. Notably, Major Generals Turkul, Skoblin, Manstein, and Kharzhevskii were still all in their twenties when the war ended. These young firebrands sometimes felt that the high ideals of their movement justified the most unscrupulous behaviour. The older, pre-war officers were on the whole more conservative, restrained, and disciplined.

The defeat of the Whites in the Civil War is often blamed on the political and administrative failures of the White generals. Too many of them allowed corruption and ill-discipline to run rife among their troops, and displayed an inability to check abuses by their men against the civilian population. They themselves, however, believed that they had lost not because of their own failings, but because they had been betrayed and abandoned by everyone else. The Russian masses had stood to one side, the intelligentsia had proved that they were incapable of anything other than talk, and the Whites' French and British allies had provided only desultory assistance which in some instances was counterproductive.

White officers came to feel that they were alone in the world, surrounded by enemies. They were therefore prone to believe in conspiracy theories, with the result that anti-Semitism and a belief in the existence of Masonic plots were prevalent among them. The historian Peter Kenez concludes that anti-Semitism became a substitute for any real ideology, and that it was 'not an accidental and minor element in the ideology of the officers, but an essential centre piece'.[13] While there is some truth to this idea, it rather exaggerates the real influence of anti-Semitism. The White armies were too diverse, and contained too many strands of belief for their ideology to be reduced to one factor. In any case, the real cause of resentment of the Bolsheviks was not their

[12] For a discussion of the various views of the nature of the White movement, see V. N. Samus, S. V. Ustinkin, and P. S. Matsur, *Beloe dvizhenie i otechestvennyi ofitserskii korpus v gody grazhdanskoi voiny v Rossii* (Nizhnii Novgorod, 1995).

[13] Kenez, 'The Ideology of the White Movement', 80. See also, P. Kenez, 'Pogroms and White Ideology in the Russian Civil War', in J. D. Klier and S. Lambroza (eds), *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History* (Cambridge, 1992), 293–313.

supposed Jewishness, but their attitude towards the army. The Whites hated the revolution because it had destroyed the army, and hated the destruction of the army because they saw it as the destruction of Russia.

In the aftermath of the February revolution which brought the Provisional Government to power, authority in the army rapidly broke down. Committees of soldiers were set up, which officers had to consult before they made important decisions. Soldiers refused to fight, and many deserted. Bolshevik agitators spread out among the troops and incited them to disobey their officers and lay down their weapons. In some instances officers were lynched, their epaulettes fixed to their shoulders with nails, and their bodies mutilated. When the Bolsheviks took power in October 1917, the army fell apart entirely. Huge numbers of troops simply dropped their weapons and went home. Officers were stripped of what little authority they had left. The Commander-in-Chief, General Dukhonin, was bayoneted to death.[14]

The collapse of the army left Russia defenceless against Germany. In March 1918, the Bolsheviks signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany, taking Russia out of the First World War and surrendering vast amounts of Russian land. In the eyes of many White officers, the Bolsheviks' deliberately undermining the army, and then humiliating Russia at Brest-Litovsk was their greatest sin. For many officers, 'The Army [was] Russia.'[15] Their rebellion against Soviet rule was a reaction against what the Bolsheviks had done to the army.

Many officers, who knew little else, saw military values as the essence of virtue. As the historian Leonid Heretz has noted, White officers were not so much interested in political, economic, or social structures as in spiritual values such as duty, honour, and religion—'The Whites perceived the world and their struggle in religious categories, and it is in the context of religion that their mentality can best be explained.'[16] For instance, it is said of one of the leading White officers, General Denikin, that 'his values seem to have been in the spiritual realm . . . Denikin was concerned for material events only in so far as they affected Russia's spiritual destiny.'[17]

[14] The collapse of the Russian Army is described in Wildman, *The End of the Russian Imperial Army*, Vols 1 and 2.

[15] N. Ross, *Vrangel' v Krymu* (Frankfurt, 1982), 295. Also GARF, f. 5881, o. 1, d. 255 (V. N. Varnek, *Golos Armii*).

[16] L. Heretz, 'The Psychology of the White Movement', in V. N. Brovkin (ed.), *The Bolsheviks in Russian Society: The Revolution and Civil Wars* (New Haven, 1997), 105–22.

[17] W. G. Rosenberg, *A. I. Denikin and the Anti-Bolshevik Movement in South Russia* (Amherst, Mass., 1961), 38.

Possibly the most important of the values cherished by the Whites was honour. Honour is a concept which tends to be dismissed as meaningless by people today, but which held a powerful sway over peoples' minds just a hundred years ago. Russia before the First World War was a hierarchical society in which questions of status and prestige mattered greatly, and defence of one's honour was a social necessity. This was not merely a Russian phenomenon. At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries honour played a vital role in the lives of military officers throughout Europe. In some European countries, the military code of honour 'had a more profound influence on the life of an officer than the laws of his state, the precepts of his religion, or the traditions of his family and nation.'[18] So powerful was this influence that John Keegan has stated that 'It was the idea of honour and its associated ideals of duty and self-sacrifice that supplied the energy of the First World War.'[19] Imperial Russian officers were thoroughly indoctrinated in the need to defend the honour of their country, their regiments, and their own persons. Men could atone for shame and dishonour only by shedding blood. The Imperial government gave this honour code official sanction in 1894, when it legalized duelling. Military Courts of Honour, based on mediaeval Courts of Chivalry, enforced the rules of the honour code, and had the power to force officers to challenge others to a duel, even if they did not want to.[20]

The events of 1917 convinced many Russian officers that the officer corps, the army, and Russia itself had not merely been altered, but shamed. By rising up against the new regime, the Whites were seeking two things: revenge, and the restoration of their own and Russia's honour. The lust for revenge explains many of the Whites' more brutal and unpleasant characteristics; the quest for honour some of their more idealistic features. These motivations based on abstract values provided the Whites with the unifying notions which held them all together regardless of their political opinions, class origins, or economic interests.

The Russian Civil War started in earnest in early 1918 when the Red Army invaded the Don and forced the Volunteer Army to flee south into the steppes of the Kuban in the northern Caucasus, where it found allies among the Kuban Cossacks. What followed was one of the most remark-

[18] I. Deak, *Beyond Nationalism: A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1848–1918* (Oxford, 1992), 138.
[19] J. Keegan, 'War and the Individual', *BBC Reith Lecture*, BBC Radio 4, 29 Apr. 1998.
[20] For one such example, see A. I. Denikin, *The Career of a Tsarist Officer: Memoirs 1872–1916* (Minneapolis, 1975), 52.

able sagas of the Civil War—the Ice March of the winter of 1918. From February to April 1918, 3,700 Volunteers trudged hundreds of miles through the snow and ice of the Kuban seeking a new haven. Massively outnumbered, they had to keep permanently on the move, fighting off continuous attacks, and covering as much as thirty miles a day in temperatures well below zero. An attempt to capture the city of Ekaterinodar in April 1918 failed dismally. Yet as the army marched it grew, picking up several thousand volunteers from among the Kuban Cossacks. It also acquired a special *esprit de corps* and new heroes, such as General S. L. Markov, who commanded a regiment composed entirely of officers. Finally in May 1918 a Cossack uprising drove the Reds out of the Don region, and the Volunteer Army returned to the Don.[21] Those who participated in this epic trek were dubbed the First Campaigners, the *Pervopokhodniki*. Among them was Colonel Kutepov, the officer who had unsuccessfully resisted the February revolution, and who before long was promoted to the rank of general. The *Pervopokhodniki* later formed a special elite in the Volunteer Army. Back in the Don region, they linked up with the survivors of another long march, the men of General M. G. Drozdovskii's regiment, who had walked all the way to the Don from the Romanian border, a distance of 900 miles which they covered in 61 days. These men were also counted among the *Pervopokhodniki*.

By this time the Volunteer Army had a new leader. General Kornilov had been killed by an artillery shell in the battle for Ekaterinodar, and General Alekseev died of cancer in October 1918, having already given up active command. The new commander of the Volunteer Army was General Anton Ivanovich Denikin. Denikin's father had been a serf, who was conscripted into the Russian Army in the mid-1800s, and subsequently rose to become a middle-ranking officer. The younger Denikin was born in 1872 in Poland, where his father was serving. He joined the army on leaving school, and gained rapid promotion, becoming chief of staff to General Alekseev during the First World War. The peasant roots of Denikin, Alekseev, and Kornilov showed that the Civil War was far from being a simple class struggle. In many ways these White commanders came from far more humble backgrounds than educated Bolsheviks such as Lenin. Denikin's own origins left him with an inferiority complex which made him distrust those of his colleagues who had more aristocratic backgrounds, most notably the commander of the north-eastern front of his army, General Wrangel. A man of generally liberal convictions, Denikin

[21] The Ice March is described in R. Gul', *Ledianoi pokhod* (Berlin, 1921).

was intelligent, but stubborn. He was a first-class military officer, but had little understanding of politics or civil administration.[22] Appropriately for a man who was born in Poland, and had a Polish mother, Denikin regarded Poland and other non-Russian areas as integral parts of Russia, considered the borders of the former Russian Empire sacrosanct, and was unwilling to countenance any peace settlement which gave independence to non-Russian nations, such as the Poles. Under Denikin, the Whites adopted the slogan, 'Russia, one and indivisible'. This lost the Whites valuable support among non-Russians, and contributed to their defeat.[23]

At the same time as Denikin was taking control of the Volunteer Army, an anti-Bolshevik rebellion broke out in Siberia. At the end of 1918 command of this rebellion passed into the hands of Admiral Aleksandr Kolchak, who had become famous before the First World War as an Arctic explorer. Pressure mounted on the Bolsheviks as Kolchak advanced on Moscow from the east, and Denikin marched on the city from the south. At the same time, the army of General Iudenich threatened Petrograd, while the forces of General Miller began a slow march south from their base in the far north. The core of Denikin's army consisted of the Cossacks and the four most respected units of the Volunteer Army, the Kornilovskii, Alekseevskii, Drozdovskii, and Markovskii Infantry Regiments, known collectively as the 'Coloured Regiments' because of their multi-coloured uniforms (black and red for the Kornilovskii regiment, blue and white for the Alekseevskii, red and white for the Drozdovskii, and black and white for the Markovskii). In spring 1919, the army cleared the northern Caucasus of Bolshevik forces, and in June 1919 General Wrangel captured the city of Tsaritsyn, later to become famous as Stalingrad. At this point, Denikin faced an important strategic decision. Should he head east to link up with Kolchak, who by this time had been driven back and was retreating deeper into Siberia or should he march on Moscow? Wrangel argued that he should do the former, but Denikin rejected Wrangel's advice and instead ordered the Volunteer Army to march on Moscow. This dispute over strategy soured relations between Denikin and Wrangel, who from then on developed an intense dislike of one another.

In summer 1919, the Whites moved into Ukraine. Their armies marched along the railway lines on which their supply depended, and

[22] Denikin's life is desribed in D. Lehovich, *White against Red: The Life of General Anton Denikin* (New York, 1973), and M. Grey, *Mon Père le Général Denikine* (Paris, 1985).

[23] See A. Procyk, *Russian Nationalism and Ukraine: The Nationality Policy of the Volunteer Army during the Civil War* (Edmonton, 1995).

their control of the land beyond the railways was limited. All the same, as they acquired more and more territory, their ability to administer the areas they controlled was put under tremendous strain. As military men, the Whites had no experience of civil administration, and proved unsuited to the task. Many Whites took the opportunity to loot and take bribes. Corruption was endemic. Sensing that popular opinion was turning against them, and lacking any firm ideological purpose, the Whites turned to anti-Semitism, whipping up hatred of Jews among the Ukrainian population in a desperate attempt to gain popular support. Cossack units carried out terrible pogroms, massacring thousands of Jews in towns and villages across Ukraine. These left an indelible stain on the reputation of the Whites.[24]

By October 1919 Denikin's army was less than 250 miles from Moscow. Victory seemed within its grasp. But Denikin had sent his men too far, too fast. The army was desperately overstretched, and the area behind the front lines was in total disarray. In November the Reds counterattacked, and soon the Whites were in headlong retreat. Morale plummeted, thousands deserted, and large parts of the army disintegrated.

The Whites continued to retreat throughout the winter of 1919–20. As they went, Denikin and Wrangel argued heatedly over strategy, and their relationship deteriorated even further. Eventually the situation became intolerable and Wrangel resigned and went into exile in Constantinople. By March 1920 Denikin's troops had been driven out of Ukraine and had retreated all the way to the northern Caucasus, with their backs to the sea at the port of Novorossiisk. As the Red Army moved in on the port, Denikin ordered the army to evacuate to the last remaining piece of territory under his control—the Crimea. The evacuation was a disaster. Denikin controlled the former Imperial Black Sea Fleet, but there were not enough ships to take all the troops, and thousands were left behind to almost certain death. The few troops who made it to the Crimea had almost no weapons, and their organization and morale were shattered. Denikin's prestige never recovered. He had led his army from near-victory to catastrophic defeat, and no longer enjoyed the loyalty of those under his command. On 3 April 1920, Denikin resigned as leader of the White armies in southern Russia. The same night he boarded a ship and left Russia, never to return.

[24] The pogroms are desribed in E. G. Heifetz, *The Slaughter of the Jews in the Ukraine in 1919* (New York, 1921); N. I. Shtif, *Pogromy na Ukraine (period Dobrovol' cheskoi armii)* (Berlin, 1922); I. B. Schechtman, *Progromy Dobrovol' cheskoi armii na Ukraine* (Berlin, 1932).

The senior White officers who remained in the Crimea had no doubts as to who should succeed Denikin. General Wrangel rushed back to the Crimea from Constantinople, and a council of senior officers requested that he assume command. Wrangel accepted. His situation was desperate. The army was in disarray, and elsewhere in Russia the other White armies, those of Kolchak, Iudenich, and Miller, had all been decisively defeated. Kolchak had been captured and killed by the Bolsheviks, and Iudenich and Miller had been driven into exile. Wrangel's small army stood alone against the communists.

Lieutenant General Baron Petr Nikolaevich Wrangel was probably the most outstanding officer to lead the White armies. He combined military prowess with personal charisma and, unusually for a Russian officer, a remarkably sound understanding of the political dimensions of the Civil War. Wrangel was a pure aristocrat. His ancestors had served as field marshals in the armies of Sweden, Spain, and Germany. In Russia, the family regiment was the Horse Guards, the smartest and most exclusive cavalry regiment of the Empire. His father socialized with royalty on intimate terms, including making at least one visit to a brothel with the then Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII of England.[25]

Most Russian army officers at the end of the nineteenth century knew little of life outside the military. Wrangel was an exception. His father had wanted him to become a mining engineer, and he therefore went to St Petersburg's School of Mines, rather than to a military school. This provided him with a broader understanding of civilian life than most of his colleagues. From 1901 to 1902 Wrangel carried out his compulsory military service as a trooper in the Horse Guards. He then applied for a commission as a regular officer. His request was rejected when he chopped the heads off the colonel's new trees with his sword after a drunken party. Wrangel could still have accepted a commission in another regiment, but he chose not to do so. Instead he returned to civilian life, and moved to Siberia to work as a mining engineer.[26] This was typical of Wrangel. He was, according to how generous one wishes to be, either a perfectionist or a petulant snob. If he could not arrange things exactly as he wanted them, he preferred to have nothing to do with them at all.

Wrangel's civilian life did not last long. In 1904 war broke out between Russia and Japan and he enlisted as an officer in a Cossack unit, and went to the front. He acquitted himself well during the war, and after it was

[25] A. Wrangel, *General Wrangel: Russia's White Crusader* (London, 1987), 7.
[26] Ibid. 11.

over took a permanent commission in the army. In 1907 he was finally accepted into the Horse Guards. Around this time Wrangel acquired the nickname 'Piper' from his love of Piper Heidseick champagne. Some of his older colleagues addressed him in this way right up until his death.[27] Soon after the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914, Wrangel's unit was sent into action against the Germans at Kaushen in East Prussia. Wrangel led his squadron in an old-fashioned cavalry charge against two German artillery guns, and captured them. As a result, he became one of the very first soldiers in the First World War to win Russia's leading gallantry medal, the St George Cross. His reputation was ensured, and he gained an unshakeable faith in the efficacy of cavalry tactics.[28] He became aide-de-camp to Tsar Nicholas II, and by 1917 was a brigade commander.

After the Bolsheviks took power, Wrangel resigned his commission and went to live in the Crimea. In summer 1918 he left the Crimea and joined the Volunteer Army, rapidly becoming one of the leading lights of the White movement. Denikin appointed him to command the front around Tsaritsyn, and Wrangel's capture of that city was one of the greatest White victories of the Civil War. Wrangel's troops captured 2 armoured trains, 131 locomotives, 70 cannon, and 300 machine guns.[29]

Tall and imposing, with a booming voice, Wrangel was 42 years old when he took command in the Crimea. He was a thoroughly modern general in the way in which he deliberately cultivated his public image. He exploited his reputation as a dashing cavalry commander who always led from the front, and dressed in traditional Cossack uniform including a long cloak, complete with ammunition pouches, known as a *cherkesska*, a tall fur hat known as a *papakha*, and a ceremonial dagger. He was a firm believer in traditional military virtues, above all discipline and honour, and was decisive and quick thinking. His Chief of Staff, General Shatilov, described him as a man who liked to get to the heart of the matter and hated trivia.[30] He was capable of great brutality, as when he captured a large group of Red soldiers, ordered the execution of 300 of them, and gave those remaining the choice of joining the Whites or being executed as well. He punished transgressions among his own soldiers harshly, but nonetheless earned his troops' respect by his obvious care for their well-being. Despite his aristocratic background, he knew how to converse with

[27] Ibid. 37.
[28] Ibid. 45–6.
[29] Lincoln, *Red Victory*, 217.
[30] P. N. Shatilov, 'Memoirs' (unpublished—copy in the possession of Count Nikita Cheremeteff), 1284.

the ordinary soldier. Immensely self-confident, he had a reputation for overbearing vanity, which made him many enemies. His powerful sense of duty, and his belief in the superiority of his own judgement, made him feel that when mistakes were being made he had a duty to put a stop to them. This did not endear him to those of his colleagues whose errors he insisted on pointing out. His authority over his own troops was, however, extraordinary.

On assuming command of the White armies in the Crimea, Wrangel became the head of government in all the areas occupied by his army. As such, he believed that he was the sole legitimate representative of Russian statehood, and expected loyalty and obedience from all those beneath him. He wanted to use the dictatorial powers at his disposal to enact social and economic reforms that would restore law and order in the White territories, and win the popular support that the Whites needed for victory. Denikin had conspicuously failed to enact meaningful reforms, and never understood the link between the military and political aspects of the Civil War. Wrangel was determined not to repeat this mistake. As a result, Wrangel's government in the Crimea pursued what was known as a 'leftist policy in rightist hands'. It passed a land reform, which redistributed land to the peasants and gave them legal ownership of it. Wrangel abandoned the policy of 'Russia, One and Indivisible', and wooed non-Russians with promises of autonomy, and in some cases perhaps even independence. He stamped out anti-Semitic propaganda, hanged looters, and dismissed incompetent and corrupt officers. The impact of these actions was limited for Wrangel did not hold power long enough to make a significant difference. In the short time available to him, however, he displayed a capacity for order and good government, and helped disperse the myth that the Whites were necessarily reactionary.[31]

Militarily, Wrangel's position was hopeless from the start. The resources of the Crimea were no match for those of all the rest of Russia under Bolshevik control. Wrangel's men gained a brief respite when in April 1920 Poland attacked Soviet Russia. The Red Army diverted most of its forces to face the Poles, and briefly the pressure lifted off the Whites. In October 1920, however, the Poles and Soviets made peace. The Bolsheviks then turned all their power against Wrangel's army, which had been renamed from the 'Volunteer Army' to the 'Russian Army' to stress its national aspirations. On 7 November 1920, the Red Army began a

[31] Ross, *Vrangel' v Krymu*; D. W. Treadgold, 'The Ideology of the White Movement: Wrangel's "Leftist Policy in Rightist Hands" ', *Harvard Slavic Studies*, 4 (1957), 481–98.

massive assault on the Crimea. Wrangel's Russian Army was heavily outnumbered, and was soon forced to retreat. On 11 November, Wrangel ordered the evacuation of his army from the Crimea. For the next four days, his troops embarked on ships to sail into exile, and on 15 November Bolshevik troops entered Sevastopol, the capital of the Crimea. Wrangel and the Whites were defeated, the Reds were victorious, and, apart from some mopping up, the Civil War was over.

The history of the Russian Army in exile begins here.

2

Russia Abroad

When the men of Wrangel's army abandoned the Crimea and went into exile they became part of an entire society of Russians abroad, which although dispersed throughout many countries retained a remarkable cohesion during the entire inter-war period. The history of the army cannot be separated from that of this wider emigration.[1] The army helped to shape the life of the emigration as a whole, while émigrés outside the army had a powerful influence on its fate. Before examining the history of the army in exile, we must therefore take a small diversion and look in detail at emigré society in general, a society often known as 'Russia Abroad'.

The exact number of refugees who left Russia in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution and Civil War is not known. Estimates vary from 700,000 to approximately two million, although the most credible figures suggest a total of about 800,000 Russian émigrés in Europe and several tens of thousands more in Manchuria.[2] About 100,000 of these were members or former members of Wrangel's army, while thousands of others had served in one of the other White armies during the Civil War. In the early 1920s many émigrés returned to Russia, while others assimilated into local communities. The death rate in the émigré community was high, and the birth rate was low. As a result, during the 1920s and 1930s the émigré population declined rapidly, until by 1940 its numbers had fallen to around 400,000.

[1] There are several general histories of the Russian emigration, each with a slightly different emphasis, none of which can claim to be fully comprehensive: J. Glad, *Russia Abroad: Writers, History, Politics* (Tenafly, N.J., 1999); M. Gorboff, *La Russie fantôme: L'Émigration russe de 1920 à 1950* (Lausanne, 1995); V. V. Kostikov, *Ne budem proklinat' izgnan'e . . . puti i. sud'by russkoi emigratsii* (Moscow, 1993); M. Nazarov, *Missiia russkoi emigratsii* (Stavropol, 1992); M. Raeff, *Russia Abroad: A Cultural History of the Russian Emigration* (New York, 1990); L. K. Shkarenkov, *Agoniia beloi emigratsii* (2nd edn) (Moscow, 1986); N. Struve, *Soixante-dix ans de l'émigration russe* (Paris, 1996). For a historiographical survey of writings on the emigration, see A. Kvakin, 'Rossiia poznaet russkoe zarubezh'e', *Novyi Zhurnal*, 211 (1998), 155–172.

[2] Sir John Hope Simpson, *The Refugee Problem: Report of a Survey* (London, 1939), 82. W. C. Huntington, *The Homesick Million: Russia-out-of-Russia* (Boston, 1933), 18. A summary of the various estimates is to be found in Raeff, *Russia Abroad*, 202–3.

The geographic distribution of émigrés also changed over time.[3] Initially, they were concentrated in areas close to Russia, especially Germany and Constantinople.[4] From there they spread outward until Russian communities had been established in most parts of the world. By the mid-1920s the largest collections of Russians were in France, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Manchuria, and these remained the most important centres thereafter. The greatest single concentration of émigrés was in Paris, where in the late 1920s there were about 45,000 Russians.[5] The character of these communities varied. In Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, Russia Abroad was dominated by men who had served in Wrangel's army. Russian society in these countries tended to be politically conservative. Elsewhere, there was a broader mix of people. Most liberal intellectuals ended up in Paris, giving the community in that city a special feel of its own. The Parisian emigration had an especially vibrant cultural life, and was politically diverse. The presence of numerous political and military leaders made Paris a centre of intrigue and conspiracy. By comparison émigré communities in the Balkans were much more stable.

The popular image of the archetype Russian exile is of Parisian taxi-drivers or of romantic aristocrats and artists living off their own princely means or off the generosity of the intellectual community. Émigrés who made the headlines in western Europe and America in the 1920s and 1930s tended to be colourful characters such as the murderer of the monk Rasputin, Prince Felix Yusupov, who won a sensational libel case against the film company Metro Goldwin Mayer. Pretenders to the Russian throne, such as Anna Anderson, who claimed to be Grand Duchess Anastasia, the daughter of Tsar Nicholas II, also attracted considerable

[3] For a collection of studies of some of the émigré centres, see K. Schlögel (ed.), *Der Grosse Exodus: Die Russische Emigration und ihre Zentren, 1917 bis 1941* (Berlin, 1994).

[4] R. C. Williams, *Culture in Exile: Russian Émigrés in Germany, 1881–1941* (Ithaca and London, 1971). K. Schlögel (ed.), *Russische Emigration in Deutschland 1918 bis 1941: Leben im europäischen Bürgerkrieg* (Berlin, 1995). S. V. Karpenko, E. I. Pivovar, and S. S. Ippolitov, 'Rossiiskaia emigratsiia v Konstantinopole v nachale 20-kh godov', *Otechestvennaia Istoriia*, 5 (Sept./Oct. 1993), 75–85.

[5] For France see R. H. Johnston, *New Mecca, New Babylon: Paris and the Russian Exiles, 1920–1945* (Kingston, 1988); for Yugoslavia: V. Maevskii, *Russkie v Iugoslavii: vsaimootnosheniia Rossii i Serbii* (New York, 1966) and A. Arsen'ev, O. Kirrilovo, and M. Sibinovich, (eds), *Russkaia emigratsiia v Iugoslavii* (Moscow, 1996); for Manchuria: E. N. Chernolutskaia, (ed.), *Rossiiskaia emigratsiia v Manchzhurii: voenno-politicheskaia deiatel'nost' (1920–1945): sbornik dokumentov* (Iuzhno-Sakalinsk, 1994) and E. P. Taskina (ed.), *Russkii Kharbin* (Moscow, 1998); for other centres of population, see O. A. Kaznina, *Russkie v Anglii* (Moscow, 1997), and E. P. Serapionova, *Russkaia emigratsiia v Chekhoslovatskoi respublike* (Moscow, 1995).

publicity. Despite the attention such people gained, they actually made up only a small minority of the emigration. In so far as there was such a thing as a typical Russian émigré, he would most likely have been an unmarried soldier aged between 20 and 40, working on Yugoslav roadworks or in a Bulgarian mine, and pooling his meagre earnings with a commune of fellow soldiers. At the higher end of this age scale he would have been a former Imperial Army officer; at the lower end he would have still been at school when the First World War broke out in 1914, and probably joined the army in either the World War or the Civil War. Although reasonably well-educated, he would not have been an intellectual, and although a member of the officer class, he would probably not have been independently wealthy before the revolution.

By European standards Imperial Russia had relatively small middle and upper classes, although because of Russia's size these classes were quite large in absolute numbers. After the revolution a huge proportion of educated Russians fled abroad, whereas most of the uneducated stayed at home. At a time when much of the Russian population was still illiterate, two-thirds of Russian émigrés had completed at least some secondary education. The Russian emigration contained almost no peasants (although there were many Cossack farmer-soldiers), but did contain a disproportionate percentage of Russia's professional classes such as businessmen, academics, lawyers, and doctors, as well as a large proportion of the cultural élites of pre-revolutionary Russia—artists, musicians, writers, and so on.[6] If the aristocrats dominate popular perceptions, these cultural élites dominate most historical surveys of the Russian emigration. Despite their importance, however, they too were only a small minority of the overall émigré community.

The Russian emigration was notable both for its size and for its success in forming almost an alternative society living alongside but separate from the nations in which it found itself. Russian émigrés did all they could to recreate Russia in exile, and to a large degree they succeeded. Many Russians lived a sort of double life, spending the days working in the outside community, and then returning to spend their evenings and weekends entirely in the milieu of Russia Abroad. Émigré satirist Nadezhda Teffi thus described the émigré community in Paris as a 'little town', which lived in complete isolation from the surrounding world,

[6] Raeff, *Russia Abroad*, 26. A detailed analysis of the social background of the Russian emigration in Yugoslavia can be found in *Rossiia v izgnanii: sud'by rossiiskikh emigrantov za rubezhom* (Moscow, 1999), 320–48.

with its inhabitants spending their time quarrelling, writing their memoirs, and holding long telephone conversations.[7]

As a general rule Russians abroad resisted assimilating into their new countries. They felt that they had little in common with their hosts, and believed that the Soviet regime could not last long and they would soon be going home. They therefore clung to institutions and culture which protected their old identities as Russians. Because of this, these men with double lives have often been dismissed as pitiful fantasists with impossible dreams of returning to Russia and restoring a non-existent Golden Age to their country. Russian émigrés are said to have lived lives 'divorced from reality'[8] in a 'world of fantasy'.[9] The language used when talking of this life is generally that of disease, as if émigrés suffered from some sort of psychological illness. It has been described by one author as a 'psychosis' called 'bacillus emigraticus'.[10] Émigrés themselves also used such language. The émigré newspaper *Russkii Golos* (Russian Voice), for instance, wrote that 'In emigration Russian society continues to suffer from that terrible illness which accompanied the Russian revolution. This illness consists of people cutting themselves off from activity and beginning to exist . . . in the realm of pure fantasy.'[11]

Military émigrés were particularly stubborn in resisting assimilation. They continued to believe in the need to struggle against the Soviet Union, and ran numerous military training courses to prepare for the day, which never came, when they could again fight the Soviets. In consequence they have been roundly criticized for refusing to accept their fate. Some authors maintain that the insistence of émigré military leaders on maintaining military organizations in exile hampered the adaptation of soldiers and officers to life in exile, hindered them from finding employment and above all accepting their new circumstances, and instead kept them in perpetual limbo with promises of a return to Russia which never happened.[12]

[7] N. A. Teffi, *Gorodok* (NewYork, 1982), 5–7.

[8] O. L. Polivanov, 'Psikhologiia russkoi emigratsii', in *Iz istorii rossiiskoi emigratsii: sbornik nauchnykh statei* (St Petersburg, 1992), 23.

[9] Williams, *Culture in Exile*, 290.

[10] P. Tabori, *The Anatomy of Exile: a Semantic and Historical Study* (London, 1972), 33.

[11] *Russkii Golos*, 25 (27 Sept. 1931), 4.

[12] For instance, T. F. Johnson, *International Tramps: From Chaos to World Peace* (London, 1938), 285–91, and V. F. Ershov, 'Adaptatsiia rossiiskoi voennoi emigratsii v stranakh razmeshcheniia v 1920-e godu', in Iu. A. Poliakov, G. Ia. Tarle, and V. N. Shamshurov (eds), *Istoriia rossiiskogo zarubezh'ia: problemy adaptatsii migrantov v XIX–XX vekakh* (Moscow, 1996), 91.

These criticisms are somewhat unjustified. One must bear in mind that it was not easy for Russians to assimilate into the countries of inter-war Europe. Their host societies mostly did not want them, and consequently discriminated openly against them. Furthermore, the émigrés' actions make sense if one recognizes that most of them fervently believed that their exile would not last forever, that sooner or later the Soviet regime would fall, and they would return home. This belief persisted throughout the inter-war period and was one of the defining features of the Russian emigration. Of course, one can interpret this as yet more evidence of the emigration's divorce from reality, since the Soviet regime did not fall rapidly and most émigrés never did return home. The former Russian Ambassador to France, Vassilii Maklakov, certainly saw it this way. In a letter to a French journalist in 1934 he wrote that he did not share the 'illusions' that the Soviet regime would fall, but it would not be fair to disillusion émigrés, as in their impoverished lives they needed hope, and this was all they had.[13] With hindsight, we can see that Maklakov was right—Soviet power did not crumble in the 1920s and 1930s. At the time, however, it seemed very possible, even probable, that it would. In the first twenty-five years of its existence the Soviet Union lurched from crisis to crisis—a mutiny by the navy at Kronstadt in 1921, peasant uprisings, internal party struggles, collectivization of farms, famine in Ukraine, purges, the German invasion, and so on. All of these crises were well reported in the international press, and it was quite reasonable to expect that one or other of them might bring about the regime's fall. What may seem to modern observers as living in a 'world of fantasy' did not seem so fantastic at the time.

Russian émigrés were not economic refugees who had gone abroad to seek a better life, but political exiles. One might expect economic refugees to try to put down roots in their new homes, learn the language, educate their children in a new culture, and so on. Political exiles, on the other hand, are unwilling emigrants. They desire to go home, but cannot do so because of their hostility to the political regime there. It is absurd to tell them to assimilate into the culture of their new homes, or to give up their hostility to the regime of their native country, since to do so would negate the entire reason for their exile. As the newspaper *Russkii Golos* put it in an article entitled 'Emigrants or Settlers?', 'the act of emigration is the expression of a certain idea, rejecting the existing order, and it is carried

[13] Letter reproduced with commentary in *Chasovoi*, 135/136 (Oct. 1934), 25.

out in the name of definite principles.'[14] 'We are in voluntary exile', wrote one White veteran in 1955, 'but the long years of our enforced presence abroad have not turned us into "refugees" . . . We are still irreconcilable political émigrés and our struggle with the worldwide red danger continues.'[15] The determination not to assimilate was thus not so much a sign of psychological illness as a political statement, affirming émigrés' continued hostility to the Bolshevik regime.

Two of the prevailing attitudes among émigrés were a tremendous sense of isolation and an ever-growing paranoia. These were the logical result of four factors which influenced the Russians once abroad. The most important of these factors was the hostile international environment. From the moment that émigrés arrived in exile they found themselves at the mercy of foreign powers, who were generally disinclined to help exiles or their anti-Soviet causes. In the mid-1920s the international environment became somewhat less hostile for Russian émigrés, but by the early 1930s after the Great Depression, the rise to power of the Nazis in Germany, and the diplomatic recognition of the Soviet regime by most countries, including the United States of America, the situation again deteriorated. Some émigrés, in response to the hostility they encountered, fell into despair and abandoned the White cause to which they had originally been committed. Others came to realize that only by maintaining their cohesion could they survive. The environment thus simultaneously split émigrés apart and drove them together. Some also came to despise the Western world, which they felt had betrayed them, and in response they looked to Russia as the embodiment of the highest spiritual and cultural ideals.

The second force acting on émigrés was economic need, especially the need for employment. This forced émigrés to disperse far and wide in search of work, although such work as they found was normally poorly paid and involved heavy physical labour. Émigrés' financial position became even worse during the Great Depression, when European nations practised open discrimination against refugees. A French law passed in 1932 fixed maximum percentages of foreigners who could be employed in any industry. These limits applied even to enterprises run by refugees, so that a Russian choir, for instance, could legally employ only 10 per cent Russians. As a result, the economic conditions in which most émigrés

[14] *Russkii Golos*, 34 (29 Nov. 1931), 4.

[15] *Gallipoli-Lemnos-Chataldzha-Bizerta: Iubileinyi al'manakh izdannyi k 35-i letiiu prebyvaniia v Gallipoli Russkoi Armii, 1920–1955* (Obshchestvo Gallipoliitsev, 1955), 2.

lived were very poor. One described the main characteristic of the emigration as 'social degradation and poverty'.[16] Financial want had the same contradictory effect as the hostile international environment. Gruelling physical labour or unemployment reduced émigrés to the status of proletarians, wearied their souls, and undermined their old identities. On the other hand, the very same hardship made the retention of old identities and links with old comrades all the more valuable, as in their degraded lives these links gave people their only sense of self-worth.

Émigré life was also affected by the activities of the Soviet regime. Émigrés paid close attention to developments within Soviet Russia, and in reaction to these developments their attitudes towards the Soviets gradually changed. Some, especially military émigrés, remained irreconcilably opposed to the Soviet regime, but others gradually came to terms with it. This created divisions within the emigration which grew wider and wider as time progressed. In the meantime, the Soviet secret services (known as the GPU, and later as the NKVD) paid considerable attention to the Russian emigration, and regarded military émigrés as their main target. The GPU expended considerable efforts on disrupting the emigration.[17] In particular, great damage was done to émigré society by a Soviet provocation known as the Trust and by several assassinations and kidnappings of leading émigrés, described in Chapters 9 and 13 of this book. The activities of the Soviet secret services generated an ever-increasing fear of Soviet agents, which as time went on made émigrés more and more suspicious of one another.

The paranoia of the emigration was also partly generated by its own internal political struggles. The Russian emigration contained people from across almost the entire political spectrum, who devoted a great deal of their time and energy to fighting each other. As Nadezhda Teffi put it, émigrés 'all hated each other so much, that you couldn't put twenty people together, of whom ten were not enemies of the other ten. And if they were not to begin with, they soon were.'[18]

Émigré political organizations ranged from revolutionary socialists on the left, through constitutional democrats in the centre, to the extreme conservatives of the monarchist parties on the right. On the far left were the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs). The Mensheviks were ideologically close to Lenin's Bolsheviks, but Lenin had expelled

[16] B. N. Aleksandrovskii, *Iz perezhitogo v chuzhykh kraiakh* (Moscow, 1969), 161.
[17] C. Andrew and O. Gordievsky, *KGB: The Inside Story* (London, 1990), 115.
[18] Teffi, *Gorodok*, 6.

them from all positions of authority in Russia because they wanted to replace Bolshevik one-party rule with a more inclusive revolutionary government. Despite this the Mensheviks remained committed communist revolutionaries. They followed the so-called 'Martov Line', laid down by their leader Iulii Martov. The Martov Line stated that the Bolshevik regime was abhorrent, but no attempt should be made to overthrow it because a White government would be even worse than a Bolshevik one. As a result, the Mensheviks regarded themselves as a sort of 'loyal opposition' to the Soviet regime.[19] In exile they were few in number and their influence in émigré society was negligible, especially as they held themselves aloof from their fellow émigrés, whom they regarded as reactionaries.

Until driven out by the Bolsheviks, the Socialist Revolutionaries had been the largest and most popular political party in Russia. In late 1917, when elections were finally held for a Russian Constituent Assembly, the SRs won a majority, and hoped to convert this into genuine political power. However, the Bolsheviks dissolved the Constituent Assembly by force, and the SRs were driven underground. They proved to be inept political operators, and in the civil war were squeezed out by the two extremes of the Red and White Armies, until eventually they entirely disintegrated as a political force.

In exile in 1921 the former leader of the Provisional Government, Aleksandr Kerenskii, attempted to revive the political left by organizing a meeting in Paris of all surviving members of the Constituent Assembly. However, by this time Kerenskii had almost no support or credibility, and the meeting failed to give the émigré left any political momentum. The influence of SRs on émigré society tended to be behind the scenes. Some of them played an important role in funding émigré publishing, and in managing the main Russian charity, *Zemgor*. But as an organized body, the SRs were almost entirely impotent.

Apart from the Mensheviks and SRs, Imperial Russia's most important political party had been the Constitutional Democratic Party, whose members were known as the Cadets. The Cadets were liberal democrats, who during the Civil War for the most part supported the White armies.[20] The White defeat prompted some of them to reconsider their tactics. The

[19] A. Liebich, *From the Other Shore: Russian Social Democracy after 1921* (Cambridge, Mass., 1997), 83.
[20] The history of the Cadet party during the Revolution and Civil War is described in W. G. Rosenberg, *Liberals in the Russian Revolution: The Constitutional Democratic Party, 1917–1921* (Princeton, 1974).

most prominent of these was Pavel Miliukov, who had briefly served as Foreign Minister in the original Provisional Government. One of the most brilliant intellects of his generation, Miliukov had moved from university teaching into politics in the early 1900s, and his outspoken criticisms of the Imperial regime had led to his arrest on more than one occasion before the revolution. As implacably opposed to Bolshevism as he had been to Tsarist autocracy, at the end of 1917 Miliukov helped General Alekseev to establish the Volunteer Army and subsequently he supported the White armies throughout the Civil War. In late 1920, however, he underwent a change of heart. He decided that the cause of the Whites' defeat was their failure to adopt a political programme which could attract broad support among the Russian populace. Émigrés, he argued, should disassociate themselves from the generals and adopt popular policies on social and economic issues in alliance with the forces of the left such as the SRs. This policy was known as the 'New Tactics'.

In line with his New Tactics, in late 1920 Miliukov turned on his former allies in the White armies, and for the rest of his life carried on a bitter struggle against the émigré military leadership. His actions were not supported by most of the other Cadets, whose party split irrevocably when Miliukov left with a handful of supporters to form a new organization, the Russian Democratic Union. White leaders regarded his behaviour as hypocritical and opportunist. Miliukov had, after all, supported all those actions of the White armies which he was suddenly denouncing as reactionary. For his part, Miliukov came to see the White leadership as the main obstacle preventing the emigration from forging an alliance with the Russian people, and he gradually began to regard the Whites as perhaps even more dangerous than the Bolsheviks. Having cast himself as a champion of the left, Miliukov found himself bit by bit moving toward the Soviet camp, until by the start of the Second World War he had all but accepted Soviet rule as a positive force.[21] The New Tactics did not gain much support in the Russian emigration, but Miliukov was still an extremely influential figure, because he edited the most popular daily émigré newspaper, *Poslednie Novosti* (Latest News). He used this as a platform for his views, and it enabled him to reach a wide audience and remain a regular thorn in the side of the White leadership.

Miliukov was not the only émigré whose attitudes were transformed by the end of the Civil War. Nikolai Ustrialov, a former minister in the White government of Admiral Kolchak, led a movement known as *Smena*

[21] S. A. Aleksandrov, *Lider rossiiskikh kadet P. N. Miliukov v emigratsii* (Moscow, 1996).

Vekh (Changing Landmarks). This was the title of a collection of essays published in exile in October 1921. The title was a deliberate reference to an earlier collection of essays entitled *Vekhi* (Landmarks) which had been published in Russia in 1909, and in which various prominent Russian philosophers had discarded their previous views and adopted an entirely new set of opinions. Through this reference, the authors of *Smena Vekh* were indicating their desire to change direction.

Smena Vekh was inspired by the defeat of the White armies, by the Soviet government's war against Poland, and by the introduction into Soviet Russia of a New Economic Policy (NEP) which restored some degree of private enterprise. The White defeat was seen as proof that efforts to overthrow the Bolsheviks by force had failed and had to be abandoned. The war against Poland, and the subsequent Soviet conquests of Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia, were interpreted as evidence that the Bolsheviks had abandoned their internationalism and adopted Russian nationalism, and were endeavouring to reunite the Russian Empire. The NEP offered hope that private property would be restored and socialist economics would be abandoned. *Smena Vekh* therefore claimed that the Soviet Union was evolving in a positive direction.[22]

Ustrialov and his colleagues drew the conclusion that Russian patriots should stop fighting the Soviet regime and should instead join it in order to encourage this process of evolution from within. Reconciliation with the Soviet regime would, it was believed, promote its evolution to more acceptable forms. *Smena Vekh* won few converts, but it did begin a process in which some émigrés gradually came to terms with the Soviet government and decided to halt their struggle against it.

The one émigré philosophy which has had an important long term influence on Russian thinking is Eurasianism. After being forgotten for many years, Eurasianism has now been rediscovered in post-Soviet Russia, where it has found many followers. Eurasianism started with the publication in 1921 of a collection of essays entitled *Iskhod k Vostoku* (Exodus to the East). This book described the Russian Revolution as a great turning point, which would culminate in the decline of the West and the rise of the East. Russia was seen as a distinct identity, neither European nor Asian, but Eurasian. Western philosophies such as democracy and socialism were to be rejected in favour of native Eurasian culture. The Eurasians believed in an authoritarian social structure based

[22] H. Hardeman, *Coming to Terms with the Soviet Regime: The Changing Signposts Movement among Russian Émigrés in the early 1920s* (Dekalb, 1994).

on religion. Their identification of Russia as a distinct cultural identity attracted Russian nationalists, but some critics regarded the description of the revolution as a positive turning point in history as dangerously close to an endorsement of Bolshevism. For this reason, although some Whites were attracted by Eurasianism, most rejected it.[23]

The collapse of the old political parties, such as the Cadets and SRs, and the introduction of new ideas such as Smena Vekh and Eurasianism, showed how exile disturbed the preconceptions of many émigrés. Others, however, regarded exile as an opportunity to revive pre-revolutionary concepts which had been silenced during the Revolution and Civil War. The most important of these was monarchism. The White philosophy of non-predetermination had precluded an active espousal of monarchist sentiment during the civil war. After the White defeat monarchists decided that it was safe to come out of the closet.

Monarchism had the potential to be the most powerful political movement in the Russian emigration, because most émigrés were in some form or other monarchist. But the monarchists could never turn this potential into actual power. In the first place, the White leadership continued to follow the principle of non-predetermination. Second, monarchists were divided among themselves according to the form of monarchy they believed in, with a wide chasm separating constitutional monarchists from supporters of monarchical absolutism. Finally, monarchists had no credible pretender to lead their cause. All members of the Royal Family with a realistic claim to the throne had been killed during the Civil War. Those that remained either had no desire to claim the crown or were considered beyond the pale by many of their fellow émigrés.

In the 1930s one émigré politician, Aleksandr Kazem Bek achieved the remarkable feat of combining fascism, monarchism, and support for the Soviets in one movement. Kazem Bek's party, the *Mladorossy* (Young Russians), used the slogan 'For Tsar and Soviets'. Kazem Bek demanded a dictatorial monarchist state, and praised Stalin for his nationalism and his quasi-monarchical system of government. He took his style from Italian fascism, with his followers dressing in dark suits, berets, and armbands adorned with a stylized sceptre, and addressing Kazem Bek as 'Glava' (a Russian equivalent of 'Führer' or 'Duce'). Kazem Bek also stressed the need to win over the masses with promises of left-wing social policies.[24]

[23] N. Riasanovsky, 'The Emergence of Eurasianism', *California Slavic Studies*, 4 (1967), 58–69.

[24] N. Hayes, 'Kazem-Bek and the Young Russians' Revolution', *Slavic Review*, 39/2 (1980), 255–68.

The *Mladorossy* had about 2,000 members in the early 1930s. Most were young and felt that the ideologies and methodologies of their parents' generation had failed. This reflected a deep generational divide that emerged within the Russian emigration, inspiring the creation of a number of youthful organizations which sought new solutions to Russia's problems. These included the National Union of the New Generation, which was closely associated with the remaining elements of the White Army in exile, and the Post-Revolutionary movements. The latter were so named because they were led by men who had played no public role in Russia before the revolution. The Post-Revolutionaries emerged in the early 1930s, rejected both communism and capitalist liberal democracy as products of Western materialism and rationalism, and also rejected a restoration of the old Russia. They saw the only route to salvation as coming through inner spiritual transformation. Their rejection of material values and their affirmation of spirituality reflected attitudes that were widespread among large segments of the Russian emigration.[25]

The renewed interest in spirituality gave the Orthodox Church a central role in émigré life. Russian émigrés flocked to the churches in part because the Church was one of the few symbols of the old Russia which still survived, and in part because they were in desperate need of moral support. The Russian Orthodox Church abroad was, however, unable to act as a source of émigré unity because it soon split into two competing factions, and eventually into three.

The causes of the schisms were complex, involving interpretations of canonical law, political differences, and doctrinal disputes. The basic problem was that the Soviet regime had destroyed the independence of the Church leadership in Russia, and the Church abroad had no clear and agreed source of authority. Some churchmen abroad still looked to the Church in Russia for authority, while others rejected it, saying that Church leaders inside Russia were prisoners of the Soviets and their statements did not reflect their true wishes. In 1920 the senior Church officials in exile formed a Synod in Yugoslavia led by the former Metropolitan of Kiev, Antonii. They claimed that the Synod represented the sole legitimate Church authority abroad. When in 1921 the Synod called openly for a restoration of the monarchy, the head of the Church in Russia, Patriarch Tikhon, who was a prisoner of the Soviets, ordered the Synod to dissolve itself and appointed another leading official, Metropolitan Evlogii, to be head of the Church in Western Europe. The

[25] Raeff, *Russia Abroad*, 153.

Synod refused to obey the order, and the Church split into two—with one group following Antonii and the Synod, and the other group following Evlogii. Roughly speaking, the split followed political lines, with the more conservative émigrés backing the Synod, and more liberal ones backing Evlogii. In 1934, the two sides were briefly reconciled, but they soon split again, and then elements of the Russian Church in America broke away to form yet another independent group.[26]

The fractious nature of émigré politics made many émigrés abandon the debates altogether. Most had little time or energy to devote to political matters, and regarded them as futile. By contrast, the cultural life of the emigration seemed purposeful and successful. As the historian Robert Williams says about one exile community, 'The story of the political life of the Russian emigration ... is largely one of despair and ultimate defeat; the story of its cultural life is one of intellectual ferment and literary productivity'.[27]

As they searched to rationalize their suffering, émigrés tended to regard their exile as having two purposes: continued struggle against the Soviets; and the preservation of Russian culture, which was believed to exist only in exile. Since the first of these missions was failing, many chose to focus on the second. This choice was justified by the presence abroad of a disproportionately large percentage of Russia's cultural élites. By promoting Russian culture, émigrés were trying both to preserve their own identities and serve some higher purpose. They could prevent their children from being denationalized. As well, they hoped to preserve in exile the Russian language, Russian history, arts, and philosophy. They then hoped to be able to take these back to Russia after the Soviet regime collapsed, in order to fill what they believed would be the cultural vacuum created by the Bolsheviks.

Russians in exile made important contributions across the cultural spectrum. Musicians such as Rachmaninov, singers such as Chaliapin, and artists such as Chagall, both participated in the cultural life of the emigration itself and performed and displayed their work in the wider world. Groups of artists such as the Ballets Russes and Jaroff's Cossack Choir also proved popular with foreigners. They were fortunate because music and the visual arts cross linguistic boundaries and they could more easily gain access to foreign audiences than could Russian writers. Despite

[26] Ibid. 119–55; D. Pospielovsky, *The Russian Church under the Soviet Regime, 1917–1982*, Vol. 1 (Westwood, 1984), 113–42.
[27] Williams, *Culture in Exile*, 290.

this, Russians abroad focused most of their efforts on literature and philosophy, perhaps because the use of the Russian language was seen as a vital element in the preservation of Russian culture.[28]

Russia Abroad rapidly developed a large and successful publishing industry. Hundreds of books, journals, pamphlets, and newspapers were published. The most important newspapers were Miliukov's *Poslednie Novosti*, which had a daily circulation of about 40,000 copies, and the more conservative *Vozrozhdenie* (Regeneration), whose circulation was somewhat smaller. Literature was published in the form of books and also serialized in the newspapers and so-called 'thick journals' such as *Sovremennye Zapiski* (Contemporary Annals). Nowadays, the most famous names in émigré literature are the writer Vladimir Nabokov and the poet Marina Tsvetaeva, but at the time others were rather more prominent, especially the writer Ivan Bunin. Bunin had been evacuated from the Crimea with Wrangel's army in November 1920, and was a loyal supporter of the Whites. In 1933 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, an award which was interpreted by his fellow émigrés as international recognition of the Russian emigration in general. Émigré writers also made significant contributions to fields such as philosophy and history. Eurasianists studied a particularly broad range of subjects including history, geography, and linguistics. Some of the philosophers and theologians, such as Nikolai Berdiaev, Sergei Bulgakov, and Ivan Il'in, have now been rediscovered in post-Soviet Russia. As a general rule, Russian émigré thinkers tended to be rather anti-Western, viewing the Western world into which they had come as degenerate and materialistic. They were highly patriotic and wanted to find Russian solutions to Russian problems, views fairly representative of those held by the bulk of their fellow émigrés.[29]

Thinkers such as Ivan Il'in and Nikolai Berdiaev shared a powerful religious bent, which stressed the need for spiritual perfection in preference to materialist solutions to political, social, and economic problems. But in other respects they differed greatly. Whereas some, like Bunin and Il'in, remained irreconcilably anti-Soviet, others such as Berdiaev gradually adopted a more ambivalent position, and as time went on were more and more inclined to see positive aspects in Soviet rule. Some émigrés even abandoned the anti-Soviet cause entirely and returned home to

[28] For detailed studies of Russian culture abroad, see Glad, *Russia Abroad*, 235–95, and Raeff, *Russia Abroad*.
[29] Glad, *Russia Abroad*, 240–3. Raeff, *Russia Abroad*, 140.

Russia. These included the authors Aleksei Tolstoy and Ivan Kuprin, and, most famously, Marina Tsvetaeva, whose husband Sergei Efron turned out to be a Soviet spy. Her example highlighted the pressures on émigrés to come to terms with their defeat and make peace with the Soviet regime.

The cultural élites were not the only ones determined to preserve Russian culture abroad. For instance, the most popular émigré writer was probably General P. N. Krasnov, the former Ataman of the Don Cossacks, whose novel *From the Double Headed Eagle to the Red Banner* was exceedingly successful. General Denikin also wrote a series of short stories, entitled *Officers*. Military émigrés were as determined as other émigrés to preserve Russian culture, although to them it meant something rather different from what it meant to liberal intellectuals. To Russian officers, culture was associated not only with literature and other higher arts, but also with Russian traditions and history, such as service to the state, honour, duty, the traditions of the regiment, preserving the memory of Russian military victories, and so on, traditions which to liberal intellectuals were almost universally anathema. For many former officers, culture could not be retained without continued struggle against the Soviets, whereas to intellectuals preserving culture was an alternative to struggle.

Russian émigrés of all political persuasions wished to pass Russian culture on to the next generation, and therefore put great efforts into Russian-language education. Financial shortages made it difficult to support Russian schools in exile, and the children of most émigrés attended foreign schools but parents ran extra classes out of hours, and sponsored youth groups such as boy scouts, which Russian children could attend in the evenings and at weekends. But émigrés could not agree on what constituted Russian culture, and the provision of education became a political battle ground, with former officers and liberal intellectuals fighting each other to control what was taught.

However Russian culture was interpreted, protecting it abroad was not an easy task. The pressures on Russia Abroad from within and without were enormous. Yet it survived, and to some extent even flourished. This was due to the efforts not only of the cultural élites of the emigration, but also to those of the rank and file of Russia Abroad, who supported émigré life with their time, money, and energy. More than anything else, such people were military men. They formed the core of émigré society, and it was to them that Russia Abroad owed its existence.

3

The Gallipoli Miracle

At this point let us return to the Crimea in November 1920, just before Wrangel's final defeat, and take up again the story of the Russian Army. Wrangel and his staff had long expected an attack by the Red Army on their positions in the Crimea, but the actual timing and location of the offensive which began on 7 November 1920 took them by surprise. Most of the front-line troops of Wrangel's army were positioned defending a fortified line across the narrow Perekop isthmus which connected the Crimea to mainland Russia. Unfortunately for the Whites, an unusually early frost froze the shallow water of the Sivash inlet to the east of the Perekop, permitting Red troops to march across the sea into the rear of Wrangel's defences. The Whites had to withdraw from the Perekop to avoid being surrounded, and once they did so, the gates to the Crimea were opened and the White position on the peninsula became untenable.

The evacuation which Wrangel ordered on 11 November 1920 was very different from the disastrous evacuation of Novorossiisk several months earlier. Wrangel had at his disposal the ships of the former Imperial Black Sea Fleet, and had made preparations for an evacuation in advance. The process was entirely orderly, and there was no panic. Several thousand wounded soldiers were left behind in the Crimea, because there were no facilities to look after them at sea, but all able-bodied troops who wished to be evacuated found places on a ship. Many of the rank and file soldiers chose to stay behind, but the vast majority of officers and Cossacks took the opportunity to escape the advancing Bolsheviks. They were joined by thousands of civilians. Between 13 and 16 November 149,000 people, including 50,000 civilians, boarded 126 ships and set sail from the Crimea, heading south across the Black Sea to Constantinople and exile.[1]

By the time they reached Constantinople, Wrangel's troops were thoroughly demoralized. Not only had they lost the war, but the voyage itself, which for some took as much as ten days, was a terrible experience. The

[1] Figures for the number of evacuees are provided in COC, 20 N 1156 (Rapport d'ensemble sur les réfugiés russes, Exode Wrangel).

ships of the Black Sea Fleet had not been properly maintained for years, and many were scarcely seaworthy. Some soon broke down and had to be towed all the way across the Black Sea. All the ships were desperately overcrowded. Thousands of men were crammed into each vessel with scarcely any food or water.[2] On arrival at Constantinople the starving troops traded anything they could with Turkish merchants who sailed up to the Russian warships and sold bread and water for extortionate prices. Military discipline broke down almost entirely. There was little to distinguish the remnants of the army from a disorganized mass of refugees. 'With few exceptions, nobody wants to fight any more', wrote one officer, Captain G. A. Orlov, in his diary, 'everyone is tired, worn out, shocked, and no longer believes in the possibility of success.'[3]

Constantinople was at this time occupied by the French Army, which had taken control of the city and surrounding area at the end of the First World War. The French government had previously supported Wrangel in the Crimea, but it now decided that there was no more hope for the White cause, and that the Russian Army was a potentially destabilizing force. At the time Greece and Turkey were fighting a fierce war, and France feared that the Russians might get sucked into the war as an ally of one side or the other. It therefore wished to disband the Russian Army as fast as possible.[4]

In these circumstances it seemed most improbable that the army could survive. Yet it not only survived, but in the year that it spent in the vicinity of Constantinople also built a myth that sustained many of its troops throughout the rest of their lives in exile. This was the myth of the 'Gallipoli miracle', according to which the men of the Russian Army who were interned at Gallipoli after the evacuation of the Crimea underwent a spiritual and moral resurrection, renewed their determination to carry on the struggle against the Bolsheviks, and united around their leaders as a cohesive, disciplined mass. Great efforts were put into propagating this legend, which gave many veterans a sense of their own worth, as members of a supposed moral élite, and gave a purpose to their existence in exile.

[2] For descriptions of the voyage to Constantinople, see: GARF, f. 5881, o. 1, d. 154 (M. P., *Gallipoli*); GARF, f. 5881, o. 1, d. 724, l. 15–16 (P. Ivlin, *Dnevnik*); B. N. Aleksandrovskii, *Iz perezhitogo v chuzhykh kvaiakh* (Moscow, 1969), 17. G. Rakovskii, *Konets belykh: ot Dnepra do Bosfora* (Prague, 1921), 200–1; I. M. Kalinin, *Pod znamenem Vrangelia: zametki byvshego voennogo prokurora* (Leningrad, 1925), 214–16; G. Oudard, and D. Novik, D., *Les chevaliers mendiants* (Paris, 1928), 179–235.

[3] BAR, G. A. Orlov Collection (Diary of G. A. Orlov, 349).

[4] J. Bernachot, *Les Armées Françaises en Orient après l'armistice de 1918* (Paris, 1972), 70–1.

The Gallipoli experience also created a pattern in which military émigrés turned their backs on the world into which they had come and looked towards home, a stance which they maintained for the rest of their lives.

Wrangel was determined to keep his army together and to continue the struggle against the Bolsheviks. He believed that internal or external factors would soon undermine the Soviet government so as to make a new armed campaign against it possible. Wrangel and many around him also came to associate the army with the very existence of the Russian state, and felt that it was synonymous with Russia itself. The army therefore had to be preserved in order to save the little that was left of Russia.[5]

Wrangel's decision to preserve the army was supported by his most senior subordinates. Two of the most important of these were his Chief of Staff, General-of-Cavalry Pavel Nikolaevich Shatilov, and the commander of the First Army Corps of the Russian Army, General-of-Infantry Aleksandr Pavlovich Kutepov.

Thirty-nine years old, a man of unremarkable appearance but considerable talent, Shatilov came from a successful military family, both his father and grandfather having preceded him as generals. He was a highly intelligent man, who had qualified top of his class at the Russian General Staff Academy, but he was hated by many other officers, in part because those who disliked Wrangel but dared not express their dislike directed it instead at his Chief of Staff, and in part because Shatilov had an unfortunate disposition towards intrigue. Wrangel addressed Shatilov as 'Pavlusha', indicating that the relationship between the two was very close indeed. Of all Wrangel's generals Shatilov was probably the only one who could be called a friend as well as a colleague.

Kutepov, a youthful general of 38 years, cultivated an older image with a full beard in the style of Tsar Nicholas II. He lacked the intelligence of either Wrangel or Shatilov, but possessed a quite remarkable stubborness and self-discipline. At school he used to wake himself up in the middle of the night and go for walks in dark and scary places in order to build up his willpower.[6] His detractors liked to say that he was a martinet, who should never have been an officer but would have made a good sergeant-major.[7] Kutepov's commitment to the counter-revolutionary cause was unparalleled. During the February revolution, as seen in Chapter 1, he was the only senior officer to take active measures to put down the uprising in the

[5] *Russkie v Gallipoli: sbornik statei* (Berlin, 1923), 241.

[6] *Kutepov: sbornik statei* (Paris, 1934), 12.

[7] *Russkaia voennaia emigratsiia 20-kh—40-kh godov: dokumenty i materialy* (Moscow: 1998).

capital city, leading a detachment of troops which tried and failed to restore order.[8] He was then among the very first officers to join the Volunteer Army, and fought all the way through the Civil War to the final defeat in the Crimea. Kutepov was brutal but fair, and like Wrangel stressed the need to maintain the highest possible standards of moral behaviour in the army. During the Civil War both Wrangel and Kutepov acquired a reputation as fierce opponents of the ill-discipline which pervaded many White units, both using their powers to prevent pogroms and hang looters.[9] The emphasis both men placed on the value of discipline, and on moral values in general, was to be decisive in the course of events which unfolded in 1920 and 1921.

In order to preserve the army, Wrangel had to restructure it as soon as he arrived at Constantinople. The fighting in the Crimea had inflicted heavy casualties on the army, and one of Wrangel's first acts in Constantinople was to disband many rear and staff institutions which were no longer required.[10] This deprived many officers of their jobs, and these surplus officers were released from the service if deemed inessential. In particular, senior officers without posts and those who were medically unfit were pruned from the fighting force. Those who were discharged were forced to fend for themselves in Constantinople. Most eventually found their way out of Turkey, and moved to Yugoslavia or France. A dedicated few volunteered to stay with the army as ordinary soldiers. Major General M. M. Zinkevich, for instance, served in the ranks for a whole year before being appointed commander of the Alekseevskii Infantry Regiment in 1922. Such devotion to the cause was, however, rather unusual.

The new streamlined army consisted of three corps: the Don Cossack Corps, 23,000 men under General Abramov; the Kuban Cossack Corps, 12,000 men under General Fostikov; and the First Army Corps (which contained all the non-Cossack troops of the army), 29,000 men under General Kutepov. There was also a very small headquarters with Wrangel in Constantinople. The First Army Corps was the most cohesive of these units, in part because it contained a disproportionate number of officers. Several military schools also accompanied the army into exile. The officer cadets of these schools were among the most dedicated of the White

[8] *Kutepov: sbornik statei*, 159–78.

[9] P. N. Wrangel, *The Memoirs of General Wrangel* (London, 1930), 168–9, 239; J. Delage, *Koutepoff—la carrière militaire, l'exil, l'enlèvement* (Paris, 1930), 19, 41; *Kutepov: sbornik statei*, 15.

[10] COC, C 20 N 1154 (order, General Wrangel, no. 3817, 21 Dec. 1920).

troops, and were used as a sort of police force to keep order among the rest of the army.

As for the navy, Wrangel agreed with the French that the Russian Fleet would be handed over to France as security for the expense of providing aid to the army.[11] The fleet subsequently sailed to the Tunisian port of Bizerta, where it remained manned by skeleton Russian crews until October 1924, when France gave diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Union. The French then forced the Russian sailors to abandon their ships, which were handed over to the Soviets. A naval cadet school accompanied the fleet to Bizerta, and commissioned naval officers until it finally closed in 1925.[12] Wrangel's army also had a small air force, although it had lost all its planes. The pilots and ground crew of the air force were sent almost immediately to Yugoslavia, where they joined the Yugoslav army.

The reorganized Russian Army was distributed among various camps. Twenty thousand men were sent to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (Yugoslavia), which had agreed to accept a limited number of refugees. The First Army Corps was sent to Gallipoli; the Don Cossack Corps was parcelled out among various camps in the region of Chatalga, north west of Constantinople; and the Kuban Cossack Corps was moved to the island of Lemnos. All of these locations were controlled by the French Army, which took responsibility for providing the Russians with food and shelter.

Conditions in the army's camps were very harsh. This was especially true of the Chilingir camp near Chatalga, where cholera was rife and there was little shelter.[13] The troops of the First Army Corps were divided into two parts. One half was accommodated in the town of Gallipoli, which had been partly destroyed by the Royal Navy during the failed British First World War attack on Gallipoli. Most of the buildings in the town were damaged, and until they repaired them soldiers had to sleep in houses with no roofs and sometimes only two or three walls. The other half of the corps was deployed into a broad open valley about three miles north of the town, which the Russians eventually nicknamed 'The Valley of Roses and Death', supposedly because of the poisonous snakes

[11] A. I. Ushakov, 'Gallipoli: Die Weisse Armee in den Lagern', in K. Schlögel (ed.), *Der grosse Exodus: Die Russiche Emigration und ihre Zentren, 1917 bis 1941* (Munich, 1944) 23.

[12] The story of the fleet's stay in Bizerta is described in N. N. Knorring, *Sfaiat: ocherki iz zhizni Morskogo Korpusa v Afrike* (Paris, 1935).

[13] *Kazaki v Chataldzhe i na Lemnose v 1920/1921 gg.* (Belgrade, 1924), 18–24. Kalinin, *Pod znamenem*, 223–6.

which lurked in the rose bushes there. Initially the troops were placed in a muddy, empty field with no shelter apart from a few old tents. Some soldiers slept for two weeks under the open sky, and it rained every day.[14] Eventually the Russians constructed a large tent city which was linked to the town by a railway built by the Russians themselves (the railway waggons were pulled by donkeys rather than engines!). Rations were provided by the French Army, but were barely sufficient to sustain life. Charitable organizations, the most important of which was the American Red Cross, provided tents and medical aid, as well as supplementary rations for those most in need.[15]

In the first weeks of their exile the troops sold anything they could lay their hands on to better their conditions, and many deserted. Cossacks tore down telegraph poles for firewood, and robbed local inhabitants.[16] Wrangel and Kutepov believed that only the harshest discipline could restore order and put the troops in a position where they could work together to improve their conditions. Thus on 1 December 1920 Wrangel issued an order stating that the three corps were to organize courts-martial immediately. Courts of honour were also set up to uphold the moral rectitude and sense of honour of the officer corps, Wrangel stating that 'The Russian officer was always a knight.'[17]

The enforcement of discipline was harshest in the First Army Corps at Gallipoli. Kutepov noted that the Civil War had had a terrible effect on the morals of many officers, and was determined to restore the standards of discipline that had existed in the Imperial army.[18] He rapidly put a stop to the thefts from local inhabitants by ordering the execution of an officer convicted of robbing and murdering a shopkeeper. He demanded that officers and soldiers be arrested for the slightest infraction of discipline. Kutepov put special emphasis on the external forms of discipline, such as dress and saluting, believing that they set the tone for other behaviour and for the troops' self-image.[19] Offences such as being improperly dressed

[14] GARF, f. 5881, o. 1, d. 724, l. 18 (P. Ivlin, *Dnevnik*).

[15] *Russkie v Gallipoli*, 343–53. The activities of the American Red Cross are described in J. Hutchins, *The Wrangel Refugees: A Study of General Baron Peter N. Wrangel's Defeated White Russian Forces, both Military and Civilian, in Exile* (MA thesis, University of Louisville, 1972), 46–64.

[16] COC, C 20 N 1156 (Telegram, Broussaud to COC, no. 1441, 26 Nov. 1920; & Letter, Director Général Poste, Télégraphes et Téléphones, 28 Dec. 1920).

[17] HIA, WA, Box 99, File 6, 2 (Order, General Wrangel, no. 3776, 1 Dec. 1920).

[18] BAR, ROVS, Box 1, Folder 'A. P. Kutepov, Gallipoli' (Report, Kutepov to Wrangel, no. 0877, 12 Oct. 1921).

[19] *Russkie v Gallipoli*, 138; V. Kh. Davatz, and N. N. L'vov, *Russkaia Armiia na chuzhbine* (Belgrade, 1923), 84.

were likely to lead the offender to spend several days in one of the three guardrooms set up in the town of Gallipoli. This discipline was regarded by many of Kutepov's troops as petty and pointless, and utterly inappropriate given the circumstances. The troops' clothes were in tatters, they lived in dirt and squalor, and yet were expected to turn themselves out as if on parade. In consequence, Kutepov was feared and hated.[20] It is easy to see why.

Amazingly, little by little Kutepov's measures had the desired effect. Orders were obeyed, work carried out, appearance improved, theft and insubordination reduced. The emphasis on external form continually reminded troops that they were soldiers and not refugees, and that as such they had responsibilities and a home. This had a consequent effect on morale. Discipline meant that the troops could be organized for work, and hard work was a noted element of life at Gallipoli. Troops were put to work constructing shelters and bakeries. Sanitary commissions ensured that waste was properly disposed of, and the camp kept clean. Water supplies were improved by digging wells and repairing the local water pipes and reservoirs.[21] As a result of this, not merely were the troops kept busy, but the conditions of their life improved, and so did their morale.

Kutepov's method could be seen at work from the very first day at Gallipoli. On that day he apprehended an officer because his greatcoat was missing buttons, ordered his arrest, and sentenced him on the spot to several days in the guardroom. Several months later Kutepov met the officer again and asked him if he remembered why he had been arrested. He replied that it was because his greatcoat had been missing buttons, to which Kutepov said that this was not the real reason. He had been arrested because he had looked dejected and was obviously completely demoralized. By arresting the officer, Kutepov said, he hoped to anger him, and thereby instil some passion back into him and stir him out of his despondency. The officer had to admit that the strategy had worked, and that his morale had improved as a result.[22]

Even though conditions improved, life at Gallipoli was always harsh, especially as the rations provided by the French were kept to the bare minimum required to sustain life. One veteran noted that all day the

[20] GARF, f. 5881, o. 1, d. 154 (M. P., *Gallipoli*); GARF, f. 5881, o. 1, d. 261, l. 23 and 37 (A. Boltunov, *Povest' o tom, kak ia zhil, chto videl, chto dumal, i chto chustvoval v Gallipoli*); GARF, f. 5881, o. 2, d. 612, l. 13, 14 & 54 (V. Sukhanev, *Gallipoli*); BAR, G. A. Orlov Collection (Diary, 355).

[21] *Russkie v Gallipoli*, 106–14.

[22] GARF, f. 5881, o. 2, d. 612 (V. Sukhanev, *Gallipoli*).

soldiers thought of little but how to get food.[23] 'I can openly say', wrote Captain Orlov in his diary, 'that every day I do not eat enough and am hungry.'[24] Yet to some degree the harshness of the conditions served to cement the troops together, as they began to regard Gallipoli as an ordeal shared and overcome.

Word of Gallipoli soon leaked out to the émigré press. The influential Miliukov denounced the Gallipoli camp as 'Kutepia' in his paper *Poslednie Novosti* (implying that conditions there were similar to those in Soviet Russia, which was nicknamed 'Sovdepia'). He also called the brutal army regime there 'Kutepovshchina', a form of language with particularly negative connotations. For Miliukov and others on the political left, Kutepovshchina symbolized all that was wrong with the reactionary militarism of the Whites. The truth of the Gallipoli experience suggests otherwise. What Gallipoli demonstrated was the positive difference that genuine discipline made. Whereas Miliukov and many historians since have proposed that the major failure of the Whites was their refusal to endorse liberal political opinions which could win them popular support, others have countered that the real problem with the Whites was a lack of firm leadership on the military side, which led to gross ill-discipline among White troops and so alienated the Russian population. The historian Jonathan Smele, for instance, has noted that the fundamental failing of Admiral Kolchak was that he was a dictator who 'did not dictate'.[25] The brutality of Wrangel and Kutepov may have been illiberal, but it maintained order.

The difference between Kutepov's discipline and the lax command of the Cossack Corps soon became evident. By spring 1921, even General Charpy, commander of the French Occupation Corps in Constantinople, who was no friend of the Russians, acknowledged the improvement in morale and discipline in the First Army Corps, saying that 'the results are real'.[26] No such improvement was visible among the troops of the two Cossack corps. Admittedly, the Cossack troops were always hard to control. At Chatalga, for instance, they refused to use the latrines even when ordered to do so, thereby contributing to the terrible conditions in which they lived.[27] However, the low morale of the Cossacks was also due

[23] V. Dushkin, *Zabytye* (Paris, 1983), 105.
[24] BAR, G. A. Orlov Collection (Diary, 386).
[25] J. D. Smele, *Civil War in Siberia: the Anti-Bolshevik Government of Admiral Kolchak, 1918–1920* (Cambridge, 1996), 671.
[26] COC, C 20 N 1154 (Letter, Charpy to War Minister, 15 Feb. 1921).
[27] *Kazaki v Chataldzhe*, 22.

to a failure of leadership by their officers, who failed to enforce the kind of stern discipline demanded by Kutepov, keep their troops busy, or set an example. Some officers were actually among the first to desert.[28] The French commandant on Lemnos, General Broussaud, criticized the Cossack command as 'feeble from all points of view',[29] an opinion shared even by some of the Cossack officers.[30] Wrangel himself blamed Cossack officers for the poor morale of their troops, complaining that they were too distant from their men, and had taken all the best accommodation for themselves. To rectify this problem Wrangel ordered subalterns to share their troops' accommodation.[31] This sort of concern for the ordinary soldier made Wrangel immensely popular among his men.

Meanwhile, relations between the French and the Russians were breaking down irretrievably. This was primarily because the French were determined to dissolve the Russian Army, while the Russians were equally determined to keep it in being. The French insisted that the army no longer existed, that its members were refugees, not soldiers, and that they should obey the orders of French officers not of Russian ones. In January 1921, Charpy ordered the Don Cossack Corps to move from its camps around Chatalga to Lemnos. This infuriated Wrangel as the order was given without consulting him, and he interpreted it as a clear attack on his prerogatives. By this point, moreover, the Cossacks were in a state of mutiny. Rumours abounded that conditions on Lemnos were even worse than those at Chatalga, and on the night of 12–13 January troops of the Kaledin Regiment revolted, and shots were exchanged between French and Russian troops, wounding two Frenchmen. Two Cossack squadrons, including their officers, fled their camp and deserted. The next day order was restored, and the Cossacks eventually agreed to move to Lemnos, but Franco-Russian relations never recovered.[32]

In mid-December 1920 the French government decided to enforce its policy that the Russian Army should be disbanded, and General Charpy was entrusted with putting this policy into effect. France's preferred option for dispersing the Russian soldiers was to repatriate them to the Soviet Union. To encourage them to go home, the French government decided to stop feeding them. On 8 January 1921 Charpy received a letter

[28] GARF, f. 5881, o. 2, d. 273 (V. Bunin, *Begstvo iz lageria Chataldzhi*).
[29] COC, C 20 N 1154 (Letter, Broussaud to Gen. Cdt COC, 150/5, 30 Dec. 1920).
[30] *Russkaia voennaia emigratsiia*, 525–9.
[31] ENA, C 7 N 2210, Dossier 2 (Order no. 61, General Wrangel, 21 Feb. 1921).
[32] COC, C 20 N 1156 (Letter from the Russian Liaison Officer to the Commandant of French troops at Hadim-Kuey, 15 Jan. 1921).

from Paris announcing that he should cease distributing rations on 1 February. Many of the Russians blamed Charpy personally for this harsh policy, but in fact he denounced the order as 'a deplorable gesture, inhumane and impolitic',[33] although he nevertheless passed it on to the Russians. Eventually he was able to persuade Paris to cancel the order.

France also sought to reduce the number of Russians in the camps by recruiting them into the Foreign Legion. This met considerable resistance from the Russian High Command, which did all it could to restrain its men from volunteering.[34] As a result, the French were not able to recruit as many men as they had hoped, and between November 1920 and April 1922 only 2,437 Russians joined the Foreign Legion.[35] The efforts to persuade soldiers to accept repatriation to the Soviet Union were more successful. The French government ordered Charpy to prepare a boat to repatriate volunteers, regardless of whether agreement was reached with the Soviet Union to guarantee their safety.[36] In addition, Charpy was informed that the Brazilian government had agreed to take 10,000 refugees, and efforts were made to find volunteers to go to Brazil.[37] Charpy arranged ships to Russia, and the first repatriations to the Soviet Union took place on 16 February 1921, when 3,285 volunteers left by boat for Novorossiisk.[38] Nearly all of these were Cossacks, whose morale had by now been so undermined by the conditions of life in the camps that their fear of the Soviets was outweighed by the desire to escape from Lemnos.

In March 1921 the French government decided that the issue of disbanding the Russian Army should be immediately and finally settled. On 11 March 1921, the government sent a telegram to Constantinople in which it announced that France would be ceasing all provisioning of the Russians, and the Russians must choose at once between three options: returning to Russia, resettlement in Brazil, or finding work to maintain themselves.[39] The last was an impractical option given the lack of jobs for foreigners in Constantinople, and Brazil was immensely unpopular with the Russians, since they were only offered work as the lowliest of plantation labourers. The choice was really one of starvation or repatriation.

33 ENA, C 7 N 2210, Dossier 1 (Letter, Charpy to War Minister, 3109/3, 22 Jan. 1921).
34 HIA, WA, Box 138, File 9, pp. 53, 91 (orders, General Abramov, no. 9, 9 Dec. 1920; no. 25, 20 Dec. 1920).
35 Bernachot, *Les Armées Françaises*, 128.
36 COC, C 20 N 1154 (Telegram, Briand to Charpy, 3250/3, 4 Feb. 1921).
37 Ibid. (Letter, Chef du Service de Santé to Charpy).
38 Ibid. (Letter, Charpy to Pellé, 3339/3, 17 February 1921).
39 Ibid. (Telegram, Briand to Charpy, 11 March 1921).

The issuance of this ultimatum was a decisive moment. It created a wave of indignation against the French, which developed into a general contempt of everything associated with Western Europe, and correspondingly an elevation of everything Russian. The Russians had regarded the French as their allies, and so now regarded the French behaviour as betrayal. 'Everybody is unanimously cursing the French', wrote one officer in his diary.[40] 'Now you can see among us', wrote another, 'a change in mood and tastes and in our attitude towards Europe . . . there is no more servility or rapturous worship of it. The Russian is growing up in his own eyes and has already outgrown the European in him.' Europhilia, he claimed, had been replaced by Russophilia—'In the eyes of thinking Russians, Europe in general and France in particular have lost their authority as ideologically advanced countries.'[41] This had long-term repercussions, as it increased the hostility later shown by Russian émigrés towards the West and Western ideas.

The actual implementation of the ultimatum varied in different camps. At Gallipoli the French seem to have contented themselves with advertising the choices on posters, but on Lemnos the French commandant, General Broussaud, pursued his orders with zeal and enthusiasm. Broussaud deliberately kept conditions on Lemnos hard in order to provide an incentive for the Cossacks to accept repatriation. He objected strongly to the efforts of the representative of the American Red Cross, Captain Macnab, to improve living conditions. He rejected Macnab's offer to set up a tuberculosis sanatorium, and accused him of providing a military school with 'a completely unnecessary tent'.[42] (In an equally insensitive statement, the French senior medical officer at Gallipoli doubted that the Russians in the tuberculosis sanatorium there were really ill, and accused them of using it solely to enjoy 'a rest by the seaside'.[43]) To prevent Cossack officers on Lemnos from persuading their troops not to leave, Broussaud sent out his own officers to confront individual Cossacks and get volunteers, telling the Russians that no other country was willing to take them and that their safety was guaranteed, which was far from the truth. While this was going on, a threatening gunboat patrolled the coast in sight of the camp.[44] As a result 6,135 troops agreed to return to Russia, and left on ships on 29 March and 2 April 1921.

40 GARF, f. 5881, o. 2, d. 612, l. 71 (V. Sukhanev, *Gallipoli*).
41 Ibid. o. 2, d. 261, l. 102 & 119 (A. Boltunov, *Povest'*).
42 COC, C 20 N 1154 (Letter, Broussaud to Charpy, 193/5, 5 Apr. 1921).
43 COC, C 7 N 2210 (Report, Major Butin, 12 July 1921).
44 Rakovskii, *Konets belykh*, 264; *Kazaki v Chataldzhe*, 97–101.

Another 3,435 men volunteered to go to Brazil. The fate of those who returned to Russia is unclear. The rank and file Cossacks appear to have been allowed to return home, while the officers were detained in concentration camps awaiting 'further orders' from Moscow.[45] What happened to them thereafter is not known.

After this, repatriations ceased because the Soviet government refused to take any more returnees, except for some 3,000 men who went to Baku in June and July 1921 to take up an offer to work in the oil industry there.[46] Thereafter the only option provided to those Russians seeking to leave the camps was to go to Greece. From May 1921 onwards, Athens allowed individual Russians to enter the country, but those who did so went entirely at their own risk with no guarantees of support. To entice Cossacks to leave Lemnos and go to Greece, the French offered new boots to any who agreed to go, while at the same time deliberately withholding the boots from those staying in the camps, even though many had no decent footwear.[47] Such ethically dubious tactics by the French did not endear them to the Russian command. Approximately 2,500 Cossacks took up the offer to go to Greece, but it was later reported that many had difficulty finding work, and that about 90 per cent of them had contracted malaria. By 1922 their situation was described by the headquarters of the Don Cossack Corps as 'tragic', and many subsequently fled from Greece to Yugoslavia, where they were allowed to rejoin the army.[48]

Nearly all those who agreed to leave the camps for the Soviet Union, Brazil, or Greece were Cossacks, which is testimony to the higher morale and discipline of the First Army Corps. The Gallipoli troops' morale was boosted by a wide variety of cultural activities which were developed from the spring of 1921 onwards. The army's leaders encouraged the formation of cultural societies, artists' groups, and lecture courses on subjects such as literature, mathematics, history, and geography. Such activities failed to stir the troops of the two Cossack corps, proving far more popular among the comparatively well-educated men of the First Army Corps. At Gallipoli churches were built, a football league set up, and theatres built in camp and in town.[49] In this way some soldiers began to feel that

[45] *Russkaia voennaia emigratsiia*, 352–3.
[46] Bernachot, *Les Armées Françaises*, 131.
[47] HIA, WA, Box 139, File 11, 1095, 1449 (Order, Colonel Sitnikov, no. 1449, 31 May 1921; letter, Abramov to Major Brenne, no. 1531, 18 Aug. 1921).
[48] *Kazaki za granitsei, 1921–1925 gg.* (Belgrade, 1925), 23.
[49] *Russkie v Gallipoli*, 235–330.

the Gallipoli camp represented a 'Russia in miniature', that there was among the troops a revival of interest in Russian culture and traditions. 'I am in Russia', exclaimed one officer on arriving at Gallipoli from Lemnos, 'With the loss of the Crimea, it seemed . . . that it had died . . . but I, arriving in Gallipoli, really found myself in Russia itself.'[50] Some officers claimed that, deprived of their homeland, they came to realise how important that homeland was to them, and tried therefore to get in contact with it in the only way possible—through culture.[51]

As a result of the improved discipline, better living conditions, the cultural activities, and the existence of a common enemy in the French, the Russian soldiers at Gallipoli (who now referred to themselves as 'Gallipoliitsy') began to rally around their commanders. One officer, A. Boltunov, wrote in his diary on 26 September 1921, that Kutepov's severity had been justified by its results—'The Gallipoliitsy are saying to themselves: "it had to be so".'[52] General Kutepov, previously feared and hated, was by the summer of 1921 deeply respected. 'All the officers are on General Kutepov's side', wrote Captain Orlov on 10 September 1921, who just a few months earlier had commented that 'Everybody is cursing Kutepov with one voice.'[53] The corps commander was especially admired by the younger officers and cadets, among whom he acquired a moral influence which he was to retain for the rest of his life.

The one thing which did not improve at Gallipoli was Franco–Russian relations. The French commandant at Gallipoli, Colonel Thomassen, was more diplomatic than General Broussaud on Lemnos, but the Russians were uncompromising in defending their prerogatives. Kutepov infuriated the French by insisting on the right of one of his officers to challenge a French officer to a duel over a perceived insult to his wife,[54] and by executing a Russian officer accused of spying for the French.[55]

This unyielding attitude came straight from the top. Wrangel considered that the French had betrayed the Russians, and were without honour. He made this plain at a reception at the British embassy in Constantinople, at which he ostentatiously refused to shake the hand of

[50] GARF, f. 5881, o. 2, d. 261, l. 7 (A. Boltunov, *Povest'*).
[51] *Russkie v Gallipoli*, 434. GARF, f. 5881, o. 2, d. 612, l. 177 (V. Sukhanev, *Gallipoli*).
[52] GARF, f. 5881, o. 2, d. 261, l. 118 (A. Boltunov, *Povest'*); for similar views, see GARF, f. 5881, o. 1, d. 724, l. 19 (P. Ivlin, *Dnevnik*); GARF, f. 5881, o. 2, d. 612, l. 126 (V. Sukhanev, *Gallipoli*); I. Opishnia, 'Gallipoliiskii Kutep-Pasha', *Vozrozhdenie*, 49 (1956), 134.
[53] BAR, G. A. Orlov Collection (diary, 355, 439).
[54] HIA, WA, Box 139, File 11, 1411–1415 (letter, Thomassen to Kutepov, no. 1669, 8 Aug. 1921, and Kutepov to Thomassen, no. 7777, 11 Aug. 1921).
[55] COC, C 20 N 1156 (Rapport).

General Charpy, and told the senior British officer present, General Harrington: 'General, it is indeed painful for me to abuse your hospitality by refusing to greet this gentleman, but he knows exactly the reason for my behaviour, and he must know that I am ready to offer him satisfaction wherever and whenever he wishes.'[56] Such gestures satisfied honour, but they were hardly diplomatic. It was behaviour like this that led Charpy to complain bitterly of Wrangel's 'manifest and arrogant opposition'.[57] This episode also typifies the White officers' inability to find friends and sympathizers outside their own narrow circle. Their notion of honour meant that they tended to be diplomatically inept.

Russian determination eventually triumphed over French policy. In the middle of May 1921, the French offered to transport 1,000 troops to Bulgaria, after an offer by the Bulgarian government to take that many refugees. Despite the improvements in life at Gallipoli, conditions there remained so harsh that volunteers were easily found. In consequence, Kutepov decided that the time had come to clear his corps of the weak-willed and to reinforce his authority. He issued an order giving all troops three days to decide whether they wished to leave the army. All those who wished to leave could do so at the end of three days, but those who chose to stay would be obliged to accept military discipline thereafter and any future attempts to leave would be treated as desertion.[58] As a result of the order some 2,000 men left the First Army Corps, but the great majority chose to remain. This was regarded as a ringing endorsement of the army's leadership, and as a step to rebuilding the army on the basis of the strongest-willed and most morally sound elements.[59]

By summer 1921, therefore, the Russian Army was not merely still intact, in defiance of Paris's wishes, but at Gallipoli at least it had been reinvigorated. Relations between the Russians and the French sank to the level of mutual loathing. When the Russians had first arrived at Constantinople they had handed over most of their weapons to the French, but kept several thousand rifles and machine-guns. The Russians then resisted all efforts by the French to make them hand over these weapons, and made it clear that they would not hesitate to fight for their survival. Kutepov's staff secretly drew up plans in complete earnest to march on Constantinople and seize the city, and the First Army Corps carried out ostentatious military training and night alerts to convince the

[56] A. Wrangel, *General Wrangel: Russia's White Crusader* (London, 1990), 226.
[57] COC, C 20 N 1154 (report, *Sur l'attitude de Général Wrangel*).
[58] HIA, WA, Box 138, File 10, 1052 (Order no. 323, General Kutepov, 23 May 1921).
[59] Davatz and L'vov, *Russkaia Armiia na Chuzhbine*, 87.

French of their willingness to fight if necessary.[60] These activities had the desired effect. French plans made in May 1921 to seize the Russians' weapons by force were abandoned in the knowledge that such an endeavour would meet armed resistance, and the threat to end the distribution of food was never repeated. The Russians drew the conclusion that their unity and cohesiveness had saved them, and that such cohesion could protect them in similar situations where others did not have their best interests at heart. This was to be an important element of the Gallipoli legend.

Despite this success in resisting French efforts to disband the army, initial hopes of renewing the armed campaign against the Soviets had been shattered, as it was clear that nobody was willing to help with such a campaign. Wrangel was forced to admit that it might not be possible to preserve the army as a standing force, and that he should consider methods of dissolving it, but he was determined to do so in such a way as to keep some structure alive in order that it could be re-formed should a suitable opportunity arise. To achieve this, it was necessary to move the army out of Gallipoli and Lemnos and find it a new home where its members could support themselves. In March 1921, therefore, Wrangel sent Shatilov to Belgrade to ask the Yugoslav government to accept formed troops of the Russian Army into its country.[61] Shatilov met the Yugoslav Prime Minister who agreed to allow several thousand Russian troops into Yugoslavia with their command structure intact, on condition that the Russians handed over some of the money of the former Russian state which they held to help pay for their support.[62] After further talks, Wrangel's representative in Belgrade, General N. D. Pototskii, persuaded the Yugoslavs to take an additional 4,000 men to carry out road-building projects.[63] Under these agreements, the Yugoslavs accepted 5,000 Russians into their border service, 6,000–7,000 to work on road-building projects, and an additional 8,000 to be supported for six months by funds provided by the Russians.[64] After the necessary funds were found, the

[60] V. K. Vitkovskii, 'Konstantinopol'skii pokhod', *Rossiia*, nos. 4766, 4767, Dec. 1951. ENA, C 7 N 2210, Dossier 3 (Report of 3-ième bureau, HQ COC, 17 May 1921); HIA, WA, Box 138, File 9, 724 (Report, General Kutepov, no. 0410, 19 Apr. 1921).
[61] Shatilov's negotiations with the Yugoslav and Bulgarian governments are described in P. N. Shatilov, 'Memoirs', 1112–51.
[62] HIA, WA, Box 139, File 10, 656 (Letter, Shatilov to Minister of War of Yugoslavia, no. 1229, Apr. 1921), and p. 682 (Telegram, Shatilov to Chertkov, no. 2001/8, 17 April 1921).
[63] Ibid. p. 801 (Telegram, Pototskii to Shatilov, 26 Apr. 1921).
[64] Ibid. p. 913 (Circular, General Wrangel, no. 6352, 10 May 1921).

first Russian contingents were able to move to Yugoslavia in May 1921. An additional agreement was later reached to provide work for another 4,000 men to carry out railway construction work, provided that the cost of the move of the troops to Yugoslavia was paid for by the Russians.[65] As a result of all these agreements, some 25,000 men of the Russian Army found refuge in Yugoslavia.

Shatilov also undertook negotiations with the Bulgarian government, and in June 1921 the Bulgarians agreed to allow a first group of 2,000 men of the Russian Army into their country. The Chief of Staff of the Bulgarian Army, Colonel Topaldzhikov, agreed that the troops entering Bulgaria should preserve their military organization and command structure. All troops were permitted to wear uniform, and unit commanders were allowed to carry firearms.[66] A detachment of 2,000 men under General Gusel'shchikov moved to Bulgaria on the basis of this agreement. Negotiations with the Bulgarian government continued after this, and several more agreements were reached in the summer of 1921. In an agreement of July 1921, Bulgaria stated that it was willing to accept a further 7,000 men under the same terms as General Gusel'shchikov's detachment on condition that $300,000 were provided to pay for their upkeep.[67] After this money was found a treaty was signed in August 1921 with regard to the transfer of Russian troops to Bulgaria.[68] Another agreement to allow even more Russians into Bulgaria was reached in November 1921. All in all, some 19,000 men of the Russian Army found refuge in Bulgaria. Negotiations with the Czech government also resulted in places for 1,000 Cossacks being found in Czechoslovakia.

The troops of the Russian Army left their camps at Gallipoli and Lemnos for these locations in various groups between August and December 1921, and by December 1921 the only men remaining in the area of Constantinople was a detachment of 2,000 men at Gallipoli. This last contingent eventually went to Hungary in 1923. A new life for the troops of the Russian Army had begun.

As 1922 opened, the army of 100,000 which had fled the Crimea a little over a year before had been reduced to about 45,000 men, divided

[65] HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 11, File 44 (Letter, Pototskii to Miller, 22 Sept. 1921).
[66] HIA, WA, Box 139, File 11, 1128–37 (Letter, Viazmitinov to Topaldzhikov, no. 362, 7 June 1921), and pp. 1161–6 (Letter, Topaldzhikov to Viazmitinov, no. 768, 15 June 1921).
[67] HIA, WA, Box 139, File 11, pp. 1245–6 (Telegram, Viazmitinov to Miller, no. 462, 1 July 1921).
[68] BAR, ROVS, Box 166, Folder 'Bulgaria 1922' (Addition to Treaty, 18 Aug. 1922).

between 4 countries. Nonetheless, an organized cadre had been maintained against overwhelming odds. This was a development of profound importance for the inter-war Russian emigration as a whole. Perhaps more significant than the army's physical survival was the myth that developed around events at Gallipoli. Many felt that the army had been not merely preserved physically, but more importantly had been morally resurrected. They had come off the boats from the Crimea utterly defeated. A year later the army left Gallipoli numerically weaker, but in the eyes of many who were there, spiritually stronger. Many veterans would later write of Gallipoli as something almost supernatural. As the representative of a Russian émigré charity at Gallipoli, Sergei Resnichenko, wrote in a report to his office in Paris: 'At Gallipoli a Russian national miracle occurred.'[69] This theme of the 'Gallipoli Miracle' is echoed in scores of memoirs, articles, and letters by Gallipoli veterans. According to one such writer 'Gallipoli is the cradle of the resurrection of the Russian soul',[70] a theme echoed by the official history of the First Army Corps, which stated that at Gallipoli the troops underwent an 'enormous spiritual rebirth'.[71] The troops supposedly not merely bonded into a stronger whole, but also regained faith in the need for continued struggle and the inevitability of eventual victory.[72] Gallipoli came to encapsulate the spirit of 'irreconcilability'—the concept that no matter what happened and no matter how much time elapsed, émigrés should not compromise with the Soviet regime and should continue the struggle against it.

Within a few years Gallipoli had acquired a legendary status. Histories, memoirs, poems, even a play,[73] were written about it. This mythology was promoted by the Society of Gallipolians established by General Kutepov just before he departed Gallipoli in November 1921. The Society kept veterans of the First Army Corps in touch with one another as they dispersed across Europe, and sought to maintain the 'Gallipoli spirit' among them.

On arrival at Constantinople the army's leaders still hoped to use it again as a fighting force to renew the struggle against the Bolsheviks. During 1921 they began to realize that this was not possible in the short

[69] *Kutepov: sbornik statei*, 278.
[70] Letter by P. Skarzhinskii, *Gallipoli*, 1 (1923), 3.
[71] *Russkie v Gallipoli*, 272.
[72] BAR, ROVS, Box 88 (V. Larionov, *Dobrovol'cheskaia belaia ideia v izgnanii*); B. N. Sergeevskii, 'Gallipoli', *Vestnik Pervopokhodnika*, 37/38 (Oct./Nov. 1964), 22.
[73] A. Rennikov, *Gallipoli* (Sofia, 1925).

term, and began to view the army as a cadre around which a future Russian army could be built. As such it would have to exemplify all that was best about Russian military traditions, not just for the benefit of its own members, but also for émigré society in general. This idea was based on a belief that the catastrophe of the Revolution and defeat in the Civil War was due to a spiritual failure by the army and the Russian people as a whole. The army was now expected to reforge its spiritual values, especially those of discipline and honour, to make up for this failure. The army began to redefine itself as a moral élite, an 'order of knights', a 'knightly order of monks',[74] bearing moral values and the traditions of Russia along with its arms. This view of themselves as an order of knights was to be a vital part of the self-image of the White military émigrés for years thereafter.

The language used about Gallipoli, especially the knightly imagery, reveals something about the mentality of the White officer corps that is also relevant to the earlier period of the Civil War. Whereas Russian intellectuals, especially those on the political left, tended to idealize reason and belonged firmly to the Enlightenment tradition of rationalism, Russian army officers seemed to fit more into the Romantic tradition, and were attracted by the revival of mediaeval notions of honour and chivalry which swept across Europe in the late nineteenth century. Their opponents in the Civil War were driven by a lust for power and a desire to institute a new social and economic order, while the Whites looked at their struggle in moral, not practical terms. In effect, although they were fighting the same war, the Reds and the Whites were fighting about entirely different things.

As with all myths it is of course necessary to treat the claims about Gallipoli with some circumspection. It is hard to penetrate the official Gallipoli mythology, as spread through publications printed by the First Army Corps and the Society of Gallipolians, to find the views of the rank and file. Certainly, the supposed moral resurrection of the First Army Corps was not as absolute as some claimed. Kutepov would not have been obliged to issue his order giving his troops three days to decide whether they wished to stay in the army if there had been no morale problems at all. Some 21 per cent of the First Army Corps left its ranks during the year at Gallipoli,[75] and it is probable that many of those who stayed did so primarily because the alternatives were so unattractive, rather than because they were totally dedicated to the cause. In addition, the Gallipoli 'miracle' excludes Cossacks among whom no such moral rebirth took

[74] *Kutepov: sbornik statei*, 137. [75] *Russkie v Gallipoli*, 430.

place, and whose morale on Lemnos sank lower and lower as time went on. An alternative perspective of events is given in a report to Paris written by General Charpy in which he said that most of Wrangel's troops would gladly have left the army had they not been forcibly prevented from doing so.[76] Memoirs of veterans who later returned to the Soviet Union also provide an alternative view of what happened in the year in Turkey. One veteran, Dmitrii Meisner, specifically denied that any form of moral resurrection took place at Gallipoli,[77] and Boris Aleksandrovskii, a military doctor at Gallipoli, noted in his memoirs the prevalence of suicide there.[78] Nevertheless both Aleksandrovskii and I. M. Kalinin, another officer who returned to Soviet Russia, confirmed that many troops at Gallipoli did rally around General Kutepov, and that it was there that the ideology of the White military in exile was formed.[79] Diaries written by soldiers at Gallipoli also testify to the renewal of their spirit there. 'Strong in spirit, deeply loving its motherland, the Russian Army has held out a whole year', wrote P. Ivlin in his diary, 'Day by day the Russian soldier has grown in spirit here at Gallipoli.'[80]

A balanced assessment might be that during 1921 the army split into two—one group which fell into despair and left the army, and a second group which stayed with the army and rallied ever closer together. The official version of the Gallipoli miracle is echoed in numerous memoirs by officers who served there. Whether or not Gallipoli really was the special experience that was claimed, many certainly came to believe that it was. In a sense the mythology made it real. To many soldiers Gallipoli was the most vital experience of their lives, a terrible ordeal shared and overcome together in which they took immense pride. 'Our white Russian Army has still not died', wrote one officer in 1923, 'It has survived the machinations of our enemies, our physical deprivations and the spiritual sufferings of those thousands of Russians who came here from harsh, but eternally beloved, Gallipoli.'[81] The Gallipoli myth determined veterans' self-image, and shaped much of their future behaviour.

[76] COC, C 20 N 1156 (Rapport).
[77] D. Meisner, *Mirazhi i deistvitel'nost'* (Moscow, 1966), 108.
[78] Aleksandrovskii, *Iz perezhitogo*, 37.
[79] Ibid. 31–2. Kalinin, *Pod znamenem*, 291.
[80] GARF, f. 5881, o. 1, d. 724, l. 4 (P. Ivlin, *Dnevnik*); see also GARF, f. 5881, o. 2, d. 261, l. 71 & 95 (A. Boltunov, *Povest'*); GARF, f. 5881, o. 2, d. 612, l. 87 & 177 (V. Sukhanev, *Gallipoli*). For a completely different point of view, see GARF, f. 5881, o. 1, d. 154 (M. P., *Gallipoli*).
[81] HIA, Miller Collection, Box 16, File 22 (Letter, unknown officer to V. Kh. Davatz, 15 Apr. 1923).

The survival of the army as an organized body also ensured that its members were not cast adrift on their own in a hostile outside world. As one veteran wrote, 'If there had been no General Kutepov, there would have been no Russian Gallipoli, the Russian Army would not have survived, and there would have been only homeless refugees, and, consequently, the fate of the whole Russian emigration would have been entirely different.'[82] The subsequent history of the army in exile shows that this conclusion is accurate.

[82] V. Kravchenko, *Drozdovtsy ot Iass do Gallipoli* (Munich, 1975), 340.

4

The Army, the State, and Society

The reinvigorated soldiers at Gallipoli were certain that they were the legitimate representatives of Russian statehood, and that they were the rightful leaders of the Russian emigration. Other émigrés, however, did not share the soldiers' high opinion of themselves. Throughout 1921 the army and other émigré factions conducted a bitter struggle for control of the funds of the former Russian state and for political power within the emigration. These struggles had significant repercussions for the humanitarian and cultural institutions which came to dominate émigré life. The in-fighting also left the emigration rudderless and divided, and left many members of the army feeling that their rightful role had been usurped and the welfare of thousands of veterans arbitrarily disregarded. Russian officers had never had a particularly high opinion of intellectuals and politicians. The events of 1921 reinforced their suspicions that nobody outside the military could be trusted, and confirmed their belief that the army must be maintained at all costs.

While he governed the Crimea, Wrangel was recognized by the French government (although not by the British) as being the de facto head of state of Russia as a whole. Fortified by such international recognition, Wrangel considered the government and army which he brought with him out of the Crimea to be the true representatives of Russian statehood. Cossacks also brought their own state institutions into exile with them, headed by the Atamans of the Don, Kuban, Terek, and Astrakhan Cossack Hosts, each of whom had beneath him a small 'government'. The other major state institutions in exile were the Russian embassies. In 1921 the Soviet regime was not internationally recognized. Russia maintained embassies in many countries, but the ambassadors were still those appointed by the Provisional Government. Some, especially the ambassador to the USA, Boris Bakhmeteff, controlled large sums of official money, estimated at several million dollars. Crucially, however, because the ambassadors had been appointed by the Provisional Government, not by Wrangel, they felt under no special obligation to obey him.

A plethora of groups of varying political orientations, and numerous émigré social and humanitarian organizations were considered to make up

émigré 'society'. Émigré charities included the Russian Red Cross, which accompanied the Russian Army, and the *Zemstvo* and Town Relief Committee, known as *Zemgor*, which had operated in Russia before the Bolshevik seizure of power and was closely associated with liberal and socialist political groups. Indeed, part of the problem in providing humanitarian aid to members of the Russian Army after the evacuation of the Crimea was that there were too many organizations providing relief, and no centralized control or coordination.[1] The need for such centralized control was widely recognized, but the representatives of the army and of 'society' could not agree who should exercise it. As a result the provision of aid became highly politicized.

The evacuation of the Crimea caused many Russian émigrés to reconsider their attitude towards the Bolshevik regime in Russia. Miliukov's New Tactics and the ideas of *Smena Vekh*, as covered in Chapter 2, were the most obvious manifestations of this. Though neither the New Tactics nor *Smena Vekh* won much support among émigrés, they were symptomatic of a change in attitudes which made it very difficult for the army to gain support among the emigration as a whole. Many émigré leaders felt that their priority should now be providing humanitarian aid to their fellow exiles, and they were therefore unwilling to use the scarce financial resources available to the emigration to keep the army in existence. Even more decisively, even though in the Crimea it had recognized him as head of state, the French government was not willing to let Wrangel dispose of the assets of the former Russian state. Struggle for control of these resources between Wrangel and other émigré leaders was to play a key role in determining the future of the army and of the wider emigration.

At the centre of the divisions which arose between the army and the leaders of émigré 'society' was a difference of opinion on the merits of 'statehood' (*gosudarstvennost'*) and 'public opinion' (*obshchestvennost'*). The conflict of these two ideas revealed a deep chasm in thinking between the Russian officer corps and the Russian intelligentsia. The officers of the Russian Army believed in 'statehood', and often referred to themselves as 'state-minded people'. This implied a belief in a strong state, and also in the primacy of state interests. They believed that without a strong state Russia was ungovernable, and hated the Bolsheviks for what was seen as their deliberate destruction of the Russian state in 1917. By

[1] For a list of organizations involved in providing aid to refugees, see J. A. Hutchins, *The Wrangel Refugees: a Study of General Baron Peter N. Wrangel's Defeated White Russian Forces, both Military and Civilian, in Exile*, MA thesis (Louisville, Tex., 1972), 45.

contrast the Russian intelligentsia tended to dislike the state, regarding it as reactionary and incompetent. They felt that the state should surrender its responsibilities to what they called 'society', by which they meant not all the people of Russia, merely the most educated section of it, in other words themselves. In the context of exile, this meant that the officers of the Russian Army, noting that the army was the sole remaining institution of state, and that Wrangel was the last recognized head of state, believed that the army must be preserved in order to preserve the state, and also that the army was the natural leader of the emigration, to which 'society' should defer. They despised 'public opinion' as a self-serving concept used by left-wing politicians to justify their own rule. By contrast, émigré intellectuals felt that Wrangel and the army should defer to 'society'.[2]

After their arrival at Constantinople, Wrangel sent his Prime Minister Aleksandr Krivoshein, his Foreign Minister Petr Struve, and his Finance Minister Mikhail Bernatskii, to Paris to plead the army's case with the French government, and to obtain control of funds which were owned by the former Russian state and which were held in foreign banks and property abroad.[3] But Wrangel's ministers were unable to carry out this task. In January 1921 Wrangel's official representative in Paris, the former White commander in the far north of Russia, Lieutenant General E. K. Miller, told Wrangel that he was unable to carry out any negotiations with the French government, because the French would not recognize that the army existed. Wrangel was at a disadvantage, because in Constantinople he was too far from the centre of power in Paris. By the time that Krivoshein, Struve, and Bernatskii reached there, Wrangel's political opponents in Paris had already had several weeks to lobby the French government and persuade it to abandon him. The French Prime Minister Aristide Briand wrote to the former leader of the Provisional Government, Prince G. E. L'vov, who was now the head of *Zemgor*, that he could not accept the claims of Wrangel's representatives to administer the assets of the former Russian state. Humanitarian aid for refugees, wrote Briand, should be concentrated in the hands of *Zemgor*.[4] Briand wanted to disband the Russian Army and so did not want Wrangel to get control of Russian state property which he could use to support the army.

Meanwhile, the Cossack Atamans soon came into conflict with Wrangel. Political agitation by left-wing politicians among the Cossacks

[2] For instance, HIA, WA, Box 141, File 16, 97–100 (Letter, Wrangel to Burtsev, no. 100, 20 Apr. 1921).

[3] *Obshchee Delo*, 138 (30 Nov. 1920), 1.

[4] HIA, WA, Box 139, File 9, 248 (Letter, Briand to L'vov, 29 Jan. 1921).

made the Atamans feel that they needed to make concessions to the left in order to preserve their own leadership position. In December 1920 radical Cossack politicians sought to compete with the authority of the Atamans by creating a Union for the Resurrection of Cossackdom, which contained former members of the Cossack governments, cooperatives, and political activists. The union blamed the White generals for the defeat of the Cossacks and called for the struggle against Bolshevism to come to an end.[5] Under pressure from groups such as this, the Atamans on 14 January 1921 took a first step towards asserting their independence from Wrangel by forming a United Council of the Don, Terek, and Kuban. The Atamans agreed to act together in all political, economic, and external matters, and called for a Russia based on 'democratic and federal principles'.[6] This declaration undermined Wrangel's ability to present himself to foreign governments as the sole legitimate representative of Russian state power. It also infuriated him because it represented an attack on his authority, something over which he was always particularly ready to take offence.

Soon after he arrived in exile, Wrangel disbanded his government. This decision, although financially realistic, was a political mistake. Wrangel had no means of supporting the government, besides which most of its departments now had nothing to do, as there was no longer any territory to administer.[7] He regarded the government as merely an administrative apparatus, whose disbandment did not affect his own status. But in practice, because he had no government or land, his decision made it impossible for him to argue that he was still head of state.

On 2 February 1921, the senior Russian ambassadors, Mikhail Girs, Vassilii Maklakov, and Boris Bakhmeteff met in Paris. Shortly before the fall of the Crimea Wrangel had assured the ambassadors that his situation was secure, and the ambassadors felt that he had deliberately deceived them. They consequently lost faith in Wrangel and decided to withdraw their support from him.[8] At their meeting of 2 February they agreed to form a Conference of Ambassadors, and decided that as Wrangel had dissolved his government, their conference constituted the only remaining legal state authority. As such it would take on itself responsibility for

[5] G. Rakovskii, *Konets Belykh: Ot Dnepra do Bosphora* (Prague, 1921), 230.

[6] HIA, WA, Box 114, File 21, 15–28 (Agreement 14 Jan. 1921).

[7] N. Savich, 'Konstantinopol'skii Period', *Grani*, 152 (Apr.-June 1989), 215–16. Also, R. Pipes, *Struve: Liberal on the Right, 1905–1944* (Cambridge, Mass., 1980), 295.

[8] N. Tongour, *Diplomacy in Exile: Russian Émigrés in Paris, 1918–1925* (Ph.D. thesis, Stanford University, 1979), 313.

the distribution of all state property. The conference also determined that the distribution of aid to refugees should be concentrated in the hands of a single organization, and that the organization should be *Zemgor*.[9]

Although *Zemgor* maintained that it was apolitical, the army High Command regarded it as a political organization hostile to the army, as many of its members were connected with left-wing political groups. The history of the Russian Army's relations with *Zemgor* was one of mutual hostility and suspicion from start to finish. In early 1921 the Russian military representative in Japan, General Podtiagin, handed over a sum of about one million francs held by him to Ambassador Girs, who in turn gave it to Prince L'vov on the understanding that it would be used to improve the living conditions of troops of the Russian Army. Thereafter the money seems to have disappeared, and the army High Command was convinced that *Zemgor* had not used it for the specified purpose.[10] Whatever the truth of the matter, the army's suspicions reflected an impression that 'society' was exploiting its control of émigré financial resources to undermine the army. The transfer of control of state funds to *Zemgor* was seen as an attack on the army by the political left, and as part of the general campaign of liberal politicians such as Miliukov to destroy the army in exile.

It is clear that the chief cause of the ambassadors' decision was pressure applied by the French government. Girs told Wrangel that handing over control of aid to *Zemgor* was the only solution which would permit the funds to stay in Russian hands. Otherwise, he wrote, the French would insist on taking control, leaving the Russians dependent on their goodwill.[11] Regardless of the motives behind the decision, the effect was to weaken the position of the army. Left-wing politicians used the cover of *Zemgor* to spread their influence among émigrés and reduce that of the military High Command. For instance, in Prague in June 1921 *Zemgor* set up its own registration department and announced that old documents issued by Russian diplomatic and military officials were no longer valid. The Russian military representative in Prague, General Leont'ev, noted that left-wing parties had long wished to destroy Russian diplomatic and

[9] V. Kh. Davatz and N. N. L'vov, *Russkaia Armiia na chuzhbine* (Belgrade, 1923), 48; V. Kh. Davatz, *Fünf Sturmjahre mit General Wrangel* (Berlin, 1927), 22–3; and E. I. Pivovar, *Rossiiskaia emigratsiia v Turtsii, iugo-vostochnoi i tsentral'noi Evrope 20-kh godov* (Göttingen, 1994), 54.

[10] HIA, WA, Box 148, File 36, 291 (Letter, Chertkov to Khripunov, no. p/127, 26 Apr. 1921); BAR, ROVS, Box 166 (Letters, Balabanov to Guchkov, and Zeeler to Miller).

[11] HIA, WA, Box 148, File 36, 104–9 (Letter, Girs to Wrangel, no. 100, 10 Feb. 1921).

and then into Yugoslavia (childrens' schools, Cadet Corps, and military schools), and Pletnev sought to remove these from military control.[20] Only the Cadet Corps were to survive, and these experienced regular difficulties with liberal education officials on the *Derzhavnaia Kommissia* over the next two decades.

The problems were more acute in other countries. In Bulgaria part of the sum provided by the Ambassadors' Conference specifically for the use of Wrangel's troops was spent on repatriating Cossacks instead, and the Russian diplomatic representative in Bulgaria refused to let military representatives join in discussions as to how the money should be used. *Zemgor* remained the main problem as far as the army was concerned. In Czechoslovakia, a *Zemgor*-inspired Cossack congress launched bitter attacks against General Wrangel, with the result that some Cossacks walked out in protest. This created considerable difficulties for them, as Czech law required them to belong to a legally registered organization, and these were all financially dependent on *Zemgor*.[21] *Zemgor*'s claims to be an apolitical humanitarian organization were never believed by many in the Russian Army.

With Nansen pressing to repatriate his men to enemy territory, formerly allied countries making it clear that he was considered a nuisance, Russia's ambassadors undermining his authority, the Cossack Atamans asserting their independence, and the left-wing press attacking his army, Wrangel began to feel the need for support from 'society'. However, few representatives of liberal 'society' were willing to accept his leadership and most felt that the White armies' defeat was due to the fact that the White officers had divorced themselves from 'society' and followed reactionary policies. If it wanted to survive, they said, the army would now have to embrace 'society', giving civilians a more prominent role in decision-making and replacing the army's 'reactionary' political advisers with men of more liberal convictions.[22]

There was still room to compromise. In the summer of 1921, most émigrés had only been in forced exile for a short time and saw themselves as common victims of the Bolsheviks. Many genuinely wished to forge some sort of political union to overcome the divisions which had so damaged anti-Bolshevik efforts in the past. Wrangel himself now took the

[20] HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 5, File 20 (Letter, Paleolog to Shlikevich, no. 264/s, 9 Aug. 21).
[21] HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 10, File 40 (Letter, Makhrov to Miller, no. 181, 16 June 1924).
[22] e.g., HIA, WA, Box 148, File 36, 28 (Letter, Burtsev to Wrangel, Dec. 1920).

initiative to try and create such an émigré political union. On 29 January 1921 he chaired a conference in Constantinople which considered how to create a new anti-Bolshevik political front and an organization to lead it. The conference soon confronted certain important differences of opinion between the military and civilian proponents of émigré unity. Wrangel wanted an advisory council, with final authority resting in his own hands, whereas his civilian supporters wanted the representatives on the council to have the decisive voice. Historians have often criticized the White generals for not having understood the political nature of the Civil War. Yet the generals' experiences in the war merely reinforced their belief that politicians were capable only of talk, incapable of action.[23] As Wrangel stated:

> They want to share power with me. I do not cling to power. But, having passed through rivers of blood, the Provisional Government, committees, every sort of 'special assembly', and having finally put power into the hands of one man, which is a requirement for successful struggle, they now want to repeat the mistakes of the past. I cannot treat this lightly. I have no right to put the army into the hands of any committee and I will not do this.[24]

He envisaged a governing body created and led by himself, to be called the Russian Council. Representatives of 'society' would join it as junior partners, rather than seek to take a leading role for themselves. This idea was not acceptable to many outside the army.

In a competing effort to unite the emigration around monarchist slogans, right-wingers held a large congress at Reichenhall in Germany in June 1921, and elected a permanent executive, the VMS (*Vysshii Monarkhicheskii Soiuz*: Supreme Monarchist Council), which was dedicated to promoting the monarchist cause. During the same month a group of liberal politicians in Paris launched yet another unity scheme and formed a Russian National Committee. This organization, occupying the broad centre of émigré political opinion, aimed to unite all the various groups of the emigration into one body, but failed when both the left (SRs and Miliukov) and the right (the VMS) refused to cooperate. The Committee became yet another political organization representing few people other than itself.

Of all émigré political groups, the National Committee was the closest to the Russian Army. Wrangel corresponded regularly with its members,

[23] BAR, Russkii Natsional'nyi Komitet Collection, Box 5 (Letter, Wrangel to Burtsev, 25 Jan. 1921).
[24] Rakovskii, *Konets Belykh*, 249.

and avidly sought an alliance with them. His efforts to do so belie the idea that the army was inherently 'reactionary'. Most of the National Committee's members were liberal democrats, although a few were former SRs. The most prominent of the latter was Vladimir Burtsev who had become famous in pre-war Russia for exposing a police provocateur within the SR party. In exile Burtsev edited a newspaper *Obshchee Delo* (The Common Cause) which was outspoken in its support for Wrangel and his army. Wrangel's close relations with Burtsev showed that he was genuinely willing to work with anyone whatever their political beliefs, as long as they were dedicated to the anti-Bolshevik cause. His friendship with A. I. Guchkov was another example. As the first War Minister of the Provisional Government Guchkov had been partly responsible for a series of army reforms which most officers believed were responsible for the collapse of the army in 1917. Officers in general considered Guchkov to be little better than a traitor, but Wrangel recognized that, whatever his previous failings Guchkov was devoted to the struggle against the Bolsheviks, and was prepared to forgive him his past errors.

The most startling demonstration of Wrangel's indifference to political views was given in an extraordinary incident in Spring 1921, when he agreed to an alliance with the sailors of the Soviet fleet who had mutinied at the naval base of Kronstadt. The Kronstadt sailors were among the most radical leftist revolutionaries in Russia. They had played an important role in bringing the Bolsheviks to power in 1917, and mutinied not because they had lost their revolutionary zeal but because they believed that the Bolsheviks had betrayed the revolution. They demanded that power be given back to the revolutionary councils, the Soviets, and taken away from the Bolshevik party. In response Lenin ordered the Red Army to crush their mutiny, and on 17 March 1921 the army drove the mutineers out of Kronstadt. The survivors fled across the ice of the Baltic Sea and went into exile in Finland.[25] From there on 25 May 1921 they sent an appeal to Wrangel, asking to be incorporated into his Russian Army. The sailors called Wrangel 'a selfless fighter for the liberation of our dear motherland', and asked his approval for a common political platform including ownership of land by the peasants, freedom for trade unions, and use of the slogan 'power to the Soviets and not to parties'.[26] Wrangel gave his full approval saying that the proposed slogan was acceptable as

[25] The Kronstadt uprising is described in P. Avrich, *Kronstadt, 1921* (Princeton, 1970).

[26] HIA, WA, Box 148, File 36, 444–8, 808 (Letter, Petrichenko to Wrangel, May 1921; Letter, Petrichenko to D. D. Grimm, 31 May 1921; Petition to Wrangel from participants of the Kronstadt revolt, 25 May 1921).

long as it found a positive response in the mass of the population.[27] After this, contact between Wrangel and the Kronstadters seems to have been broken off, but Wrangel's willingness to consider an alliance with men who represented the extreme revolutionary left reveals a great deal about him and the nature of the White movement. It shows that non-predetermination was not just a pretext to hide reactionary, restorationist pretensions, but the result of a sincere belief that political differences should be subordinated to common struggle against Bolshevism.

Wrangel's Russian Council ran into immediate difficulties. Even his closest supporters, the National Committee, as well as allied groups in Constantinople, attacked his concept, demanded an 'independent' body organized by 'society', and refused to join.[28] The United Council of the Don, Terek, and Kuban Cossacks was no more amenable. The Cossacks were determined to make the Commander-in-Chief responsible to the council, rather than its supreme leader, a demand which Wrangel was unwilling to countenance.[29] Despite these problems the project went ahead, and on 12 March 1921 Wrangel issued a declaration establishing the Russian Council. His proclamation said that the council was based on the principle of the succession of power, exercised by himself as Commander-in-Chief, in conjunction with social organizations.[30] The statute of the council established that it would consist in part of delegates elected by émigré social organizations and in part of appointees of the Commander-in-Chief. Authority and power was to remain firmly in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief, who would have a veto.[31] Wrangel would make no concessions: the council's purpose was to mobilize émigré society in support of the army, rather than to be a truly representative institution.

The biggest blow to the Russian Council was the refusal of the United Council of the Don, Terek, and Kuban to participate because their demands for the Commander-in-Chief to be responsible to the council

[27] HIA, WA, Box 148, File 36, pp. 449–50 (Letter, Wrangel to Grimm, no. 8858, 17 Aug. 1921).

[28] HIA, WA, Box 141, File 16, 35–7 (Letter, Bureau of Temporary Russian Committee of National Union, 31 Mar 1921); and pp. 15–16 (Letter, Political United Committee to Wrangel, 9 Mar. 1921).

[29] HIA, WA, Box 114, File 14, 34–6 (Letter, United Council of Don, Terek and Kuban to Wrangel, no. 1081/k, 9 Mar. 1921); & p. 37 (Letter, United Council of Don, Terek and Kuban to Wrangel, no. 1102/k, 12 Mar. 1921).

[30] COC, C 20 N 1154 (Proclamation of the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army, 12 Mar. 1921).

[31] Ibid. (Statute of the Russian Council, 12 Mar. 1921).

had not been met. The Ataman of the Don Cossacks, General A. P. Bogaevskii, wrote to Wrangel to say that experience had shown that individual dictatorship was no solution, and he appealed to Wrangel to seek to rebuild the struggle on new principles.[32] Wrangel regarded the actions of the Cossack Atamans as completely unforgivable and from this moment on he would regard the United Cossack Council as anathema, and refuse to have any official relations with it or the Atamans. This was typical of Wrangel. Desperately protective of his own authority, he was incapable of forgiving those who broke with him, which greatly complicated efforts to promote émigré unity in future years.

As a result there was a complete split between the army High Command and the Cossack political leadership. In practice this rupture had little effect, as the military units of the Cossacks remained under Wrangel's command, and their military leaders continued to obey his instructions. Many of the rank and file of the Cossack units also continued to look to Wrangel as their leader.[33] Nevertheless, the split with the Atamans undoubtedly weakened Wrangel's position and his ability to speak as a political leader on behalf of all his men was fatally undermined.

In March 1922 Wrangel continued to hope that, with some changes, the council might serve as the focus of a broad émigré political union.[34] In January 1922, in order to increase the breadth of the council's base, Wrangel added delegates from the Church and émigré social organizations in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. However, the conservative nature of émigrés in those countries meant that the new members to be chosen by these organizations were likely to be right-wing. Wrangel was determined to escape the charge of being 'reactionary', and feared that the monarchist right would try to use the council to further its own interests. He therefore asked the head of the National Committee, A. V. Kartashev, to try to persuade Parisian circles to participate in the council. Without their participation, Wrangel noted, the council could acquire an undesirably narrow right-wing complexion.[35] The National Committee displayed some interest, and sent a delegation to him in Belgrade in March 1922 (he had moved there that month from Constantinople, along with his staff).

[32] BAR, Bogaevskii Collection, Box 1 (Letter, Bogaevskii to Wrangel, no. 1113/k, 14 Mar. 21).

[33] e.g. HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 5, File 20 (Report from town of Vranje, July 1921).

[34] HIA, WA, Box 148, File 37, pp. 372–3 (Letter, Wrangel to Savich, no. 404/s, 12 Dec. 1921).

[35] BAR, Russkii Natsional'nyi Komitet Collection, Box 5 (Letter, Wrangel to Kartashev, no. k/580, 12 Jan. 1922).

The delegation proposed enlarging the council and altering its structure to give more power to representatives of 'society' rather than the Commander-in-Chief, but Wrangel would not give way. He insisted that political organizations could not be represented on the council, and that he had to retain a veto. This was necessary, he said, in case it acquired a monarchist tint and started passing monarchist resolutions. Only his veto could prevent the council becoming the weapon of any political party which was in a majority.[36] His insistence on retaining control over the council was unacceptable to the representatives of 'society', who therefore broke off negotiations.

Another factor had come into play by this time. Some groups, having lost faith in the Whites' ability to defeat the Bolsheviks, had begun instead to hope that the Red Army might overthrow the regime, in which case they would not wish to be represented by Wrangel, whose name could only be a hindrance to reaching agreement with Red generals. 'Torgprom', the union of émigré industrialists, refused to accept Wrangel's leading role for this reason.[37]

As predicted by Wrangel, the new inductions to the council brought in new members of right-wing, monarchist persuasions. Guchkov reported that the council was regarded by émigré 'society' in France as being too right-wing for its tastes,[38] which of course was precisely why Wrangel had asked Kartashev to persuade the National Committee to join. Wrangel therefore decided to dissolve the council, which held its last meeting on 22 September 1922.[39] The dissolution greatly angered monarchist members, who regarded it as a direct attack on the émigré right by the Commander-in-Chief.[40] Certainly it shows that émigré 'society' was wrong to regard Wrangel and his army as a reactionary force. Wrangel showed a genuine desire to reach out to the left and centre of émigré politics and to form a broad-based union. There was really very little to separate the army ideologically from groups such as the National Committee. The creation of a broad political union should have been quite feasible: what wrecked it were the personal ambitions of each side, neither of which was willing to let the other be in control. In this sense

[36] HIA, WA, Box 141, File 16, 268–71 (Letter, S. N. Il'in to Danilov, no. k/635, 30 Mar. 1922).

[37] HIA, WA, Box 149, File 38, 219–22 (Letter, Guchkov to Wrangel, 7 Apr. 1922).

[38] Ibid. 232–6 (Letter, Guchkov to Wrangel, 12 Apr. 1922).

[39] Ibid. 237–45 (Letter, Wrangel to Guchkov, 23 Apr. 1922).

[40] HIA, WA, Box 40, File 13, 708–33 (*Zhurnal Zasedaniia Russkogo Soveta*, no. 107, 20 Sept. 1922).

Wrangel did not always help his own cause. He had a pronounced inclination towards absolutes, demanding total subordination of others to him or nothing at all.

Russian émigrés wasted enormous amounts of time and energy on internal feuding, while all the time the Bolshevik regime grew stronger and international support for the Whites diminished. Wrangel believed that if the emigration was to have any chance of reviving the struggle against the Bolsheviks, it needed to unite under one leader, and he believed that he was the natural person to assume that leadership role. Outside the army, however, nobody agreed with him, and so the army and 'society' instead of uniting, merely drifted further apart. The emigration was left leaderless, and hopes for a renewal of the struggle faded.

5

The Last Battle

While the exiled Russian politicians, intellectuals, and other would-be leaders fought for control of Russia Abroad, Wrangel was also busy settling the Russian Army's troops into new quarters in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. In the latter country, the army believed that it had found a safe refuge, but its hopes were shattered when it came into conflict with the Bulgarian government and was sucked into the bitter internal struggles of Bulgarian politics. In 1923 the White Army then marched into battle against communist forces for the last time, in a brief military action in a small corner of Bulgaria involving only a few hundred troops. Meanwhile, the army's position was constantly threatened by financial difficulties, which forced its troops to disperse to find civilian jobs. This chapter and the next follow the fate of the White soldiers as they spread throughout Europe in search of work and a better life.

From July to December 1921 about 18,000 Russian soldiers arrived in Bulgaria from Lemnos and Gallipoli. The country to which they came was impoverished, unstable, and defeated. During the First World War Bulgaria had been an ally of Germany, and after the war France and Britain insisted that its army be reduced to a rump of 5,000 men. The overwhelmingly agricultural country had a constitutional monarchy, governed by the populist Agrarian Party led by Prime Minister Alexander Stamboulisky. The democratic system in Bulgaria was extremely fragile, and although Stamboulisky had a parliamentary majority, his position was far from secure, as enemies on both the right and left were plotting to remove him, by force if necessary. This may have encouraged him to invite Wrangel's army into the country, in the belief that the Russians might counter the growing threat of the Bulgarian Communist Party, the BKP. But before long Stamboulisky began to worry that the Russians might themselves pose a threat, and his attitude toward them began to change.

Wrangel's troops were distributed to about forty locations around the country, and housed in barracks vacated by the shrunken Bulgarian army. The barracks were often half-destroyed, forcing the Russians to rebuild, furnish, and equip them. Conditions of life were harsh, but the Russians

were at least assured of shelter. Under the terms of the treaty reached between the Bulgarian government and Wrangel's representatives in August 1921, the Bulgarian government agreed to accept not just individual refugees but formed military units subject to the authority of the Russian Commander-in-Chief. Troops were allowed to wear uniform, and commanders, although not their men, retained the right to carry personal weapons.[1] On arrival in Bulgaria, the Russians were asked to surrender their weapons, but handed over only a token quantity to satisfy the local authorities, and kept the rest.[2] Most units managed to bring some weapons with them into Bulgaria, and many paraded openly with them in Bulgarian towns.

The Russian units in Bulgaria consisted of elements of both the Don Cossack Corps and the First Army Corps, both corps headquarters, and several military schools. The two corps dealt rather differently with the situation. The troops of the Don Cossack Corps, encouraged by their commander, General Abramov, soon started to look for civilian jobs, using their barracks as bases to which they could return at night or in periods of unemployment.[3] By May 1922 about 70 per cent of Cossacks were working outside their units.[4] In contrast, in the First Army Corps, General Kutepov strongly disapproved in principle of allowing his soldiers to take civilian jobs, and the troops themselves were not keen to do so. Rather than working, the men of the corps devoted their time and energy to barrack life.[5] Meanwhile, the several Russian military schools which had been brought to Bulgaria continued to function, training and commissioning officer cadets of the Russian Army, despite grave financial difficulties which meant that the cadets lived in very straitened financial circumstances.[6]

Almost from the moment that the Russians arrived they were plunged against their will into the maelstrom of Bulgarian politics. Bulgarian communists regarded the Whites as a dangerous enemy, and also believed

[1] G. I. Cherniavskii, and D. Daskalov, *Borbata na BKP protiv Vrangelistkata Zagovor* (Sofia, 1964), 27; Also BAR, ROVS, Box 166, Folder 'Bulgaria 1922' (Addition to Treaty, 18 Aug. 1922).

[2] HIA, WA, Box 145, File 28, 251–2 (Letter, Vitkovskii to Kutepov, no. 5063/g, 6 Sept. 1921).

[3] *Kazaki za granitsei, 1921–1925 gg.* (Belgrade, 1925), 3.

[4] BAR, Kutepov Collection, Box 3, Folder 'Bulgaria 1922' (S. V. Resnichenko, *Obsledovanie polozhenia chastei Russkoi Armii v Bolgarii, May 1922*; and S. V. Resnichenko, *Russkie v Bolgarii*, 6, 30–3).

[5] Ibid.

[6] For a description of life at the Sergievskii Artillery School in Bulgaria, see M. Karateev, *Belogvardeitsy na Balkanakh* (Buenos Aires: Private Edition, 1977), 67–97.

that by whipping up popular anger against them they could win support for the BKP. From the beginning of 1922 the BKP therefore began an active campaign of propaganda and agitation against the Russian Army. Socialist newspapers published stories that the Russian Army was a counter-revolutionary force of landowners who were preparing to drag Bulgaria into war against Soviet Russia, that it was a 'state within a state', and that it was preparing a coup.[7] Communist meetings were held in towns throughout Bulgaria to protest against the presence of the Russian Army, and questions on the issue were raised in the Bulgarian parliament. Attempts were made to provoke the Russians into violent action, which in some cases had the desired effect. Russian officers and soldiers did not always behave with restraint. In the town of Svishchov, for instance, a group of armed Russians exchanged shots with the Bulgarian police after a fight between a Bulgarian officer and a Russian officer.[8] Such incidents helped turn elements of the Bulgarian population against the Russians. This change in the mood of the Bulgarians was facilitated by a sometimes rather arrogant attitude displayed by Russian officers. The Russian Army had liberated Bulgaria from Turkish rule in 1877, and in consequence many White officers felt that they, as officers of the modern Russian Army, automatically deserved to be treated as liberators. Boris Aleksandrovskii, a doctor in the First Army Corps, noted that the Russians often offended Bulgarian national sensibilities by making it clear that they looked down on their 'younger brothers'.[9] The nationalistic Bulgarians did not always appreciate the flying of the red, white, and blue Russian flag over barracks, the mounting of armed guards, or the public parades of armed Russian troops. BKP propaganda thus fell on increasingly fertile ground.

In response to the anti-Russian campaign of the BKP, the Bulgarian government decided that it needed to show the public that it was taking action on the issue. On 23 March 1922 it passed a resolution stating that the Russians were to be fully disarmed, and that efforts were to be made to find work for the troops. It also announced that it would open talks with the Soviet government about repatriating troops to Russia.[10] Bulgarian Army commanders were instructed to round up all Russian

[7] BAR, ROVS, Box 166, Folder 'Russian Army (1)' (Report, Colonel Iasevich, June 1922).

[8] HIA, WA, Box 142, File 19, 2 (Memo, Gendarmerie department of Ministry of War, no. 106, 11 Feb. 1922).

[9] B. N. Aleksandrovskii, *Iz perezhitogo v chuzhykh kraiakh* (Moscow, 1969), 41–4.

[10] HIA, WA, Box 142, File 19, 43 (Resolution of Supreme Administrative Council, 23 Mar. 1922).

weapons, except those held by the military schools.[11] This order was not, however, zealously enforced. The Chief of Staff of the Bulgarian Army, Colonel Topaldzhikov, explained to General Shatilov, who was representing General Wrangel in Bulgaria, that the order had a purely declaratory character, designed to appease public opinion, and that the government had no intention of putting it fully into effect. He and Shatilov agreed that only a token number of weapons would be handed over to give the impression that something was being done.[12] Thus the Sergievskii Artillery School in Trnovo 'disarmed' by handing over 30 of its 300 rifles and 2 of its 15 machine-guns and hiding the rest.[13] This appears to have been the standard procedure elsewhere as well.

Despite this, the situation in Bulgaria continued to become more and more tense, as the BKP organized another round of anti-Russian public meetings. The mounting tension forced the Russians to consider what their response would be if the situation got any worse. On 6 April 1922, Wrangel instructed Kutepov and Abramov that if the situation became unbearable they were to seize stores of Bulgarian armaments and march out of Bulgaria into Yugoslavia.[14] Kutepov, however, wanted more dynamic action. On 2 April 1922 he met his senior commanders to discuss the crisis. The meeting calculated that, if it needed to, the First Army Corps could easily arm itself from Bulgarian stores, which were generally only lightly guarded, and could quickly seize control of the main railways and threaten Sofia. In the event that the situation became unbearable, Kutepov argued, the Russian Army should reach agreement with the non-socialist political parties in Bulgaria, overthrow Stamboulisky, and install them in power.[15]

Shatilov categorically rejected this plan. In the event of an armed conflict breaking out between the various factions in Bulgaria, the army, he wrote, must observe strict neutrality in order not to earn the hostility of the Bulgarian people and worsen the army's position.[16] Shatilov therefore told Kutepov and Abramov that they must not interfere in Bulgarian internal affairs.[17] Wrangel agreed with Shatilov. He emphasized that the

[11] Ibid. 38–9 (Circular, Colonel Topaldzhikov, no. 72, 21 Mar. 1922).
[12] Ibid. 77–8 (Telegram, Shatilov to Wrangel, no. 180, 31 Mar. 1922).
[13] Karateev, *Belogvardeitsy*, 70–1.
[14] HIA, WA, Box 142, File 19, 95–6 (Letter, Wrangel to Shatilov, no. 00934, 6 Apr. 1922).
[15] Ibid. 98–9 (Letter, Kutepov to Shatilov, no. 0588, 12 Apr. 1922).
[16] Ibid. 127–30 (Letter, Shatilov to Miller, no. 249, 25 Apr. 1922).
[17] Ibid. 132–9 (Telegram, Shatilov to Miller, no. 256, 29 Apr. 1922).

army must observe 'unconditional neutrality' in Bulgarian internal affairs. Armed struggle within Bulgaria was rejected 'in principle'.[18]

Soon after this, General Miller replaced Shatilov as Wrangel's Chief of Staff, although Shatilov remained in Bulgaria for a short while thereafter. The new appointment did not prove successful. Wrangel and Miller did not work well together, Wrangel considering his new Chief of Staff a pedant obsessed with minutiae. As a result he was keen to get him out of the way, and decided to send him to Bulgaria to defuse the looming crisis there. This proved a more successful decision, as Miller, who had served as a military attaché in several countries, possessed a tact and diplomatic skill which most White generals entirely lacked.

The crisis came to a head at the beginning of May 1922, when the Bulgarian government decided to finally clamp down on the Russian Army. The method chosen was forgery and provocation, and the pretext for the repressions against the Russian Army was a search which was conducted on 4 May 1922 of the hotel room of Colonel Samokhvalov, a member of Wrangel's security staff. The Bulgarian police arrested Samokhvalov and declared that incriminating documents had been found in his room proving that the Russian Army had been planning a coup. These documents supposedly included an order by Wrangel, signed by both him and Shatilov in Dubrovnik on 9 April 1922, which told units 'to be ready to rise up at the first sign'. However, as Shatilov pointed out, neither he nor Wrangel had ever been to Dubrovnik. It seems certain that the letter was a plant. Every internal Russian Army memorandum on the subject describes the documents discovered in Samokhvalov's room as forgeries. Although the Bulgarians interpreted the documents as proof that the Russians were plotting to overthrow Stamboulisky's government, the Russians' records make it clear that they had no such intention.[19]

Behind this provocation lay the hand not just of the Bulgarian government but also of the Bolsheviks. A letter written by the head of the Soviet secret service, the GPU, reveals that the Bulgarian interior ministry was under the control of the GPU's agents.[20] A Russian provocateur named Komissarov who worked for the Bulgarian Ministry of the Interior was believed to have prepared the forged documents with the knowledge of

[18] Ibid. 140 (Letter, Wrangel to Shatilov, no. 01070, 30 Apr. 1922).
[19] Most notably: BAR, ROVS, Box 166, Folder 'Russian Army (1)' (Report, Colonel Iasevich, June 1922).
[20] *Russkaia voennaia emigratsiia*, Book 1, 377 (Letter, Iagoda to Kalinin, no. 5734, 29 Sept. 1922).

the Minister of the Interior, Daskalov.[21] Other Bolshevik agents were certainly at work attempting to destroy the army from within. One Soviet agent, Shcheglov, offered the deputy commander of the First Army Corps, General Vitkovskii, a post as a corps commander in the Red Army if he would announce his support for the Soviet regime.[22]

Whatever the source of the forged documents, Stamboulisky now had a pretext to act. On 10 May 1922, Kutepov's apartment in Veliko Trnovo was searched, and various officers were arrested. The next day, Topaldzhikov telephoned Kutepov and invited him to Sofia to discuss the developing crisis. Kutepov suspected that he might be arrested if he went to Sofia, and asked Topaldzhikov to give his word of honour as an officer that he would be allowed to return to his troops after the interview. Topaldzhikov gave his word, but when Kutepov arrived at his office he was nonetheless arrested. Kutepov's response is revealing, not to say touching. On being informed of his arrest, he turned to Topaldzhikov and asked incredulously, 'What about your word of honour?'[23] To Kutepov and many other Russian soldiers of his generation, a word of honour really meant something. History does not record Topaldzhikov's reply.

Kutepov was expelled from Bulgaria. Many other senior Russian officers throughout the country were also arrested and expelled from the country at the same time. On 11 May the Bulgarian Council of Ministers voted to take control of all funds brought to Bulgaria for the support of the Russian refugees; to disperse those Russians living in barracks into groups of ten to fifty men; to distribute these groups around the country into towns and villages, where they would be put to work; and to help those who wished to return to Russia. All Russians were henceforth forbidden to travel by rail, and all were obliged to register with the local police. Various barracks were surrounded by Bulgarian troops who searched them for weapons.[24]

These actions brought a sharp riposte from Wrangel. In a typically intemperate telegram of complaint to Stamboulisky, Wrangel wrote: 'Persecuted and slandered, Russian warriors may again be forced to rally around their standards. The spectre of fratricide has again appeared. God

[21] HIA, WA, Box 142, File 21, 108–85 (Report to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 20 Oct. 1923).
[22] BAR, ROVS, Box 166, Folder 'Bulgaria 1922' (Memo, General Vitkovskii, 16 Sept. 1922).
[23] *Kutepov: sbornik statei* (Paris, 1934), 143. This story is repeated in numerous contemporary documents, suggesting that the incident is real.
[24] Cherniavskii and Daskalov, *Borbata*, 163–6.

is our witness that we did not summon it.'[25] Shortly afterwards, Miller arrived in Bulgaria and visited Prime Minister Stamboulisky, hoping to persuade him to countermand his order. He was told that the Bulgarian government had no complaint against the behaviour of the Russian Army, but had been obliged to act against it in order to remove a pretext for attacks against the government by the BKP.[26] Miller proposed a compromise. On the Russian side, the military contingents in Bulgaria would be reorganized to make them less visible. Units would be split into small groups, titles such as 'Corps', 'Division' and so on would be replaced with less obviously military names, and efforts would be made to find the troops work. Only those unable to work would continue to be housed in barracks. Small directorates would be formed in each region of the country to travel around the groups and report on their needs. But, Miller pointed out, these were changes that some troops would strongly object to. In order to persuade the troops to accept them, all repressive measures against the troops would have to be stopped.[27] These arguments seem to have convinced the Bulgarians. Stamboulisky ordered local authorities not to dissolve units in barracks by force or try to disperse them to local villages, but instead merely to assist the soldiers in finding work.[28] The planned dissolution of the army therefore never took place in the manner originally envisioned. A few units were still forcibly expelled from their barracks, but in most cases units were able to keep their barracks as bases, while the men went out to work.[29]

Harassment of the Russians continued, however. Throughout June and July 1922 there were more searches for weapons. On 3 July, for instance, the Kornilov Military School was surrounded and searched, and the commandant, three officers, and three cadets arrested. At the Sergievskii Artillery School, a cadet was killed and six more wounded when a Bulgarian patrol opened fire on a group of cadets. In August the school was then forcibly transhipped to Nova Zagora from its previous location in Veliko Trnovo, but once in its new location it was allowed to continue to function.[30] The net result of all this harassment was to disarm most of the Russian contingents and seriously demoralize many of the troops, but it did not destroy the basic structure of the army.

[25] HIA, WA, Box 101, File 6, 246 (Telegram, Wrangel to Stamboulisky, 16 May 1922).
[26] HIA, WA, Box 142, File 20, 45–7 (*Beseda s Generalom Millerom*, June 1922).
[27] Ibid. 48–53 (Letter, Miller to Daskalov, 16 June 1922).
[28] Ibid. 22 (Telegram, Miller to Abramov, no. 1699, 22 June 1922).
[29] BAR, Kutepov Collection, Box 3, Folder 'Bulgaria 1922' (*Russkie v Bolgarii*).
[30] Karateev, *Belogvardeitsy*, 72–7.

The army now faced an even bigger threat, namely bankruptcy. Those funds which Wrangel had been able to preserve for his own use after the evacuation of the Crimea were exhausted, and the Bulgarian government had confiscated what remained of the funds given by the Ambassadors' Conference for the maintenance of Russian troops in Bulgaria. In these circumstances it was vital that the men find work, however reluctant the men of the First Army Corps might be. In May 1922 Shatilov praised the command of the Don Cossack Corps, which put pressure on its subordinate commanders to obtain work for their men, and contrasted this with the behaviour of some units of the First Army Corps, in which neither men nor commanders showed any willingness to find work.[31] Wrangel therefore instructed Miller that one of the aims of his trip to Bulgaria should be to obtain work for the army's troops, preferably in large groups, so that they could finance their own existence.[32] When Miller told officers of the First Army Corps that the army's money was exhausted and that the corps would have to be at work by 1 September, they were shocked. Senior commanders told Miller that he misunderstood the mood of the men, and that it was not possible. General Vitkovskii, who had replaced Kutepov as corps commander after his expulsion from the country, issued an order telling units to take all measures to put the largest possible number of men to work,[33] but he also felt obliged to check Miller's instructions himself by sending a loyal officer to Wrangel's headquarters in Yugoslavia.[34] This resulted in an order issued by Wrangel on 4 July 1922, which stated: 'Our exchequer is exhausted. . . . Let everyone who has the strength go to work. He will make life easier for others. Do not lose contact with your units. Having substituted the spade for the rifle and the hammer for the sabre, you will remain Russian warriors and members of your regimental family, eagles of the Russian Army.'[35]

This, more certainly than the actions of Stamboulisky, sealed the fate of the army. Throughout summer and autumn 1922 its troops gradually left their barracks in search of work. Most found some, but the only work most Russian soldiers could hope to find was physical labour. The largest single concentration of workers was at the Pernik coalmines, where around 1,500 Russians worked. Conditions there were described as 'fully

[31] HIA, WA, Box 142, File 19, 150–2 (Telegram, Shatilov to Miller, no. 292, 9 May 1922).
[32] Ibid. File 20, 27–30 (Circular, General Wrangel, nos 886–908, 12 June 1922).
[33] Ibid. 93 (Order, General Vitkovskii, 18 June 1922).
[34] BAR, Kutepov Collection, Box 3, Folder 'Bulgaria 1922' (*Russkie v Bolgarii*).
[35] Ibid. (Order no. 271, General Wrangel, 4 July 1922).

satisfactory', due to the lack of flooding or coal dust in the mines. Men worked an eight-hour day and were fed and accommodated by the mine.[36] A few Cossack units were able to obtain work in large groups,[37] but most soldiers were not able to find such steady labour, and had to settle for individual jobs which were short-term and seasonal, as well as badly paid and very physically demanding. Second Lieutenant Karateev, for instance, after being commissioned from the Sergievskii Artillery School, had a succession of jobs in a coalmine, house-building, in an orchestra, at a gypsum quarry, and brick-making.[38] Lieutenant Dushkin sang in a choir before moving to work at the Black Sea coalmine, but stayed there only three weeks, and eventually found work again at a saltmine.[39] Volunteer Ivanov tried and failed to get a job road-building, and eventually got employment brick-making. He then became an Englishman's manservant, before falling ill, after which he worked first as an icon-peddler, and later as a railway worker loading and unloading rail wagons. When that job also expired, he got work in a sugar factory.[40] These were fairly typical examples of the fates of the officers and men of the First Army Corps and the military schools. Such men were thrust from their vaunted status as military officers down to the lowest social levels, and occupied the bottom rung of the economic ladder. The main emotions of Russian officers in their new circumstances were, according to one veteran, humiliation and shame. Nevertheless many retained their faith in the cause, and in a perverse way found purpose in their sufferings. The intense sufferings of the Russian officer, wrote F. Anikin in 1923, would lead to resurrection and through this to the salvation of the Russian people as a whole.[41]

Maintaining any form of military organization in the army's new circumstances represented a major challenge. The new structure adopted by the army resembled that of the Russian *zemliachestvo* or 'friendly society'. Prior to the revolution, most Russian industrial workers were peasants who maintained close contacts with their villages. Workers from the same village would join together in a *zemliachestvo* to obtain employment and living quarters, and through this would continue to consider themselves

[36] HIA, Box 145, File 28, 455–8 (*Usloviia postanovki russkikh rabochikh na rabote na dobyche uglia v derzhavnykh shakhtakh 'Pernik'*).
[37] *Kazaki za granitsei*, 6.
[38] Karateev, *Belogvardeitsy*, 107–62.
[39] V. Dushkin, *Zabytye* (Paris, 1983), 125–7.
[40] Volunteer Ivanov, 'Po sledam pamiati', *Vestnik Pervopokhodnika*, nos. 42–8.
[41] GARF, f. 5881, o. 1, d. 213 (F. Anikin, *Ofitser na rabote*, Yambol, Bulgaria, Jan. 1923).

members of the village.[42] Larger groups of Russians in Bulgaria, such as those at Pernik, adopted another traditional structure—the *artel*. This was a form of co-operative society, in which workers pooled their wages to pay for communal services such as accommodation, cooking, and cleaning.

In the case of the Russian Army the military unit was substituted for the village, but the principle was the same. In every major unit a small cadre and command staff was preserved, while the mass of the soldiers and officers left to find work. This cadre had the responsibility of maintaining links among the dispersed troops, and of providing aid and shelter to those unit members unable to find work or too ill to work. In locations where many Russians worked together, so-called 'work groups' were established, each with a senior officer in charge. Some members of a work group would not work in the mine or factory, but be employed by the *artel* to cook or wash. Where units had been allowed to keep their barracks, these barracks were kept going as refuges where troops could return in the intervals between jobs. This was especially important in the winter of 1922/3 when much of the seasonal work which had kept men going in the summer and autumn came to an end, although it did sometimes have the unintended side-effect of inducing men to live off the welfare of their unit rather than seek work. Many men of the First Army Corps remained very reluctant to do civilian work at all.[43]

Meanwhile the relative lull in the campaign against the Russian Army came to an end in September 1922. By this time Stamboulisky feared a right-wing coup against his government, and decided to completely destroy the Russian Army, which he regarded as a potential ally of the Bulgarian right. A search of the rooms of one senior Russian officer, General Ronzhin, 'revealed' more documents, planted by the Bulgarians themselves, purporting to show that Wrangel was plotting with the opposition parties in Bulgaria to mount a coup. Weapons were also 'found' at the Russian embassy.[44] These 'discoveries' gave the government a pretext for renewed repressions and an opportunity to whip up public anger against the Russians, as a result of which seventeen unit commanders were expelled from the country. However, by this time the new army structure was sufficiently in place to withstand these blows and the army survived. This was in part because the government's assaults on it were

[42] O. Figes, *A People's Tragedy: The Russian Revolution, 1891–1824* (London, 1996), 110.

[43] HIA, WA, Box 145, File 28, pp. 488–96 (Minutes of commission of Stroitel'naia Kontora, no. 121, 25 Feb. 1923).

[44] For the Russian version of these events, see HIA, WA, Box 88, File 3, 208–16 (*Svodka informatsionnykh svedenii*, no. 9, 15 Sept. 1922).

once again rather patchy, with many units still being allowed to keep their barracks and with the military schools continuing to train officer cadets unmolested. Nevertheless, the situation remained tense for the Russians. They could never know when further attacks might take place or whether the government might not decide to destroy their organization entirely.

Meanwhile, a new threat had emerged in the form of the Union for the Return to the Motherland, known as Sovnarod. This was formed in May 1922 with the aim of organizing repatriations to the Soviet Union. Stamboulisky's government gave Sovnarod its direct support. Its agitators held meetings in towns where Russian troops were located and persuaded them to sign up to return home. The harshness of conditions of life in Bulgaria and the demoralization brought about by the government's campaigns against the army gave Sovnarod some success, especially among Cossacks. By September 1922 Sovnarod had registered 65 local groups with 5,300 members. Its work was aided by agents of the GPU, who agitated among members of the Russian Army to persuade them to accept repatriation, largely by using the ideas of *Smena Vekh* to play on soldiers' sense of patriotism and convince them that they should return home to help rebuild Russia.[45]

In autumn 1922 an agreement was reached between the Soviet government and the League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Fridtjof Nansen, in which the Soviets confirmed a general amnesty for the rank and file of the White armies (officers had to receive personal amnesties). As a result, in October 1922, Nansen issued a declaration on repatriation from Bulgaria.[46] Between May and October 1922, 3,887 Russians had already returned in unorganized groups to the Soviet Union, and Sovnarod now organized more repatriations, as a result of which 3,751 men returned home between October 1922 and May 1923.[47] Few of these were officers or members of the First Army Corps. The great majority of the returnees were Cossacks.

In June 1923, Stamboulisky's fears came true, his government was overthrown in a right-wing coup, and he himself was assassinated. The White Russian forces took no part in the coup and observed strict neutrality.[48] In some locations the Bulgarian Army offered arms to the Russians

[45] *Russkaia voennaia emigratsiia*, Book 2, pp. 263–6, 591.

[46] Cherniavskii and Daskalov, *Borbata*, 222–7.

[47] D. Daskalov, 'Sofia: die russischen Flüchtlinge in Bulgarien', in Schlögel, K. (ed.), *Die grosse Exodus: Die Russiche Emigration und ihre Zentren, 1917 bis 1941* (Munich, 1994), 74–5.

[48] HIA, WA, Box 142, File 21, pp. 32, 38 (Letters, Ronzhin to Wrangel, 26 June 1923; Wrangel to Tyrkova-Williams, no. k/2239, 25 June 1923).

for their self-defence in case of counter-attacks by supporters of the government, but these offers were refused.[49] As a result of the coup the restrictions which had been placed on the Russian Army by Stamboulisky's regime were rescinded. In addition, the funds which had been confiscated in May 1922 were returned to Russian control. However, it turned out that Stamboulisky's government had spent a large portion of the money on repatriating Russians. Furthermore, the Russian diplomatic representative in Bulgaria, who received control of the funds from the government, would not allow representatives of the army to participate in meetings to discuss the distribution of aid to refugees, even though this money had been specifically assigned to help members of the army. As Miller explained to Ambassador Girs, thousands of members of the army, who had expected this money to be spent on their needs, were deeply offended by this treatment.[50] It highlighted, in their eyes, the manner in which émigré 'society' ignored the wishes and needs of the army.

The parlous financial state of the army required the process of dispersal in search of work to continue. Efforts continued to concentrate soldiers from the same units at the same places of work in order to maintain as much cohesion as possible. At places where large numbers of soldiers were working together, the Russians were housed in separate barrack blocks from the Bulgarian workers, and divided up by units, each with their own senior. At Pernik, for instance, men were accommodated according to their units, each battalion occupying its own barrack. Nearby, the Kornilov regiment rented a house for its regimental headquarters, and those unable to work were accommodated there.[51] The idea that military units still existed was thus maintained. The military schools commissioned their last classes of cadets in June 1923, after which the schools closed but kept their barracks for several more years as bases for their ex-cadets.

By the middle of 1924, the Gallipoli Group (as the First Army Corps had been renamed) was divided into 60 work groups of between 15 and 1,500 men, each with its own senior, and the Don Group was similarly organized. The country was divided up into 11 regions, each with its own

[49] Ibid. 39–43 (Colonel A. Zaitsov, *Svodka po perevorote na mestakh*).

[50] HIA, Miller Archive, Box 10, File 19 (Letters, Miller to Girs, Jan. and Feb. 1924; Stavitskii to Miller, 18 Mar. 1924); Box 11, File 4 (Letter, Stavitskii to Miller, 29 June 1923); File 5 (Letter, Miller to Girs, 25 June 1923); File 8 (Letter, Stavitskii to Miller, 6 Sept. 1923).

[51] Colonel Riabinskii, 'Pernik', *Iubileinaia Pamiatka: Kornilovtsy, 1917–1967*, 136.

regional commander. The largest group was at Pernik (1,394 men), and all but 192 officers and soldiers of the regimental cadres, 335 invalids, and 43 unemployed soldiers, were working as civilians.[52] Each regiment still retained a cadre, paid for from Wrangel's budget, of five to six men, and a barrack or building in which the unemployed could find shelter. Troops were expected to contribute a small sum monthly from their salaries to keep the regimental organization intact, and to help those in need. General Wrangel ordered the creation in every unit of a reserve fund to provide aid to the sick and unemployed.[53] Life was necessarily hard. Physical labour remained the norm, and conditions were often very poor. Returning to Bulgaria for an inspection of troops of the Gallipoli Group in December 1923, Kutepov noted that only 10 per cent of soldiers were well set up. He commented that he met hardened veterans who cried when describing their situation in Bulgaria. At the Plakhovtsy mines, for instance, the workers' barracks were filthy, there were no toilets and only one tap, and the mines were poorly fortified. Those working in sugar factories had to endure foul smells and terrible heat.[54] The worst conditions were possibly at the Black Sea coalmine, where it was reported that 100 per cent of the Russians had malaria and that the work was in perpetual dirt and water.[55] However, despite the pressures for dissolution that such harsh conditions produced, the army's cohesion remained remarkably strong, and officers' faith in the army and in General Wrangel continued high.

The fall of Stamboulisky did not entirely remove the threat to the army. The BKP remained active and was preparing an attempt to seize power. On 23 September 1923 a communist uprising began. Wrangel instructed his commanders not to interfere in the internal affairs of Bulgaria, but did permit self-defence in the event of attacks by communists.[56] In general the White troops stayed out of the conflict except where self-defence required participation. The exception proved to be in the northwest of the country, where the situation was particularly bad and several hundred troops of the Markovskii regiment were brought together under General Peshnia. They played an important role in clearing the area of communists and helping

[52] BAR, ROVS, Box 166, Folder 'Russian Army, 1923–1924' (*Svodka o zhizni chastei gallipoliiskoi gruppy v Bolgarii*, Aug. 1923–Aug. 1924).

[53] E. K. Miller, *Armiia* (Belgrade, 1924), 6–9.

[54] HIA, WA, Box 145, File 28 (Report, Kutepov to Wrangel, no. 01255, 12 Dec. 1923).

[55] *Vestnik Pravleniia Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev*, 2 (31 Jan. 1924), 10.

[56] BAR, Bogaevskii Collection, Box 1, Folder 'Catalogued correspondence, Wrangel to Bogaevskii' (Letter, Wrangel to Bogaevskii, no. 03816, 26 Sept. 1923).

to defeat the uprising.[57] After this the men of the Russian Army once again laid down their arms, this time permanently. From then on the Russians were able to live and work in Bulgaria unmolested. This was the last battle of the Russian Army.

To those who stayed with the army in Bulgaria, it offered a source of hope and purpose in a world which otherwise lacked any. Many therefore remained fiercely loyal to it, and especially to General Wrangel, who was seen as their main protector. As one officer wrote from Pernik to a friend in Belgrade in 1923, 'Do not think that . . . we have forgotten our leader and defender . . . he whose name is forever sacred, who is our idol . . . We are ready to throw ourselves into fire and water for our beloved leader-idol . . . We worship him, we have infinite faith in him.'[58] In some respects the care he provided for his men in exile was the greatest achievement of Wrangel's life. He was able to ensure food, shelter, and medical treatment for them, and to some extent ease the painful adaptation to civilian life on the lowest rungs of the ladder. In this way he and the organization of the army provided a valuable service to thousands of Russian exiles in the early 1920s.

[57] HIA, WA, Box 142, File 21, 54–99 (*Svodki ob obstanovke v mestakh raspolozheniia russkikh garnizonov i rabochikh partii*, 26, 28, 29 Sept. 1923, and 1, 11, 17, 20 Oct. 1923). Also, V. Kh. Davatz, *Fünf Sturmjahre mit General Wrangel* (Berlin, 1927), 202–5.

[58] HIA, Miller Collection, Box 16, File 22 (Letter, unknown at Pernik to V. Kh. Davatz, 25 Apr. 1923).

6

Dispersal

Bulgaria was not the only country in which the High Command of the Russian Army provided valuable aid to its troops to enable them to adapt to their new circumstances. In Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and France the army found work for thousands of its troops and provided substantial assistance to those who could not obtain work or who were struck down by illness. Russian military organizations also helped hundreds of students to gain further education, thereby giving them an opportunity to rise out of the general émigré poverty. General Shatilov played a particularly important role in helping thousands of Russian soldiers move from eastern Europe to France and Belgium, and through his efforts these men were able to enjoy a more prosperous life than would otherwise have been possible. In this way the army continued to look after its members even after they had ceased to be serving soldiers.

In 1920 the government of Czechoslovakia began a programme known as the 'Action Russe', in which it subsidized the education in Czechoslovakia of Russian refugees. It hoped that it would thereby establish an educated élite which would be able to rebuild Russia after the Bolshevik regime collapsed. The government initially offered to let 100 soldiers of Wrangel's army enter Czechoslovakia as part of the 'Action Russe', and in October 1921, 100 men of the First Army Corps left Gallipoli to attend Czechoslovak universities.[1] More followed. By December 1923 there were 3,245 Russian students in Czechoslovakia.[2] Many of these were officers who entered the country illegally from Bulgaria, once the Russian Army in Bulgaria began to disperse.[3]

Most Russians studied technical subjects such as agriculture and engineering. They were accommodated in student barracks so overcrowded

[1] For a description of the departure of this group, see the diary of one student, Captain G. A. Orlov, in BAR, G. A. Orlov Collection, Box 1.

[2] J. A. Hutchins, *The Wrangel Refugees: A Study of General Baron Peter N. Wrangel's Defeated White Russian Forces, both Military and Civilian, in Exile*, MA thesis (Louisville, Tex., 1972), 161.

[3] For a description of how such officers entered Czechoslovakia see V. V. Almendinger, *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo v Brno: pamiatnaia zapiska o zhizni Gallipoliitsev v Brno, 1923–1945* (Huntington Park, Calif., 1968), 11–17, 84, 88.

that some had to sleep on benches or in cupboards.[4] As late as 1926, students were sleeping two to a bed in some locations.[5] On graduating from their institutes, some found work in Czechoslovakia, but many had great difficulty in obtaining work matching their qualifications, and left the country.

From the beginning efforts were made to preserve some form of organization among officers and soldiers of the Russian Army in Czechoslovakia. The first group of Gallipoliitsy which arrived in November 1921 formed a 'group of student-Gallipoliitsy' under the most senior officer among them, Lieutenant Colonel Prokofiev, through whom contacts were maintained with the Russian Army. Later, veterans of the Russian Army established various other student organizations, such as the Society of Russian Students at Příbram.[6] A larger group was the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo* (Gallipoli Friendly Society), founded in 1923. By 1924 this had 150 members in Brno alone (out of a total of 600 Russian students in Brno).[7] In the 1930s it had about 600 members throughout Czechoslovakia.[8]

Lack of money was the greatest problem facing Russian students in Czechoslovakia: some received stipends from the Czech government, but others received nothing at all. The primary purpose of the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo* (in addition to maintaining links among Russian veterans) was to provide aid to those members who could not afford their education. Using money obtained from membership fees and charity events such as balls, the organization guaranteed a dinner for all in need by giving out dinner coupons valid at Russian student hostels, provided stipends to cover petty expenses, and helped pay students' matriculation fees.[9] In the 1930s, when most of its members had already graduated, the organization provided stipends to young Russians who came from Bulgaria to study in Czechoslovakia.[10] The Society of Russian Students at Příbram provided stipends to between fourteen and twenty students a

[4] Almendinger, *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo v Brno*, 17.

[5] HIA, Vooruzhennye Sily Iuzhnoi Rossii Sudnoe Otdelenie, Box 3, File 13 (*Informatsionnyi Listok 1-go Armeiskogo Korpusa*, no. 7, 31 Mar. 1926).

[6] HIA, Chasovoi Collection, (*S"ezd Gallipoliitsev Chekhoslovakii 4–5 Iiunia 1933 goda v Prage*).

[7] *Vestnik Pravleniia Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev*, 6 (1 June 1926), 9.

[8] GARF, f. 5759, o. 1, d. 55, l. 7 (*Gallipoliiskaia gruppa v Chekhoslovakii*, 12 June 1932).

[9] HIA, Vooruzhennye Sily Iuzhnoi Rossii Sudnoe Otdelenie, Box 3, File 13 (*Informatsionnyi Listok 1-go Armeiskogo Korpusa*, no. 7, 31 Mar. 1926).

[10] BAR, ROVS, Box 7, Folder 'Correspondence, Czech Group, 1930–1931' (Letter, Kharzhevskii to Vitkovskii, 13 Dec. 1930).

year throughout the 1920s and 1930s.[11] In this way, émigré military organizations made a continuing commitment to the education of their members.

Since obtaining a university degree was one of the very few ways in which Russian exiles could escape from the penury of émigré existence, the army's help was invaluable. The archive of the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo* contains many letters from members thanking it for the support it gave them while they were studying at Czechoslovak universities. As one member wrote, 'I was given not only material but also moral support, so that I felt that I was not alone.'[12] Similarly, Colonel V. V. Almendinger, who received a doctorate in agricultural sciences, commented that:

> Membership of the Zemliachestvo replaced not only one's military unit but also, to some degree, the Motherland, and even one's family. It was all that was left, and many valued this and devoted a lot of time and energy to the Zemliachestvo. The Zemliachestvo helped newly arrived students as much as it could and by this alone carried out its duty of providing not just material but also moral support. Students who had just arrived and had no scholarship fell among their own and did not feel alienated and abandoned. Everyone felt confident that he would be able to study, even if in rather modest circumstances.[13]

Those who went to Czechoslovakia were far outnumbered by the many thousands who moved to Yugoslavia at the end of 1921. Yugoslavia was only a little richer than Bulgaria, but politically the country was much more stable, and its government was unhesitatingly pro-Russian. During negotiations in 1921, Shatilov and other representatives of the army persuaded the Yugoslav government to employ whole military units on single projects, thus keeping them together. As a result, the Cavalry Division of the First Army Corps, the Life Guards Don Battalion, and the Kuban Guards Regiment (in all some 5,000 men) joined the Yugoslav border service. The Kuban Division was sent en masse to Vranje in Serbia where it carried out road and railway construction in the areas of Vranje and Niš, and the Technical Regiment of the First Army Corps built railways. Soldiers with technical skills which the Yugoslavs lacked, such as engineers, artillery officers, and pilots, were particularly welcome in the

[11] HIA, Chasovoi Collection, (*S"ezd Gallipoliitsev Chekhoslovakii 4–5 Iiunia 1933 goda v Prage*).

[12] GARF, f. 5759, o. 1, d. 64, l. 284 (Letter, D. Stetsenko to the directorate of the Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo, 18 Feb. 1936).

[13] Almendinger, *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo*, 77.

Yugoslav armed forces.[14] The Military-Topographical section of the Russian Army, for instance, which consisted of about a hundred officers, was employed by the Yugoslav Army, and these helped train a new generation of Yugoslav military topographers.[15]

In general, Yugoslavia was the most hospitable and generous of all European nations towards the Russians. The Yugoslav government provided the Russian émigrés with large sums of money out of its annual state budget. These were distributed by the *Derzhavnaia Kommissiia*, which provided aid to the sick and unemployed, retraining and help in finding employment, and funding for Russian schools. Among the latter were the three Cadet Corps which had accompanied the Russian Army into exile (the Russian Cadet Corps, the Don Cossack Alexander III Cadet Corps, and the Crimean Cadet Corps).[16] Until 1923, graduates of the Corps were sent on to the Russian military schools in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria to be trained and commissioned as officers, but those schools finally closed in that year. Thereafter many from the Cadet Corps went on to attend university in Yugoslavia and in Belgium, where stipends were provided by the fiercely anti-communist Cardinal Mercier. Graduates of the Cadet Corps were also accepted into the Yugoslav military academy in Belgrade, and many followed this route and joined the Yugoslav army.[17] About 500 former Cadets of the three Russian Cadet Corps were commissioned into the Yugoslav army during the 1920s and 1930s.[18]

The Cadet Corps aimed to provide a full education for boys, but with the addition of the traditional Russian military values which had been taught in Cadet schools in Imperial Russia, including some basic military training as well as studies of Russian military history. This brought the Corps into some conflict with the liberals who ran the education department of the *Derzhavnaia Kommissia*, who wished to focus more on providing an education likely to help young émigrés find useful employment or further education.[19] For this reason, in late 1924 the commission

[14] HIA, WA, Box 145, File 29, 768–80 (*Kratkie svedeniia o sluzhbe i deiatel'nosti russkikh voennykh kontingentov i ofitserskikh obshchestv v korolevstve SKhS*, 14 Feb. 1924).

[15] V. Maevskii, *Russkie v Iugoslavii: vzaimnootnosheniia Rossii i Serbii* (New York, 1966), 57–61. Also, General Professor I. S. Svishchov, 'Pochemu ia ne popal v Gallipoli', *Gallipoli-Lemnos-Chataldzha-Bizerta: iubilenyi al'manakh-pamiatnik* (Hollywood, Calif., 1950), 39.

[16] Maevskii, *Russkie v Iugoslavii*, 14–17.

[17] *Kadetskie Korpusa za rubezhom, 1920–1945* (New York, 1970).

[18] V. A. Tesemnikov, 'Rossiiskaia emigratsiia v Iugoslavii', *Voprosy Istorii*, 10 (1988), 130.

[19] BAR, ROVS, Box 85, Folder 'Russkii Kadetskii Korpus' (Letter, B. Oreshkov to the directors of the Don, Russian and Crimean Cadet Corps, 27 Mar. 1924).

undertook a number of reforms to dilute the military nature of the schools, which made those connected with the Corps feel that the *Derzhavnaia Kommissia* was deliberately aiming to undermine them.[20]

Although the leaders of the army had no official connection with the Cadet Corps, they continued to show a keen interest in them. With time, falling attendance rolls and lack of funds forced two of the Corps to close—the Crimean Corps in 1929 and the Don Corps in 1933. When the Russian Cadet Corps was then threatened with closure in 1936, General Miller personally intervened to help it, by writing directly to Prince Paul of Yugoslavia. This had the desired effect, and the school was saved.[21] The Russian Cadet Corps survived until 1945, when it fled the advancing Red Army and was closed. Through its support of the Corps, the army made a small contribution to the maintenance of Russian culture abroad, the education of a new generation of Russians as Russians, and the preservation of the traditions of the Imperial Russian Army. In 1996 the Don Cossack Alexander III Cadet Corps was re-established in the town of Novocherkassk in Russia by General Alexander Lebed.

Despite Belgrade's generosity, Russians in Yugoslavia were always short of money, and the situation got worse as time went on. The 5,000 men who worked in the Yugoslav border service served in their own units under their own officers, but the conditions of service were very hard. A report of May 1922 noted that inflation had cut into wages and that troops were rarely able to buy meat. Their families lived in poverty, there was a shortage of medicine, and morale was falling.[22] In November 1922 the border guards service was turned into a new 'finance-control' department and the number of Russians offered employment in the new service was reduced to 1,700. This meant that 3,300 Russians lost their jobs. From spring 1923 about 2,000 jobs were provided for the men of the Cavalry Division building a road from Kraljevo to Raška (a project which was partially subsidized by General Wrangel until January 1925), and some others were provided with jobs railway-building in Slovenia.[23] In 1924 some 4,000 Russian troops were employed in road-building projects on the Kraljevo-Raška road and at other locations.[24]

[20] Ibid. (Letter, Prikhodnii to Kutepov, 14 Nov. 1928).

[21] Ibid. (Letter, Miller to Colonel V. A. Rozanov, 27 Feb. 1936).

[22] HIA, WA, Box 145, File 29, 449–53 (Report, Major General Kreiter, 1 May 1922). See also *Russkaia voennaia emigratsiia*, Book 2, 586–9 (Report, General Globachev, 11 Feb. 1922).

[23] HIA, WA, Box 145, File 29, 643–5 (Memo, General Kussonskii, *Gallipoliitsy v Iugoslavii*, no. 02825, 15 Mar. 1923); V. Kh. Davatz, *Fünf Sturmjahre mit General Wrangel* (Berlin, 1927), 170–3.

[24] E. K. Miller, *Armiia* (Belgrade, 1924), 9.

Efforts were made where possible to obtain work contracts for entire units in order to keep them together. The Life Guards Don and Ataman battalions were especially successful in this regard. On being released from the border service they were employed as forestry workers near the town of Gorniak. Conditions there were very hard. Salaries were hardly sufficient to pay for food, the workers' barracks were in poor condition and the weather was continually rainy or snowy. Wrangel had to provide extra funds to help the troops survive.[25] In June 1923 they moved out of Gorniak and found work railway-building in much better conditions.[26]

The men of the Kuban Division who were road-building in the area of Vranje remained there until 1925. The group constructing a railway near Niš was later provided with various other large-scale contracts railway-building and mining. The Kuban Guards Regiment (which had previously worked in the border service) eventually found employment at the Belishte lumber works of a Baron Gutman, where they were joined by the Life Guard Kuban and Terek Companies who had previously worked at another of Gutman's enterprises, a sugar factory at Beli Manastir. These contracts kept the Kuban troops closely together, and by 1927 they were still all working as units of company and battalion size.[27] Indeed, the Life Guard Kuban and Terek Companies worked at Belishte right up until the Second World War, and all that time lived in unit barracks with their command structure intact.[28] Other elements of the Kuban Division also stayed together throughout the 1930s. In 1933, for instance, elements of the Division began work filling in dikes on the Danube under the personal command of the Divisional Commander, General Zborovskii.[29] Of all the units of the Russian Army, the Kuban Division stayed together the longest. It was sufficiently cohesive for 600 of its members to meet and parade in full uniform, with regimental flags flying, at a memorial held for the assassinated King Alexander of Yugoslavia at his grave at Oplenats in June 1935.[30]

The Kuban Division excepted, by late 1924 the opportunities for large-scale organized work were coming to an end. The Finance Control department reduced the numbers of Russians working for it from 1,700

[25] *Kazaki za granitsei, 1921–1925* gg. (Belgrade, 1925), 17–18.

[26] Ibid, 18; HIA, WA, Box 145, File 29, 671–3 (Report, Colonel Iasevich, *Kazaki v Serbii*, 10 Sept. 1923).

[27] *Kazaki za granitsei*, 14; HIA, WA, Box 145, File 29, 671–3 (Report, Colonel Iasevich, 10 Sept. 1923); HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection, Box 1 (Report, Zborovskii to Wrangel, no. 91, 25 Feb. 1927).

[28] *Chasovoi*, 178 (15 Nov. 1936), 3–6.

[29] *Russkii Golos*, 117 (2 July 1933), 3.

[30] Ibid. 219 (16 June 1935), 2.

to 800, and in January 1925 Wrangel ceased his subsidy for the Kraljevo-Raška road project, after which only members of the Kuban Division were left road- and rail-building as organized units. Elements of the Cavalry Division were able to find work at the state tobacco monopoly, but more and more units were obliged to disperse so that their members could find individual employment.[31] Furthermore, many troops were by now exhausted from the hard physical labour of the past few years. Visiting Kuban Cossacks road-building near Vranje in June 1924, Wrangel noted that 'people are worn out from heavy labour and the monotony and savagery of the location, and there is no longer any sign of the élan which I saw last year.'[32] Morale was better in other locations Wrangel visited, but it had become evident by this stage that the old system of troops working en masse on construction projects or as border guards was coming to an end.

Providing aid to the troops was expensive and by early 1922 the Commander-in-Chief's exchequer was empty. However, a means was found of avoiding financial disaster. In 1917 when the German army approached Petrograd, as the Russian capital had by then been renamed, a bank known as the Petrograd Credit Institution moved its assets south to the Caucasus for safe keeping. These consisted of money and valuables left as deposits on loans and mortgages. During the Civil War Denikin's troops captured the deposits and later evacuated them to Yugoslavia. There they remained for two years, while the White leaders debated whether it would be ethical to spend the money or whether they must track down the owners and return it. In 1922 the Russian Council decided to liquidate those deposits on which the time-limit for repayment of the loan had expired. Even this limited decision caused a scandal, as the left-wing émigré press, especially Miliukov's *Poslednie Novosti*, accused the army of stealing private property. The sale of the relevant deposits raised 41.5 million dinars, and these funds were then spent on the upkeep of the army, providing personal loans to those in need, training and education, medical care, help to the unemployed and so on.[33] In Belgrade, Wrangel

[31] HIA, WA, Box 146, File 31, 582–4 (Letter, Wrangel to Lukomskii, no. 1956/s, 7 Sept. 1925).

[32] BAR, ROVS, Box 171, Folder 'Sovet ob"edinennykh ofitserskikh obshchestv (1924)' (Order no. 29, Gen. Wrangel, 12 June 1924).

[33] Davatz, *Fünf Sturmjahre*, 108–15; HIA, WA, Box 146, File 32, 159–78 (Report, Miller to Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, Apr. 1926); Box 146, File 31, 672–86 (*Istoricheskaia kratkaia spravka ob izmenenii formy bytiia Armii i finansovoi storone ee obespecheniia*, Oct. 1925); Box 149, File 39, 541–4 (A. F. Shelest, 'Operatsiia s ssudnoi kaznoi', from *Poslednie Novosti*, 18 May 1923).

provided money and free dinners to the Gallipoli-Students Association, which by 1924 had some 200 members.[34] He also provided funds to repair a building in Belgrade which was then used as a student hostel, housing over 100 students, and feeding up to 350 a day.[35] In Sofia, the army rented hostels to provide cheap accommodation for those in need.[36] The Don Corps built bathhouses, hostels, libraries, and dining-rooms for its men.[37] The army survived on the funds of the Petrograd Credit Institution for the next three years, and in using them provided considerable support to its members.

Additional aid for the troops was provided by Wrangel's wife, Baroness Olga, who made several fund-raising trips to America which raised $12,000. These funds were used to support three sanatoria for the troops, two in Bulgaria (at Trnovo and Kniazhevo, with 25 and 20 beds respectively) and one in Yugoslavia (at Vranska Bania, with 50 beds). Baroness Olga's fund also provided aid to students who were unable to work.[38] Aware that the army's money could not last forever, General Wrangel ordered the formation in every unit of a reserve capital fund, and provided an initial deposit for each fund. Troops in each unit were to pay a monthly contribution to the fund in proportion to their wages. The deposits were to remain the personal property of the depositor, but would be paid out to him in the event of sickness or unemployment.[39] In effect this was a form of insurance, designed to put units on an independent financial basis for long-term mutual support. Through the combination of all these activities, the army without doubt provided substantial support to its men in the early 1920s, and helped to ease the extremely tough circumstances in which the troops found themselves.

When the funds gained from the liquidation of the Petrograd Credit Institution began to run low in late 1923, Wrangel ordered severe cuts in expenditure as of early 1924. It now became necessary to consider moving

[34] *Vestnik Pravleniia Obshchestva Gallipolitsev*, 5 (27 April 1924), 3–5.

[35] HIA, WA, Box 108, File 9, 158–9 (Memo, General Kussonskii, no. 02625, 10 Feb. 1923).

[36] V. F. Ershov, 'Adaptatsiia rossiiskoi voennoi emigratsii v stranakh razmeshcheniia v 1920-e godu' in Iu. A. Poliakov, G. Ia Tarle, and V. N. Samshurov (eds), *Istoriia rossiiskogo zarubezh'ia: problemy adaptatsii migrantov v XIX–XX vekakh* (Moscow, 1996), 86.

[37] A. L. Raikhtsaum, 'Dokumental'nye materialy RZIA po istorii adaptatsii rossiiskoi emigratsii', in Poliakov, Tarle, and Shamshurov (eds), *Istoriia rossiiskogo zarubezh'ia*, 41.

[38] *Vestnik Gallipolitsev: trekhletie Obshchestva Gallipolitsev*, 11 (Nov. 1924), 80–1; also, A. Wrangel, *General Wrangel: Russia's White Crusader* (London, 1990), 236–7.

[39] P. N. Wrangel, *The Memoirs of General Wrangel* (London, 1930) 344. Also, Miller, *Armiia*, 9.

men out of the impoverished Balkans to Western Europe, where they might be able to earn better wages. By mid-1923 a spontaneous movement west to France and Belgium had already started. Wrangel's representative in Paris, General Khol'msen, noted that between 1 January and 1 April 1923, about 200 Russian officers arrived in the city from Bulgaria and Constantinople. Almost all had no money, and, more remarkably considering that they had been in exile for over two years, no civilian clothing. Khol'msen opened a shelter for them in the Parisian suburb of St Cloud where they could be housed for several days on arrival, and provided them with a small sum of money, some free meals, and letters of recommendation to factories to help them find work.[40]

Rather than impeding this spontaneous movement Wrangel decided to support it, but to do so in such a way as to keep some control over the general process. On 24 March 1924 Wrangel asked General Shatilov, who was then in France, to start finding work for men of the Russian Army in France as a matter of urgency.[41] Four days later he informed commanders that it was appearing likely that the army's exile might be prolonged, and that they should not impede its further dispersal. Commanders were ordered not to hinder troops who wished to leave for other countries, and indeed even to help them.[42] Wrangel recognized that since men were already deciding on their own to move to the West, it was unlikely that the High Command could stop them, and attempting to do so would only undermine its authority. He was determined, however, that the transfer of men to the West in search of work should be done in a systematic way. In an order of 15 May 1924, he accepted the principle of moving troops from the Balkans, but stated that this had to be done in such a way as to preserve the links within units. For this reason, the transfer of troops was to be undertaken in a planned manner, and unit commanders were forbidden to make agreements on their own with entrepreneurs, employers, or middle-men.[43] The system that Wrangel envisioned was for employment in France to be given to groups of men from the same units, so enabling the units' integrity to be retained as much as possible. His concept was that his representatives in France would find factories willing to offer a

[40] HIA, WA, Box 96, File 24, 469–70 (Letter, Khol'msen to Miller, no. 2006, 4 Apr. 1923).

[41] HIA, WA, Box 144, File 27, 1368–70 (Letter, Wrangel to Shatilov, no. 831, 24 Mar. 1924).

[42] BAR, ROVS, Box 171, Folder 'Sovet ob"edinennykh ofitserskikh obshchestv (1924)' (Circular, no. 04469, 28 Mar. 1924).

[43] Ibid. Folder 'Resettlement of Refugees (1)' (Order no. 24, General Wrangel, 15 May 1924).

fixed number of jobs, and that he and his staff would then assign troops to those jobs.[44] The reality was to prove far more difficult.

There was one initial success in this regard. In May 1924 the commander of the Life Guards Don Battalion, Major General I. N. Opritz, reached agreement with the managers of the mines at Decazeville in France to accept 200 Russian workers. As a result the Life Guards and elements of the Don Technical Regiment were sent to Decazeville in August 1924. After arriving, Opritz declared that the battalion's structure had been preserved, and that conditions and wages were much superior to those in the Balkans.[45] After visiting the Life Guards in January 1925, Shatilov noted they had their own officers' mess, a dining-room for the Cossacks, a library, church, and museum. Their cohesion, he commented, was exceptional.[46] Later the Life Guards left Decazeville and went en masse to work for the French State Railways, for whom most continued to work throughout the inter-war period.

Already, before Wrangel laid out his plans, some transfers of troops to France had been undertaken by a commercial company, *Tekhnopomoshch*, which was run by the former Russian military representative in Belgrade, General Pototskii. *Tekhnopomoshch* found work for Russians in France and provided loans to those Russians accepting the job offers, to enable them to pay for their journey to France. It then arranged with the employers to repay the loan by subtracting the necessary amounts from the arriving workers' pay.[47] Shatilov, whom Wrangel had placed in charge of the operation of transferring men to the West, initially hoped to provide work for army members in the same manner as *Tekhnopomoshch*, but he was forced to abandon this plan. On 26 June 1924 he held a meeting with a bureaucrat named Lebel at the French Department of Foreign Labour. Political considerations made it undesirable for the business of moving men to France to be seen to be connected with the Russian Army, so Shatilov attended the meeting in the guise of the representative of a Russian company in Belgrade named *Tekhprom* (not to be confused with *Tekhnopomoshch*). Lebel told Shatilov that his ministry opposed attempts

[44] BAR, ROVS, Box 1, Folder 'Bogaevskii A.P. to Shatilov P. N.' (Letter, Bogaevskii to Shatilov, no. 681, 4 June 1924).

[45] HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 10, File 40 (Report, Opritz to Kussonskii, no. 301, 30 Aug. 1924); also, *Kazaki za granitsei*, 18.

[46] HIA, WA, Box 146, File 30, 129–30 (Letter, Shatilov to Wrangel, no. 247, 28 Jan. 1925).

[47] BAR, ROVS, Box 37, Folder 'Resettlement of Refugees (1)' (Letter, Shatilov to Kussonskii, 20 May 1924); Box 13, Folder 'Court of Honour, Khimich v. Mel'nitskii' (Report, Shatilov to Khol'msen, no. 2415, Sept. 1925).

by Russians to contact employers directly, as had been done by Pototskii. If such attempts were made in the future, his ministry, whose permission was required, would refuse visas for the workers who had been promised employment. Lebel suggested an alternative scheme for bringing Russians to work in France. He would give permission for 450 Russians to come in groups of 50. They would be sent to Toul in eastern France, where they would be held in a distribution centre and would only at that point be given offers of work, on the basis of three-month contracts. After completion of the initial contract they would get a permanent residence permit. The workers would have to pay for the costs of their journeys to France.[48]

Lebel reacted very negatively to Shatilov's suggestion that employers repay *Tekhprom* the credits issued by it to pay for the workers' journeys, as he wanted no contact at all between *Tekhprom* and the employers.[49] *Tekhprom* was also forbidden to interfere in relations between the workers and their employers, for which reason it was not allowed to contact the workers once they had arrived in France.[50] Despite these restrictions, Shatilov agreed to Lebel's scheme, since in reality he had little choice and it at least gave permission for an initial group of 450 men. To reduce the costs of the journeys to France, he asked Generals Ronzhin and Kussonskii in Yugoslavia to try to arrange free travel for workers leaving the country on Yugoslav railways.[51] Shatilov also reached agreement with the Swiss railways for free transit through Switzerland for workers coming to France from Bulgaria.[52]

Shatilov's agreement with Lebel suffered from one great weakness, which was that there was no clear means of paying for the workers' journeys to France. The army was obliged to tell those who wished to take up opportunities in France that they must pay their own way. This greatly complicated the attempt to move whole units as blocks, as it was never the case that everyone in a unit could afford such a journey. To alleviate the problem in part, General Abramov in Bulgaria, where the 450 were to come from, handed over to *Tekhnopomoshch* the actual process of organizing the

[48] Ibid. Folder 'Resettlement (3)' (Letter, Shatilov to Abramov and others, no. 478, 27 June 1924).

[49] Ibid. (Letter, Shatilov to Kussonskii, no. 482, 27 June 1924).

[50] BAR, ROVS, Box 13, Folder 'Court of Honour, Khimich v. Mel'nitskii' (Report, Shatilov to Khol'msen, no. 2415, Sept. 1925).

[51] BAR, ROVS, Box 37, Folder 'Resettlement (3)' (Letter, Shatilov to Abramov and others, no. 478, 27 June 1924).

[52] HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 10, File 40 (Letter, Polunin to Abramov, no. 607, 18 July 1924).

transfer.[53] This ensured that the men would be able to travel, but had the great disadvantage that many of them were saddled with large debts on their arrival in France. This was to cause much dissatisfaction later.

Shatilov also undertook talks concerning the immigration of agricultural workers. Unfortunately the conditions for such workers were particularly poor, and the French government demanded that they complete twelve-month contracts before they received permanent residence permits. This was considered unacceptable by the Russians. Both Wrangel and Ataman Bogaevskii felt that the conditions for agricultural workers amounted to 'white slavery'.[54] Wrangel therefore issued an order forbidding members of the Russian Army from accepting agricultural work in France. The vacancies offered by the French were instead advertised among those military émigrés who had left the ranks of the army.[55] Very few responded, however, because the required twelve-month contract was deemed unacceptable by most. In these circumstances it is unlikely that Wrangel's prohibition had much impact on the transfer of troops to France, since few were willing to accept the terms offered anyway.

The first group out of the 450 men agreed to between Shatilov and Lebel arrived in France on 16 August 1924. On 22 August the French Ministry of Labour agreed, in addition to the original 450, to allow the French consulate in Sofia to issue 50 visas a month for Russians to work in France.[56] All went first to Toul, and from there on to their assigned places of work. Shatilov's main task now was to try to establish contact with these men and re-establish some form of military organization among the arriving groups. In this he was restrained by the prohibition on contacts between *Tekhprom* and Russian workers. To achieve the desired aim, a senior was appointed in every group due to enter France and given the task of contacting Shatilov once the men of his group had reached their place of work. There the men were to form 'work parties', under the authority of the senior officer and with their own mutual support funds. However, on arrival at Toul most groups were split up into

[53] BAR, ROVS, Box 37, Folder 'Resettlement (6)' (Letter, Abramov to Shatilov, no. 886, 16 July 1924).

[54] HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 10, File 40 (Letter, Kussonskii to Shatilov, no. 137/s, 21 June 1924). GARF, f. 6460, o. 1, d. 1, l. 26 (Letter, Bogaevskii to Abramov, no. 811, 23 July 1924).

[55] HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 10, File 40 (Letter, Kussonskii to Ekk and Abramov, no. 489/s, 11 Aug. 1924).

[56] BAR, ROVS, Box 38, Folder 'Resettlement, 1924 (8)' (Letter, Shatilov to Kussonskii, no. 833, 22 Aug. 1924).

smaller groups, and the majority of the seniors of the work parties failed to report to Shatilov as required. It therefore fell to Shatilov himself to track these men down. Having found a group of Russian workers (whether they had arrived in France by this method or any other) Shatilov would check the background of the senior officer, and if suitable, appoint him group commander, giving him a copy of the instructions for the formation of work groups in France and Belgium. According to Shatilov, group seniors were invariably extremely happy when contact with the army was re-established:

> On arrival in France these people . . . felt cut off from everything, saw around them a typical working class life with its lack of prospects. The establishment of a link with me, the knowledge that a military organization existed, to which they could turn for support and advice when they needed it, cheered our troops up noticeably.[57]

Lebel's prohibition on contacts between Shatilov and the arriving workers meant that Shatilov had to keep his contacts with the workers secret from the French and so could not pass on their complaints. These complaints were numerous. Lebel had promised three-month contracts, but on arrival in France most Russians found themselves on six-month contracts, and sometimes even longer. Russians were obliged to complete these contracts if they wished to obtain permanent residence in France, and therefore until the contracts were completed they were in effect in a form of bonded labour and unable to escape if conditions were harsh. Their desire for shorter contracts was highly understandable. The first group of fifty workers who arrived at Toul refused to take up the employment offered when they learned that their contracts were to be longer than promised, and only agreed to go when they were reduced to three months.[58] The main centres of employment were the Renault factory at Billancourt near Paris, factories at Knutange and Boulange in the Moselle region and Colombelles and Mondeville in Normandy, and the mines and factories of Decazeville. The standard of living was often low. As one Russian miner said of his life at Ferrière-aux-Étangs in Normandy: 'The conditions were terrible . . . The workers had little houses in the forest, with no electricity or water . . . one had to go 200 metres to get water,

[57] BAR, ROVS, Box 17, Folder 'Wrangel Headquarters (7)' (Report, Shatilov to Wrangel, no. 212, 24 Jan. 1925).

[58] HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 10, File 40 (Letter, Shatilov to Abramov, no. 681, 2 Aug. 1924). See also GARF, f. 6460, o. 1, d. 1, l. 23–6 (Letters, Bogaevskii to Abramov, 23 July and 22 Aug. 1924).

eventually we were given beds, but no mattresses, nothing.'[59] The Russian left Ferrière-aux-Étangs when his six-month contract was completed, and eventually took a job at Billancourt, where conditions were better.

Those Russians who had used the services of *Tekhnopomoshch* to enter France were particularly unhappy, as in many cases their debts to *Tekhnopomoshch* turned out to be much larger than they had been led to expect. Unable to turn to their own leaders, who were forbidden from representing them, they were powerless. Coming to France, hoping to find a better life after the hardships of the Balkans, many felt deeply disillusioned almost immediately, and realized their inferior legal and social position in France.

Despite these problems, Shatilov's efforts had some success. Under his arrangements with Lebel, twelve groups, totalling 622 men, plus 100 family members, left Bulgaria for France between 2 August and 15 November 1924. An additional 200 were transferred in the same period from Yugoslavia in a separate agreement between Shatilov and the French Ministry of Labour, and 100 were moved from Poland and Danzig. Thus, by the end of November 1924, Shatilov had moved over 1,000 people to France.[60] Shatilov had also succeeded in establishing contact with numerous other groups of Russians in France, so that by January 1925 he was able to report the existence of 73 work parties of the Russian Army in France, with a total of 3,750 members.[61]

In October 1924 the French government finally extended diplomatic recognition to the Soviet regime. Having done so, France wished to reduce its official contacts with members of the Russian Army, and it was probably no coincidence that on 8 November 1924 Lebel ordered a temporary halt in the issuing of fifty visas a month, citing a worsening employment situation in France.[62] In April 1925 this halt was made permanent, and Shatilov's arrangement with Lebel was brought to an end. Wrangel nevertheless wished the transfer of troops out of the Balkans to continue, so Shatilov was now obliged to consider new methods. This task was complicated by the fact that the High Commission for Refugees, now renamed 'The Refugee Unit of the International Bureau

[59] H. Menegaldo, *Les Russes à Paris* (Paris, 1998), 128.

[60] BAR, ROVS, Box 38, Folder 'Resettlement, 1924 (10)' (Letter, Polunin to Maklakov, 24 Nov. 1924).

[61] BAR, ROVS, Box 17, Folder 'Wrangel Headquarters (7)' (Report, Shatilov to Wrangel, no. 212, 24 Jan. 1925).

[62] BAR, ROVS, Box 38, Folder 'Resettlement, 1924 (11)' (Letter, Lebel to Shatilov, 8 Nov. 1924).

of Labour' had decided that the transfers of refugees needed to be properly co-ordinated, by it. The Bureau reached agreement with the French government to take over responsibility for the transfer of Russian labourers to France.[63] This new development caused concern in the army as it was felt that the International Bureau would not be willing to send army personnel to the West in groups, but would seek to mix them up with the general refugee mass.

To get around these new complications, Shatilov returned to his original idea of negotiating directly with French employers, who would then have to obtain the necessary visas from the Ministry of Labour without suggesting that representatives of the Russian Army had been in contact with them. Such negotiations had some success. In May 1925, for instance, a group of 250 set off from Bulgaria to go to Knutange in France.[64] Shatilov also proposed another scheme. Under this plan, those working in France were to press their employers to accept more Russians, and to ask the Ministry of Labour for the necessary work certificates. Names of members of their units back in the Balkans were to be provided.[65] This scheme resulted in the production of various offers of work throughout the rest of 1925,[66] but there was often a long delay between people signing up to go to France and the work certificates being received. By the time the certificates arrived many were either unwilling to leave, no longer had the necessary money (workers still had to pay the full costs of their journey), or had disappeared.[67] Despite these problems, transfers of men into France continued into 1928. In March 1926, for instance, Shatilov was able to persuade the director of the mines at Decazeville to provide an extra seventy jobs for Russians from Bulgaria, and permission for these was received from the Ministry of Labour.[68]

Offers of work were also provided for several hundred Russians in Belgium. Negotiations with Belgian employers on behalf of the Russians were undertaken by Madame Sh. G. Frichero, the wife of a Russian

[63] Ibid. Folder 'Resettlement, 1925 (1)' (Letter, Kussonskii to Shatilov, no. 833/p, 30 Mar. 1925).

[64] Ibid. (Letter, Abramov to Shatilov and Kussonskii, no. 519, 9 May 1925).

[65] Ibid. Folder 'Resettlement, 1924 (12)' (Letter, Shatilov to Abramov, 25 May 1925).

[66] Numerous offers of work and lists of workers sent to France are held in BAR, ROVS, Box 38, Folder 'Resettlement, 1925 (2)'.

[67] e.g. BAR, ROVS, Box 39, Folder 'Resettlement, 1925 (4)' (Letter, Société Générale des Chaux et Ciments to Shatilov, 19 Oct. 1925; & Letter, Abramov to Shatilov, no. 439, 30 Oct. 1925).

[68] Ibid. Folder 'Resettlement, 1926 (1)' (Letter, Shatilov to Abramov, no. 461, 5 Mar. 1926).

industrialist with large holdings in western Europe. In July 1924 she was able to obtain work for 50 soldiers at the factory 'Armand Blaton',[69] and a year later obtained offers for 500 Russians to come from Bulgaria to work in mines and quarries in Belgium on twelve-month contracts. It proved very difficult to fill these places, because the Russians disliked the idea of twelve-month contracts, and many, after years in Bulgarian mines, were simply unwilling to accept work as miners again. As a result only 11 volunteers came forward to take the 100 places offered at Belgian quarries.[70] Eventually more agreed to go to Belgium and also to Luxembourg, and various groups travelled there from Bulgaria in 1928.[71] A group of the Markovskii artillery battalion which left Bulgaria to work at the Winterslag mines in Belgium in 1926 commented of their new life that 'In general we saw nothing like this in Bulgaria. We feel incomparably better here.'[72] The group formed an *artel*, pooled its wages, and with them rented a house where they all lived and paid for a cook and two servants.[73]

In total, from 1923 onwards nearly 9,000 Russian soldiers arrived in France and Belgium from Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. Perhaps a third to a quarter of these found employment through the efforts of General Shatilov. The army and its representatives also helped find employment for Russian soldiers coming from Poland. In summer 1924, for instance, General Miller sent 3,000 francs to Poland to enable troops there to pay for their journeys to France.[74] By April 1925, there were 50 work groups of the Russian Army in France and Belgium, each with its own senior appointed by Shatilov, with a total of 4,041 members.[75] In this way the army's involvement in the transfers proved something of a success.

Many of those Russians who arrived in France continued to live and work together for years. In 1930, for instance, forty Gallipoliitsy working in a factory in Cannes still shared a workers' barracks, had their own mutual help fund, and had set up their own orchestra.[76] This sort of lifestyle became less common as time went on, but it was not unusual. A

[69] HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 10, File 40 (Letter, Frichero to Wrangel, 11 July 1924).
[70] Ibid. (Report, Colonel Alatyrtsev to Vitkovskii, no. 90, 22 Sept. 1925).
[71] GARF, f. 5826, o. 1, d.101, l. 13–18 (Reports, General Abramov, July–Oct. 1928).
[72] *Russkii Voennyi Vestnik*, 45 (13 June 1926), 1.
[73] Hutchins, *Wrangel Refugees*, 135.
[74] HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 10, File 40 (*Polozhenie nashikh voennykh kontingentov v Pol'she*, General Makhrov, 26 Sept. 1924).
[75] BAR, ROVS, Box 133, Folder 'Lists' (*Spisok russkikh armeiskikh rabochikh grupp na territorii Frantsii i Bel'gii*, 1 Apr. 1925).
[76] *Chasovoi*, no. 46, p. 29.

group from the Life Guards Don Cossack Battalion, who worked as porters at the Gare du Nord in Paris, continued to share accommodation and march together to work as a unit right up until the Second World War.[77] This phenomenon was not spontaneous, but was largely a deliberate creation. The leadership of the Russian Army went to very considerable lengths to find work for its men, and to do so in such a way so as to keep them together. Without the army's involvement, many thousand of these immigrants to France (and equally their colleagues in Yugoslavia) would have been dispersed, with little or no connection between them. The army ensured that as much as possible they worked and lived together, and thus helped create part of the phenomenon of Russia Abroad.

The army's involvement did not cease the moment refugees arrived in France or Belgium. Once their initial three- or six-month work contracts were over, many Russians left to look for better paid employment. To do this they often required letters of recommendation, or proof of their previous military service. These they had to obtain from the offices of the main Russian veterans' organization, the *Russkii Obhsche-Voinskii Soiuz* (Russian General Military Union), ROVS, which possessed the necessary records. Military personnel who had arrived in France by other routes also turned to ROVS for such services. Thus in 1925, ROVS's department in France provided recommendations to 5,800 men in the Paris region and 860 in the provinces; it provided 310 men with rail fares to their place of work; subsidies of 11,937 francs were given to the especially needy; 1,875 free dinners were issued; 8,569 nights of beds provided free of charge; 100 men were given hospital assistance; appeals were made to the French authorities for visas on behalf of 340 people, and official information from the archives was given to 380 men to present to the French authorities.[78] The system of work groups established by the High Command, although designed primarily as a means of retaining some form of military structure, had the side effect of helping Russians improve the conditions of their work. Shatilov noted that group commanders felt that the organization and discipline of work groups made a positive impression on French employers. Requests from group commanders were often agreed to, where the same requests from individuals would have been rejected. Enterprise managers were also willing to

[77] P. Longworth, *The Cossacks* (London, 1969), 316.
[78] BAR, Bernatskii Collection, Folder 'Settlement of White Army Veterans, 1921–1925' (*Pamiatnaia zapiska*, no date or signature).

give money for group purposes, in one instance giving money to build a library and in another case providing money to build a small Orthodox church. The clear advantages of being in such a group, Shatilov noted, helped keep the men together.[79] In this way, the maintenance of the army's structure helped the men rather than hindered them.

It should be noted that the international situation in the inter-war period did not encourage assimilation. European countries had great problems of their own and were concerned primarily with helping their own nationals, as a result of which many countries openly discriminated against foreigners. In 1926, for instance, General Opritz noted that the French government had temporarily banned foreigners from obtaining work in the Renault factory, and that as a result of protests by the French syndicate of taxi drivers, Russians were having great difficulty in acquiring driving permits.[80] In such circumstances, it was hardly surprising that Russians looked to each other for support, and so the continued existence of the Russian Army and later ROVS was a great help to many. The aid which the army provided was an important factor in persuading many to keep their links with it throughout their long years of exile.

[79] BAR, ROVS, Box 17, Folder 'Wrangel Headquarters (7)' (Report, Shatilov to Wrangel, no. 212, 24 Jan. 1925).
[80] GARF, f. 6460, o. 1, d. 10, l. 7–10 (Letter, Opritz to Abramov, 11 June 1926).

7

ROVS

By late 1924, the Russian Army had dispersed throughout Europe and was slowly losing its military character. The wider emigration was also losing its cohesiveness as time went by and emigrés settled into new lives. Wrangel had failed in his effort to unite the army and civilian émigré society under his Russian Council, but he still hoped to secure the leadership of all military elements of the emigration. His Russian Army was not the only White formation to have been driven out of Russia in late 1920. Parts of several other White armies had been interned in Poland, for instance. Wrangel hoped to unite all these to create one large military organization under his command. These considerations resulted in the formation in autumn 1924 of the Russian General Military Union, ROVS (*Russkii Obshche-Voinskii Soiuz*), which gradually took over the roles of the army High Command until eventually it replaced it entirely.

ROVS was almost certainly the largest of all Russian émigré organizations, both military and civilian, during the inter-war period. Its genesis went back to late 1920 and early 1921. At that time, exiled Russian veterans throughout Europe began spontaneously to form regimental associations, military study groups, and societies of First World War and Civil War veterans. In Paris, for instance, one of the largest of these, the Union of Russian Officer War Veterans, SROUV (*Soiuz Russkikh Ofitserov Uchastnikov Voiny*), was formed in January 1921.[1] About the same time, the troops of a fairly minor force interned in Poland, the White Army of General Bulak-Balakhovich, officially recognized Wrangel as their supreme commander.[2] In response, Wrangel gave Bulak-Balakhovich's 'Death' Infantry Division a grant of 1,135,000 Polish marks, and the Russian Army's representative in Poland, General Makhrov, helped the interned troops to reorganize into artels and provided money for them to start up workshops to earn

[1] BAR, ROVS, Box 164, Folder 'Organization of ROVS, 1921–1922'.
[2] HIA, WA. Box 148, File 36, 19–20 (Declaration of representatives of the Armed Forces of the Northern and Western Fronts, 14 Dec. 1920).

their living.[3] General Shatilov subsequently helped many of the men to move to France.

General Wrangel was already aware that it might not be possible to preserve even his own army in its original form. He therefore encouraged the process by which soldiers formed military associations in exile. Early in 1921, he ordered his representatives to ensure that former Russian soldiers in every country be organized into unions and societies.[4] On 2 April 1921, his staff issued a set of 'normal regulations' for these military associations. These described for the first time a general union of unions, with associations in each country sending delegates to a 'general union' for that country, with each general union in turn sending delegates to form a 'main union'.[5] This federation of unions eventually found form in the shape of ROVS.

One of the first efforts to create a national 'general union' was in Turkey, where in July 1921 Wrangel's military representative formed a 'Council of Unions and Societies of Former Russian Soldiers in Turkey', bringing together eight existing military organizations comprising 2,430 members.[6] In December 1921, a similar 'Council of United Officers' Organizations in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes' was created. To encourage the process, Wrangel provided grants to military associations which recognized his authority, small sums in real terms but money which many depended on. In May 1924, for instance, his representative in Germany, Major General A. A. von Lampe, noted that this subsidy was the main source of income for the Russian officers' union in Berlin.[7]

In September 1923, Wrangel took a further step, issuing his Order no. 82. The immediate purpose of this order was to bring all military associations into the ranks of the Russian Army. It stated that associations which refused to join the army, and so be subject to recall to the colours at any time, were to be deprived of financial support. It also forbade officers of the army from participating in politics. The order was published at a time when monarchist agitators were battling for the allegiance of former soldiers, and, as will be seen, was to prove one of the most significant acts in the political history of the Russian emigration.[8]

[3] HIA, WA, Box 145, File 28, 296 (Letter, Commander of the 1st Infantry Division 'Smert', Tukhol Camp, 19 Oct. 1921). HIA, WA, Box 50, File 21, 112–15 (Letter, Makhrov to Miller, 13 Feb. 1923); Box 145, File 29, 741–3 (Letter, Makhrov to Kussonskii, no. 825, 23 Oct. 1923); HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 12, File 48 (*Polozhenie voennykh kontingentov v Pol'she v dekabre 1923 g*, General Makhrov).

[4] BAR, ROVS, Box 164, Folder 'Organisation of ROVS, 1921–1922' (Letter, Shatilov to Chertkov, no. 7046, 5 July 1921); Box 161, Folder 'Officers' Unions, 1921–1923' (Letter, Shatilov to Miller, 8 Jan. 1921).

[5] BAR, ROVS, Box 164, Folder 'Organization of ROVS, 1921–1922 (2)' (*Normal'nyi Ustav russkikh voinov, nakhodiashchikhsia v . . .*, 2 Apr. 1921).

[6] E. I. Pivovar, *Russkaia emigratsiia v Turtsii, Iuzhno-vostochnoi i tsentral'noi Evrope* (Göttingen, 1994), 65–7.

[7] HIA, von Lampe Collection, Box 2 (*Svodka no. 1 o polozhenii ofitserskikh soiuzov*, 15 May 1924); also Box 4 (Letter, von Lampe to Kussonskii, no. 1164, 20 Sept. 1925); see also HIA. Kussonskii Collection, Box 12, File 48 (Letter, Miller to Khol'msen, no. 858/a, 14 Mar. 1924).

By this time, as the units of the Russian Army dispersed in search of work, and the units themselves took on new forms similar to those of the military associations, the distinction between military units and associations began to fade. Wrangel therefore decided to create a new structure to hold the dispersed elements of the military together, and in September 1924 issued another directive, Order no. 35, and an accompanying 'Temporary Statute of the Russkii Obshche-Voinskii Soiuz', issued on the same day.[9] These instructions created a military union including all military units of the Russian Army and all military associations which wished to join the complement of the army. Such associations were to be considered part of ROVS, but were to preserve their name and independence in internal matters. They were to be subject to the overall authority of the Commander-in-Chief. After Wrangel's death in 1928, ROVS was commanded by a President (each in turn appointed by his predecessor), with the help of Central Directorate in Paris.

ROVS was sub-divided into administrative departments, each with its own head and staff. The 1st Department (under General Khol'msen until 1930, when he was replaced by Shatilov) covered France, Italy, Holland, North Africa, and the Middle East (Egypt, Syria, Morocco etc.), and consisted of a general mix of First World War and Civil War veterans. The 2nd Department (Germany: General von Lampe) consisted mainly of Civil War veterans who had been in the armies of Miller, Bulak-Balakhovich, and Bermondt-Avalov (whose army had fought in the Baltic region). The 3rd Department (Bulgaria: General Abramov) consisted mainly of veterans of Wrangel's Russian Army. The 4th Department (Yugoslavia: General Ekk until 1933, after which General Barbovich) also consisted mainly of veterans of Wrangel's army, and the 5th Department (Belgium: General Gartman) contained a variety of veterans of different

[8] BAR, ROVS, Box 161, Folder 'Officers' Unions, 1923–1924' (Order, no. 82, General Wrangel, 8 Sept. 1923). For further information on Order no. 82, see Chapter 8.

[9] Ibid. (Order no. 35, General Wrangel; *Vremennoe Polozhenie o Russkom Obshche-Voinskom Soiuze*, 1 Sept. 1924).

backgrounds. A 6th Department was created in 1930 to cover Czechoslovakia, and a Far Eastern Department (Manchuria, under General Dieterichs) was set up in 1928, consisting of men who had fled from Siberia after the defeat of Admiral Kolchak. In addition, as ROVS members dispersed ever further around the world, sub-departments subordinate directly to the ROVS President were eventually created in the USA (New York and Santa Monica), Canada, Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Finland.[10] These sub-departments were very small, however, and the bulk of ROVS's members lived in the areas of the 1st, 3rd, and 4th Departments. ROVS was legally banned from some countries such as Poland and Rumania, which bordered the Soviet Union and did not wish to incur Soviet displeasure.

Former soldiers did not join ROVS directly, except in rare circumstances in which they lived in isolated areas where no military association existed. Instead they were members of a unit of the Russian Army or of one or more of the military associations, and through them were automatically members of ROVS. The organization's decentralized structure created multiple and overlapping commands. The military units of the Russian Army were retained, and through them the idea that the army still existed was retained also. Commanders were appointed and dismissed, personnel transferred from unit to unit by special order, and so on. Until 1926 each unit retained a small cadre financed by the Headquarters of the Russian Army, but after 1 January 1926 the members of these cadres were obliged to seek work, and henceforth unit commanders themselves had to maintain links with the men of their unit in their spare time after work. But these units were not the only organizations within ROVS, nor was their chain of command the only one. An officer might be a member of a regiment of the Russian Army with its chain of command, but he might also be a member of one or more military associations, such as the Society of Gallipolians or the Society of General Staff Officers, which had their own separate chain of command. All of the groups to which he belonged were issuing instructions, providing help and advice, and expecting membership fees. General Abramov noted, for instance, that Gallipoliitsy were expected to pay fees to both their unit and the Society of Gallipolians, which few could afford.[11]

The overlapping commands led to bitter disputes between commanders. Generals Abramov and Vitkovskii, for instance, quarrelled over who

[10] BAR, ROVS, Box 164 ('Organization of ROVS'); *Armiia i Flot* (Paris, 1938).
[11] HIA, WA, Box 147, File 33, 315–16 (Letter, Abramov to Wrangel, 26 July 1927).

should issue instructions to Gallipoliitsy in Bulgaria—Abramov as head of the 3rd Department, or Vitkovskii as Commander of the First Army Corps.[12] These difficulties were exacerbated by the geographic dispersion of ROVS members, which made communications between members very slow and inefficient. General Miller, who became President of ROVS in 1930, would often complain that orders and information issued by the Central Directorate were not passed on to the lower ranks.[13] In other cases, orders were simply ignored. General Zinkevich, the Commander of the Alekseevskii Infantry Regiment, who lived in Bulgaria, noted that he and Abramov regularly suppressed orders from the centre, as they considered that orders issued in Paris were often inappropriate in Bulgaria.[14] While this habit may have been understandable, it did not help create a strong, unified organization.

As information was not centralized, ROVS never knew exactly how many members it had. Until 1930 there was not even a universal ROVS membership card.[15] The only available document in the ROVS archive on the subject is a small carbon-copy of a list put together in November 1925, according to which, at that time, ROVS had 35,214 members, 19,226 of which were in military units and 15,988 in military associations. The largest department was the 1st, which had 13,853 members, followed by the 4th Department with 10,955, and the 3rd with 9,281.[16] However, as the person preparing the list pointed out, these figures were at best a rough estimate. After 1930, ROVS's membership fell, especially in France. In 1936, Miller estimated ROVS's membership in France at 6,000,[17] a fall of over 50 per cent since 1925. This decline was not as severe elsewhere. Membership held up much better in the Balkans (taking into account a large drop in the mid-1920s caused by the movement of veterans from the Balkans to France). Correspondents from Yugoslavia and Bulgaria in the mid-1930s often noted that the situation there was

[12] HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection, Box 1 (Letters, Vitkovskii to Wrangel and Arkhangel'skii, and Abramov to Wrangel, July and Aug. 1927).
[13] e.g. BAR, ROVS, Box 2, Folder 'Miller, E. K. to Tsurikov, N. A.' (Letter, Miller to Tsurikov, no. 1166, 7 July 1935).
[14] BAR, ROVS, Box 6, Folder 'Correspondence, Zinkevich to Matsylev, 1937–1940' (Letter, Zinkevich to Matsylev, 7 Apr. 1937).
[15] BAR, ROVS, Box 63, Folder 'Correspondence, 1920, II Otdel to Central Office' (Order no. 5, General Stogov, 18 Apr. 1930).
[16] BAR, ROVS, Box 164, Folder 'Project to form Russian Army abroad (3)' (*Spisok ofitserskikh obshchestv i soiuzov, voinskikh chastei i organizatsii, vkhodiashchikh v ROVS*, 1 Nov. 1925).
[17] BAR, ROVS, Box 1, Folder 'Maklakov V. A. to Miller, E. K.' (Letter, Miller to Maklakov, 27 May 1936).

much better than it was further west. Thus, there were 6,000 members in France in the 1930s out of approximately 100,000 émigrés in that country, and 800 members in Czechoslovakia out of an émigré community of 7,000, but a reported 4,500 members out of a total émigré community of 15,000 in Bulgaria.[18] This meant that one in three émigrés in Bulgaria were ROVS members. The proportion was probably the same in Yugoslavia.

The aid which ROVS provided to its members can be divided into two types—that provided locally by units and military associations, and that provided centrally by ROVS itself via the departmental offices. The former was based upon the system of mutual help funds which Wrangel had ordered to be established in the early 1920s. These survived throughout the inter-war period. Unit and organizational funds were kept going through members' dues and through an endless round of charity dinners and balls. Those organizations which were successful in collecting fees and holding charitable events could often give quite substantial support to their members. The Union of Cavalry and Horse Artillery in France, which had 186 members, was able to spend 30,175 francs on support to its members in 1935, including 9,220 francs on providing aid to the sick in sanatoria, 2,703 francs on rest homes, and 3,600 francs on support of the unemployed.[19] The *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo*'s charity ball of January 1933, whose organizing committee was chaired by the wife of the former Czech Prime Minister, Karel Kramar, was attended by 1,500 people, including many Czech luminaries, and raised 50,000 crowns.[20] This money was divided between the Zemliachestvo's mutual help fund, and the fund which ROVS had set up to finance its underground operations against the Soviet Union, known as the Fund for the Salvation of the Motherland, FSR (*Fond Spaseniia Rodiny*). Zemliachestvo funds were also used to set up a restaurant in Prague which provided employment to several members, to buy a car which enabled two more members to earn their livings as taxi drivers, and to found a hostel for unemployed and homeless Russians in Prague.[21] In Yugoslavia, a movement called the Russian Labourers' Christian Movement (RTKhD), a mutual aid society for Russian workers based on Christian principles, was set up in 1931 with the

[18] *Chasovoi*, 110/111 (Oct. 1933), 33.

[19] BAR, ROVS, Box 7, Folder 'Ob"edinenie konnitsy i konnoi artilerii (6)' (Report, General Chekotovskii, 1935).

[20] BAR, ROVS, Box 16, Folder 'Correspondence, Zinkevich to Miller' (Letter, Zinkevich to Miller, 24 Jan. 1933).

[21] *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev*, 18 (1 Jan. 1935), 11.

aid of the ROVS 4th Department, and soon expanded rapidly, with several thousand members in Yugoslavia alone.[22] ROVS members were particularly attracted by the religious element associated with the RTKhD, which sought not only to provide material aid to members but also to develop them spiritually and bring up their children with Christian morals.[23]

Military organizations also served as important social centres for their men. Many set up messes selling cheap food and providing libraries, reading rooms, and conference facilities. The Gallipoli Mess in Paris and the Officers' Mess in Belgrade were especially important social centres, and their facilities were used by many organizations both inside and outside of ROVS.[24] The restaurant run by the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo* played a similar role in Prague. N. E. Andreyev, a civilian émigré, noted that even in the 1930s ROVS members would not take a table on entering the restaurant but would first approach the senior officer present, come to attention, and ask for permission to be seated.[25] Many military organizations held meetings and hosted lectures at their messes. In 1926, for instance, the Gallipoli Mess in Paris sponsored lectures on such diverse themes as Turgenev, the Orthodox Church in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Dostoevsky, and 'The Time of Troubles'.[26] Musicians and singers often found employment at the numerous balls held by military associations. Popular writers such as Nadezhda Teffi, Aleksandr Kuprin, and Boris Zaitsov gave readings at literary evenings held by the Society of Gallipolians in Paris.[27] The society's branch in Belgrade published a collection of poems by Ivan Savin, who had served in the Russian Army in the Crimea and was the favourite poet of the younger generation of White veterans until his premature death in 1927.[28] Historians commenting on the maintenance of Russian high culture often ignore this substantial support for the arts by the supposedly unintellectual veterans of the White armies, but it was one of the mechanisms which allowed Russian culture to survive in exile.

[22] *Russkii Golos*, nos. 96, 123, 178, 320; *Chasovoi*, 77 (1 Apr. 1932), 30.

[23] *Informatsionnyi Vestnik Grenobl'skoi Gruppy ROVS*, 41 (Feb. 1933). *Chasovoi*, 188 (5 Apr. 1937), 15–16.

[24] Details of all the meetings held at the Gallipoli mess in Paris can be found in L. A. Mnukhin, (ed.), *L'Emigration russe, chronique de la vie scientifique, culturelle et sociale en France*, vols 1–4 (Paris, 1995, 1997). For information on the Officers' Mess in Belgrade, see *Russkii Golos*, nos. 117, 121, 129, 223.

[25] N. E. Andreyev, *To chto vspominaetsia* (Tallin, 1996), Vol. 2, 8.

[26] Mnukhin, *L'Emigration russe*, Vol. 1, 292–4.

[27] Ibid. 242, 421.

[28] Ivan Savin, *Ladonka: kniga liriki* (Belgrade, 1926). Savin's poems have now been published in Russia under the title *Moi belyi vitiaz'* (Moscow, 1998).

Humanitarian aid was provided not only by members' own units and organizations but also by ROVS's departmental and central directorates, which were funded centrally. Members' subscription fees and money raised locally went solely to the local unit or military association, and were used either for its needs, primarily in aid to the sick and unemployed, or to publish unit information bulletins, which circulated orders from ROVS commanders and detailed information from the lives of members in different areas. General Wrangel, and after him the ROVS President, paid the salaries and expenses of the small staffs of the ROVS departments and the central directorate (most of whom had to work on their own to supplement these incomes, which were very small). In 1928, when ROVS's funds were drying up, several million francs were provided by General Podtiagin, the former Russian military agent in Japan. This money financed the ROVS bureaucracy thereafter. It had originally been deposited in a Japanese bank by the White warlord Ataman Semyonov, and subsequently became the subject of a protracted lawsuit between Semyonov, Podtiagin, and the Japanese government, which Podtiagin eventually won, allowing him to transfer the funds to ROVS.[29]

The services provided centrally by ROVS were much in demand. Colonel Matsylev, who served as secretary of the ROVS 1st Department in the late 1930s, reported that the department, situated in the Gallipoli Mess, received as many as seventy to eighty visitors a day.[30] The files of the ROVS central offices, now stored at Columbia University in New York, are full of requests to ROVS for money, for aid in getting visas, for recommendations for work, for certificates proving military service, and so on. ROVS also handled dozens of inquiries from émigrés trying to find lost relatives or friends, or trying to determine whether somebody they had met was really who he said he was. ROVS was often able to help with providing information or aid in getting visas, but requests for money were normally rejected. Some groups within ROVS did, however, receive direct financial assistance from the centre. In November 1930, for instance, the Kuban Cossack Division in Yugoslavia was given a loan of 5,000 francs by the ROVS central directorate, which was supplemented by a further loan of 17,000 dinars in May 1932.[31] In Paris, ROVS

[29] For the full story of how ROVS acquired this money see BAR, ROVS, Box 1, Folder 'Kutepov A. P. to Miller, E. K.' (Letter, Kutepov to Miller, 30 Aug. 1928).

[30] BAR, ROVS, Box 86, Folder 'Correspondence, Zinkevich to Matsylev, 1934–1936' (Letter, Matsylev to Zinkevich, 15 May 1936).

[31] BAR, ROVS, Box 65, Folder 'Correspondence, 1935, IV Otdel to Central Office' (Letter, Miller to Zborovskii, 7 May 1935).

arranged for a lawyer to provide free legal advice for members who were unable to afford it themselves,[32] and it paid for a bed at a hospital near Paris to be used exclusively, and free of charge, by ROVS members needing surgery.[33] In Bulgaria in 1930, the ROVS 3rd Department paid half the cost of surgery for 27 members (the other half being paid for by the men and their units) and found places for 75 of its members in the sanatoria of Baroness Olga Wrangel.[34] The 3rd Department also paid for a bed for the exclusive use of its members in the hospital of the Russian Red Cross in Sofia.[35] In addition, General Shatilov was able to obtain grants from the League of Nations to boost the mutual help capitals of the military organizations in the 1st Department.[36]

Despite all ROVS's efforts to support its members, those members often had little energy or money to give back to the cause. The correspondence of senior officers, and the pages of military journals, are full of complaints about the non-payment of membership fees. In 1926, Abramov estimated that only 40–50 per cent of members paid their dues.[37] Initially, non-payment was grounds for expulsion, but as von Lampe pointed out, the numbers not paying were too great to make expulsion a practical option.[38] As a result, in 1927 Wrangel ordered that those who were genuinely unable to pay should not be expelled for failing to do so. Expulsion was to be reserved solely for those who showed no desire to maintain links with their comrades.[39] Non-payment of dues became a particularly severe problem during the Great Depression, when the economic problems which many émigrés experienced made it more and more difficult for them to afford their membership fees. In 1934 General Zborovskii, commander of the Kuban Cossack Division, stated firmly that collection of any dues from his Cossacks was impossible.[40]

[32] BAR, ROVS, Box 4, Folder 'Central Office (6)' (Announcement, *Besplatnaia iuridicheskaia pomoshch' chinam ROVSa*).

[33] Ibid. (*Polozhenie o koike ROVS v gospitale Villejuif*).

[34] BAR, ROVS, Box 12, Folder 'Correspondence, Abramov to Miller (2)' (*Informatsionnye Svedeniia 3-ogo Otdela ROVSa*, 5 Sept. 1931).

[35] BAR, ROVS, Box 7, Folder 'Correspondence, 1932, III Otdel to Central Office' (Letter, Abramov to Miller, no. 176, 1 July 1932).

[36] BAR, ROVS, Box 6, Folder '1 Armeiskii Korpus, 1931–1933' (Letter, Shatilov to Fok, no. 3283, 19 Dec. 1933).

[37] HIA, Box 147, File 33, 36–7 (Letter, Abramov to Wrangel, 30 Nov. 1926).

[38] HIA, von Lampe Collection, Box 4 (Letter, von Lampe to Kussonskii, no. 1164, 20 Sept. 1925).

[39] HIA, WA, Box 147, File 34, 468–71 (Circular, General Wrangel, 25 Sept. 1927).

[40] HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection, Box 2 (Report, Zborovskii to Miller, no. 131, 13 Sept. 1934).

The same year, the head of the Paris branch of the Alekseevskii regiment, Colonel Matsylev, noted that in some units in France the payment of fees had ceased entirely.[41] In some countries the situation was better than in others. In Czechoslovakia the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo* was very successful in retaining its members and collecting money. The country's 800 ROVS members contributed more in absolute terms to the FSR than the membership in any other country. ROVS members in France, despite their larger numbers and that country's relative wealth, were among the lowest contributors.[42]

Members' lack of commitment went beyond not paying their membership fees. Many seem to have been purely nominal members, who rarely if ever turned up at meetings of their unit or association. Attendance at military training courses and lectures organized by ROVS was particularly poor. The problem was, as one general noted as early as 1925, that members engaged in hard physical labour had no energy to do anything after work but sleep.[43] In August 1933, for instance, only eight ROVS members bothered to attend a propaganda lecture in Grenoble given by the organization's professional agitator in France, V. M. Levitskii.[44] Commanders in Belgium, Luxembourg, and France noted 'an ever growing indifference and apathy' among their subordinates.[45]

ROVS leaders liked to speak of their 'firm cohesion', and thought of their military discipline as the greatest strength of their organization. The reality was somewhat different. Many members did indeed retain a sense of themselves as soldiers, even after twenty years of exile, but as time went on this became harder and harder. Cohesion and discipline became more and more a matter of rhetoric and less and less a reality. By 1937 Wrangel's former deputy Chief of Staff General Kussonskii was forced to admit that 'there are very few officers left, and all the other "misters" . . . cannot be considered officers in the sense that we understand it.'[46]

[41] BAR, ROVS, Box 86, Folder 'Correspondence, Zinkevich to Matsylev (1934–1936)' (Letter, Matsylev to Zinkevich, 13 Sept. 1934).

[42] BAR, ROVS, Box 7, Folder 'Correspondence, Czech Group, 1930–1931' (Letter, Kharzhevskii to Vitkovskii, 13 Dec. 1930); Box 84, Folder 'Russian Youth Organisations, 1929–1932' (*Informatsionnyi List Alekseevskogo Pekhotnogo Polka*, no. 4, 11 Apr. 1933).

[43] HIA, WA, Box 146, File 31, 508–16 (Report, Artifeksov to Wrangel, 1 Aug. 1925).

[44] *Informatsionnyi Vestnik Grenobl'skoi Gruppy ROVS*, 45 (Aug. 1933).

[45] BAR, V. D. Merzheevskii Collection, (Order no. 1, Colonel Levashov, 1927). BAR, ROVS, Box 6, Folder 'Correspondence, 1 Armeiskii Korpus, 1931–1933' (*Obrashchenie Pravleniia Otdela Obshchestva Gallipolitsev vo Frantsii*, Feb. 1933).

[46] BAR, ROVS, Box 63, Folder 'Correspondence, 1937, III Otdel to Central Office' (Letter, Kussonskii to Abramov, 28 July 1937).

Many of ROVS's activities, especially in later years, were simply social events. Units held regular dinners, celebrated regimental anniversaries, held commemorative church services, and met for drinks, at which members could see old friends, talk about past experiences, and keep the memory of their unit and its traditions alive, in the way of veterans' associations such as the Royal Legion in the United Kingdom. For many ROVS members this social function was always the way in which ROVS impinged most upon their lives.

ROVS had been intended as more than just an old soldiers' club, however. The Temporary Statute of 1924 laid out the following goals for it:

> The aim of Russian General Military Union is to unite Russian warriors, dispersed in various countries, to strengthen the spiritual link between them, and to preserve them as the bearers of the best traditions and testaments of the old army. ROVS's task is to support soldiers' military knightly spirit, to strengthen the principles of military discipline and military ethics . . . and also to provide material and moral support to its members.[47]

This in effect split ROVS's aims and activities into two—moral and practical. The latter, which focused on mutual support and humanitarian aid, were envisaged as a secondary purpose, which would ensure support from members. The moral sphere was the one which ultimately counted.

The more idealist ROVS members regarded their purpose as being to act as a moral élite at the core of the emigration, preserving Russian culture and continuing the ethos of irreconcilable hatred of the Soviet regime. To preserve its moral force ROVS had to remain military in essence, to prevent its members becoming civilianized by their everyday lives, and to preserve in them the high values of a Russian officer. As General Miller told a dinner of members of the Kornilov Shock Regiment in 1935, 'Your occupations are, if I may say so, proletarian, but your ideas must remain those of officers—ideas of honour, duty and nobility.' Under the mask of a social organization, ROVS members were to remain an army, bound by the demands of discipline. Subordinates were to obey orders precisely, leaders not to allow errors to pass without comment—'We must remain ONLY MILITARY, fighting the temptations and tempters that surround us.'[48]

[47] BAR, ROVS, Box 161, Folder 'Officers' Unions, 1923–1924' (*Vremennoe Polozhenie o Russkom Obshche-Voinskom Soiuze*, 1 Sept. 1924).

[48] BAR, ROVS, Box 89, Folder 'Manuscripts, Miller, E. K.' (Speech to Kornilov Regiment, 1 Sept. 1935).

ROVS saw itself as the preserver of the history and traditions of the Imperial Russian Army, guarding these in exile so that they could be taken back into post-communist Russia in order to fill the moral vacuum which it was believed would exist after the fall of the Soviets. In this vacuum it was felt that a small group of cohesive, morally forceful people could have a decisive impact.[49] As General Zinkevich told Colonel Matsylev in 1935, 'guard our regiment, Russia needs it. Perhaps it may not be needed as an organized fighting unit, but it is needed as a collection of people who think alike, standing on the completely correct path.' After the collapse of communism there would be a void, Zinkevich predicted, a negative attitude to anything creative, but 'We . . . can give ideas and practical directions to the reconstruction of life in Russia. The value of this is enormous.'[50]

To the leaders of ROVS there was no distinction between the task of preserving Russian culture and that of fighting Bolshevism. They were inextricably linked, because the struggle between Red and White always had been, in their view, primarily a cultural and spiritual one. The revolution, explained the philosopher Ivan Il'in, who was closely associated with ROVS, was 'a spiritual illness', and the White struggle had nothing to do with political programmes, but was 'above all a question of religion, spirit and patriotism.'[51] Wrangel himself summed up the moral purpose of the White Army, both in the Civil War and in exile, in a note in which he emphasized that the White cause was primarily about saving Russia's honour:

> The White movement . . . showed that not all of the Russian people had submitted to the red executioners. If it had not been for the White struggle the last turbulent years would have been a shameful blot on the history of Russia. . . . The Army must unite all the Russian military abroad, unite it and preserve it for Russia's future. Russia needs not just technical knowledge, not just military experience, but also a burning fit of sacrifice and a burning love of the fatherland, those feelings which are borne by the Army..[52]

ROVS leaders came to regard their organization as a sort of religious–military order, a concept which first emerged at Gallipoli. In 1921 Wrangel even endorsed the idea of creating a 'Union of Virtue and

[49] GARF, f. 5796, o. 1, d. 7, l. 99 (Letter, Orlov to the President of the Regional Directorate of the Society of Gallipolians in Czechoslovakia, no. 554, 22 June 1938).

[50] BAR, ROVS, Box 86 (Letter, Zinkevich to Matsylev, 17 Nov. 1935).

[51] I. A. Il'in, *Rodina i my*, (Belgrade, 1926), 13, 15.

[52] BAR, ROVS, Box 161, Folder 'Officers' Unions, 1923–1924' (*Pamiatnaia Zapiska* attached to Letter, Wrangel to Kutepov, no. 1473/s, 18 Jan. 1924).

Honour', a knightly order which was to have branches in every unit of the army and was meant to help the High Command raise the army's spirit and moral outlook. Shatilov eventually persuaded Wrangel to abandon the idea, but the episode revealed clearly Wrangel's obsession with concepts of honour.[53] The idea was resurrected in 1922 by an officer of the Kornilov Shock Regiment who suggested in the regimental magazine that Russian society and the army in particular could not continue in its old ways. What was needed, said the author, was the creation within the army of a 'knightly order' which would aim for self-perfection and act as a moral force to regenerate the entire army.[54] Eventually this idea came to fruition in the creation of a secret group within ROVS known as the Inner Line, which became the source of considerable scandal in the later 1930s (see Chapter 10).

The concept of honour played a central role in the minds of émigré army officers. However, for most Russian officers, it was not so much their own personal honour that they were concerned with as the collective honour and prestige of the Russian Army, the Russian officer corps, and Russia itself. Russia's honour, they believed, had been stained by the Bolsheviks' signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and through the barbarities of Bolshevik rule. Russia had been shamed, and it was the task of the Whites to restore its reputation. This implied that ROVS members must remain irreconcilably opposed to the Bolshevik regime in order to prove to foreigners and to future generations of Russians that not all Russians were Bolsheviks, and that there were positive aspects to Russia's past. As Denikin put it, if nobody had resisted the Bolsheviks, the Russian people 'would not have been a people but dung.'[55] Russia had been shamed, said Ivan Il'in. What would Russians say to their children, he asked, if nobody resisted the Bolsheviks? That they were slaves? What would Russia's history be but a story of self-destruction and self-degradation?[56] It was incumbent on ROVS to continue the struggle in exile to save Russia's honour, and to maintain among Russians the moral and religious principles which were being destroyed inside Russia. As N. A. Tsurikov wrote, 'For victory we must first of all preserve in unviolated purity our White Banner—the Banner of Kornilov and Wrangel. This is

[53] P. N. Shatilov, 'Memoirs', 1027–30.

[54] *Kornilovets*, no. 2, 6–10.

[55] E. Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War* (Boston, 1987), 21.

[56] I. A. Il'in, *Gosudarstvennyi smysl' beloi armii*, speech delivered Nov. 1923; copy held at HIA, WA, Box 140, File 40, 208–29.

the Banner of Honour, without which all is decay and mirage.'[57] Ivan Il'in summed it all up by saying:

> The White Army is . . . at heart an order of honour, service, and faithfulness. And this order will resurrect . . . Russian citizenship on the basis of faithfulness, service, and honour. And for this we Whites must above all maintain our own spirit . . . We must above all maintain the spirit of honour, for Russia *perished from a lack of honour*, and can be resurrected only through honour.[58]

Wrangel fully agreed with Il'in's emphasis on honour. As he said in his New Year's greeting for 1923, 'In hard labour, Russian officers, soldiers, and Cossacks are defending the honour of Russia. This is the sense of their struggle.'[59]

ROVS's self-image as an order of knights implied a number of practical tasks in order for its members to reach the high ideals demanded of them. Above all these 'knights' were to strive for self-perfection. As the official history of the First Army Corps at Gallipoli said, 'We shall indefatigably work on ourselves, shall study and shall teach.'[60] For this purpose, ROVS set up military training courses, which officers were expected to attend to renew their military knowledge. Officers were also expected to study world affairs and political theory. As one of ROVS's propagandists, N. A. Tsurikov, noted, ROVS was not meant to be a purely professional or social organization, but to be actively involved in anti-Bolshevik activity, which required its members to be politically educated.[61] Captain Varnek, a ROVS member in Grenoble, commented that 'Our overall strength depends on our small efforts, the small work that we undertake on ourselves.'[62] Unit meetings were thus devoted to lectures discussing current events inside the Soviet Union and elsewhere in the world (the dry nature of such meetings did not encourage attendance!). Propaganda and agitation was taken to the rank and file. Subsidies were given to the military journal *Chasovoi* (The Sentry) and to the *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev* (Bulletin of the Society of Gallipolians). Speakers and publicists were provided with stipends to

[57] *Pervopokhodnik*, 3 (Feb. 1938), 2.

[58] Il'in, *Rodina i my*, 3–4.

[59] V. Bortnevskii, *Zagadka smerti generala Vrangelia: Neizvestnye materialy po istorii russkoi emigratsii 1920-kh godov* (St Petersburg, 1996), 113.

[60] *Russkie v Gallipoli*, 449. For similar sentiments, see *Russkii Golos*, 412 (26 Feb. 1939), 2.

[61] N. A. Tsurikov, *Zadachi Russkogo Obshche-Voinskogo Soiuza i natsional'no-obshchestvennaia rabota* (publication details unknown).

[62] *Informatsionnyi Vestnik Grenobl'skoi Gruppy ROVS*, 40 (Jan. 1933).

travel around units and lecture to them on political and other matters, and were paid to issue occasional pamphlets. Education in all senses was strongly encouraged. If ROVS members could not serve their country again as army officers, they were expected to at least acquire the knowledge to serve in some other capacity. As Miller told a banquet of First Campaign Veterans, 'The duty of each of us is to use his time abroad to acquire knowledge, understanding, experience in various areas . . . for back in Russia we will find a desert in this regard.'[63]

Self-perfection implied discipline and adoption of a code of honour. This code was enforced by the system of courts of honour. ROVS's leaders considered this system to be of prime importance, and devoted a great deal of time and energy to it. General von Lampe, for instance, commented that 'Personally I consider courts of honour especially important and consider them the basis of ROVS's existence.'[64] The courts examined all possibly dishonourable actions committed by officers, and settled disputes over matters of honour between members. Hundreds of such cases were heard in the inter-war years. A typical case came before a court of honour in Belgrade in 1929. Staff Squadron Commander Izhitskii had slammed a door on Second Lieutenant Gusev during a quarrel in the hostel which they shared in Dubrovnik. Gusev then came back into his room and assaulted him. Izhitskii appealed to a court of honour, which expelled Gusev from the army and issued a reprimand to Izhitskii.[65] Courts of honour were in fact the only means of sanction which the ROVS leadership had to enforce discipline. They had few sentencing options, none of which had great meaning in the circumstances of exile. They could issue a reprimand, reduce an officer in rank, or expel him from ROVS. Although the courts' judgements were largely symbolic, in the tight-knit world of émigré life a condemnation by a court of honour could be a severe blow to an émigré's social status.

In reality, many, if not most, ROVS members failed to live up to the high standards expected of them. Few had the time or energy to devote themselves to study and self-perfection. Ill-discipline, disobedience, even mutiny were not unusual among ROVS members, as when Colonel Arkhangel'skii, the secretary of the Society of Officers of the General

[63] BAR, ROVS, Box 89, Folder 'Manuscripts, Miller, E. K.' (Speech, General Miller, 15 Nov. 1931).

[64] GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 35, l. 15714 (Letter, von Lampe to Kutepov, no. 565, 26 Aug. 1928).

[65] BAR, ROVS, Box 2 (Sentence, Court of Honour, 27 October 1929).

Staff in France, absconded with the society's funds.[66] But the discrepancies between the rhetoric and the reality did not make the rhetoric any less genuine. ROVS's leaders may not have been able to promote high morals among all its members, or to persuade them all to study and improve themselves, but that remained their purpose nonetheless, and it shaped much of what they did.

Organizationally, ROVS was chaotic: its members all too often were less than fully committed and control over them was weak. Still, the organization was not without purpose. In some cases it succeeded in giving important humanitarian aid to its members. In all cases it offered membership of what purported to be a moral élite. The spirits of Russian émigrés had little support. The conditions of their lives were often brutal and of a sort which was likely to undermine their spirits and morals. In this situation ROVS gave, if nothing else, much required spiritual support. The Russian officer turned miner, waiter, or taxi-driver, through membership of this 'knightly order' could once again feel himself to be something above the ordinary. According to the journalist and former officer, V. Kh. Davatz, when the Russian officer was tired he could find a place of rest in the military milieu, where a high spiritual level and military traditions were preserved—'This is why the military milieu is not just a school but also a refuge, a sort of spiritual sanatorium . . . as before we shall preserve our link: it helps us live.'[67]

[66] Ibid. Folder 'Miller, E. K. to Shatilov, P. N.' (Letter, Miller to Shatilov, no. 758, 10 Oct. 1933).
[67] *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev*, 18 (1 Jan. 1935), 4.

8

Nikolasha Takes Charge

The formation of ROVS was occasioned not only by Wrangel's ambition to unite all émigré military associations under his command, but also by his desire to insulate them from the political disputes which were dividing the emigration. These disputes centred around continued efforts to create an émigré political union, and dragged the leadership of the army into conflict with monarchist groups who were pressing for the restoration of the Romanov dynasty in Russia. Most officers believed passionately in the idea of monarchy, but were not committed to its restoration in practice. During the Civil War this contradiction had been suppressed, but now it had to be addressed. The result was a bitter struggle for influence between Wrangel and the monarchists. This eventually resulted in the decisive defeat of the monarchist movement, but left Wrangel severely weakened, and he was obliged to hand over supreme command of the army in exile to one of the surviving Romanovs.

The greatest weakness of the émigré monarchist movement was the lack of a credible claimant to the Russian throne. Most of the leading members of the Imperial Family were killed by the Bolsheviks during the Civil War. The first to perish was the Tsar's brother, Grand Duke Mikhail Aleksandrovich, who was murdered near the city of Perm in June 1918. Then on 16 July 1918 Tsar Nicholas II, his wife Alexandra, his son Alexis, and his four daughters, Olga, Tatiana, Maria, and Anastasia, were bundled into the basement of the Ipatiev house in Ekaterinburg, shot, and bayoneted. Their corpses were cut up, burned, and dissolved in acid, and what remained was buried at the bottom of a mine-shaft. The Bolsheviks understood that the Imperial Family could still act as a rallying point for their opponents, and set about destroying what was left of it. On the same day as the Tsar and his family were murdered, five Romanov princes and Grand Duchess Elizaveta Fedorovna, the sister of the Empress Alexandra, were thrown alive down a mine-shaft near the town of Alapaevsk in Siberia. Hand grenades were thrown after them, but the Grand Duchess and her relatives survived these, only to perish several days later from lack of food

and water.[1] These murders eliminated most of the credible successors to the Russian throne.

A few Romanovs managed to escape with their lives and flee abroad. Among them were the Tsar's mother, and his sisters, Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga. The Grand Duchesses played no part in émigré politics, and both eventually died in obscurity in the same year, 1960, Xenia in Denmark, and Olga in Canada. Three male members of the Royal Family who survived were considered to have a potential claim to the throne.

The first was the cousin of Nicholas II, Grand Duke Kirill Vladimirovich. His father was the second son of Emperor Alexander II (Nicholas II's father, Emperor Alexander III, was the first son), and in terms of lineage he had the most legitimate claim, as a result of which his supporters acquired the title 'Legitimists'. He was, however, very unpopular among émigrés, because during the February Revolution, instead of fighting to save Nicholas II, he had led the Marine Guard which he commanded in swearing allegiance to the Provisional Government, and had hoisted a red flag over his palace. In addition his claim to the Imperial title was complicated by the fact that his mother was a German princess who did not convert to Russian Orthodoxy until after her childrens' births. Some purists believed that according to a strict interpretation of the law of succession this deprived her children, including Kirill Vladimirovich, of the right to succeed to the throne.

If, in accordance with this interpretation, one eliminated Kirill Vladimirovich and his brothers from the running, this put the right to succeed into the hands of another cousin of Nicholas II, Grand Duke Dmitrii Pavlovich, whose father was the fourth son of Alexander II. Dmitrii Pavlovich, however, was a playboy who showed no interest in pressing his claim. In 1926 he married an American heiress and moved to Florida, where he briefly worked as a champagne salesman before returning to Europe. In the 1930s he gave his support to the Mladorossy movement of Alexandr Kazem-Bek, but was never considered a serious pretender to the throne.

This left one last contender, Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich the younger. Nikolai Nikolaevich is often described as an uncle of Nicholas II, although in fact his relationship was somewhat more distant. Immensely tall, he was known affectionately as 'Nikolasha' (Little Nicky). Compared with most members of the Romanov family, who had never taken part in any serious activity in the Imperial era, Nikolai Nikolaevich

[1] R. Pipes, *The Russian Revolution* (London, 1990), 779.

was an important figure. Before the First World War he led the Imperial Defence Council, and was in effect Russia's minister of defence. Then from 1914 to 1915, he was Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army. Many of the younger generals of the Imperial Army were his protégés. Highly respected by most émigrés, he was a far more serious figure than Kirill Vladimirovich, but like Dmitrii Pavlovich he had little interest in pressing a claim to the Imperial title, and in terms of lineage he was too distant a relative of the last Tsar to have a strong case.

All this meant that there was no clear focus of loyalty for those émigrés who wished to restore the monarchy in Russia. This, however, did not deter them. During the Civil War, monarchists had by and large been silenced, but in exile they felt secure for the first time to state their beliefs openly. In 1921 a congress of émigré groups met at Reichenhall in Bavaria, and voted to form a Supreme Monarchist Union (VMS: *Vysshii Monarkhicheskii Soiuz*), which was tasked with persuading émigrés to endorse the idea of restoring the monarchy. N. E. Markov II, a vehemently anti-Semitic former member of the Russian parliament, the Duma, was elected its leader. In November 1921, the VMS persuaded a council of the Russian Orthodox Church abroad to adopt a resolution stating that God wanted a Romanov restoration.[2] The VMS then started trying to persuade Russian military organizations to adopt the slogan of the former Imperial Russian Army—'For Faith, Tsar and Fatherland'.

As many historians have noted, the great majority of Russian military exiles were monarchist by conviction.[3] This was true even of younger officers. Captain A. Grammatchikov, for instance, who was a former student member of the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo* who had moved to Yugoslavia to obtain work, commented in 1928 that he was taking Yugoslav citizenship 'because this citizenship will allow me to have my own king'.[4] Émigré officers might have been expected to support the activities of the VMS in large numbers, thereby giving the monarchist movement an unassailable position in émigré politics.

The efforts of the VMS to persuade military organizations to adopt monarchist slogans soon met a major obstacle, namely the implacable opposition of General Wrangel. Wrangel believed that those promoting the monarchist cause were political reactionaries of the worst sort, and he

[2] V. Kh. Davatz, *Fünf Sturmjahre mit General Wrangel* (Berlin, 1927), 43–5.

[3] e.g. M. Raeff, *Russia Abroad: A Cultural History of the Russian Emigration* (New York and Oxford, 1990), 14.

[4] GARF, f. 5759, o. 1, d. 64, l. 56–7 (Letter, Grammatchikov to Directorate of Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo, 24 Aug. 1928).

did not want the army to become associated with them by adopting their slogans.[5] Whereas once the ideas of monarchy and motherland were interchangeable, he wrote, now the idea of monarchy had become the property of one political party. It could only be adopted by the army if it once again became the general property of the Russian people. The idea of motherland should be the principle, Wrangel noted, behind which the army and émigré society should unite.[6] Wrangel wrote to a member of the National Committee, A. V. Kartashev, that the men of his army '[were] not the remnants of the old army, but the cadres of a new one . . . It, this new army, has become a truly National Army. In the past Russian warriors fought "For Faith, Tsar, and Fatherland", and above all for Tsar. Now their ideals are higher, they fight above all for Fatherland.'[7]

Wrangel was making a significant point. In the past service to Tsar and country had been synonymous, but a growing professionalization of the Army prior to the First World War had begun a process in which, according to the historian William Fuller, 'the army became an end in itself, its preservation a goal more important than the survival of the Romanov dynasty or the Empire . . . the primary value of the professional soldier was the army, not the regime.'[8] This helps explain the determination of many officers to preserve the army in exile. The White officers held a more modern concept of nation than the older, essentially personal, vision centred on the Tsar, which saw Russia as the Tsar's personal patrimony. Monarchy, wrote Wrangel, must be based on the support of the people, but monarchist politicians continued to think that monarchy was based on its supposed holy origins, and not on the people. They promoted monarchism primarily because they wanted to regain their former power and privileges.[9]

Wrangel's hostility to the VMS and the monarchist movement reflected his support for the concept of non-predetermination. In part non-predetermination was a tactical necessity prompted by the perpetual

[5] HIA, WA, Box 148, File 37, 294–301, 330 (Letters, N. S. L'vov to Ivan Pavlovich; Wrangel to General Nikol'skii, no. 463/s, 9 Jan. 1922).

[6] BAR, Russkii Natsional'nyi Komitet Collection, Box 5 (Letter, Wrangel to P. N. Girs, no. k/585, 16 Jan. 1922); HIA, WA, Box 148, File 37, 387–9 (Letter, Wrangel to Krasnov, no k/585, 16 Jan. 1922).

[7] BAR, Russkii Natsional'nyi Komitet Collection, Box 5 (Letter, Wrangel to Kartashev, 26 Nov. 1921).

[8] W. C. Fuller, Jun., *Civil-Military Conflict in Imperial Russia, 1881–1914* (Princeton, 1985), 261.

[9] HIA, WA, Box 149, File 38, pp. 104–5, 146–9 (Letters, Wrangel to Chebyshev, no. k/5, 11 Mar. 1922 and Wrangel to Guchkov, Mar. 1922).

fear that the army would split if it adopted a clear political position. 'ROVS is an apolitical organization' wrote General von Lampe in 1928, 'The introduction of any political struggle into ROVS will divide and destroy ROVS.'[10] The dangers of getting involved in émigré politics and of taking sides in any of the disputes which bedevilled the emigration were clearly shown in the case of the Church. Wrangel himself sympathized with the Synod and Metropolitan Antonii, but his closest colleague, General Shatilov, was a fervent supporter of Metropolitan Evlogii. After the Church authorities inside Soviet Russia issued a demand that émigré priests give a written declaration of support for the Soviet regime, the Synod issued an epistle denouncing this demand, and Wrangel sent copies of the epistle to his senior officers, and asked them to distribute it among the rank and file of the army. Shatilov refused, and he and von Lampe warned that 'the taking of one or another side by the High Command in Church issues will inevitably lead to our complete disintegration.'[11] Wrangel eventually conceded and issued an order stating that 'Religious convictions are a matter for everyone's personal conscience and commanders may not influence their subordinates in any way in this matter.'[12]

Another, very pragmatic, reason for Wrangel's opposition to the monarchists was that he did not wish to seem overly reactionary in the eyes of foreign powers whose help and support he still hoped to win. In 1922, for instance, he noted that associating the army with monarchism would be likely to lead to more repressions against the army in Bulgaria.[13]

All this suggests that the policy of non-predetermination was fundamentally based on tactical needs rather than principle. Non-predetermination was 'a tactical means of union', stated a ROVS newspaper in the Far East.[14] Similar views were expressed by one of ROVS's propagandists, N. A. Tsurikov, in a pamphlet dedicated to the subject of

[10] GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 35, l. 15714 (Letter, von Lampe to Kutepov, no. 565, 26 Aug. 1928).

[11] HIA, WA, Box 151. File 44, 760–8 (Circular, General Wrangel, no. 1758, 9 Nov. 1927, and Letters, Shatilov to Khol'msen, Wrangel to Khol'msen, Shatilov to Wrangel, Wrangel to Shatilov, Nov. 1927); also, HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection, Box 4 (Letters, Shatilov to Arkhangel'skii, 4 Mar. 1928 and Arkhangel'skii to Shatilov, 9 Mar. 1928); GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 35, l. 15646–7 (Letter, von Lampe to Father Vassilii, 10 July 1928).

[12] HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection, Box 2 (Circular, General Wrangel, no. 36, 16 Feb. 1928).

[13] HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 11, File 45 (Letter, Wrangel to Markov and others, no. k/1183, 30 Aug. 1922); HIA, WA, Box 143, File 22, 164–71 (Letter, S. N. Il'in to V. Bobrinskii, Sept. 1922).

[14] *Na Strazhe Rodiny: odnodnevnaia gazeta Kharbinskogo otdeleniia ROVS* (1934) 2.

non-predetermination.[15] But it would be wrong to interpret this to mean that the policy was a hypocritical one behind which the true monarchist, reactionary nature of the White Army was deliberately hidden. Wrangel wrote:

> I would like to dispel all the legends about the Army's reactionary nature or its bonapartism. . . . The Army's political credo is clear . . . The Army is fighting not for monarchy, not for republic, but for fatherland. It will not support those who wish to impose this or that state order on Russia against the will of the people, but will guard that order which is established by a truly free expression of the national will. . . . All Russia's past indicates that sooner or later it will return to a monarchist order, but God forbid that this order should be imposed by bayonets, or by white terror. In the event that a republican form of government is established in Russia by the will of the people, every honourable monarchist should reconcile himself with this and serve his Motherland faithfully.[16]

Wrangel's comments about monarchy not being restored at the point of a bayonet are reflected in the writings of Ivan Il'in, whose views Wrangel valued highly. Il'in was both an enthusiastic monarchist and a believer in non-predetermination. Monarchy, he believed, was a superior form of government to republicanism, but it was not always appropriate because the forms of the state must reflect peoples' legal consciousness.[17] If there was no mood for monarchy, Il'in went on to say, it would be pointless to create a monarchy, as it would simply be destroyed. This attitude distinguished the Whites from the monarchist politicians. Whereas the latter took the view that the Tsar was sovereign, Il'in and Wrangel were admitting that the people were sovereign. This did not make Wrangel a democrat. He and most officers despised democracy. He did not look for a popular vote or a Constituent Assembly but rather for a 'spontaneous expression of the people's will'. As his political adviser, S. N. Il'in, explained, the image Wrangel had in mind was that of Napoleon's return to France from Elba. The spontaneous welcome which the French Emperor received then legitimized his rule.[18] Should the Romanov dynasty return to Russia and receive a similar welcome, then that would be sufficient to justify the restoration of a monarchy. If however, the monarchist standard was raised in Russia and the people did not rally to it, then it would be clear that Russia was not ripe for monarchy.

[15] N. A. Tsurikov, *Nepredreshenstvo i zadacha osvoboditel'noi bor'by* (Paris, 1932), 8.

[16] BAR, Russkii Natsional'nyi Komitet Collection, Box 5, Folder 'Correspondence, Wrangel to Kartashev' (Letter, Wrangel to Kartashev, no. k/580, 12 Jan. 1921).

[17] Letter, Wrangel to Il'in, 4 Oct. 1924, printed in V. Bortnevskii, 'I. A. Il'in i P.N. Vrangel: 1923-1928', Russkoe Proshloe, 6 (1996), 230.

[18] HIA, WA, Box 143, File 22, 164–71 (Letter, S. N. Il'in to V. Bobrinskii, Sept. 1922).

Wrangel's views were shared by many military men. 'We are nearly all monarchists', stated Captain Varnek, 'but our slogan is not "For Tsar" but "For the Motherland" '.[19] A general meeting of the Society of Russian Veterans in San Francisco resolved: 'Monarchists in the past, monarchists in the future, but convinced supporters of non-predetermination on the long road to the liberation of Russia—this was, is, and will be our fundamental position.'[20]

By early 1922 two different schemes of émigré union were circulating. The first, put forward by the National Committee, envisioned the formation of a bloc of émigré social organizations and representatives of the army. To this end one of Wrangel's former colleagues, General Iuzefovich, was co-opted onto the National Committee along with two other White generals, Danilov and Sychev, and the committee began negotiations with other social and political groups in Paris. The second scheme centred around Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich. Many veterans respected the Grand Duke greatly because of his former role as Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Russian Army, and proposed that émigré society unite politically by accepting his leadership. The Grand Duke was also acceptable to some republicans, as he did not claim the throne for himself, and publicly supported the concept of non-predetermination. Wrangel, however, rejected Nikolai Nikolaevich's leadership, on the grounds that any union led by him would inevitably turn into a monarchist political party and would be perceived as such by others.[21] He preferred the plan of the National Committee but, unfortunately for him, the National Committee enjoyed little support and its scheme soon collapsed.[22]

Meanwhile, pressure on Nikolai Nikolaevich to accept the leadership of the process of uniting the emigration continued to mount, although the Grand Duke himself did not want to take on this role. A new impetus was given to the movement promoting Nikolai Nikolaevich in July 1922 when Grand Duke Kirill Vladimirovich declared himself to be the rightful heir to the Russian throne. The personal antipathy most émigré

[19] GARF, f. 5881, o. 1, d. 255 (V. N. Varnek, *Golos Armii*).

[20] *Vestnik obshchestva russkikh veteranov velikoi voiny*, 154/155, Mar./Apr. 1939, p. 2.

[21] HIA, WA, Box 143, File 23, 8–12 (Letter, Wrangel to Lukomskii, no. k/699, 6 Apr. 1922).

[22] V. G. Bortnevskii, 'General P. N. Vrangel i bor'ba za rukovodstvo russkoi emigratsii v 1920-kh gg.', in *Russian, Ukrainian and Belorussian Emigration between the World Wars in Czechoslovakia*, Vol. 2 (Prague, 1995), 579.

monarchists felt towards Kirill Vladimirovich now made them even more determined that Nikolai Nikolaevich should step forward to lead their cause. Reports in 1923 from the Drozdovskii regiment in Sevlievo in Bulgaria, for instance, noted that 'We expect the unification of the emigration around the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich', while a report from Gallipoliitsy in the Bulgarian town of Orkhanje commented that 'all the work carried on in Paris around the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich is followed with great hopes.'[23]

As support for Nikolai Nikolaevich increased, the monarchist movement as a whole gained momentum. All that stopped many émigré officers from joining monarchist groups was the opposition of General Wrangel. Aware of this, monarchist groups such as the VMS sought to undermine his influence and to bring members of the Russian Army into their own orbit, even if this meant destroying the Army in the process.[24] It was not easy for Wrangel to maintain his line. Many of his senior officers supported Nikolai Nikolaevich, and a conference of senior officers held in November 1922 resolved that only the Grand Duke had sufficient authority to unite the emigration.[25] Wrangel, by contrast, was convinced that Nikolai Nikolaevich would fail and had no faith in his leadership ability. But he did not wish to be seen to be hindering what many considered to be the emigration's one and only hope.[26]

On 7 May 1923 Wrangel told Shatilov that he had reconsidered his opposition. If Nikolai Nikolaevich's leadership would help the army, he continued, he would willingly hand over command to him.[27] As a result, on 12 May 1923 Wrangel sent a telegram to Nikolai Nikolaevich announcing his willingness to subordinate himself and the Russian Army to him. Wrangel is very often criticized for having been vain and ambitious and for being primarily concerned with self-promotion. This was for him a remarkable act of self-effacement.

Wrangel hoped that his declaration of support for Nikolai Nikolaevich

[23] BAR, ROVS, Box 166, Folder 'Russian Army, 1923–1924' (*Svodka o zhizni chastei gallipoliiskoi gruppy v Bolgarii za avgust mesiats 1923 goda*).

[24] e.g. HIA, WA, Box 149, File 38, 179 (Letter, Khol'msen to Wrangel, no. 30/s, 22 Mar. 1922); HIA, WA, Box 149, File 38, pp. 440–4 (Letter, von Lampe to Miller, no. 10/l, 12 June 1922).

[25] HIA, WA, Box 143, File 22, 228–9 (Minute of meeting of senior commanders, 22 Nov. 1922).

[26] HIA, WA, Box 149, File 39, 531–4 (Letter, S. N. Il'in to General Danilov, no. k/2074, 16 May 1923).

[27] HIA, WA, Box 143, File 23, 182–3 (Letter, Wrangel to I. P Aleksinskii, no. 1242/s, 7 May 1922).

would force the Grand Duke to come out into the open and declare his leadership of the emigration. Nikolai Nikolaevich, who was known to support non-predetermination, could then use his authority to stop divisive monarchist agitation among the army's ranks. But events did not turn out this way. Nikolai Nikolaevich seems to have been suffering from a crisis of indecision. On the one hand he met Shatilov and Kutepov and told them that he intended to start work as leader of the emigration, and he also began to meet representatives of émigré society to promote unity among them. On the other hand, he was still unwilling to make a public declaration of his leadership. The political situation which emerged in mid-1923 was one of total confusion, as it was not clear exactly what Nikolai Nikolaevich intended.

This confusion was exploited by monarchists, who continued to pressure military organizations to adopt monarchist slogans, with some success. During 1923 various military unions adopted monarchist slogans. Particularly prone to monarchist tendencies were unions of Guards Regiments and societies of officers of First World War veterans (i.e. officers who had fought in the First World War, but not in the Civil War). By contrast the monarchist movement made little headway among units of the Russian Army itself. In Paris, the president of the Union of Russian Officer War Veterans, SROUV (*Soiuz Russkikh Ofitserov Uchastnikov Voiny*), General A. A. Gulevich, was particularly active in promoting the monarchist cause. The SROUV adopted the slogan 'For Faith, Tsar, and Fatherland' and Gulevich decided to set up branches of the society in other countries, so forming an alternative military structure outside that of the Russian Army and independent of Wrangel's leadership.[28] In Belgrade this resulted in the formation of the Union of Great War Veterans, SUVV (*Soiuz Uchastnikov Velikoi Voiny*) led by General Bolotov, which also adopted the slogan 'For Faith, Tsar, and Fatherland'.[29] Members of the SUVV were reported to have told one of the senior officers of the Russian Army, General A. M. Dragomirov, that their organization's purpose was to destroy Wrangel's power.[30] Wrangel's representative in Germany, General von Lampe, noted that the VMS was actively trying to undermine Wrangel's authority among military émigrés in Germany with encouragement from General Gulevich.[31]

[28] BAR, ROVS, Box 162, Folder 'Officers' Unions, 1923–1924 (1)' (Letter, Miller to Wrangel, 21 Oct. 1923).

[29] Ibid. (Letter, Arkhangel'skii to Bolotov, Aug. 1923).

[30] HIA, WA, Box 144, File 25, 925–9 (Letter, Wrangel to Shatilov, no. 1409/s, 5 Oct. 1923).

[31] BAR, ROVS, Box 162 (Letter, von Lampe to Shatilov, no. 5014, 2 Sept. 1923).

Frightened that Nikolai Nikolaevich's indecision was creating a situation in which the Russian Army and military associations were being dragged bit by bit into the monarchist camp, Wrangel decided that the time had come to act. In so doing he displayed his powers of leadership and ability to grasp a situation and take control of it. His response to the monarchist threat was Order no. 82, issued on 8 September 1923, which was in part a step towards the creation of ROVS and in part an effort to put a stop to political agitation in the army. In addition to the clauses mentioned in the last chapter, it stipulated that the leadership and union of all military organizations in every country was to be carried out by Wrangel's own military representatives; all officers who did not consider themselves to be part of the army were to resign; members were forbidden to engage in political activity or to join political organizations, and those who continued to do so would be expelled from the army; and military unions were forbidden to discuss political matters.[32]

The response to this order was mixed. Most of the rank and file of the Russian Army accepted it without complaint, and even welcomed it. The prevailing mood, especially among the younger elements of the army, was summed up in a letter written by members of the Circle of Russian Youth in Helsinki, several of whom had served in the Russian Army under Wrangel. They wrote 'We are monarchist not out of fear, but from conscience . . . But all the same we . . . want to stay outside the influence of monarchist groups . . . We are convinced that restoration of everything pre-revolutionary, especially if accompanied by revenge, can bring nothing but new rivers of blood and a new revolt.'[33]

Despite this, Order no. 82 drew howls of protest from some quarters, especially from monarchist members of unions of First World War veterans, and also from many of the more senior generals of the Russian Army who began to pressure Wrangel to reverse his decision.[34] The contrast between the reaction of the First World War veterans and the rank and file of the Russian Army showed the degree to which the White officers had grown apart from those officers of the Imperial Army who had not

[32] BAR, ROVS, Box 161, Folder 'Officers' Unions, 1923–1924' (Order no. 82, Gen. Wrangel, 8 Sept. 1923).

[33] HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 12, File 47 (Letter, Bergman, Savolainen, and Larionov to A.N. Fen, 8 Sept. 1923).

[34] See e.g. GARF, f. 6460, o. 1, d. 6, l. 16 (Letter, Kutepov to Abramov, 25 May 1924); HIA, WA, Box 144, File 25, 918–14 (Letter, Shatilov to Wrangel, no. 394, 30 Sept. 1923); HIA, WA, Box 144, File 25, 944–51 (Letter, Miller to Wrangel, 8 Oct. 1923); HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 12, File 47 (Letter, von Lampe to Miller, no. 261/l, 1 Nov. 1923).

fought in the Civil War. Both groups were monarchists, but to the Whites monarchism was a less important emotion than patriotism.

What angered the order's opponents was the ban on participation in political organizations. As very few officers had ever been likely to join parties of the left, Order no. 82 was clearly designed with monarchist political groups in mind, and aimed at breaking the influence of those groups over the military emigration. Since military émigrés constituted the most promising pool of potential recruits for the monarchists, Order no. 82 was a terrible blow to their hopes.

The biggest protests against the order came from the First World War veterans in Paris and Belgrade. On 1 October 1923 Miller noted that it would not be possible to keep them on the army's side without compromise.[35] General Gulevich was continuing to put forward plans to expand his own organization in other countries, and in Belgrade the Union of Great War Veterans held a general meeting on 30 September 1923 at which its members reaffirmed their support for the slogan 'For Faith, Tsar, and Fatherland'.[36] Aware of the resistance his order was meeting, Wrangel met representatives of officers' organizations in Yugoslavia between 9 and 11 October 1923 to discuss its implementation. He explained his views in clear terms: 'We, old officers, who served under the Russian Emperor . . . cannot not be monarchists . . . but we will not allow officers to be dragged into political struggle under the words "Faith, Tsar, Fatherland".'[37]

Wrangel's plans were greeted with great reservations by many senior officers present. The prevailing view was that the Commander-in-Chief must compromise, and that he was wrong to seek conflict with the monarchist right. Many officers asked for the order to be altered. General Orlov, for instance, stated that the order could result in the collapse of the monarchist cause. He felt that officers were divided between a sense of duty to obey the order, and a sense of honour not to abandon their colleagues, 80 per cent of whom were monarchists. He asked Wrangel to change the order so that officers could preserve their honour. Similar ideas were expressed by many others.[38] Wrangel refused to reconsider his

[35] BAR, ROVS, Box 4, Folder 'Central Office (2)' (Letter, Miller to Wrangel, 1 Oct. 1923).

[36] BAR, ROVS, Box 162, Folder 'Officers' Unions, 1923–1924 (1)' (Letter, Pravlenie Soiuza Russkikh Ofitserov-uchastnikov Velikoi Voiny v Korolevstve S.Kh.S, to General Wrangel, 7 Oct. 1923).

[37] BAR, ROVS, Box 161, Folder 'Officers' Unions, 1921–1923' (Speech of General Wrangel to representatives of officers' unions in Yugoslavia, 10 Oct. 1923).

[38] Ibid. Folder 'Officers' Unions, 1923–1924' (Minutes of commission of representatives of officers' organizations, 11 Oct. 1923).

decision, but the opposition that he encountered made clear the extent of monarchist sentiment among military émigrés at this time. As it was, the pressure from monarchists was sufficient to force Wrangel to backtrack slightly. Writing to Miller in March 1924, Wrangel told him that in enforcing Order no. 82, the local situation was to be taken into consideration. In certain locations, individuals were to be allowed in special circumstances to join political organizations in order to influence discussions concerning the army.[39]

This concession may have been brought about by the continued resistance to the order from the SROUV in Paris. At a general meeting of the union on 20 January 1924 calls were heard to set up officers' unions supporting the slogan 'For Faith, Tsar, and Fatherland' in other locations, and some officers directly criticized General Wrangel himself. General Nechvolodov, who had commanded Russian troops who fought in France in the First World War, complained that Wrangel was living in luxury in Yugoslavia while his men toiled in Bulgarian coalmines. On hearing this comment, General Miller left the meeting in protest, followed by about half those present. The divisive potential of monarchist politics was clearly demonstrated.[40]

Despite all this, Order no. 82 achieved its desired effect. Even the SROUV eventually accepted it, and General Gulevich was replaced as the union's president by another officer less associated with the monarchist cause. In the end Wrangel's authority was sufficiently large among most army officers for his order to be obeyed. Within a short time many of those senior officers who had opposed the order became ardent supporters of it. Henceforth, except for a few individuals who received special permission, members of the Russian Army and officers' organizations remained outside émigré political bodies. Order no. 82 shattered the hopes of the monarchist movement for a broad-based émigré union, including émigré military organizations, based on the monarchist principle. The order was thus one of the most decisive acts of the political history of the Russian emigration.

By mid-1924 Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich had begun practical work as leader of the nationalist Russian emigration. He established a staff at his country home at Choigny, near Paris. This took over efforts to call an émigré union conference, sought financial and political support

[39] BAR, ROVS, Box 171, Folder 'Sovet ob"edinennykh ofitserskikh obshchestv, 1924' (Letter, Wrangel to Miller, no. 1486/s, 12 Mar. 1924).

[40] BAR, ROVS, Box 162, Folder 'Officers' Unions, 1923–1924 (1)' *(Obshchee Sobranie Soiuza Russkikh Ofitserov Uchastnikov Voiny*, 20 Jan. 1924).

from foreigners, and tried to start up underground operations inside the USSR. The establishment of his staff was a *de facto* declaration of leadership by Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, but despite this Nikolai Nikolaevich still refused to make an open declaration of his leadership until November 1924. What finally prompted him to act were the actions of Grand Duke Kirill Vladimirovich. In April 1924 Kirill Vladimirovich formed his own military organization—The Corps of Officers of the Imperial Army and Fleet—as a parallel to those organizations already existing under Wrangel's command, and with the aim of attracting members from them. Few officers were willing to join the new Corps, but its creation helped further undermine the morale and cohesion of émigré officers.[41] On 31 August 1924, Kirill Vladimirovich then threw the emigration into disarray by declaring himself Emperor of Russia, demanding recognition of his position from military associations. His declaration was immediately denounced by other members of the Royal Family. Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, for instance, circulated a letter calling Kirill's declaration illegal. Most émigrés refused to swear allegiance to the would-be Emperor, and according to a despatch from Bulgaria, the prevailing mood among the rank and file of the army was one of bewilderment.[42] Nevertheless, such was the extent to which monarchist emotions had been raised, and such was the desire for a leader who could claim legitimate authority, that some officers did respond positively to Kirill Vladimirovich's declaration. The naval officers' society, Morskoi Kaiut Kompaniia (Naval Wardroom), recognized Kirill Vladimirovich as Emperor,[43] and the commander of the Guards Cavalry Regiment, Colonel Apukhtin, was expelled from the Russian Army by Wrangel after sending a telegram of support from his regiment to Kirill Vladimirovich.[44]

Kirill Vladimirovich's declaration forced Nikolai Nikolaevich to step forward to counter his influence, and as a result on 16 November 1924 he announced that he would assume the title of Supreme Commander of the army in exile, exercising his powers through Wrangel who remained Commander-in-Chief. This was exactly what Wrangel had been hoping

[41] See e.g. BAR, ROVS, Box 166, Folder 'Memoranda, 1921–1924' (Letter, Vitkovskii to Abramov, 3734/a, 15 June 1924).

[42] *Vestnik Gallipoliitsev*, 11 (Nov. 1924), 143.

[43] BAR, ROVS, Box 134, Folder 'Memoranda, 1921–1924' (*Pamiatnaia Zapiska*, no date or signature).

[44] BAR, ROVS, Box 162, Folder 'Officers' Unions, 1923–1924 (1)' (Order no. 46, General Wrangel, 13 Oct. 1924).

for. Those military associations, such as the SROUV, which had refused to recognize Wrangel's authority but who did recognize that of Nikolai Nikolaevich, were now brought into ROVS and under the sway of Order no. 82. This, Wrangel hoped, would put an end to monarchist intriguing within the ranks of émigré military organizations. But he was to be disappointed. Attacks on Wrangel in the émigré press by the leader of the VMS, N. E. Markov II, continued, and Shatilov suspected that these had been sanctioned by Nikolai Nikolaevich himself.[45] Nikolai Nikolaevich also provided subsidies to monarchist organizations in Yugoslavia.[46] Responsibility for military organizations in the Far East and North America was taken from Wrangel by the Grand Duke and given to one of the founders of the Volunteer Army, General A. S. Lukomskii.[47] Relations between Wrangel and Nikolai Nikolaevich rapidly deteriorated, the former being convinced that the latter did not value the Russian Army and was happy to see it disappear.

Around the middle of 1925 the focus of Wrangel's correspondence changed. Complaints about the activities of monarchists, which once dominated almost to the exclusion of everything else, now tapered off. It would appear that, despite Wrangel's complaints about Nikolai Nikolaevich's encouragement of monarchist groups, Order no. 82 had achieved its aim, and the activities of such groups had lessened. A new subject now came to the forefront—money. When Nikolai Nikolaevich had assumed control of the army, Wrangel had handed over to him all the money at his disposal. This put the remaining cadres of the army, as well as the staff of ROVS, at the mercy of the Grand Duke's generosity. Nikolai Nikolaevich had additional priorities to maintaining the army's cadres, as he wished to fund political work and underground activities inside the USSR. His own money-raising schemes had little success, and he was short of cash. Nikolai Nikolaevich therefore announced that expenditures on the remaining cadres of the Russian Army would be cut on 1 April 1925. In response Wrangel was obliged to order these cadres to seek work. They were instructed to find work by 1 January 1926.[48] All that now remained of the Russian Army was Wrangel's headquarters at

[45] HIA, WA, Box 146, File 30, 401–2 (Letter, Shatilov to Wrangel, no. 1415, 4 June 1925).
[46] Ibid. File 31, 754–7 (Letter, Wrangel to Miller, no. 1997/s, 1 Dec. 1925).
[47] Ibid. 450–1 (Letter, Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich to Wrangel, no. 10/l, 26 June 1925).
[48] BAR, ROVS, Box 3, Folder 'Wrangel' (Circular, General Wrangel, no. 1648, 7 Aug. 1925); Box 4, Folder 'Central Office (2)' (Letter, Wrangel to Lukomskii, no. 1937/s, 12 Aug. 1925).

Sremski Karlovac, which was in turn disbanded on 1 August 1926. With this the final remnant of the Russian Army ceased to exist. From now on, although many would refer to the army as if it still existed, ROVS had fully taken its place.

With the closing of the army staff, Wrangel's own role in the life of the émigré military was greatly downgraded. In December 1926 he moved from Yugoslavia to Belgium in order to be closer to his wife and children who had been living there for some time. Von Lampe commented in October 1927 that Wrangel appeared to have lost his will, and lacked energy.[49] To a large degree he now withdrew from public life.

In the meantime Nikolai Nikolaevich's entourage was making the grandest attempt yet to forge an émigré political union. The idea arose of summoning a congress elected by Russian émigrés throughout Europe which could agree on a common political platform and endorse Nikolai Nikolaevich as leader. It was felt that if its delegates were elected by the entire emigration, the congress would give Nikolai Nikolaevich's leadership legitimacy and allow him to speak and act on behalf of all émigrés, both within the emigration and in front of foreigners. It was hoped that the congress would elect a single 'centre of will' in the form of a permanent executive committee, which would direct the struggle against Bolshevism.[50] Preparations for the congress were carried on throughout 1925, and it finally met in Paris in April 1926. Delegates were chosen not by a direct election in which all émigrés voted, but indirectly through elections in émigré political and social organizations, who were invited to send delegates. A very broad part of the emigration did participate in these elections, but the indirect electoral procedure of itself reduced the congress's legitimacy. The émigré political left refused to attend, Miliukov claiming that the electoral procedure revealed that the congress was merely a mask which monarchists were using to give themselves legitimacy[51] (although in reality, given the mood of the emigration at this time, a more direct form of representation might have helped the monarchists). The Legitimists also refused to attend. In addition, ROVS was forbidden to send delegates due to the requirement that the army be apolitical. Military personnel were allowed to attend, but only in the capacity of representatives of non-military organizations, and they were prohibited from identifying themselves as members of the

[49] GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 31, l. 23 (Diary of von Lampe).
[50] R. Pipes, *Struve, Liberal on the Right* (Cambridge, Mass., 1980), 380.
[51] P. N. Miliukov, *Emigratsiia na pereput'e* (Paris, 1926), 14–18.

army.[52] With the absence of these groups, it became very difficult for the congress to claim that it could unite the emigration.

In the end the congress passed resolutions recognizing the independence of Poland, Finland, the Baltic States, Georgia, and Armenia, and rejecting any restoration of land or property seized during the revolution. In this way it hoped to send a positive message to the Soviet people with regard to the political and social aims of the anti-Soviet struggle. But the main task of the congress was to create a permanent body to represent the emigration and lead the anti-Soviet struggle in its name. Agreement could not be reached on what form of standing body to create. The right wanted a body with full powers, subordinate to Nikolai Nikolaevich, whereas the centre and left felt that such a body lacked the right to act as if it possessed democratic legitimacy, and felt that it should have no authority over émigré social and political organizations. They saw Nikolai Nikolaevich only as a figurehead. The final vote on the creation of the permanent body caused only confusion. A majority voted in favour of creating an authoritative council, but the rules of the congress required a two-thirds majority, and the majority fell just short. The question remained unresolved. Two competing unity councils were then set up—the centrist Russian Central Union and the more right-wing Patriotic Union. Rather than uniting the emigration, the congress resulted only in the creation of two more political bodies, neither of which enjoyed any authority.

The failure of the congress was partly the fault of Nikolai Nikolaevich himself. It was called specifically to endorse his strong leadership, but he not only failed to attend, but also did not make a clear public statement of where he stood on the key questions to be debated. Many delegates arrived at the congress keen to vote in whatever way Nikolai Nikolaevich wanted them to, but they had difficulty finding out what this was. Many asked Nikolai Nikolaevich's official representative at the congress, General Lukomskii, but even he did not know his master's wishes. He told many delegates to vote in favour of creating an authoritative council, only to find out later that Nikolai Nikolaevich was opposed to the idea.[53] Despite his reputation for leadership, the Grand Duke was weak and indecisive. As the liberal politician, N. N. L'vov, noted, 'in business matters, in matters of organization and financial accounts, the Grand

[52] BAR, ROVS, Box 4, Folder 'Central Office (2)' (Letter, Khol'msen to President of the Society of the General Staff in France, 23 July 1925).

[53] HIA, WA, Box 151, File 42, 102–3 (Letter, Shatilov to Wrangel, 16 Apr. 1926).

Duke is like a powerless child who cannot walk and is afraid of every step in case he falls.'[54] Personally unambitious, he was reluctant to become involved in émigré politics and did so only due to the pressure exerted on him by others. When he finally did get involved he preferred to stay on the sidelines rather than speak out in public. He provided no sense of direction to those who followed him, and his leadership achieved nothing positive. It was perhaps one of the tragedies of the Russian emigration that the only man whom most émigrés were willing to follow was by nature not suited to the task of leading them.

On 25 April 1928 General Wrangel unexpectedly died, almost certainly of intensive tuberculosis. The sudden nature of his illness (which lasted only a month), and his relative youth (he was only 49), have ever since led to speculation that he was poisoned,[55] but there is no direct evidence for this. The idea of poisoning was categorically rejected by those closest to him at the time.[56] It is possible for someone to be infected by tuberculosis, and not be aware of it because the bacteria in his system are dormant. The disease can then be set off in a dramatic form if his immune system is weakened by a secondary infection, such as influenza. It is known that Wrangel suffered from a severe cold in early 1928, and it could be that this was the catalyst that set off his tuberculosis. Traces of tuberculosis bacteria were found in a urine sample taken by his doctors.[57] On the other hand, Boris Bazhanov, who was Josef Stalin's secretary and then defected to the West, claimed in his memoirs that the Soviet secret services had the technology to poison somebody and make it look like tuberculosis, and that this technique was used to kill Wrangel.[58] The rumours of foul play seem unfounded, but they cannot be ruled out entirely.

Initially Wrangel was buried in Belgium, but a year later his body was moved to Yugoslavia to be reinterred in the Russian church in Belgrade. To mark this event, an enormous demonstration was organized. In October 1929, Wrangel's body was brought to Yugoslavia by train. After several stops en route, it reached Belgrade railway station on 5 October, where it was guarded overnight by a platoon of the Kornilov Artillery

[54] HIA, WA, Box 150, File 41, 66–7 (Letter, L'vov to Wrangel, 1925).

[55] Most recently, V. Bortnevskii, *Zagadki smerti generala Vrangelia: Neizvestnye materialy po istorii russkoi emigratsii 1920–kh godov* (St Petersburg, 1996), 86.

[56] *Bolezn', smert' i pogrebenie Glavnokomanduiushchego Russkoi Armii general-leitenanta barona Petra Nikolaevicha Vrangelia v Briussele* (Brussels, 1928), 7, 8. Although see also GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 25, l. 30 (Diary of von Lampe).

[57] HIA, WA, Box 162, File 2 (Laboratory result).

[58] B. Bazhanov, *Vospominaniia byvshego sekretaria Stalina* (Paris, 1980).

Battalion. The next day a huge procession accompanied the coffin from the railway station to its final resting place at the Russian church in Belgrade. The Yugoslav Army provided two companies of infantry, an artillery battalion, and a gun-carriage for the coffin. Companies of Cossack troops in full uniform and with sabres joined the procession, as did a platoon of the Kornilov Shock Regiment and various other troops of the Russian Army. Russian pilots flew planes overhead. Russian youth organizations, representatives of the Yugoslav, Hungarian, and Italian governments, Russian émigré social organizations, and the general public brought up the rear. Lieutenant General Baron Petr Nikolaevich Wrangel, Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army, was buried in a manner befitting a head of state.[59]

No other émigré leader received a send-off of even remotely comparable magnitude, but then no other émigré enjoyed the love and devotion of so many. Wrangel was a divisive character, who had a knack of alienating those around him, but he retained the admiration and love of the rank and file of the Russian Army, thousands of whom directly experienced the benefits of his efforts to improve their welfare in the early 1920s, and were grateful. Whatever his personal faults, he was a great leader, who provided direction and purpose, and instilled a sense of hope in those who served under him. When he died, their hopes were shattered.

[59] *Perenesenie prakha Generala Vrangelia v Belgrad, 6 Oktiabria 1929 g.* (Belgrade, 1929).

9

Activism, Provocation, and Paranoia

The ever-growing divisions among émigrés made their dreams of overthrowing the Bolshevik regime seem incredible, but at least one party took their efforts very seriously—the Soviet government. The leaders of the USSR viewed the Russian Army in particular as a serious threat, and did not intend to rest until it was completely destroyed. As soon as the army arrived in Constantinople, the Soviet secret services were at work recruiting agents among disaffected officers.[1] They were also believed to have played an important role in the provocations and forgeries which so damaged the Russian Army in Bulgaria in 1922. The war continued, albeit in another form. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s the Bolsheviks put considerable efforts into disrupting the army in exile. Their methods included provocation, abduction, and murder.

On their side, from the very beginning of their exile the leaders of the Russian Army attempted to carry out underground actions inside Russia. Unsuccessful efforts were made during 1921, for instance, to raise a new revolt in the Don region.[2] Many émigrés argued that if the Soviet regime was not going to evolve, it was their responsibility to do all they could to promote its violent overthrow. These 'activists' believed that it would be wrong to sit back and wait for the Soviet regime to evolve and fall, because with every year of communist rule, religion was undermined, Russia's historic traditions were destroyed, and tensions between the nationalities of the country increased, making it harder and harder to keep them together. Thus concluded one proponent of this view, 'time will not wait, we must act.'[3] Otherwise, irreparable damage would have been done by the time communism actually fell.

Not everyone shared the enthusiasm for continued struggle. Miliukov, for one, rejected the idea entirely. Instead he and others like him placed their hopes on the Soviet regime 'evolving'. Continued anti-Soviet struggle

[1] *Russkaia voennaia emigratsiia*, Book 2, 263–6.

[2] BAR, ROVS, Box 63, Folder 'Correspondence, 1937. III Otdel to Central Office' (Letter, Kussonskii to Abramov, 17 Apr. 1937).

[3] BAR, Kutepov Collection, Box 3, Folder 'Grand Prince Nikolai Nikolaevich' (Unsigned document entitled *Za nas li vremia?*, Paris, 18 Feb. 1927).

would, it was feared, merely fuel a backlash inside Soviet Russia and so hamper the process of evolution. For the members of the Russian Army, however, Miliukov's strategy seemed self-defeating. In the eyes of the White officer corps, the Soviet regime was based entirely on force, and by force it had to be overthrown. As General Shatilov wrote in 1923, the idea that the Soviet regime could evolve was baseless—'that is why one must consider the only true path to the liberation of Russia from the 3rd International to be its forceful overthrow.'[4] In addition, it soon became obvious that the prospects for a renewed conventional military campaign were rapidly diminishing. In this light, the army's leaders began to contemplate a large-scale shift towards revolutionary methods. This implied conspiracy, propaganda, subversion, terrorism, and sabotage within the Soviet Union. This was first suggested by Wrangel's staff as early as January 1921.[5]

In 1922 Wrangel told his military representatives in various countries to try to establish contacts with leading members of the Red Army with the aim of convincing them of the positive nature of the Russian Army's aims.[6] As part of this general strategy, in 1922 Wrangel's representative in Berlin, General Khol'msen, created a newspaper, *Russkaia Pravda* (Russian Truth), which was distributed inside Russia across the Polish and Baltic borders and through Soviet sailors calling at German ports.[7] In 1924, the staff of Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich stopped funding *Russkaia Pravda*, after which it was rescued by a former regimental colleague of General Wrangel, Prince Leikhtenbergskii, who ran a publishing house in Berlin. A group of 'friends' of the newspaper was established, known as the Brotherhood of Russian Truth, BRP (*Bratstvo Russkoi Pravdy*), which raised money to keep it going until the early 1930s. *Russkaia Pravda* claimed to be in contact with a large number of

[4] BAR, ROVS, Box 165, Folder 'Project to overthrow Soviet government' (General Shatilov, *Zapiska o rabote po podgotovke, rukovodstvu i osushchestvleniiu sverzheniia vlasti v Rossii*, 31 July 1923).

[5] HIA, WA, Box 113, File 27, 20–31 (Report, Head of Information Department of Russian Army, no. 26, Jan. 1921).

[6] HIA, WA, Box 145, File 29 (Letters, Kussonskii to von Lampe, no. 1616, 27 July 1922 and von Lampe to Kussonskii, no. 34/l, 3 Aug. 1922); Box 143, File 22, 71–2 (Letter, L. Artifeksov to Wrangel, 25 Aug. 1922); HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 11, File 44 (Letter, Kussonskii to Khol'msen, no. 1617, 24 July 1922).

[7] HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 11, File 45 (Letter, Khol'msen to Kussonskii, no. 53/2835, 7 Sept. 1922); File 46 (Letter, Khol'msen to Miller, no. 422, 1 Feb. 1923). Also, Box 12, File 48 (*Svodka vypisok iz rasshifrovannykh donesenii, poluchennykh v techenie 1923 goda po voprosu ob obstoiatel'stvakh, soprovozhdaiushchikh rasprostranenie zhurnala 'Pravda'*, 31 Dec. 1923).

anti-Soviet groups inside the Soviet Union (especially Belorussia) whom it claimed were controlled by the BRP's Supreme Command, and it published fantastic stories of their partisan activities. An edition of autumn 1927, for instance, wrote of the destruction of a government supply depot in Borisov, the beating off of a Red cavalry detachment, and the shooting down of a Soviet warplane.[8]

The claims of *Russkaia Pravda* were treated with great caution by ROVS leaders, many of whom felt that they were products of the fertile imagination of the newspaper's editor, S. A. Sokolov, who liked to call himself 'Ataman Krechetov'. Many critics believed that the BRP was based entirely on bluff. There were suspicions that it was either a Soviet provocation or a genuinely anti-Soviet organization heavily penetrated by Soviet agents.[9] As a result, ROVS came to regard the BRP as a hostile organization, especially as its fund-raising activities competed with those of ROVS. ROVS members were forbidden to participate in its activities.[10]

The BRP was not the only group dedicated to continued struggle against the Soviets. Various other groups and individuals, some decidedly eccentric, tried their hands. One of the leading exponents of continued struggle was the socialist revolutionary Boris Savinkov. Savinkov was a compulsive conspirator, who before the revolution was a member of the terrorist branch of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. In 1904 he helped to assassinate the Imperial Minister of the Interior, Viacheslav Plehve. He then became Deputy Minister of War under Kerenskii, and after the fall of the Provisional Government in July 1918 organized an unsuccessful uprising against the Bolsheviks in the city of Yaroslavl. After going into exile in Poland Savinkov continued to organize underground anti-communist action inside Russia. Wrangel considered him completely untrustworthy, and forbade his representatives to work with him. In 1924 Savinkov was lured into Russia by a Soviet *agent provocateur*, captured, and imprisoned. He died in prison in 1925 in suspicious circumstances.[11]

Another proponent of underground action against the Soviets was A. I. Guchkov, a keen duellist with a reputation as a wild adventurer. In 1900

[8] *Russkaia Pravda*, Sept./Oct. 1927, 14–15 (Copy held in HIA, VSIuR, Sudnoe Otdelenie, Box 3, File 13).

[9] HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection, Box 1 (Letter, von Lampe to Arkhangel'skii, no. 794, 13 Sept. 1927). HIA, WA, Box 147, File 34, 505–7 (Letter, Shatilov to Wrangel, 11 Nov. 1927); Box 151, File 44, pp. 417–20 (Circular, General Wrangel, 7 Nov. 1927); Box 147, File 33, pp. 390–1 (Letter, Wrangel to Shatilov, 23 Aug. 1927).

[10] BAR, ROVS, Box 4 (Letter, Abramov to Stogov, 29 May 1931); HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection, Box 2 (Circular, General Shatilov, no. 452, 27 Feb. 1933).

[11] C. Andrew and O. Gordievsky, *KGB: The Inside Story* (London, 1990), 68–70.

he had fought on the side of the Boers against the British during the South African War. He also fought several duels. In 1922 he suggested to Wrangel that he carry out a coup in Bulgaria against Prime Minister Stamboulisky, but Wrangel rejected the idea outright. On reading this suggestion General Miller wrote in the margins of Guchkov's letter that the idea was pure 'adventure' and a sign of a man who had not overcome his 'ambitious adventurism'.[12] Unperturbed Guchkov continued to scheme against communism. He bought a boat in Germany and planned to set up a radio station in the Baltic Sea to broadcast anti-Soviet propaganda. Eventually, however, the German government forced him to abandon his project.[13]

In Poland two generals, Novikov and Glazenap, carried out a number of cross-border raids in 1923, but achieved nothing, at heavy cost. Wrangel refused to give them any funds to continue their work, and their activities soon ceased.[14] Among members of the Russian Army and of ROVS the desire to continue the fight was widespread. Wrangel noted that preserving the army could not be an end in itself, and only made sense if the army were used in some way against the Bolsheviks.[15] The Circle of Russian Youth in Helsinki, which consisted of former junior officers, passed a resolution in 1923, stating that 'The main and for now only task of nationally-minded Russians both in Russia and in emigration . . . is merciless ideological and physical struggle with the Bolsheviks, struggle regardless of what happens, struggle by everyone in whom a Russian heart beats, struggle to the last drop of blood.'[16]

By 1923, Wrangel recognized that the army's efforts had to be refocused on covert operations. As he wrote in a circular of 18 July 1923, the prospects of foreign intervention had faded and so, 'We must undertake revolutionary work . . . the majority of our power and resources should now be directed inside Russia.'[17] Responsibility for running underground operations inside the Soviet Union was given to General Kutepov. In December 1923 Wrangel handed over control of underground activities

[12] HIA, WA, Box 149, File 39, pp. 475–80 (Letter, Guchkov to Wrangel).
[13] P. N. Shatilov, 'Memoirs' (Unpublished), 1459.
[14] HIA, WA, Box 50, File 21, 108–15 (Letters, Makhrov to Miller, 13 Feb., 19 March 1923).
[15] HIA, WA, Box 146, File 31, 770–2 (Letter, Wrangel to Shatilov, no. 2004/s, 6 Dec. 1925); Box 150, File 41, 325–7 (Letter, Wrangel to Trepov, 15 Dec. 1925).
[16] HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 12, File 47 (Letter, Bergman and others, to A. Fen, 8 Sept. 1923).
[17] BAR, ROVS, Box 3, Folder 'Wrangel' (Circular, General Wrangel, no. 03728, 18 July 1923).

to Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, and in March 1924 Kutepov was summoned to France by the Grand Duke to take over the command of this secret work. His operations were funded through the Fund for the Salvation of the Motherland, FSR (*Fond Spaseniia Rodiny*), which raised its money from individual contributions. Committees were set up in émigré communities to organize the fund-raising, and wherever possible, civilian leaders were found to run the committees. Most contributions came, however, from the ranks of ROVS members.

Efforts were made to raise money abroad, but these had little success. A small amount of money may have been given to Kutepov by Oliver Locker-Lampson, a Conservative member of the British parliament.[18] Locker-Lampson had commanded a British armoured car squadron which fought alongside the Russian army on the Eastern Front in the First World War. Vehemently anti-Bolshevik, he maintained close contacts with Russian military émigrés throughout the 1920s. Another White sympathiser who had visited the eastern front during the First World War and established a close relationship with Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich at the time, was Colonel Robert Rutherford McCormick, owner and editor of the *Chicago Tribune* newspaper. The McCormick family was one of the richest in America, its fortune being based on the famous 'McCormick reaper' which revolutionized American agriculture in the nineteenth century. Robert Rutherford McCormick, known in America simply as 'The Colonel', and his brother, a member of the US Senate, visited the Grand Duke at his home in France at some point in the mid-1920s. The brothers offered to form a group of powerful financial and industrial leaders in the USA to provide the Grand Duke with a substantial amount of money. Three months later, however, the Colonel returned and said that they had had to abandon the undertaking due to interference by the US government. General Lukomskii suspected that the real reason may have been that Senator McCormick had signed a contract to sell agricultural equipment to the Soviets, although the Colonel's passionately anti-Soviet attitude renders this explanation unlikely. More probably, the plan collapsed because of the death of the senator in 1925. A somewhat more successful contact for the Russians was General Williams, who had served as the representative of the British War Ministry at Russian military headquarters in the First World War. He and some unnamed Americans did apparently provide some money to

[18] HIA, WA, Box 147, File 33, 251 (Letter, Shatilov to Wrangel, 5 July 1927).

Kutepov's anti-Soviet operations. The former Czech Prime Minister Karel Kramar may also have helped.[19]

By piecing together various statements Kutepov made in the mid-1920s one can trace an outline of his strategy. It was quite modest. It did not involve large-scale terrorist operations, incitement of uprisings, or the like. Insufficient funds were available for any grand plans, and it was recognized that the groundwork had first to be laid. The emphasis was to be on espionage, maintaining links with the homeland, and penetrating the Red Army. Particular importance was given to the task of establishing contacts with the Red Army, as it was realized that the support of its officers and soldiers for any uprising would be vital. It was no longer envisioned that the Russian Army would fight against the Red Army, but that they would become allies in a common struggle, and eventually merge to form a new national army. As Kutepov later said, 'We believe and know, that when the army, which is now called red, throws off the yoke of the 3rd International, it will merge with us into one Russian army.'[20]

Kutepov felt that his first step must be to establish contacts with anti-Bolshevik movements within Russia. The emigration's role would then be to support and encourage these groups, maintain contacts with them, and show them that they were not alone. As Kutepov wrote, 'Our duty is to help Russia's internal national forces with all the resources at our disposal.'[21] After establishing contact with these forces, the Whites would then install within the Soviet Union a number of long-term agents. Unfortunately for Kutepov, this strategy was to lead him right into the trap prepared by 'The Trust'.

'The Trust' was the code-name given to a fictional underground anti-Soviet organization which was in fact fully run and operated by the Soviet secret service, the GPU.[22] It was one of a number of similar provocations organized by the GPU in the early 1920s. The modus operandi of such provocations invariably followed the same lines. Émigrés would be contacted by a Soviet citizen, abroad on business, who would purport to be a member of a large underground movement inside the Soviet Union.

[19] HIA, Arkhangels'kii Collection, Box 2 (General Lukomskii, *Bor'ba s Bol'shevikami*, 27 Oct. 1932).

[20] *Chasovoi*, 5/6 (Mar. 1929), 4.

[21] *Vestnik Gallipolitsev v Bolgarii*, no. 5/7 (Sept.–Nov. 1927), 1.

[22] The history of the Trust has been recounted many times, not always very accurately. The best accounts are: S. L. Voitsekhovskii, *Trest: vospominaniia i dokumenty* (London, Ontario, 1974); B. Prianishnikov, *Nezrimaia pautina* (Silver Spring: Private edn., 1979); G. Bailey, *The Conspirators* (New York, 1960); P. Blackstock, *The Secret Road to World War Two* (Chicago, 1969).

The émigrés would be asked to establish contacts with the movement, send their agents to meet them inside Russia, and give them financial support. The purpose of the whole exercise was to channel the émigré plotters into activities which could be observed and controlled by the Soviet secret services. At the required moment, the whole émigré underground could then be destroyed, its agents arrested and shot. It was a provocation such as this which led to the capture of Boris Savinkov.

The Trust began its operations in November 1921 when a man calling himself Aleksandr Iakushev made contact with Russian émigrés in Estonia. Iakushev said that he was a member of a large underground organization inside Russia, code-named 'The Trust'. He claimed that the Trust had many cells throughout Russia, as well as important contacts within both the Red Army and the GPU. Its leaders were supposedly the well-known Red Army Generals Zaionchkovskii and Potapov. On 7 August 1923 Iakushev met various senior army officers and civilian advisers representing Wrangel. Having listened to him, only one of those present thought that Iakushev was a *provocateur*. The others chose to believe him.[23] Iakushev then travelled to Paris, where he met Miller, and through him Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich.[24] Wrangel, however, was not convinced by the reports given to him. After meeting General Potapov in Yugoslavia in late 1923 he became convinced that the Trust was a provocation, and ordered his staff to break off contact with it.[25] Wrangel also warned Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich and Kutepov of his suspicions, but his warnings were to no avail.[26] On a visit to Paris, Potapov convinced many that the Trust was genuine, and the Grand Duke's staff decided to establish permanent contact with it.

To test the worth of the Trust, Kutepov arranged for two agents to be sent to Moscow. These were a former White officer, Georgii Radkovich, and his wife, Maria Zakharchenko-Shul'tz, who had also fought in the Civil War on the White side. In late 1923, they crossed into Russia, made their way to Moscow, and there established contact with the Trust, which

[23] BAR, ROVS, Kutepov Collection, Box 3, Folder 'Trest' (Letter, Lukomskii to Wrangel, 2 Aug. 1927).

[24] BAR, ROVS, Box 165, Folder 'Project to overthrow Soviet government' (Letter, von Lampe to Miller, no. 6695, 17 Sept. 1923). Voitsekhovskii, *Trest*, 152. Prianishnikov, *Nezrimaia pautina*, 52–7.

[25] Ibid. 59–60.

[26] HIA, WA, Box 144, File 27, pp. 1793–4 (Letter, Wrangel to Miller, no. 1645/s, 31 Oct. 1924); Box 150, File 41, 73–4, 77–8 (Letters, Fedorov to Wrangel, 11 Feb. 1925 and Wrangel to Girs, no. 1728/s, 12 Mar. 1925); Box 151, File 44, pp. 356–7 (Letter, Chebyshev to Wrangel, 11 Mar. 1925).

provided them with accommodation and work in a market. They were allowed to continue living in Moscow to create the impression that the Trust was genuine. Communications between Kutepov and his agents were maintained by using the Polish diplomatic bag. It has been claimed that Kutepov and his agents knew from the start that the Trust was a provocation, and simply used it in order to get the agents safely in and out of Russia.[27] But even a cursory review of Shul'tz's letters to Kutepov reveals that she was totally taken in by the Trust. One report, for instance, mentioned that the Trust had opened cells in eleven new towns, and conveyed a request to provide the Trust with $5,000.[28] In another she wrote that 'our friends are truly working beyond their strength. I am struck by their capacity for work.'[29] Kutepov was warned from many quarters about the nature of the Trust. General Denikin, for instance, to whom he often turned for advice, warned him that it must be a provocation,[30] but despite this, Kutepov retained complete faith in it.[31] He did so even after his assistant General Monkevitz vanished in mysterious circumstances in 1926. Monkevitz had lived with Denikin and his wife and left behind documents which convinced Denikin that he had been a Soviet agent.[32]

There were many reasons for the absolute faith Kutepov had in the Trust. Wishful thinking undoubtedly had a lot to do with it. Another reason was that Shul'tz and Radkovich were allowed to live unmolested in Moscow for several years, and to send back a continual flow of intelligence. Between the end of 1923 and early 1927 the two agents made various trips out of the country to meet Kutepov, and the ease with which they crossed and recrossed the border only reinforced their faith in the Trust. Kutepov and his colleagues were also blinkered by their sense of honour. It was one thing to understand in principle that many men were *provocateurs*, it was another to question the honour of the specific person who stood in front of you. Lieutenant M. A. Kritskii, who later worked

[27] Blackstock, *Secret Road*, 46. Also, N. Vinogradov, 'Pravda o svidanii bol'shevitskogo agenta Iakusheva-Fedorova s Velikim Kniazem Nikolaem Nikolaevichem', *Vozrozhdenie*, 48 (Dec. 1955), 109–18.

[28] BAR, Kutepov Collection, Box 3, Folder 'Trest' (Report, Shul'tz to Kutepov, no date given).

[29] Ibid. (Report, Shul'tz to Kutepov, 15 Mar. 1925).

[30] BAR, Denikin Collection, Box 26 (Manuscript by General Denikin, entitled 'Kutepov').

[31] e.g. Kutepov's letters to N. N. Bunakov on the subject—BAR, ROVS, Box 9 (Letters, no. 13, 10 July 1926, no. 16, 31 July 1926).

[32] D. Lehovich, *White against Red: The Life of General Anton Denikin* (New York, 1973), 433.

for Kutepov, noted that when the general lived in Yugoslavia he was often visited by soldiers asking for help. He was aware that many were deceiving him, but was nonetheless always surprised to find this out. For, as Kritskii said, 'A. P. [Kutepov's] sense of suspicion of others was entirely theoretical. He had difficulties imagining that this very person with whom he was now communicating was capable of deceit. Being himself incapable of telling a lie, A. P. was ashamed even to suspect another of lying.'[33] S. L. Voitsekhovskii, who worked for Kutepov's secret organization, handling correspondence between him and the Trust, felt that in his own case it was also honour which blinded him to the Trust: 'We were young and brought up in the traditions of that Russia, for which a military uniform was a commission of honour. We could not imagine Zaionchkovskii or Potapov as despicable weapons of the Chekists [Soviet secret police].'[34]

Two incidents should have alerted Kutepov to the true nature of the Trust but did not. The first was the capture of the British agent Sidney Reilly, popularly known as the 'Ace of Spies'. In 1925 Reilly met Kutepov and arranged to enter Russia through the channels of the Trust. He crossed the Soviet border with the help of Radkovich and reached Moscow where he met representatives of the Trust. He was then arrested and shot. To avert suspicion the Soviets claimed that he had been killed in a fight with border guards while trying to leave the country, and this seems to have satisfied Kutepov and his agents, as they did not blame the Trust for what had happened.[35]

The second incident was a journey through Russia carried out by one of Wrangel's former political advisers, V. V. Shulgin. Shulgin's son had been killed during the Civil War, but Shulgin believed that he was still alive and wanted to travel to Soviet Russia to find him. The Trust arranged for him to enter Russia, transported him around the country, and then allowed him to leave unscathed. Shulgin wrote a book describing his adventures, in which he claimed that a large underground organization existed inside Russia, which was on the verge of taking power.[36] On reading this, the more perceptive observers immediately suspected a provocation, but others interpreted Shulgin's story as proof that the Trust really was a powerful organization which had a real chance of overthrowing the Bolsheviks.

[33] *Kutepov: sbornik statei*, 146.

[34] Voitsekhovskii, *Trest*, 10.

[35] Blackstock, *The Secret Road*, 91–6.

[36] V. V. Shulgin, *Tri stolitsy* (Berlin, 1926).

The line peddled by the Trust was that it was a large and growing organization, with an ever-increasing number of members in important positions of authority. Rather than spending its resources on premature subversion and terrorism, it claimed to be preserving its forces to be in a position to make one big bid for power. This gave the Soviets a useful pretext to restrain Kutepov and his agents from trying to carry out subversion, sabotage, or terrorism themselves. By 1926, however, Kutepov and Shul'tz were becoming impatient with the lack of activity this implied, and had begun to consider carrying out terrorist actions. In March 1927, Kutepov met Shul'tz, Iakushev, and Potapov in the town of Terijoki in Finland to discuss strategy, and it became clear from the meeting that it would be increasingly difficult to dissuade Kutepov from carrying out terrorist actions.[37] In these circumstances the Trust had outlived its purpose, which was to restrain Kutepov from such activities and to channel his actions into directions deemed harmless by the GPU. In addition, the Trust was coming under suspicion around this time from the Polish intelligence services. Supposedly, a set of Soviet mobilization plans sold by the Trust to the Poles were seen by the Polish President, Marshal Pilsudski, who announced that he was sure that they were forgeries.[38] The Soviets therefore decided to liquidate the Trust.

Shul'tz and Radkovich had initially made contact with the Trust through a man named Eduard Opperput, who unknown to them was a Soviet agent. In April 1927, Opperput suddenly revealed to Shul'tz that he was working for the Soviets and that the Trust was a provocation. He had, he said, repented of his ways, and wished the truth to be known. Fearing arrest, Shul'tz and Kutepov's other agents (three more had arrived in Moscow in 1926) fled the country. Opperput, under instructions to keep an eye on Kutepov's organization, went with them. Having arrived in Finland, Opperput made a statement to the press, revealing all about the Trust. This was a terrible blow to those who believed in the need for underground action against the Soviet regime, as the pointlessness and futility of such actions were now revealed. Furthermore, the public revelations about the Trust shone bright light on the activities of Soviet *provocateurs*. Émigrés already believed that they were surrounded by enemies. Now their worst fears were proved to be true. There were provocateurs everywhere after all! The newspaper *Novaia Rossiia* (New Russia) expressed the mood well: 'The GPU is striving to dissolve the

[37] Voitsekhovskii, *Trest*, 98.
[38] Richard Vraga, 'Trest', *Vozrozhdenie*, 7 (Jan.–Feb. 1950), 132–3.

most dangerous enemy of the communists—the Russian emigration. There is a continuous bacchanalia abroad: provocation after provocation, bribery, betrayal, 'trusts', assassinations, etc. . . . The knife of the Russian chekist has already been driven into the spine of the emigration.'[39] The journal *Illustrirovannaia Rossiia* (Illustrated Russia) ran a sensational article by Vladimir Burtsev revealing many of the most intimate details of Kutepov's involvement with the Trust. This sparked a series of similar revelations about other underground groups. For instance, in 1928 a set of polemical articles appeared in the émigré press purporting to reveal all about the BRP, and claiming that the organization was a Soviet provocation.[40]

From now on the emigration's sense of paranoia would grow ever deeper. It became increasingly difficult to trust anybody else, and when things went wrong the failures were invariably laid at the door of Soviet *provocateurs*. Mutual accusations of being Soviet agents began to fly back and forth with ever-increasing regularity.[41] This not only made any form of communal action more difficult, it also made a rational analysis of errors impossible. Opperput's public revelations about the Trust thus had a devastating and debilitating effect on the whole Russian emigration.

Kutepov himself came under tremendous pressure to surrender the leadership of the underground struggle to someone else. In order to restore his reputation, he therefore decided now to move immediately to a new strategy—terrorism—in the hope that a few prominent terrorist acts organized abroad would inspire those inside the USSR to follow suit.[42] Opperput was given a chance to prove that his repentance was real, and sent back into Russia with Shul'tz and a third agent, Peters, armed with explosives to blow up a GPU hostel in Moscow. A second team of three men, led by a young captain from the Markovskii Artillery Battalion, Viktor Larionov, was sent on a similar mission to Leningrad. Unsurprisingly, Opperput's mission was intercepted by the GPU (probably betrayed by Opperput himself). Pursued across the country, Shul'tz and Peters were eventually killed in a shoot-out near Smolensk.[43] Larionov's group had more success. Reaching Leningrad undetected, they threw several bombs into a minor meeting at the Leningrad Party Club and escaped unscathed back over the border into Finland.[44]

[39] GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 35, l. 15844 (clipping from the von Lampe diary).
[40] Ibid. l. 15835–47 (newspaper clippings from the von Lampe diary).
[41] For a typical example see GARF, f. 5759, o. 1, d. 61, l. 126 (*Prigovor treteiskogo suda po delu polkovnika Toma-Papsha i kapitana Orlova*, 21 June 1929).
[42] Voitsekhovskii, *Trest*, 115.
[43] Ibid. *Trest*, 12–13.
[44] The whole operation is described in Larionov's own book, *Boevaia vylaska v SSSR* (Paris, 1931).

Encouraged by this success, Kutepov sent two more groups, each of two men, over the Finnish–Soviet border in August 1927, and a third group of three men crossed into Russia from Latvia. Unfortunately, the first group was confronted by a forester who tried to detain them. Having killed him in order to escape, they were pursued by Soviet soldiers and killed in a shoot-out near Petrozavodsk. The alarm having been raised, the second group of two was captured, as were the three coming in from Latvia. The five survivors were then put on public trial by the Soviets.[45] These disasters caused Kutepov to halt his terrorist campaign for a year. Then in July 1928 Radkovich and one other agent were sent to Moscow. Radkovich threw a bomb into the pass office of the GPU's headquarters, the Lubianka, and in the ensuing pursuit both he and his colleague were killed.[46] Kutepov's so-called 'Fighting Organization' was wiped out with hardly anything to show for it. In a last effort to carry out a spectacular terrorist act, Kutepov sent an agent to Moscow with instructions to assassinate one of the leaders of the Communist Party, Nikolai Bukharin. The agent made it to Moscow undetected, but found Bukharin's security too tight to warrant an attack, and returned to France without having fulfilled his mission.[47]

The failure of Kutepov's terrorist campaign was in part due to a lack of resources, and in part to bad luck, but mainly to the immense difficulty of operating within the Soviet Union. But Kutepov's absolute failure did not mean that his efforts were without wider consequences both in the international arena and for the Russian emigration. The historian Paul Blackstock claims that Kutepov's terror offensive contributed to the war scare between Britain and the USSR in 1927, and that it was also used by Stalin to justify a counter-terror against his political opponents inside the Soviet Union.[48] When the five captured members of Kutepov's organization were put on public trial every effort was made by the Soviet prosecutors to link them to British intelligence, which, it was claimed, had entirely directed Kutepov's work.[49] This contributed to the general war psychosis which gripped the USSR at this time. Kutepov's activities can only have served to increase the Soviets' sense of security paranoia, justifying their beliefs that the White Guards were still plotting against them, although, of course, this sense of paranoia was already highly developed, even without Kutepov's help. The effect of Kutepov's operations was

[45] Prianishnikov, *Nezrimaia pautina*, 119–20. N. Kichkasov, *Belogvardeiskii terror protiv SSSR* (Moscow, 1928).
[46] Prianishnikov, *Nezrimaia pautina*, 125–6.
[47] Ibid. 132–3.
[48] Blackstock, *Secret Road*, 159–69.
[49] Kichkasov, *Belogvardeiskii terror*, 4–6, 30.

greater on the Russian emigration than it was on the wider world. They pushed the emigration in two opposing directions. Some émigrés, examining Kutepov's failure, decided to turn their backs once and for all on 'active struggle' against the Soviets, concluding that nothing could be done. To others, though, Kutepov was an inspiration. However much he had failed, he had shown the way ahead. This interpretation was particularly popular among the Gallipoliitsy and the younger generation of Russian émigrés. Indeed one veteran, Boris Prianishnikov, remarked in his memoirs that émigré youth 'worshipped' Kutepov.[50] On top of his example at Gallipoli, his leadership of the continuing underground struggle came to symbolize the very essence of 'irreconcilability'. His example tore the emigration into two—half abandoning the struggle for ever, and half endorsing it even more keenly.

On 29 April 1928, the day after Wrangel's death, Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich appointed Kutepov head of ROVS.[51] Less than a year later, Kutepov found himself elevated yet again, when Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich died on 5 January 1929. While ill at the end of 1928 the Grand Duke had temporarily transferred all his powers and authority to Kutepov, who therefore now issued an order formally accepting Nikolai Nikolaevich's duties on a permanent basis.[52] With this he became undisputed leader of the military emigration. The Grand Duke's staff were now subsumed into ROVS, and absorbed into the central directorate which Kutepov created in Paris.

Some senior officers were sceptical about Kutepov's ability to fulfil his new role. He was considered to be unintelligent, discredited by his involvement with the Trust, and politically too far to the right.[53] In fact, Kutepov was to prove a rather better leader than expected. He enjoyed immense personal authority among the Gallipoliitsy, but as the last commanding officer of one of Imperial Russia's most prestigious units, the Preobrazhenskii Guards Regiment, he was also acceptable to most of the more conservative officers who made up the membership of the military associations. He therefore united all the various tendencies within ROVS. In addition, despite his reputation for harsh discipline and reactionary beliefs, he was to display a surprising flexibility and ability to reach out to the more liberal parts of the Russian emigration. It appeared

[50] Prianishnikov, *Nezrimaia pautina*, 35
[51] BAR, ROVS, Box 134, Folder 'Orders, 1928' (Order no. 3, Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, 29 Apr. 1928).
[52] Ibid. Folder 'Orders, 1929' (Order no. 1, General Kutepov, 6 Jan. 1929).
[53] GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 35, l. 15648–56 (Diary of von Lampe).

that years of exile had taught him a political tact that he had previously entirely lacked. General Denikin commented that, as ROVS President, Kutepov showed surprising diplomatic ability, finding a way of speaking in different tongues to both the left and right of émigré society. He carefully kept out of the arguments dividing the Orthodox Church abroad, visiting churches under the jurisdiction of both Evlogii and Antonii. He also made determined efforts to attract Jews into the anti-Bolshevik struggle, and to rid the White armies of their anti-Semitic image.[54] One prominent liberal Jewish émigré, G. Sliozberg, would later praise Kutepov as one of the few White leaders to have actively prevented pogroms in the Civil War, and to have accepted that a future Russia must be for all Russians, including Jewish ones, whom he understood could play an important role in a renewed Russia.[55]

From the point of view of the Soviet government, Kutepov was an especially dangerous enemy. His immense stubbornness gave him an utterly inflexible determination to continue the struggle against the Soviets with all the means at his disposal. The Soviets must have known that Kutepov would never stop. They therefore decided to eliminate him.

On the morning of 26 January 1930, Kutepov disappeared after leaving his office in Paris. Later, a witness reported seeing a man of his description being bundled into a car and driven away at high speed.[56] It turned out that Kutepov had been abducted by agents of the GPU, who planned to take him back to Moscow, interrogate him, and then kill him. Two versions of his ultimate fate exist. According to the first version, Kutepov suffered an adverse reaction to the chloroform used to subdue him and died while still in France.[57] According to the second version, he was smuggled onto a boat in Marseilles, but died while en route to the USSR.[58] Whichever version is true, Kutepov does not seem to have reached the Soviet Union alive.

The manner of the kidnapping raised suspicions that Kutepov had been betrayed by someone close to him. Kutepov almost never walked anywhere: thirty Russian taxi-drivers took turns to take a day off once a month to act as his chauffeur. But on the day of his kidnapping Kutepov

[54] BAR, Denikin Collection, Box 26 (Manuscript by Denikin entitled 'Kutepov').

[55] *Kutepov: sbornik statei*, 364–6. See also 315 for a speech by Kutepov to the Union of Russian Jewish Patriots, 8 Dec. 1928.

[56] M. Grey, *Le général meurt à minuit: l'enlèvement des généraux Koutiepov (1930) et Miller (1937)* (Paris, 1981), 12–15.

[57] Ibid. 112–20. This version is supported by Pavel and Anatolii Sudoplatov, *Special Tasks: the Memoirs of an Unwanted Witness, a Soviet Spymaster* (Boston, 1994), 91.

[58] L. Mlechin, L., *Set'—Moskva—OGPU—Parizh* (Moscow, 1991), 26–7.

dismissed his driver and left his office on foot for a rendezvous with an unknown person. Observers commented that he would only have done this if he trusted absolutely the person he was going to meet. Suspicion has since fallen on Major General B. A. Steifon, who had been Camp Commandant at Gallipoli and responsible for putting Kutepov's ideas of draconian discipline into practice. The suspicion that Steifon betrayed Kutepov is based on very circumstantial evidence, but some new information on his possible involvement can be found in the unpublished memoirs of General Shatilov. According to Shatilov, at some point in the 1920s Steifon had quarrelled with Kutepov, whom he denounced as a 'stupid and untalented commander'.[59] In the mid-1920s Wrangel expelled Steifon from ROVS for quarrelling in the press with another general. It may be, therefore, that Steifon felt sufficiently disgruntled with the ROVS leadership to consider betraying it to the Soviets. In early January 1930, prior to Kutepov's kidnapping, he suddenly appeared in Paris, telling fantastic stories of a trip he had made on Kutepov's behalf to Russia, and showed Shatilov photographs which he alleged he had taken in the city of Ekaterinodar in the northern Caucasus. He claimed that he had been reconciled with Kutepov, who had sent him on a secret mission to the Soviet Union, although Kutepov told Shatilov that this was not true.[60] Then, after Kutepov's kidnapping, Steifon left Paris and returned to his home in Yugoslavia. His sudden appearance and disappearance seemed inexplicable, and it has therefore been suggested that the purpose of his trip to Paris was to arrange the kidnapping of Kutepov. A former Volunteer officer, A. N. Petrov, who was recruited as a Soviet agent and later turned himself in to the Belgian police, claimed that Steifon was also in the pay of the Soviets.[61] Despite this, there is no solid evidence to link Steifon directly to the kidnap of Kutepov. Furthermore, Steifon's later career showed him to be a dedicated anti-communist. In the Second World War he commanded the Russian Corps which collaborated with the Germans in Yugoslavia and nothing he did during the war suggested that he was working for the Soviets. The identity of the person who betrayed Kutepov therefore remains a mystery.

From the point of view of ROVS and the broader Russian emigration, the impact of the kidnapping was devastating. In the first place, ROVS lost a leader who enjoyed great authority. There was no suitable replacement,

[59] Shatilov, 'Memoirs', 1657.

[60] Ibid. 1663.

[61] V. M. Zernov, 'K pokhishcheniiu Gen. Kutepova', *Novyi Zhurnal*, 138 (1980), 129–35; B. Prianishnikov, 'A. Kutepov i B. Steifon', *Novyi Zhurnal*, 139 (1980), 267–9.

and Kutepov had named no successor. On the day after his disappearance a group of senior generals and civilians close to ROVS met to discuss the succession, and endorsed General Miller as the new president of ROVS. Miller had many qualities, but he lacked the authority and strength of will of either Wrangel or Kutepov. He was to prove incapable of providing the same leadership as his predecessors.

Kutepov's abduction renewed the split in the emigration with regard to the viability of active struggle against the Soviets. It was clear that he had been kidnapped because of his commitment to underground work. To those opposed to 'activism', his abduction was proof of the folly of such behaviour. But to many others, Kutepov's abduction was instead proof that ROVS was on the right track. Surely, it was argued, the Soviets would not have abducted Kutepov unless ROVS was a real threat. The title of a contemporary pamphlet summed up this feeling precisely, asking 'Why was Kutepov kidnapped, but not Miliukov?'—the obvious answer being that Miliukov was not a threat to the Soviets, whereas Kutepov was.[62] Despite the failures of his underground work, Kutepov's activities now acquired in some circles a truly inspirational quality. His death hardened the resolve of those promoting renewed struggle and ensured that the rift between them and those opposed to it would be final.

The mutual recriminations which followed Kutepov's disappearance had an even worse impact. Accusations of involvement began to fly in all directions. Vladimir Burtsev, who had exposed *agents provocateurs* in the SR Party before the Revolution, took upon himself the task of researching the case, and concluded that there must have been a Soviet spy in Kutepov's closest entourage. Burtsev claimed that his sources had told him that the general was betrayed by 'several people close to him', although he refused to name names.[63] Suspicion in particular fell on one of Kutepov's assistants, Colonel A. A. Zaitsov. Burtsev did not directly accuse Zaitsov of involvement, but issued a statement saying that he could not ignore the accusations being made, which from Zaitsov's point of view was little better. Bitter recriminations flew back and forth for three years, until in 1933 Burtsev was finally forced to apologize.[64]

The witch-hunt atmosphere launched by Burtsev would have been bad enough on its own, but it now spread even wider. The newspaper *Vozrozhdenie* accused two émigré generals, D'iakonov and Karganov, of

[62] *Pochemu pokhishchen Kutepov a ne Miliukov?* (Paris, 1930).

[63] BAR, ROVS, Box 1, Folder 'Burtsev, V. L. to Miller, E. K.' (Letters, Miller to Burtsev, 25, 30 July 1930; Burtsev to Miller, 28 July 1930).

[64] Ibid. (Letters, Burtsev to Zaitsov and Zaitsov to Burtsev, 23 May 1933).

working for the Bolsheviks. The two sued the newspaper in the French courts and won, but the mud stuck.[65] A Captain Zavadskii-Krasnopol'skii, who had liaised with the French police on Kutepov's behalf, also came under suspicion. Burtsev also accused Steifon and Zaitsov of running counter-intelligence operations in Bulgaria and playing a double game with Soviet *provocateurs*, in a manner which exceeded the permissible limits. Steifon vehemently rejected these claims in correspondence to Miller, and sued Burtsev for libel.[66] These accusations were indicative of the all-round suspicion created by Kutepov's death. Even more than before, it now became commonplace to blame all problems on Soviet provocation, and to accuse anyone with whom one had a disagreement of being a Soviet agent.

Kutepov was not the last émigré to be murdered by the Soviets. A number of other émigrés died in suspicious circumstances, although, as with Wrangel, it is not always possible to ascertain exactly the cause of death. For instance, General Shatilov suspected that his former assistant, Squadron Commander Arkadii Polunin, was among those murdered by the Soviets. Polunin had served in Wrangel's intelligence department and was put on trial in Switzerland in the early 1920s for the murder of the Soviet diplomat Vatslav Vorovskii. Vorovskii had been killed by a veteran of the Drozdovskii Regiment, Captain Conradi, who used a pistol given to him by Polunin. Remarkably, both Conradi and Polunin were acquitted, having argued before the court that their action was justified by the reprehensible nature of the Soviet regime.[67] Polunin then moved to France where he worked for Shatilov helping to find work for members of the Russian Army in that country. He also acted as a go-between ferrying messages between Wrangel, Locker-Lampson, and Prince Felix Yusupov, a friend of Locker-Lampson, who was famous for helping Grand Duke Dmitrii Pavlovich to murder Rasputin.[68] On 23 February 1932 Polunin was found unconscious on a train and died shortly afterwards. His death was put down to a diabetic attack, but he had no previous record of diabetes, and Shatilov suspected foul play. Apparently Polunin had been persuaded by Burtsev to allow himself to be recruited by the Soviets so that he could act as a double agent on Burtsev's behalf.

[65] Prianishnikov, *Nezrimaia pautina*, 152.

[66] BAR, ROVS, Box 15, Folder 'Correspondence, S. to Miller, E. K.' (Letter, Steifon to Miller, 23 Feb. 1931).

[67] The story of the murder and subsequent trial is described in A. E. Senn, *Assassination in Switzerland: The Murder of Vatslav Vorovsky* (Madison, 1981).

[68] HIA, WA, Box 147, File 33, 252–4 (Letter, Wrangel to Shatilov, 8 July 1927).

The Soviets may well have seen through his trick and killed him.[69] Whether this was true or not, the fact that Shatilov believed it reveals much about the suspicious state of mind of Russian émigrés by the early 1930s.

The emigration, though separated from its homeland, was not ignored by it. The Soviets had a profound fear of all opponents, and actively pursued the goal of breaking up émigré society, fostering divisions, removing opponents, creating suspicion and paranoia, and undermining faith in active struggle. In this they were phenomenally successful. Once the interplay of the Soviet regime's covert operations with the underground activities of the émigrés themselves is recognized, it becomes much easier to understand why émigrés behaved and thought as they did.

[69] Shatilov, 'Memoirs', 1399.

10

The New Generation

By 1930, even the youngest of Wrangel's veterans, those who had fought in the civil war as young teenagers, were reaching their late twenties. Most were in their thirties or older. As time went by, ROVS leaders became more and more worried about the need to find a new generation of recruits to be the soldiers and activists of the future. They attacked the problem by organizing training to qualify new officers and NCOs and educate the current troops. These efforts failed to appeal to all but a few younger émigrés, but simultaneous attempts to encourage émigré youth to create and strengthen new anti-Bolshevik organizations of their own had more success, and had a lasting impact on the Russian emigration.

The first effort to attract émigré youth into the ranks of the army in exile was an initiative of Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, who in 1926 told Wrangel of his desire to fill the ranks of regimental unions with young men, in order to instil a spirit of duty and honour into them. Wrangel therefore issued an order allowing regiments and military associations to include in their ranks young men who had not fought in either the First World War or the Civil War.[1] However, few associations did anything, and few young men responded. Noting that many young émigrés were interested in sport, the Grand Duke's staff therefore tried a more subtle approach, organizing sporting clubs attached to military associations. A great deal of effort was put into this, but with limited results.[2] In Paris a gymnastics school was set up under General Fok, and a youth circle created for the Union of Great War Veterans, but elsewhere little was achieved. In 1929 Kutepov noted this lack of progress and reminded military organizations of the need to attract youth, suggesting that they give special attention to practical activities rather than educational lectures,[3] but his words brought little change.

[1] *General Miller v Bolgarii* (Sofia, 1930), 6.

[2] GARF, f. 5826, o. 1, d. 192, 193, 194 (Committee on the physical development of Russian youth).

[3] BAR, ROVS, Box 84, Folder 'Russian Youth Organizations, 1929–1932' (Circular, General Kutepov, no. 750, 25 Sept. 1929).

By 1930, the ageing of the ROVS membership was becoming obvious to all. As a result, under General Miller's leadership, ROVS began to pay greater attention to the problem of rejuvenating its ranks. ROVS's goal was to instil in youths the correct virtues of patriotism, struggle, irreconcilability, and self-sacrifice, so that even if they chose not to join ROVS, they would carry on the struggle on their own. As Miller said in a speech in Bulgaria in 1930, 'The struggle does not consist solely of fighting with weapons in one's hands, but also in preserving one's national and moral outlook, in forging in oneself the feeling of sacrifice and selfless dedication to the Motherland. . . . We must create abroad the base for the resurrection of Russia—we must support the young forces of the emigration.'[4] Under Miller's leadership, ROVS would play an important role in supporting Russian youth groups and in aiding the new generation of émigrés to preserve their Russian identity abroad.

In March 1931, Miller issued a 'Statute on the Military Preparation of ROVS Members'. This established four categories of military training courses designed to update the military knowledge of existing ROVS members or provide a basic military education for new recruits. These courses covered topics such as weaponry, tactics, military history and topography, communications, the Red Army and the contemporary USSR, and in some cases included field-training, map-reading, and sports, as well as a two-week camp.[5] With the establishment of all these courses, ROVS finally began to put into practice its talk about study and self-perfection, as well as about attracting new members.

At first there were great hopes for this training, but the response among both ROVS members and émigré youth was disappointing, with only a handful of men attending the courses. For instance, only ten or twenty a year turned up for most of the various NCO and officer courses in France and Yugoslavia.[6] In France, the Officers' School for the Development of Military Knowledge, designed to upgrade the military

[4] BAR, ROVS, Box 134 , Folder 'Orders, 1926' (Order no. 42, General Wrangel, 12 Dec. 1926).

[5] Ibid. Folder 'Orders, 1931' (*Polozhenie o voennoi podgotovke chinov ROVSoiuza*, Mar. 1931).

[6] *Chasovoi*, 78 (15 Apr. 1932), 28. BAR, ROVS, Box 134, Folder 'Orders, 1932' (*Informatsionnyi Bulletin, Voennaia Kantseliriia ROVSa*, 1 Feb. and 15 Apr. 1932); Box 134 Folder 'Correspondence, 1932. IV Otdel to Central Office (2)' (Order no. 14, General Barbovich, 14 Dec. 1934; Report, Colonel Dreiling, 28 Mar. 1932; Report, Lieutenant General Stremukhov, 26 Mar. 1932); Box 65, Folder 'Correspondence, 1936, IV Otdel to Central Office' (Letter, Barbovich to Miller, 5 Mar. 1936).

skills of junior officers, was such a failure that in 1935 it was closed down. It had proved almost impossible to get officers to participate.[7]

The most successful training course was the Higher Military Technical Course, run by General N. N. Golovin, one of Russia's foremost military scholars. Two branches of the course were run, one in Paris, beginning in 1927, and one in Belgrade, beginning in 1931. The courses in effect constituted a general staff academy in exile. Attended by middle-ranking officers, they offered a broad in-depth military education, and completion of the courses gave the graduate the right to consider himself a member of the General Staff. Lecture subjects included tactics, airpower, chemical warfare, military history, logistics, the work of the general staff, and the economic bases of modern warfare.[8] Between 1927 and 1940, over 400 attended the Higher Military Courses in Paris, and 200 those in Belgrade.[9] The high attendance at the courses, and the quality of their contents, made them the one undoubted success of ROVS's training programme. Their success was helped by the high reputation of Golovin himself, who not only wrote many books, but also lectured at military academies in France, the UK, and the USA.[10]

Less spectacular success was achieved in Yugoslavia in 1932, where 80 Cossacks of the 800-man Kuban Cossack Division completed a two year NCO's course in 1932. Photographs in the journal *Chasovoi* showed them in full military uniform carrying out military training in the classroom and in the field, an unusual sight for 1932.[11]

Both the Higher Military Courses and the Cossacks' NCO's course were attended only by civil war veterans, however. Only in Bulgaria and Belgium did ROVS manage to attract a fair number of new recruits. In Sofia, the ROVS 3rd Department set up the General Kutepov Company of the Young Relief, which in 1937 had 160 members and met three times

[7] e.g. BAR, ROVS, Box 134, Folder 'Orders, 1931' (*Prikaz Kornilovskomu Artilleriiskomu Divisionu*, no. 16, 12 Sept. 1931).

[8] Details of many of the lectures are to be found in L. A. Mnukhin (ed.), *L'Emigration Russe: Chronique de la vie scientifique, culturelle et sociale en France, 1920–1950* (Paris, 1995).

[9] Trembovel'skii, A., 'Zarubezhnye vysshie voenno-nauchnye kursy Professora Generala Golovina', *Pervopokhodnik*, 11 (Mar. 1973), pp. 42–4; also, Vl. Maevskii, *Russkie v Iugoslavii: vzaimnootnosheniia Rossii i Serbii* (New York, 1966), 115–18.

[10] I. V. Obraztsov, 'N. N. Golovin i vysshaia voennaia shkola russkogo zarubezhiia', in E. P. Chelyshev and D. M. Shakhovskoi (eds), *Kul'turnoe nasledie rossiiskoi emigratsii, 1917–1940*, Vol. 1 (Moscow, 1994), 373. For information on the thought of Golovin and other Russian military writers in exile, see in the same book an article by I. V. Domnin, 'Voennaia kul'tura russkogo zarubezh'ia'.

[11] BAR, ROVS, Box 64, Folder, 'Correspondence, 1932, IV Otdel to Central Office (1)' (Letter, Zborovskii to Stogov, 20 July 1932); *Chasovoi*, 90 (15 Oct. 1932), 2.

a week to conduct military training, including field exercises in spring and autumn.[12] In Belgium a Russian Shooting Squad was formed in 1930.[13] Aware that overt military training would not be permitted by the local authorities, ROVS leaders in Belgium decided to resort to subterfuge by creating what was nominally a sports shooting team, but which in practice was a military training organization.[14] Branches were set up in Brussels, Louvain, and Liège. By September 1932 the Shooting Squad had 165 members, aged between 20 and 30, as well as 24 command staff and 5 teachers.[15] By January 1934, 212 members had passed through its ranks.[16] This was a fair quantity given the relatively small size of the Russian colony in Belgium. Most members were students at Belgian universities, and the Shooting Squad was in effect a sort of university officer training corps.

Other organizations both within and outside ROVS also held lectures on military themes for their members. For instance, the 'Sporting Circle of ROVS' in Paris gave would-be pilots ground training to pass their pilots' examinations (flight training had to be done at French aerodromes at great personal expense).[17] Organizations such as the Society of Officer-Artillerists and the Union of Technical Forces held lectures to discuss topics of interest to their own military speciality. The Officers' Technical Courses of ROVS in Paris, attended by twenty to forty officers at a time, taught subjects such as mathematics, mechanics, thermodynamics, and chemistry.[18] The Society of Enthusiasts for Military Knowledge had branches in many locations and published its own journal in Belgrade during the 1920s. Other important military publications were *Chasovoi*, which was closely associated with ROVS through its editor, Captain V. V. Orekhov, and *Russkii Invalid*, the paper of the Society of Russian War Invalids, which was not part of ROVS.

Overall, though, attempts at military training for the second generation of émigrés failed. Few serving officers participated, and even fewer

[12] V. N. Butkov, 'Russkaia natsional'naia molodezh' v Bolgarii', *Nashi Vesti*, 421, 1990, p. 20.

[13] *Chasovoi*, 31 (15 May 1930), 17; *Chasovoi*, 34 (30 June 1930), 2.

[14] BAR, ROVS, Box 134, Folder 'Orders, 1930' (*Informatsionnyi List Oblastnogo Otdela O-va Gallipoliitsev i chastei 1-go Armeiskogo Korpusa v Bel'gii*, 22 Apr. 1930).

[15] Ibid. Folder 'Orders, 1932' (*Informatsionnyi Biulleten, Voennaia Kantseliariia ROVSa*, 1 Sept. 1932).

[16] BAR, ROVS, Box 66, Folder 'Correspondence, 1934, V Otdel to Central Office' (*Otchet no. 4 o Russkoi Strelkovoi Druzhine za 1933 god*).

[17] BAR, ROVS, Box 64, Folder 'Correspondence, 1932. IV Otdel to Central Office (2)' (Letter, Stogov to Bazarevich, no. 623, 27 Oct. 1932).

[18] *Chasovoi*, 34 (30 June 1930), 23; 73 (1 Feb. 1932), 18; 97 (1 Feb. 1933), 23.

fresh recruits joined ROVS. In part this was due to practical difficulties in finding willing and qualified teachers, and in part due to considerable political obstacles. Von Lampe commented in 1931 that Soviet diplomatic representatives followed émigré activities very closely and complained vociferously to the local authorities if any military training was undertaken. In Berlin, an officer organizing courses for his colleagues was warned that if military training was conducted, the officers' union might be closed by the authorities.[19] The political situation worsened after the rise to power of the Nazis, which made many nations seek alliances with the USSR as the prospect of war drew closer. In Latvia in 1934, the head of the Riga Group for the Maintenance of Military Knowledge, Lieutenant Colonel Zenov, was put on trial for leading an illegal organization.[20] In France, the government asked *Chasovoi* not to print any more stories about military training activities, as every time such a story appeared the government had to put up with a barrage of complaints from the Soviet embassy. In 1935 France and the Soviet Union formed an informal alliance, and the French Foreign Ministry, under pressure from the Soviets, attempted to ban Golovin's Higher Military Technical Courses. Miller was only able to prevent this from happening with great difficulty.[21]

The chief reason for ROVS's failure to attract youth was, however, that there was little for young men to do within the organization. All it offered was the opportunity to attend yet more lectures, or to appear at dinners and balls where older men recalled old times. This was hardly a prospect that would attract young men, especially the more dynamic ones ROVS was after.[22]

Many hours of thought were devoted to the problem of enticing young émigrés to join ROVS. General Barbovich, the commander of the Cavalry Division, wrote an entire report on the subject in 1932.[23] After reading the report, however, General Dragomirov noted that young émigrés

[19] BAR, ROVS, Box 62, Folder 'Correspondence, 1931. II Otdel to Central Office (2)' (Report, von Lampe to Miller, no. 657, 29 Oct. 1931).

[20] Ibid. Folder 'Correspondence, 1934. II Otdel to Central Office' (Report, von Lampe to Miller, no. 113, 11 Mar. 1934).

[21] BAR, ROVS, Box 6, Folder '1 Armeiskii Korpus, 1934–1936' (*Protokol sobraniia starshikh nachal'nikov i otdela ROVSoiuza Parizhskogo raiona, imevshego mesto 26 Avgusta 1936*).

[22] For a discussion of the reasons why young émigrés failed to join ROVS, see *Chasovoi*, 58 (30 June 1931), 18, and 77 (1 Apr. 1932), 20–9.

[23] BAR, ROVS, Box 84, Folder 'Russian Youth Organizations, 1929–1932' (Letter, Barbovich to Miller, including report of commission examining the subject of youth, no. 93/s, 27 Feb. 1932).

would never join ROVS in large numbers, because they could never be anything other than junior members and they preferred their own groups where they could be in charge.[24] Another senior officer, Colonel Bazarevich, cast doubt on the whole idea of persuading youth to join ROVS, and suggested that what mattered was attracting them generally into the Russian nationalist orbit.[25] This was an idea developed by General Abramov, who noted that the 'healthy elements' of émigré youth were joining their own nationalist organizations. He proposed that ROVS concentrate on helping other organizations such as the Boy Scouts, which youth would join more readily than ROVS, by providing both money and instructors, who could give the boys army training.[26] This scheme of supporting and promoting other youth groups rather than attracting youth into ROVS, was the one which ROVS adopted from about 1932 onwards.

The *Sokol* movement was the primary target of ROVS sponsorship efforts. The *sokols* (which means 'falcons') were a gymnastics club, founded in Czechoslovakia in 1862 by the Czech nationalist Miroslav Tyrs. In 1900 the first Russian *sokol* club was established, and from 1905 the organization grew rapidly until it was repressed after the revolution by the Bolshevik regime.[27] At their meetings, *sokol* members practised both individual gymnastics and mass gymnastic displays (the latter often having a patriotic flavour), sang patriotic songs, and paraded with national flags. They also organized lectures and concerts and studied Russian language and literature. In exile the purpose of the Russian *sokols* was described as preparing future fighters for national ideals; fighting the spiritual decay that brought atheism, socialism, and internationalism; fostering the physical development of Russian youth; and struggling with denationalization.[28] Members of the Russian Army were involved in the *sokols* from the early days of their exile. In 1923, General Fok, who had run the football club at Gallipoli, took 300 *sokols* from Yugoslavia to attend the All Slavic Sokol Rally in Prague.[29] In 1929, Kutepov, who had

[24] Ibid. (Notes of General Dragomirov and General Lukomskii on report of General Barbovich).

[25] BAR, ROVS, Box 64, Folder 'Correspondence, 1932, IV Otdel to Central Office' (Letter, Bazarevich to Miller, no. 386, 19 Sept. 1932).

[26] Ibid. (Letter, Abramov to Stogov, no. 172, 28 June 1932).

[27] A. V. Okorokov, *Molodezhnye organizatsii russkoi emigratsii (1920–1945)*, (Moscow, 2000), 5.

[28] Ibid. 11. Also, *Russkii Golos*, 320 (23 May 1937).

[29] HIA, Kussonskii Collection, Box 7, File 28 (Report, V.Kh. Davatz, June 1923; Letter, Abramov to Davatz, no. 1571, 21 June 1923).

visited *sokol* organizations in Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, issued a circular praising the movement and calling on senior commanders to support links with it.[30] Similar calls to ROVS members to support the *sokols* were issued by Generals Miller, Khodorovich, and Abramov.[31] As a result many ROVS officers did take up positions running *sokol* organizations. In Bulgaria, for instance, the *sokol* organization was headed by General Abramov and subsidized by the ROVS 3rd department.[32] In 1932 Miller formed a committee to provide material and moral support to enable Russian *sokols* to attend the All-Slavic Sokol Rally in Czechoslovakia.[33] The movement grew rapidly and by 1939 there were about 5,700 Russian *sokols* in exile.[34]

Inevitably, perhaps, it was not long before the *sokol* movement, like so many émigré organizations, split into competing factions. ROVS activists involved with the *sokols* always wanted to stress the patriotic elements of meetings and to add an element of military training to the group's activities. This created problems with liberal elements who wished to avoid any form of political or military colouring in the organization. Military involvement in the *sokols* was far greater in Yugoslavia than in Czechoslovakia, where the movement had its headquarters, with the result that activities had a much more nationalistic flavour in the former country than in the latter.[35] In 1930 *sokol* leaders in Yugoslavia, many of whom were ROVS officers, proposed moving the organization's headquarters there from Czechoslovakia. At a meeting of the *sokol* committee in Prague the Gallipoliitsy present voted to support the move to Yugoslavia, but others voted against, saying that in Belgrade the *sokols* would be militarized.[36] As a result, two rival organizations were created, one based in Belgrade and the other in Prague. In Yugoslavia the *sokols* were gradually turned into a military training organization, which taught military tactics, map-reading, shooting, communications, and camouflage, and held field exercises in summer.[37]

[30] BAR, ROVS, Box 84, Folder 'Russian Youth Organizations, 1929–1932' (Circular, General Kutepov, no. 382, 20 Apr. 1929).

[31] *Chasovoi*, 34 (30 June 1930), 3; 75 (1 Mar. 1932), 27; HIA, VSIuR, Sudnoe Otdelenie, Box 3, File 13 (Circular, General Abramov, no. 315, 29 June 1927).

[32] GARF, f. 5826, o. 1, d. 193, l. 71 (Letter, Abramov to Gulevich, no. 707, 28 Nov. 1927).

[33] BAR, Russkii Natsional'nyi Komitet Collection, Box 2, Folder 'Correspondence, Miller to Kartashev' (Letter, Miller to Kartashev, 11 Feb. 1932).

[34] Okorokov, *Molodezhnye organizatsii*, 9.

[35] Photographs showing sokols in Yugoslavia carrying out military training in the 1930s are on display at the Museum of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union in Moscow.

[36] BAR, ROVS, Box 16, Folder 'Correspondence, Zinkevich to Miller' (Letter, Zinkevich to Miller, 20 Dec. 1930).

[37] Okorokov, *Molodezhnye organizatsii*, 9–10.

ROVS was also actively involved with the various scout groups set up by Russian émigrés. Of these, perhaps the most popular with ROVS was the NORR (*Natsional'naia Organizatsiia Russkikh Razvedchikov*—National Organization of Russian Reconnaissance Scouts). The NORR was founded in 1928 by Colonel P. N. Bogdanovich who accused the more conventional National Organization of Russian Scouts, NORS (*Natsional'naia Organizatsiia Russkikh Skautov*) of internationalism and masonry.[38] The NORR was run on the basis of hierarchy and discipline, and its activities had a distinctly military nature. Detachments were set up in Australia, the UK, Bulgaria, Hungary, China, the USA, Tunisia, France, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. In Bulgaria, where the NORR had some 600 members in the late 1930s, many of its instructors were provided by ROVS, and it had groups engaged in gliding, skiing, chemical warfare training, shooting, and riding. Under the supervision of the ROVS 3rd Department, it ran summer camps training recruits for underground military activities, studying subjects such as minefield-crossing, grenade-throwing, and night navigation.[39] ROVS was also involved in less militaristic groups, such as the National Organization of Knights (*Natsional'naia Organizatsiia Vitiazei*), which split from the NORS in 1928, and was associated with the Russian Students' Christian Movement. In the south of France, ROVS also took a scout group of 30 boys and 15 girls under its protection, and found 4,000 francs to run the group's annual camp.[40]

Despite the ban on political involvement by its members, ROVS was also involved with several new political organizations run by émigré youth. ROVS was, however, selective about its sponsorship. One group which was not supported, for instance, was the *Mladorossy*, whose strange mix of monarchist legitimism and Soviet nationalism was regarded with great suspicion. Some ROVS members, such as Orekhov, proposed establishing good relations with the Mladorossy in order to gain some influence over them, but this advice was rejected.[41] It was believed that the Mladorossy were under the influence of the GPU,[42] and also that their

[38] Okorokov, *Molodezhnye organizatsii*, 43–53.

[39] Butkov, 'Russkaia natsional'naia molodezh', 20.

[40] BAR, ROVS, Box 102, Folder 'Attestations, 1932 (1)' (Letter, Shatilov to Aprelev, 20 July 1932).

[41] GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 54, l. 165–9 (Letter, Orekhov to von Lampe, 16 July 1933). BAR, ROVS, Box 4 (Letter, Miller to von Lampe, 20 June 1930).

[42] BAR, ROVS, Box 12, Folder 'Correspondence, Miller to Abramov' (Letter, Miller to Abramov, 20 Aug. 1933).

ideology played insufficient attention to religion.[43] As a result they were regarded as a hostile force. Groups which were nationalist in flavour and close to ROVS in ideology were preferred. An example was 'White Idea', established in 1933, and composed of students who discussed political matters and sought to train themselves to carry out underground action against the USSR.

The most important of the new émigré youth organizations was the National Union of the New Generation, NSNP (*Natsional'nyi Soiuz Novogo Pokoleniia*), formed in 1928. ROVS and the NSNP were to develop particularly close relations, which then collapsed in 1936 and 1937, producing one of the major public splits and scandals of the history of the Russian emigration. In the Second World War, the NSNP (by then known as the NTSNP, and often referred to simply as the NTS) played an important role in the collaborationist movement of the captured Soviet general, A. A. Vlasov, and then continued to play an active political role after the war.[44]

The NSNP had its origins in youth circles which sprang up in the early 1920s among young émigré army officers. Perhaps the largest group consisted of officers of the Russian Army at Pernik, where in 1925 a Circle of Russian National Youth was already thriving.[45] These groups studied political, military, and world affairs, organized debates, and published journals. They sought to analyse the reasons for the White defeat in the Civil War, and to come up with possible future strategies. At first this did not extend to creating political programmes, and so they did not count as political organizations under Order No. 82. Their early membership was largely made up of young army officers and cadets, especially in Bulgaria and France, though less so in Yugoslavia where most members were not ex-soldiers (though many of their leaders were). This meant that the NSNP, which grew out of these groups, had a tight link with the Russian Army and ROVS from the very beginning. With time these youth circles became more political in character. Feeling that the White struggle had failed because it had lacked a positive ideology and popular support, youth groups began to consider creating such an ideology. Furthermore, many young men blamed their seniors for the defeat of

[43] BAR, ROVS, Box 162, Folder 'Officers' Unions (1930s)' (*Informatsionnaia Svodka*, no. 3, Annex 5).

[44] C. Andreyev, *Vlasov and the Russian Liberation Movement: Soviet Realities and Émigré Theories* (Cambridge, 1987).

[45] *Vestnik Glavnogo Pravleniia Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev*, 8/9/10 (Aug./Sept./Oct., 1925), 11.

the White cause, and wanted to create their own organization based entirely on youth. For these reasons, in 1928 the numerous youth groups throughout Europe united to form one new political organization, known as the Union of Russian National Youth, which after a conference in 1930 changed its name to the NSNP. Its president was a Don Cossack veteran of the Russian Army, V. M. Baidalakov.[46]

The ideology of the NSNP was close in spirit to that of ROVS. The organization supported non-predetermination, believing that there were more important questions to settle than that of whether Russia should be a monarchy or republic. It believed in 'solidarism', a version of the Italian fascist idea of corporatism, which aimed, at least in theory, to eliminate class struggle through corporate decision-making. The NSNP also rejected political parties, emphasizing that the state must rule above all parties and classes in the name of the national interest. In all this, there was little difference between ROVS and the NSNP. The latter's philosophy was based on 'idealism, nationalism, and activism', stressing, in turn, the spiritual over the material dimension of life, the nation as the framework for a creative society, and continual direct action against the Soviet Union.[47] Where the NSNP differed from ROVS was in its stress on the need for ideological as well as military struggle against the Soviets.

By 1932, as ROVS faced up to its failure to attract youth into its own ranks, a desire to use the NSNP and to bring it firmly into ROVS's orbit, so as to steer it in the right direction, was becoming more and more pronounced.[48] In April 1932, Baidalakov wrote to Miller to praise a speech he had given in Paris and to explain what the NSNP was doing. Its purpose, he explained, was to continue the political struggle by creating a corps of political agitators, to do which it was first necessary to equip them with a clear set of political ideals. Miller gave Baidalakov his approval, and the stage for closer relations was set.[49]

By mid-1933 the impetus for establishing some form of official co-operation was gathering momentum, in particular in the area of underground struggle against the Soviets. In March 1933, Abramov wrote to Miller to say that ROVS's own efforts in that direction had achieved little, while youth were finding their own way in such matters independent of

[46] B. Prianishnikov, *Novopokolentsy* (Silver Spring, Md., 1986), 5–7.

[47] Andreyev, *Vlasov*, 185–7.

[48] For instance, BAR, ROVS, Box 2, Folder 'Tsurikov, N. A. to Miller E. K.' (Letter, Tsurikov to Miller, 30 Nov. 1931).

[49] BAR, ROVS, Box 84, Folder 'Russian Youth Organizations, 1929–1932' (Letters, Baidalakov to Miller, no. 68, 10 Apr. 1932; Miller to Baidalakov, 20 Apr. 1932).

ROVS. The time had come for ROVS to let youth take the lead.[50] This cause was taken up with special enthusiasm by Shatilov, who between 1930 and 1934 commanded ROVS's 1st Department in France. ROVS already provided support to the NSNP through use of its buildings, where NSNP meetings were generally held, but NSNP leaders wanted more assistance, and in particular wanted an exception to be made to Order No. 82 for their organization, so that ROVS members could join it. Shatilov agreed that it was worth making a concession in the NSNP's case, and on 24 June 1933 issued a circular allowing ROVS members in the 1st department to join the NSNP. This instruction was then duplicated in other departments. It was not meant to give blanket permission for any ROVS member to join the NSNP, and ROVS members who joined the NSNP were meant to continue to abide by ROVS's internal discipline and not to participate in any activities which ROVS might not approve of.[51] Nevertheless a green light was given for the first time to a large number of ROVS members to join a political organization, and many took advantage of it.

On 22 September 1933, after he and Miller had met one of the leaders of the NSNP, M. A. Georgievskii, and promised him their support, Shatilov issued another circular, which ordered that wherever there were groups of ROVS but not of the NSNP, the former were to help set up new detachments of the latter. In such locations the local ROVS commander was to appoint a person who was to be in charge of setting up a detachment of the NSNP.[52] This instruction was confirmed by a meeting of senior ROVS commanders in October 1933,[53] and it resulted in a spectacular growth in the activity of the NSNP in France. According to Boris Prianishnikov, who was himself a leading NSNP member in France at this time, groups of the NSNP sprang up 'like mushrooms' after Shatilov's circular.[54] Georgievskii would later write to Shatilov that 'Without your help, the Union would not have existed in France.'[55]

ROVS's support for the NSNP was financial as well as organizational.

[50] BAR, ROVS, Box 12, Folder 'Correspondence, Abramov to Miller' (Letter, Abramov to Miller, 31 Mar. 1933).

[51] BAR, ROVS, Box 65, Folder 'Correspondence, 1933. V Otdel to Central Office' (Letter, Stogov to Gartman, 23 Oct. 1933).

[52] BAR, Denikin Collection, Box 27 (Circular, General Shatilov, no. 2717, 22 Sept. 1933).

[53] BAR, ROVS, Box 162, Folder 'Officers' Unions, (1930s)' (Report arising from conference of senior commanders, Oct. 1933).

[54] Prianishnikov, *Novopokolentsy*, 20.

[55] *Russkii Golos*, 345 (14 Nov. 1937), 3.

The NSNP wished to carry out 'active work' against the Soviets, and asked ROVS for financial assistance. In response, General Abramov suggested giving it a grant of 10,000 francs.[56] The commander of the Alekseevskii Infantry Regiment, General Zinkevich, endorsed the idea of using the NSNP to carry out 'active work', writing to Miller, 'We absolutely must use the excellent material of the union of national youth. . . . My opinion is that we should place our main stake on them . . . Revolutions are made by youth . . . At the moment they are sucking up to us, if we don't use them, we will be deprived of an influx of young blood . . . We must give them work inside Russia, or else they will leave us for others.'[57]

As a result, Miller agreed in June 1933 to give the NSNP 10,000 francs out of the FSR.[58] It was also agreed that the fund-raising activities of the NSNP and the FSR should be co-ordinated to avoid competition between the two.[59] The NSNP now became ROVS's great hope, and support for it a top priority. As Abramov wrote to Miller, 'ROVS's basic line must be friendly relations and every sort of assistance to the development and strengthening of the Union of National Youth.'[60]

Not everyone approved of the close links established with the NSNP. Some ROVS members bemoaned the fact that Order no. 82 had been broken, and feared that ROVS would be dragged into political fights.[61] These fears were to be justified. Within a few short years, the ROVS leadership was to regret permitting its members to join the NSNP in such large numbers, for these members found themselves subject to a dual authority and ROVS did not always prove to be the prime loyalty. In 1937 an open split was to develop between the two organizations, resulting in one of the most bitter scandals of the emigration's history. In the long term it was the NSNP which would profit more from the arrangement than ROVS.

[56] BAR, ROVS, Box 12, Folder 'Correspondence, Abramov to Miller' (Abramov to Miller, 10 May 1933).

[57] BAR, ROVS, Box 16, Folder 'Correspondence, Zinkevich to Miller' (Letter, Zinkevich to Miller, 15 May 1933).

[58] BAR, ROVS, Box 12, Folder, 'Correspondence, Barbovich to Miller' (Letter, Miller to Barbovich, no. 460, 19 June 1933).

[59] Ibid. Folder, 'Correspondence, Barbovich to Miller' (Letter, Miller to Barbovich, no. 470, 21 June 1933).

[60] Ibid. Folder 'Correspondence, Abramov to Miller' (Letter, Abramov to Miller, 27 June 1933).

[61] BAR, ROVS, Box 162, Folder 'Officers' Unions (1930s)' (Unsigned document entitled 'Order no. 82'); Box 2 , Folder 'Tsurikov, N. A. to Miller, E. K.' (Letter, Tsurikov to Miller, no. 594, 15 Aug. 1933).

One of the causes of the later split between ROVS and the NSNP was a shady underground group operating within both organizations, known as the 'Inner Line'. The Inner Line represented a more sinister aspect of ROVS's efforts to promote and control émigré youth organizations. Its activities were to be the source of much scandal and left a deep impression on the minds of some émigrés. It came to be seen by some as an all-pervading conspiracy with roots spreading deep into all parts of émigré life, eating away at them like a cancer—'an ulcer on the body of the Russian emigration', as one writer described it.[62] The truth was somewhat more prosaic than this hyperbole suggests, but the way in which émigrés reacted to the Inner Line tells one much about the atmosphere of the times.

The Inner Line was a secret organization of nationalist youth which was established in Bulgaria in the late 1920s. According to General Abramov, cells were set up in the provinces of Bulgaria, unaware of each other's existence, and controlled from the centre by the secretary of the ROVS 3rd Department, Captain K. A. Foss. Their purpose was to spread ideas into the mass of the emigration by means of personal example and by participation in émigré debates.[63] Though Abramov did not specify it, what this actually meant was that they were to penetrate émigré social and political organizations and seek to gain control of them from within. By 1930 this strategy had already had significant success in Bulgaria. Members of the Inner Line were commanding a large variety of émigré groups in Bulgaria. Foss himself was apparently head of the Bulgarian branch of the BRP, and other members headed the Bulgarian NSNP, and the local branch of the left-wing party Peasant Russia (*Krestianskaia Rossiia*), among others.[64]

Captain Foss was a former officer of the Drozdovskii Artillery Battalion, and was considered by his enemies to be one of the most sinister figures in the Russian emigration. Many believed that he was a Soviet *provocateur*. He was, however, idolized by his protégés. One of them, Paul Butkov, described him as modest, ascetic, and deeply religious—'a shining example of a White warrior who taught us how to struggle with the evil of Communism that had enveloped our Motherland'.[65] Foss was in

[62] N. Svitkov, *Vnutrenniaia Liniia (iazva na tele russkoi emigratsii)* (São Paolo, 1964).

[63] BAR, ROVS, Box 12, Folder 'Correspondence, Abramov to Miller' (Letter, Abramov to Miller, 21 Mar. 1931).

[64] BAR, ROVS, Box 63, Folder 'Correspondence, 1937, III Otdel to Central Office' (Circular, *Ispolnitel'noe Biuro Soveta NTSNP*, no. 205, 9 Mar. 1936).

[65] P. Butkov, *Our Fight for Russia* (Cormack, NY, 1998), 23.

constant pain from what he claimed was recurrent appendicitis, but he refused to submit to an operation, preferring to endure the pain rather than confront his fear of the surgeon. During the 1930s he apparently built the Inner Line up into a formidable underground organization in Bulgaria. After the Bulgarian government recognized the Soviet regime in 1934, Foss set about destroying the new Soviet diplomatic representation in Bulgaria. Falsified documents were supposedly fed to the head of the GPU, Ezhov, who ordered the ambassador, a former sailor who had taken the *nom de guerre* Raskolnikov, back to Russia. Raskolnikov, aware that his recall portended his inevitable execution, chose instead to defect to France. On Foss's instructions Butkov then persuaded the Soviet military attaché Colonel V. G. Sukhorukov to defect as well.[66] Foss's activities were not, however, appreciated by all. In the mid-1930s he began to send intelligence to General Miller in Paris. General Abramov, who was his immediate superior, considered the intelligence invaluable. Miller's deputy, General Kussonskii, considered it 'useless'.[67]

In 1929 and 1930 various members of the Inner Line moved to France, and began to create cells of the organization there, supervised by a Captain N. D. Zakrzhevskii under the command of Shatilov. Zakrzhevskii began to recruit rapidly for the Inner Line, which in the years 1930 to 1933 expanded greatly. From the little he had been told about the organization by Shatilov and Abramov, Miller gave his approval to the Inner Line's activities.[68] Much of Zakrzhevskii's time was taken up with counter-intelligence tasks, collecting information on émigré organizations such as the BRP and the Mladorossy, and reporting to Shatilov on the mood among ROVS members.[69] One example of his work was a report in April 1932 noting that an émigré named Gorgulov had arrived in Paris, and suggesting that he be placed under observation as his actions were a cause for concern. General Globachev, who headed ROVS's central security apparatus, did not seem concerned and failed to warn the French police.[70] A short while later Gorgulov assassinated the French President Paul Doumer.

[66] F. F. Raskolnikov, *Tales of Sub-Lieutenant Ilyin* (London, 1982), 198. Also, Butkov, *Our Fight for Russia*, 17.

[67] BAR, ROVS, Box 63, Folder 'Correspondence, 1934, III Otdel to Central Office' (Letter, Abramov to Kussonskii, 8 Dec. 1934); Folder 'Correspondence, 1936, III Otdel to Central Office' (Letter, Kussonskii to Abramov, 8 Dec. 1936).

[68] BAR, ROVS, Box 12, Folder 'Correspondence, Abramov to Miller' (Letter, Miller to Abramov, no. 260, 2 Apr. 1931).

[69] Ibid. (Letter, Miller to Abramov, no. 216, 17 Mar. 1933).

[70] P. N. Shatilov, 'Memoirs', 1762–3.

The Inner Line was a logical extension of the concept of a knightly order acting as a moral centre in the midst of the Russian emigration. However, as befitted an organization which viewed itself as something of a special 'order', the Inner Line began to take on a life of its own outside the proper chain of command, and tried to get all the strings of power in ROVS into its own hands. In particular it sought to gain control from within of both ROVS and the NSNP. In 1933 Zakrzhevskii wrote to R. P. Ronchevskii in Lyons, who was a member of both the NSNP and the Inner Line, that, 'We must everywhere be invisible leaders, invisible stirrups, pushing the work of both organizations [ROVS and NSNP] towards victory . . . both apparatuses, ROVS and the NSNP, must be filled with our people to such a degree that in the final account they merge.'[71] In another letter, he wrote likewise, 'We stand above both ROVS and the NSNP.'[72] This statement, once it became known to the NSNP's leaders, caused great alarm, convincing them that the Inner Line was trying to take over their organization from within.

According to one NSNP member, Boris Prianishnikov, the climax of the Inner Line's efforts was a Congress of National Groups held in Paris at the Gallipoli Mess from 31 March to 3 April 1934. This congress was organized by Shatilov, and groups invited included the NSNP, NORR, Cossack groups and White Idea. Its stated purpose was to reach agreement among active anti-communist groups about their future activity and to find common points of view.[73] Prianishnikov claimed that the purpose of the congress was actually more sinister: to establish the control of the Inner Line over those groups attending, by creating a permanent committee to unite and co-ordinate their activity. Many of those attending the congress were Inner Line members, and their plan was, Prianishnikov claims, to elect one of their number, V. M. Levitskii (ROVS's propaganda chief in France), to the presidency of the permanent body, and to get all attending groups to agree to subordinate themselves to it. This would then subordinate all nationalist émigré youth groups to representatives of the Inner Line. To prevent this the NSNP representatives acted to prevent Levitskii's election, and Viktor Larionov, the hero of the grenade attack in Leningrad, was elected instead, thus supposedly foiling the Inner Line's plans.[74] In any event, the permanent committee, like all previous such unity committees,

[71] B. Prianishnikov, *Nezrimaia pautina*, (Silver Spring, Md., Private Edition, 1979), 178.

[72] Ibid.

[73] *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipolitsev*, 11 (15 May 1933), 1–4.

[74] Prianishnikov, *Nezrimaia pautina*, 208–10.

proved to be stillborn and never achieved any real control over the organizations it claimed to represent.

It may be that the congress of national groups was not the sinister plot of the Inner Line that Prianishnikov believed it to be. Many of Prianishnikov's claims reflect the paranoia of the era more than the reality of events. What mattered was that many in the NSNP believed that it was, and their fear and dislike of the Inner Line began to grow ever stronger, until eventually it led to a direct split with ROVS (see Chapter 13). Whatever its real purpose, the congress of national groups represented the high point of ROVS's involvement in the politics of the new generation. ROVS had given birth to many of the new groupings of the Russian emigration, and had nurtured them through their early years. Now those groups were ready to break free of ROVS and find their own way.

II

Defining the White Idea

One of the more bizarre aspects of the White movement was that despite the Whites' fierce struggle in the Civil War, despite the passionate émigré feuds, despite a decade and more of intense organizing and plotting by thousands of ex-officers, neither then nor now could anyone say with any clarity what motivated the Whites. Ideologically the White movement was indistinct, its aims and objectives vague. Yet many Whites felt that they shared some common set of values, embodied in what they called the White Idea. During the Civil War and the early years of exile, this idea was never satisfactorily defined. But by 1930, many émigrés had become frustrated with their old methods of struggle, which appeared to have got them nowhere, and began to search for new ones. The beliefs of White officers came increasingly under attack from new political philosophies such as Eurasianism and fascism, and also from old ideas such as monarchism. In the face of this, ROVS members were forced to examine what they believed in and what it meant, and to try to define their ideology more precisely. Everything they stood for came under review. This included the philosophy of non-predetermination, which began to be questioned by many groups within ROVS, who by the late 1920s had become convinced that their struggle against the Soviets had failed because the White movement had lacked a positive ideology.

Leading the charge against non-predetermination were the Legitimists, who still hoped to install Grand Duke Kirill Vladimirovich as Emperor of Russia. Non-predetermination was 'criminal', wrote the Legitimist General Akatov, 'an idea of political decay . . . successfully hiding republican tendencies'.[1] The newspaper *Russkii Voennyi Vestnik* (Russian Military Bulletin), which was the official organization of the Council of United Officers' Organizations in Yugoslavia, printed several articles in 1927 calling for the adoption of a positive political programme. 'No organization, no successful struggle is possible', wrote S. L. Voitsekhovskii in one such article, 'without a creative ideology'. Later he

[1] BAR, ROVS, Box 64, Folder 'Correspondence, 1931, IV Otdel' (Open letter, Akatov to Miller, no date).

added that 'we need a programme . . . the absence of such a programme destroyed the White movement.'[2] In pursuit of a positive programme, the editor of the *Russkii Voennyi Vestnik*, Lieutenant N. Rklitskii, began to espouse the philosophy of Eurasianism in the newspaper's pages. As a result in 1927 Wrangel stirred himself from his semi-retirement and ordered military organizations to cease all contact with the newspaper, as he considered its political tone unacceptable for a military publication.[3] Subsequently the newspaper was renamed *Tsarskii Vestnik* (Tsarist Bulletin) and regularly printed articles attacking ROVS and non-predetermination, while propagating the Legitimist cause.

The Legitimists made their most determined efforts to force ROVS to abandon non-predetermination in the 1930s. A secret memo circulated among the ROVS hierarchy in 1931 claimed that in June of that year Legitimist leaders had met in Paris and planned a strategy of attack against ROVS, at the centre of which was a plan to form Legitimist cells inside ROVS.[4] As part of this campaign, *Tsarskii Vestnik* ran numerous articles attacking ROVS and its leaders, and efforts were made to win over the Belgrade-based Union of Great War Veterans (SUVV: *Soiuz Uchastnikov Velikoi Voiny*). The leader of the SUVV, General Romanko-Romanovskii, obliged and allowed Legitimist officers and members of the Mladorossy party to join the union, in direct contravention of Order no. 82.[5] This angered Miller, who ordered General Barbovich, the head of the ROVS 4th department, to force Legitimists out of the SUVV. Despite this, the activities of the Legitimists had some success, and there was something of a monarchist revival among officers in the late 1930s. The head of the ROVS 5th department, General Gartman, noted in 1935 that the emigration's problems stemmed from the lack of a legitimate leader, and he therefore suggested that Miller finally recognize Kirill Vladimirovich as Emperor: 'The situation has changed, and we must embark on a new course—the legal one—or reconcile ourselves to inevitable dissolution.'[6] Gartman's advice was rejected by Miller, who was aware that Kirill Vladimirovich's personal unpopularity made him unacceptable to most émigrés.

[2] *Russkii Voennyi Vestnik*, 101 (17 July 1927), 3; 107 (28 Aug. 1927), 1.

[3] HIA, WA, Box 147, File 34, 415–20, 429, 434–5, 444–6 (Letters, Wrangel to Ekk, 6 and 7 Sept. 1927; Paleolog to Wrangel, 5 and 7 Oct. 1927); BAR, ROVS, Box 17, Folder 'Wrangel Headquarters (13)' (Circular, General Arkhangel'skii, 30 Sept. 1927).

[4] GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 47, l. 10–14 (Untitled document, marked 'secret', 1931).

[5] BAR, ROVS, Box 64, Folder 'Correspondence, 1933, IV Otdel' (Letters, Barbovich to Miller, 21 Mar. 1933 and Miller to Barbovich, no. 481, 1 June 1933).

[6] BAR, ROVS, Box 164, Folder 'Proekt reorganizatsii' (Letter, Gartman to Miller, no. 213, 4 June 1935).

In 1938, Kirill Vladimirovich died. His son, Grand Duke Vladimir Kirillovich was much more acceptable than his father, and many now hoped that he might be able to play a leadership role similar to that previously played by Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich. On 16 December 1938 he was received at the Gallipoli Mess in Paris by an official delegation of military organizations in France.[7] General Arkhangel'skii, who succeeded Miller as president of ROVS in 1938, declared that ROVS would accept a union of the emigration led by Vladimir Kirillovich, although he emphasized that ROVS would not subordinate itself to him, or recognize him as the rightful ruler of Russia.[8] Even this mild step towards the monarchist cause proved to be too much for some ROVS members. The Society of Russian Great War Veterans in San Francisco left ROVS in protest, saying that the close relations established with Vladimir Kirillovich breached the principle of non-predetermination.[9] Despite the calls for its renunciation, non-predetermination retained a powerful hold over émigré officers.

The monarchists were not the only ones questioning non-predetermination. Many Gallipoliitsy, who retained a fervent desire to continue the anti-Soviet struggle, increasingly felt that ROVS needed some positive political slogans to win support. In a speech in November 1934 Viktor Larionov put it succinctly, saying that 'ideas are as powerful as bullets in contemporary war.'[10] A year later, V. V. Orekhov, the editor of *Chasovoi*, wrote to General Stogov, who worked in ROVS's central directorate, that 'our ideology has faded . . . non-predetermination of the form of government is absolutely necessary, but non-predetermination of the first period after the fall of the Bolsheviks is absurd.'[11] In this way, some White officers were coming round to the view expressed by Miliukov in his New Tactics that physical struggle with the Soviets must be replaced by ideological struggle.

As part of this change in direction, the Gallipoliitsy began to demand that ROVS intensify its political work. ROVS had always conducted anti-Soviet agitation among émigrés and foreigners, as well as agitation among its members, to reinforce principles such as 'irreconcilability' and military

[7] BAR, ROVS, Box 81, Folder 'Grand Duke Vladimir Kirillovich' (*Predstavleniie voinskikh organizatsii E. I. V. Velikomu Kniazu Vladimiru Kirillovichu*).

[8] GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 66, l. 137142 (Letter, General Arkhangel'skii, 6 Jan. 1939; Circular, General Arkhangel'skii, no. 11, 10 Jan. 1939).

[9] *Vestnik Obshchestva Russkikh Veteranov Velikoi Voiny*, 154/155 (Mar./Apr. 1939), 1–2.

[10] BAR, ROVS, Box 88 (V. Larionov, *Dobrovol'cheskaia belaia ideia v izgnanii*).

[11] BAR, ROVS, Box 162, Folder 'Officers' Unions, 1924–1929' (Letter, Orekhov to Stogov, 12 Sept. 1933).

values such as duty, honour, discipline, and sacrifice. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s movements such as *Smena Vekh*, Eurasianism, and the Post-Revolutionaries gradually undermined these principles and values among émigrés. Some émigrés were attracted by ideas that the Soviet Union might evolve in a democratic direction, that Stalin had become a defender of Russian national interests, and that continued struggle against the Soviets was pointless. 'Political work' implied fighting these tendencies through pamphlets, newspapers, and speeches at meetings.

Most ROVS members, however, remained stubbornly unwilling to countenance the idea of abandoning their cherished apoliticism, even to the limited degree implied by taking up 'political work'. One officer, G. Genkel, wrote in the newspaper *Russkii Golos* (Russian Voice) in 1938 that every officer could see that politics could not be permitted in the army.[12] In the same year, Captain A. A. Semeniuk commented that General Franco was not winning the civil war in Spain because his army was better educated politically than that of his opponents—rather, 'victory is decided by bravery, the steadfastness of infantry, and technology.'[13] Nevertheless, as time went on, the ideological attacks on ROVS by other émigré groups did create an increasing demand for ideas which members could use to defend themselves against these attacks. Thus General Zinkevich insisted that ROVS must engage in political work and give its members ideological weapons to defend themselves, while not simultaneously creating a 'political programme'.[14] Squaring that particular circle ultimately proved impossible, but demands for something of the sort had become very strong by the beginning of the 1930s.

During the 1920s ROVS had no permanent propaganda or political apparatus. This gap began to be filled in late 1931 when General Miller started paying monthly stipends to Captain A. A. Brauner in Bulgaria and N. A. Tsurikov in Czechoslovakia to enable them to increase the work that they were doing as propagandists for ROVS. Brauner and Tsurikov travelled around their respective countries meeting groups of ROVS members, giving lectures, and acting as conduits for information and ideas from the centre to the periphery and back again. A similar role was carried out by V. M. Levitskii in France and I. A. Il'in in Germany. What ROVS lacked was a printed organ of it own. The establishment of an official ROVS newspaper was mooted on several occasions, but nothing ever

[12] *Russkii Golos*, 381 (24 July 1938), 2–4.
[13] Ibid. 382 (7 August 1938), 3.
[14] BAR, ROVS, Box 86, Folder 'Zinkevich to Matsylev, 1937–1940' (Letter, Zinkevich to Matsylev, 7 Apr. 1937).

came of the idea.[15] The nearest things that ROVS had to official publications were *Russkii Voennyi Vestnik* until 1927, and the *Vestnik Obshchestvo Gallipoliitsev* (Bulletin of the Society of Gallipolians). A broadsheet, normally sixteen pages thick, the latter was published once a month in Sofia and had a circulation of about 1,850 copies, which were distributed throughout Europe.[16] It contained details of events in the lives of groups of Gallipoliitsy as well as articles on military and political matters. These articles examined events in Europe, the Soviet Union, and the Far East, and debated issues such as the tasks of ROVS members, their attitudes to fascism, and the slogans they should adopt. The ROVS central directorate subsidized the newspaper to the tune of 300 francs a month.[17]

The other publication closely associated with ROVS was the journal *Chasovoi*. Professionally produced, with numerous photographs, *Chasovoi* was sometimes mistakenly seen as ROVS's official mouthpiece, but disputes between the journal's editor, V. V. Orekhov, and the ROVS leadership meant that *Chasovoi* could never be relied upon to relay ROVS policy accurately. *Chasovoi* was founded at the beginning of 1929 with financial help from the eccentric White veteran Anastasii Vonsiatskii, who had married an American millionairess. This was one of the more constructive uses Vonsiatskii found for her money. His less sane projects included founding a one-man fascist party, rebuilding the Russian fleet by purchasing 600 model ships from Woolworth's, and buying a herd of snapping turtles, painting swastikas on their shells and releasing them in his garden in order to create his own 'panzer battalion'. In 1931, Vonsiatskii decided that these other activities were more worthy of his money and attention than *Chasovoi*, and stopped providing money to the journal. ROVS then stepped in to fill the gap and began to provide a regular grant. As he was paying him a subsidy, General Miller expected Orekhov to follow the line that he laid out, but Orekhov, even though he was a ROVS member, insisted on absolute editorial independence.[18] Relations between Miller and Orekhov declined rapidly, and in 1934 Miller cut off his subsidy to *Chasovoi*.[19] The journal's opinions could never be seen as being representative of ROVS's official line.

[15] BAR, ROVS, Box 17, Folder 'Wrangel Headquarters (14)' (Letters, Kondzerovskii to Khol'msen, 26 June 1928; Khol'msen to Kondzerovskii, 6 Sept. 1930).
[16] BAR, ROVS, Box 63, Folder 'Correspondence, 1934, III Otdel' (*Svedenie o rasprostranenii Vestnika Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev*).
[17] Ibid. (Letter, Zinkevich to Abramov, 14 June 1934).
[18] BAR, ROVS, Box 12, Folder 'Correspondence, Chasovoi to Miller' (Letter, Orekhov to Miller, 14 Dec. 1933).
[19] BAR, ROVS, Box 64, Folder 'Correspondence, 1934, IV Otdel (2)' (Letter, Kussonskii to Barbovich, 13 Nov. 1934).

A more reliable publication from ROVS's point of view was *Russkii Golos*, published in Belgrade twice a month. This newspaper was founded in 1931 by two ROVS members, General Potavtsev and Colonel Pronin, with the specific aim of promoting ROVS's ideology.[20] Pronin, who edited it, proved to be far more obedient to the ROVS hierarchy than Orekhov, although even he earned the occasional rebuke from Miller for not following the political line that Miller would have wanted.[21] ROVS was never fully able to overcome its failure to set up a central organ of its own, which would have been able to issue a clear political line to all its members.

Another area of ROVS's political activity was that of anti-Soviet propaganda. Miller joined an émigré committee to lobby foreign governments against the Soviet practice of 'dumping' cheap produce on the international market in order to generate foreign currency. Fighting the Soviets on the economic front was especially important, he wrote, because economic failure would create the conditions for the collapse of the Soviet regime.[22] As another aspect of this work, information bulletins about events in the Soviet Union written by the Information Director of the FSR, Prince S. E. Trubetskoi, were distributed among foreign journalists, politicians, and military leaders.

By the early 1930s some ROVS members felt that the tempo of such work had to be increased. As Tsurikov noted in 1933, one of ROVS's problems was that members did not know how to respond to attacks on them in the émigré press. They needed to be provided with better ideological preparation so that they could respond to such attacks more confidently.[23] In August 1933 Tsurikov therefore wrote to Miller to suggest that ROVS create a central organization to co-ordinate its ideological work. The new organization should not seek to turn ROVS into a political party, just to provide members with ideological weapons with which to fight their enemies.[24] Tsurikov's idea did not meet universal approval. Prince Trubetskoi admitted that members needed political instruction, but also felt that 'it is better to do too little than too much, since in the event that ROVS turns into a political organization . . . it will begin to lose

[20] Ibid. Folder 'Correspondence, 1931, IV Otdel (3)' (Letters, Barbovich to Miller, 9 Jan. 1931; Potavtsev to Miller, 15 June 1931; Pronin to Miller, 11 Apr. 1931).

[21] Ibid. (Letters, Stogov to Pronin, no. 1000, 14 Dec. 1931; no. 127, 19 Feb. 1932).

[22] BAR, ROVS, Box 1, Folder 'A. I. Guchkov to E. K. Miller' (Letter, Miller to Guchkov, no. 737, 5 Oct. 1931).

[23] BAR, ROVS, Box 2, Folder 'Tsurikov, N. A. to Miller, E. K.' (Letter, Tsurikov to Miller, 21 Aug. 1933).

[24] Ibid. (Letters, Tsurikov to Miller, 21 August 1933 & 12 November 1933).

a large number of members . . . ROVS is not and should not be a political organization.'[25] Many of Miller's senior advisers were also against the idea. Generals Dragomirov, Lukomskii, Vitkovskii, and Stogov all spoke out against it.[26] Senior officers' hostility to the idea of mixing politics and the army ran deep. But Generals Shatilov and Abramov, who headed the ROVS 1st and 3rd departments respectively, supported Tsurikov's idea, and Miller conceded to them and decided to give the idea his support.[27] ROVS members were not used to abstract ideas, he wrote, 'they do not want predetermination, but more clear-cut slogans, which they can easily understand and which are easily defended—simpler, more concrete. And we must give them these slogans.'[28]

Each department in ROVS now nominated a representative to join the new organization proposed by Tsurikov. These representatives met in Paris in March 1934, and discussed the formation of what was to be called the Information Bureau (OBRO: *Osvedomitel'noe Biuro*). They agreed that the main task of OBRO would be to study the situation in the USSR and the international world, to establish among ROVS members a unity of outlook, and to instruct the most active members in techniques of agitation.[29] A 'ROVS Credo' was produced by A. A. Brauner and given to the meeting for discussion. Miller sent the credo on to his senior advisers and stated that once their opinions were heard it would be deemed the official ideology of ROVS and not open for further discussion.

The ROVS credo is of great interest as the only attempt made by ROVS members to produce a systematic political ideology. Despite Miller's statement that it would be made an obligatory ideology for ROVS, nothing much seems to have come of it, and it did not receive wide circulation. But the ideas in it appear in various military publications, such as the *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev*, and are a fair reflection of the opinions found in the correspondence and speeches of many senior ROVS officers.

State power in a future Russia, the credo stated, would be established not for vengeance but to rebuild Russian power and economic life. It

[25] Ibid. (Letter, Trubetskoi to Tsurikov, 18 Nov. 1933).

[26] BAR, ROVS, Box 64, Folder 'Correspondence, 1934, IV Otdel (1)' (Letter, Stogov to Barbovich, 23 Jan. 1934).

[27] BAR, ROVS, Box 66, Folder 'Correspondence, 1934, V Otdel' (Letter, Miller to Arkhangel'skii, 1 May 1934).

[28] BAR, ROVS, Box 2, Folder 'Tsurikov, N. A. to Miller, E. K.' (Letter, Miller to Tsurikov, no. 788, 14 Dec. 1933).

[29] BAR, ROVS, Box 134, Folder 'Miscellaneous' (Resolutions of conference from 25 to 30 Mar. 1934).

would be above classes and parties, a 'state national power . . . the form of power will be established by the people themselves. In the transition period power must be DICTATORIAL, resting on the healthy elements of the country.' This dictatorship would have to prepare for a transfer of power on the basis of a constitution chosen by the people. Village, town, and regional soviets would be retained temporarily. Courts would be independent 'in accordance with the national legal consciousness'. Freedom of conscience, word, and assembly would be guaranteed. Nationalized industries would be retained, but would be gradually privatized. The government would defend the rights of labour, and would pass legislation guaranteeing fair wages and accommodation. The restoration of land to pre-revolutionary owners was rejected; petty landowning was seen as the ideal. The army would accept in its ranks anybody who was willing to defend Russia, no matter whom they had previously served.[30]

In the context of the mid-1930s, when communist and fascist extremism were on the rise in Europe, this was a surprisingly liberal ideology. It bore the mark of Russian liberal-conservatives such as Ivan Il'in and Petr Struve, who believed in a powerful state restrained by the rule of law. One may doubt whether any 'transitional' dictatorship would have willingly surrendered power as suggested, but it is clear that dictatorship was not construed in a totalitarian sense. The main problem with the credo was its lack of detail. It was a starting point from which a more sophisticated political platform could have been developed, but on its own gave little explanation of what its ideas would mean in practice. After 14 years of exile, White officers had still not given much thought to the practical meaning of their beliefs.

Meanwhile, OBRO got off to a bad start. At their conference in March 1934, its members had agreed on a centralized structure which would subordinate them directly to their own chairman, independently of the ROVS departments. The department heads, however, objected to this, seeing it as a deliberate ploy to take authority away from them.[31] Miller therefore insisted that OBRO should not work as an independent organization but that its members should operate through the department heads.[32] This undermined the whole purpose of creating the organization, which

[30] BAR, ROVS, Box 162, Folder 'Officers' Unions (1930s)' (*Kredo ROVSa*).

[31] BAR, ROVS, Box 66, Folder 'Correspondence, 1934, V Otdel' (Letters, Gartman to Kussonskii, no. 283, 21 Sept. 1934; Kussonskii to Gartman, 25 Sept. 1934).

[32] Ibid. (Letter, Miller to Arkhangel'skii, 1 May 1934); GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 54, l. 23005–20 (Letters, Shatilov to von Lampe, 2 Jan. and 10 Apr. 1934; Shatilov to Abramov, 11 Apr. 1934).

was to create a centralized body in charge of ideology. OBRO was thus destroyed in an internal bureaucratic struggle and never got off the ground. This ensured that the effort to produce a systematic ideology was stillborn.

Miller was largely to blame for this failure. He should have either not started the process or, having started it, seen it through to the end. It seems that his heart was not really in it, and he was just going through the motions to give the impression of action. Nonetheless he instructed Tsurikov that he wanted more work to be done to explain ROVS's slogans.[33] In response Tsurikov and Levitskii published a number of articles and pamphlets. Miller, however, was not happy with what they did. He felt that the slogans and ideas that they were promoting were too vague. It was not enough to limit matters to ten or twelve phrases, Miller wrote. Every thought must be explained to show what it meant in practical life. ROVS had to avoid merely repeating negative comments, such as 'We do not want the Bolsheviks', which justified the common complaint that ROVS did not know what it wanted. Commenting on Tsurikov's leaflet 'What we are fighting for', Miller stated that the ideas contained within it needed to be expanded. It was not enough to say 'All land to the peasants'. One had to show what this meant.[34] This was as close as any ROVS leader ever came to demanding a positive political programme.

Opposition to such a programme was strong. Tsurikov himself refused to give Miller the detailed explanations of his slogans that were being demanded. He claimed that he was not qualified to do so, but the truth may have been that he was too much an adherent of non-predetermination to go down a route that risked ending in the creation of a political programme. When a group of Gallipoliitsy approached Miller in 1935 and demanded that ROVS undertake more political work, they met great resistance. In response to their demands, General Dragomirov stressed that ROVS was a *military* organization: 'such an organization can only exist when it stands entirely outside politics and the struggles of political parties.' The basis of such a society must be 'unity of action, friendly cohesion, self-sacrifice in the name of the common good, based on *unconditional and uncomplaining subordination of ROVS members to all orders and instructions of their leader*.'[35] Dragomirov's views were shared by many of the ROVS rank and file. Captain D. D. Dobrokhotov, a member of the

[33] BAR, ROVS, Box 2, Folder 'Tsurikov, N. A. to Miller, E. K.' (Letter, Miller to Tsurikov, no. 181, 23 Apr. 1934).

[34] Ibid. (Letter, Miller to Tsurikov, no. 685, 21 Dec. 1934).

[35] BAR, ROVS, Box 164, Folder 'Proekt reorganizatsii tsentral'noi upravleniia ROVS'a' (Opinion of General-of-Cavalry Dragomirov).

Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo, noted in a letter in 1929 that Russia could not be liberated by any political programme or party, only by 'an organization of strong, decisive people, dedicated to the Motherland above all else'.[36]

This attitude was shared even by some of those who had been calling for ROVS to intensify its political work. General Kharzhevskii, for instance, who represented the more militant wing of the Gallipoliitsy, urged caution. Given the differences of opinion within ROVS, he noted that it might be entirely impossible to reach agreement on ROVS's ideology. He therefore recommended that the process of working out such an ideology should proceed slowly.[37]

In the face of such resistance the process of creating a positive ideology ground to a halt. A final effort was made in 1935 when an Instructors' Centre was set up in Paris under General Turkul, with orders to work out tactics and slogans for the White movement.[38] But its work was always hindered by the need to avoid producing what might become a party political programme. The Instructors' Centre was no more successful than OBRO before it, and the efforts to produce a clearer set of ideological principles and slogans failed entirely. ROVS never did develop a systematic ideology even after twenty years of exile.

This failure calls into question whether there was ever any ideological basis to the White movement beyond an irreconcilable hatred of Bolshevism and a belief in the need for armed struggle. Two main ideological tendencies can be observed among ROVS members in the 1930s. The first was predominant among more senior officers who had served in the pre-war Imperial Russian Army, and may be loosely described as a traditional conservatism, resting on the family, religion, and law and order, while accepting gradual change when necessary to preserve what was valued most. Miller himself fell into this category. In 1934 he produced a pamphlet entitled 'Why we are irreconcilable'. In this he stated:

> I cannot reconcile myself with the existing situation in Russia because I was brought up by my parents as a believing Christian to respect human individuals . . . Orthodox Faith, the motherland, family—these are the three foundations on which the Russian people built its life, its state. And the Soviet regime has declared merciless war on them.[39]

[36] GARF, f. 5759, o. 1, d. 55, l. 311 (Letter, Dobrokhotov to Cornet Kandiba, 31 July 1929).

[37] GARF, f. 5756, o. 1, d. 13, l. 25 (Letter, Kharzhevskii to Podgornyi, 15 Nov. 1933).

[38] BAR, ROVS, Box 133, Folder 'Instructions' (*Instruktorskii Tsentr 1-otdela ROVSa v Parizhe*).

[39] BAR, ROVS, Box 15, Folder 'Correspondence, Shatilov to Miller' (Leaflet, General Miller, 30 Oct. 1934, *Pochemu my neprimirimy*).

Such thinking looked back on the Imperial era as a positive one, but did not blind men like Miller to the fact that the past could not be restored. While one could call them conservative, it would be wrong to call them reactionary. Actual reactionaries, who believed in a restoration of the old order, were concentrated in the émigré community in Yugoslavia and generally regarded ROVS as a hostile force.

The second tendency among ROVS members shared much in common with the conservative tendency, but was more forward-looking, marking a clearer break with the past. It had many similarities to the various movements of the inter-war extreme right, though it could not rightly be described as fascist. This tendency was most marked among the younger members of ROVS, who in the 1930s began to look to the models of Italian and German fascism for inspiration. They were particularly attracted by fascist claims to have eliminated class struggle through progressive social programmes and corporatist decision-making. Thus an article in the newspaper *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev* entitled 'Our attitude to fascism' stated that one of the attractive points of fascist theory was 'the broad arbitration of the state between employers and workers'.[40] Similarly, in an 'Information Bulletin of the Alekseevskii Regiment', issued in November 1934, the regiment's commander, General Zinkevich, stated his interest in the recent social and economic experiments carried out by Mussolini, Roosevelt, and Hitler.[41] Fascist corporatism appealed to White officers' dislike of class and party conflict, offering a means of providing national unity and class co-operation. As General Turkul wrote: 'Solidarity of all classes in the name of the nation is the idea of Mussolini. Honour and glory to him, who has overcome the division of the nation. Fascism . . . is the only real threat to communism . . . the idea of fascism finds a harmonious response in Russian souls.'[42]

Both tendencies within ROVS shared a certain distaste for democracy. White army officers associated democracy with the chaos of the Provisional Government in 1917. They sensed that democracy led to government by self-interested people and groups, who governed in their own interest and not those of the population as a whole. Furthermore they believed that only a dictatorship could restore law and order in Russia. Their natural inclination was towards one-man rule, whether it be monarchical or presidential, although they recognized that this rule had

[40] *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev*, 10 (15 Apr. 1934), 6.

[41] M. M. Zinkevich, 'Informatsionnyi List Alekseevtsev', 190 (8 Nov. 1934), in *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev*, 17 (15 Nov. 1934), 15.

[42] *Signal*, 2 (6 Mar. 1937), 1.

to have popular support. As military men, they were inherently inclined to believe in hierarchical systems. Their scepticism towards democracy was reinforced during the 1930s by the seeming collapse of the democratic order in Europe, which suggested that democracy was a thing of the past. Thus the 'ROVS Credo' emphasized that the transitional power in Russia must be dictatorial.

From 1932 onwards, the example of Nazi Germany, and its successful repression of the German Communist Party, seemed to offer an example of how communism could be defeated. As an article in *Russkii Golos* put it, fascism had saved Italy and Germany from communism, but democratic Europe had done nothing: 'If it had not been for Hitler and Mussolini all of Europe would now be communist.'[43] White officers were also attracted by fascism's spiritual side, namely its 'dynamism', nationalism, and ability to instil a sense of self-sacrifice into its believers.[44] General Dragomirov noted that the era of rationalism was coming to an end, and that a new heroic epoch, a 'New World', associated with fascism, was arriving.[45] He suggested that ROVS members study fascism's spiritual basis and its cult of service to the state.[46]

To many, fascism was merely an extension of the White struggle. The world, it was believed, was being divided into two camps—those of nationalism (White) and internationalism (Red). 'We cannot but recognize', wrote General Shatilov, 'that these new movements are a continuation and development of our White struggle.'[47] The enthusiasm for fascism even spread to men as conservative-minded as General Miller. In 1937 he issued an order instructing ROVS members to study fascism, 'because we, members of ROVS, are natural, ideal fascists'.[48]

Support for fascism among the Whites was strongest in Germany and Bulgaria. Photographs of ROVS's Kutepov Company in Sofia show its members making fascist salutes.[49] But even in those countries ROVS leaders were very reluctant to be seen to be promoting fascism. Both von Lampe and Abramov refused to distribute Miller's order to ROVS

[43] *Russkii Golos*, 363 (20 Mar. 1938) 2.
[44] *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev*, 13 (15 July 1934), 7.
[45] BAR, ROVS, Box 64, Folder 'Correspondence, 1934, IV Otdel (1)' (Outline of speech to be delivered by General Dragomirov, 25 Nov. 1934, Belgrade).
[46] BAR, ROVS, Box 164, Folder 'Proekt reorganizatsii' (Opinion of General Dragomirov).
[47] HIA, Nikolaevskii Collection, Box 752, File 18 (General Shatilov, *Russkii Obshche-Voinskii Soiuz i ego zadachi*, 3 Jan. 1934).
[48] HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection, Box 2 (Circular, General Miller, no. 10, 2 Jan. 1937).
[49] Ibid. Box 5 (Photograph album, *Rota Generala Kutepova*).

members to study fascism.[50] General Zinkevich praised the spiritual element of fascism, as well as its nationalism, belief in a strong state, and corporatism, but at the same time attacked it for its racism, 'vozhdism', and étatism. After Stalin, he wrote, the last thing that the Russian people would want was another 'vozhd' ('vozhd', like 'glava', was a Russian equivalent of 'Duce' or 'Führer').[51] The generally accepted line seems to have been that fascism had some good aspects, but that it should not be slavishly copied. V. M. Levitskii, while saying that there were lessons to learn from fascism, questioned its principle of 'vozhdism', and noted that 'slavish copying cannot help us. We need creative, living, RUSSIAN thought.'[52]

One aspect of Nazi thought that attracted some Russian émigrés was its anti-Semitism. We consider Hitler 'our fellow-traveller in the cause of liberating our Motherland from the Jewish invaders', wrote one officer in 1938.[53] Likewise, the newspaper *Russkii Golos* ran a number of anti-Semitic articles in the late 1930s praising Nazi anti-Jewish laws.[54] Yet although many émigrés were deeply anti-Semitic, and anti-Semitic comments do occur occasionally in the writings of ROVS members, they are very rare. Anti-Semitism hardly registers at all in either the public writings or the private correspondence of ROVS members and in general ROVS leaders were keen to avoid antagonizing Jews. Wrangel stated clearly that he was not hostile to Jews, and did not support anti-Jewish measures. 'There are Jews who brought Russia immeasurable harm . . . There are Jews that Russia can be proud of', he stated.[55] In his turn, Miller wrote to von Lampe that he welcomed the Nazis' rise to power, but that all their achievements could be undermined by their anti-Semitism. Jews were a powerful international force, whom Hitler should take care not to antagonize, as a fight against the Jews could undermine his war against communism.[56] *Chasovoi* printed an article in 1934 in which it criticized talk that anti-Jewish pogroms might follow the fall of the Soviet regime:

[50] BAR, ROVS, Box 6, Folder 'Correspondence, Zinkevich to Matsylev, 1937–1940' (Letter, Zinkevich to Miller, 7 Apr. 1937).
[51] *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev*, 10 (15 Apr. 1934), 6.
[52] V. M. Levitskii, *Chto nam delat'?* (Paris, 1938), 8–9.
[53] *Signal*, 43 (15 Nov. 1938), 2.
[54] e.g. *Russkii Golos*, 111 (21 May 1933), 1, 2.
[55] HIA, WA, Box 152, 179–230 (Replies by General Wrangel to questions in the trial of Bernstein v. Ford).
[56] BAR, ROVS, Box 14, Folder 'Correspondence, von Lampe to Miller' (Letter, Miller to von Lampe, no. 269, 25 Mar. 1933).

Surely you do not want to darken freedom in the first dawning days of its establishment?! God forbid! How can one establish freedom on the blood of poor, persecuted, homeless people? You will blot its bright appearance, will shame the struggle with communist impurity, and will cause great harm to the Russian cause. Russian freedom must be achieved by pure means . . . We, Russian soldiers, respect the bright memory of the Jews Dora Kaplan and Leonid Kanegisser [who had attempted to assassinate leading Bolsheviks] and hope that other Russians can be found who will repeat their glorious exploits.[57]

Even many of those who were deeply anti-Semitic realized that it would not be sensible to act on these sentiments.

In fact, many of the more virulently anti-Semitic émigrés regarded ROVS as soft on the Jewish question. Von Lampe, who was undoubtedly an anti-Semite, lamented that he was being accused of 'judophilia' by other émigrés in Germany.[58] General Zinkevich, also anti-Semitic, was attacked by the émigré journalist Ivan Solonevich, who stated that 'The bony and wily hand of the Eternal Jew can be sensed behind the back of General Zinkevich.'[59] Although the influence of anti-Semitism was strong, it does not appear to have been the major reason why many in ROVS found fascism attractive.

The rise of the Nazis to power caused an explosion in the number of Russian émigré fascist organizations, as Russians sought to leap on the fascist bandwagon. This was especially true in Germany where a Russian Nazi movement, ROND, *Russkoe Osvoboditel'noe Narodnoe Dvizhenie* (Russian Popular Liberation Movement) was formed. Despite Miller's enthusiasm for fascism, he disliked ROND and ROVS members were forbidden to join it because of the provisions of Order no. 82. This was because Miller regarded ROND as a German puppet organization.[60] 'Our Berlin emigration has gone out of its mind', he wrote to his son in April 1933, 'and is planning to join the Nazi party. It is pure hysterics and a loss of all sense not only of proportion but also of personal virtue.'[61] ROVS leaders were determined to resist the pull of members into fascist organizations, and in this had a great deal of success. Von Lampe noted

[57] *Chasovoi*, 116/117 (1 Jan. 1934), 34–5.

[58] BAR, ROVS, Box 62, Folder 'Correspondence, 1934, II Otdel' (Letter, von Lampe to Kussonskii, no. 446, 24 Sept. 1934).

[59] Cited in Boris Solonevich, *Ne mogu molchat': 'Nasha Gazeta', emigratsiia, ROVS, i I. L. Solonevich* (Paris, 1939), 36.

[60] BAR, ROVS, Box 12, Folder 'Correspondence, Barbovich to Miller' (Letter, Miller to Barbovich, non. 361, 5 Aug. 1933).

[61] BAR, ROVS, Box 10, Folder 'Miller, Family Correspondence' (Letter, E. K. Miller to N. E. Miller, no. 313, 13 Apr. 1933).

that in Germany it was only ROVS's existence which prevented émigrés from joining fascist organizations in large numbers.[62] As with Wrangel's resistance to the monarchist movement in the 1920s, ROVS served to restrain the political extremes of the Russian emigration and to pull it towards the political centre.

ROVS members were certainly not democrats and favoured a 'dictatorial' government, but their view of the state was not totalitarian. Indeed, Ivan Il'in specifically remarked that 'the state cannot and should not regulate everything. The totalitarian state is godless.'[63] Zinkevich remarked that after Stalin Russians would not want another government which would seek to interfere in every aspect of their lives. Moreover the Whites appear to have been concerned with creating a law-based state, so that even the dictator would be subject to the law. This stress on legality was in part a reaction to what many White officers recognized as their own lawlessness during the Civil War.[64] Ivan Il'in made it clear that dictatorial government was not inherently superior to other forms of government *per se*, but that the form of government had to fit the level of development of the national legal consciousness. 'Il'in is equally clear', the writer Philip Grier has noted, 'that such a "dictatorship" would be justified in the long run only by its success in raising the moral, legal, and religious consciousness of the population to such a level that a state based upon the rule of law would become possible.'[65] This was an idea which found its way into the ROVS Credo.

The combination of a preference for dictatorial government and a belief in the rule of law did not make it easy for the Whites to produce a systematic ideology, as the two ideas were not easily compatible. But there is a more important reason why ROVS failed to systematize its political philosophy, which is that political and practical ideas were not what really mattered to most of its members. Many of them believed that the White struggle in the Civil War was not about political ideas but about cultural values, in particular those cherished by the Russian officer corps, such as honour, duty, and service. Bolshevism was not disliked because of its social or economic policies, but because it was the antithesis of these

[62] GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 62, l. 274 (Letter, von Lampe to Abramov, no. 310, 28 Oct. 1937).

[63] I. A. Il'in, *Osnovy gosudarstvennogo ustroistva: proekt osnovogo zakona Rossii* (Moscow, 1996), 143.

[64] e.g. *Pereklichka*, 93 (July 1959), 8.

[65] P. Grier, P., 'The Complex Legacy of Ivan Il'in', in J. P. Scanlan (ed.), *Russian Thought after Communism: the Recovery of a Philosophical Heritage* (Armonk, 1994), 173.

values. Many felt that the underlying causes of the problems of both Russia itself and the Russian emigration were spiritual. Miller, for instance, wrote to General Krasnov, 'You are completely right to describe the current era as not only difficult, but also "despicable". Unfortunately, the whole world has been seized by one and the same illness—a complete loss of morals.'[66]

This spiritual emphasis did not mean that White officers were ascetics who disliked material wealth, merely that they believed that political programmes, with their emphasis on economic, political, and social change, were not a solution to mankind's problems, as they tackled only the material superstructure. The substructure of peoples' mentalities was considered more important. If mankind's morals were first improved, its material situation would improve also. Responding to the ROVS Credo, General Barbovich commented that he wanted less emphasis in ROVS's slogans on the material side of life, and more on the spiritual, writing that 'there are too few of these promises—of a moral sort—in the slogans, which emphasize only the material good. We must focus more on what is our defining feature and is by nature unchangeable.'[67] General Dragomirov considered these unchanging values to be faith, irreconcilability, belief in Russia's eternal national principles, self-sacrifice, and discipline: 'an officer who has tasted the poison of politics is no longer capable of discipline, nor even of the modest . . . fulfilment of his service duty.'[68]

To a certain extent the spiritual emphasis of White officers was religious in nature. As Wrangel noted, 'the salvation of Russia from the Bolshevik yoke must begin with its religious resurrection.'[69] Miller said in a speech in 1934, 'The world is gradually dividing into two camps: in one are the godless, who deny every spiritual principle . . . in the other are those who do not want to become the slaves of Evil, who are ready to fight for the right to have a family, Motherland, Faith.'[70] The White movement was a moral, religious one, wrote Ivan Il'in: 'Whiteness was defined from the start and will be defined to the end by *the pureness of its guiding motive and the religious tension of its patriotic will*. Where there is none of this, there is nothing white.'[71] An article in the *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev* noted that 'Service of Christ . . . is the aspiration of all truly national exertions. It is the ideal content of Russian statehood.'[72] In a later article this was contrasted with communism: 'The Bolshevik programme, the inner sense of communism, is the construction of life without God. The true essence of soviet power is the struggle with God for power on earth.'[73] A meeting of representatives of the Society of Gallipolians held in Bulgaria in June 1937 discussed the need for slogans and programmes, and passed a resolution saying that 'We assert . . . the supreme significance of the spiritual principle in life . . . the principle of God. Thus we recognize the great significance of religion . . . which has played the most important role in . . . uniting the Russian people.'[74]

But religion was not the only part of this philosophy. It also stressed the superiority of the spiritual over the material in general terms. Many officers explicitly rejected rationalism, which, claimed Dragomirov, led inevitably to communism.[75] An article entitled 'On Slogans' noted that efforts to forge a compromise between socialism and capitalism would fail, as they were both based on materialism: 'We would do better to lay eternal principles such as God, Motherland, Nation, and Truth as the foundation of the future Russia, and the cement will be eternal and sacred concepts such as: honour, virtue, nobility . . . There can be no doubt of one thing—*The White Idea cannot be squeezed into the frames of narrow materialism*.'[76]

White officers were not alone in thinking in such terms. Many on the extreme right of European politics expressed similar ideas. The historian George Mosse says that fascism 'saw itself as a cultural movement', that fascism was a revolt against communist and capitalist materialism and that its language 'grew out of Christianity; it was after all the language of faith'.[77] Superficially, the Whites seem to fit neatly into Mosse's model of fascism. They were disaffected former soldiers who exalted struggle, 'activism', and spiritual renewal. They resembled the German Free Corps who fought communists in Germany and the Baltic States after the end of

[66] BAR, ROVS, Box 64, Folder 'Correspondence, 1934, IV Otdel (1)' (Letter, Miller to Krasnov, 25 Nov. 1933).
[67] Cited in BAR, ROVS, Box 2, Folder 'Tsurikov, N. A. to Miller, E. K.' (Letter, Miller to Tsurikov, no 133, 17 Mar. 1934).
[68] *Russkii Golos*, 425 (28 May 1939), 3.
[69] HIA, WA, Box 150, File 41, 26 (Letter, Wrangel to N. D. Zhevakhov, no. k/3588, 8 Jan. 1925).
[70] BAR, ROVS, Box 89, Folder 'Miscellaneous Manuscripts' (Speech to the Kornilov Regiment, 9 Sept. 1934).
[71] *Vestnik Gallipoliitsev*, 11 (Nov. 1924), 10.
[72] *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev*, 27 (15 Sept. 1935), 2.
[73] Ibid. 28 (15 Oct. 1935), 5.
[74] Ibid. 49 (21 July 1937), 25.
[75] *Russkii Golos*, 191 (2 Dec. 1934), 3.
[76] *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev*, 40 (15 Oct. 1936), 3.
[77] G. L. Mosse, 'Towards a General Theory of Fascism', in Mosse, G. L. (ed.), *International Fascism: New Thoughts and New Approaches* (London: SAGE, 1979), 1–41.

the First World War, and who served as an inspiration for the early Nazis. According to Mosse, the Free Corps were 'unable to formulate political goals' and were said 'to be held together not by ideas but through action'.[78] The similarity with the Whites is striking.

It is tempting therefore to see the White struggle in the Russian Civil War not as something purely Russian but rather as the first manifestation of a general European movement, which later came to prominence in Italy and Germany. But despite the similarities one should be cautious about linking the Whites too closely to the inter-war European extreme right. The striking thing about the Whites' relation to fascism is not that so many of them were attracted to it, but that so few of them actually joined fascist parties. Although there were a large number of Russian fascist groups, except in Manchuria these groups were minuscule.[79] The efforts of ROVS members to develop a systematic ideology in the 1930s show that the Whites' dislike of democracy was tempered with a liberal belief in personal freedoms and with a soldier's sense of the need for discipline and law and order. In so far as they fit in anywhere in political terms, it seems to be in the tradition of Russian authoritarian liberal-conservatism.

The efforts by many in ROVS to establish their political beliefs in more definite terms ended in failure. Even after 20 years in exile most ROVS members were still unable to say in concrete terms what it would mean if they were ever to take power. This is of itself a remarkable fact. It shows how strongly the idea of non-predetermination was held, not merely in the sense of not predetermining the question of monarchy or republic, but in its wider form of not predetermining social and economic questions in general. It shows how wrong were those on the left and right who imagined that non-predetermination was a mask for some hidden political ideology. Yet many White officers were very ideologically driven. If they failed to produce a concrete programme, it was ultimately because political, social, and economic issues were not what mattered to them. Their concerns were primarily moral and spiritual. Theirs was a movement which put its main emphasis not on social or political programmes but on the spirit of struggle and activism and on maintaining and fostering the spiritual values it held dear, in particular religion and the values of professional military men—honour, discipline, service, duty, and sacrifice. Since these values emerged from the Whites' experiences in the Civil War, and remained remarkably consistent thereafter, this reveals something fundamental about the nature of the Civil War as well. From the point of view of the Whites, the battle between Red and White turns out to have been a clash of cultures and values, not of economic or social interests or of competing concepts of material progress.

[78] G. L. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (New York, 1990), 168–9.

[79] See J. Stephan *The Russian Fascists: Tragedy and Farce in Exile* (London, 1978).

12

Depression and Mutiny

During the 1930s the international environment changed markedly for the worse as far as the Russian emigration was concerned. The Great Depression, the rise of fascism, the division of Europe into competing blocs, and the resulting threat of war, accentuated the divisions within the emigration. Émigré organizations split into ever smaller fragments as personal animosities and ambitions grew ever greater. Years of economic deprivation and failed hopes had created a general climate of disillusionment which those with axes to grind were able to exploit in order to cause trouble. This process affected ROVS as much as any other émigré group, and during the 1930s the organization experienced a series of crises and scandals, which left it intact but severely weakened.

In part the divisions which developed among émigrés were a result of the changing situation inside the Soviet Union. From 1929 on, the Soviet regime lurched from crisis to crisis, especially during Stalin's struggle against the peasantry in the years 1929–33. The situation inside the Soviet Union was well known to those émigrés who chose to pay attention, as matters such as the terrible famine in Ukraine in 1932/3 were well reported in the émigré press.[1] This encouraged some émigrés to believe that an opportunity had at last come to topple the communist regime. Fear that this opportunity would be lost prompted an impatient desire to take up immediate 'direct action' against the Bolsheviks. Other émigrés, however, observed the increasing conservatism of Stalin's regime, in which revolutionary values appeared to be jettisoned for more traditional ones, and interpreted this as a sign that the communist regime was evolving in a favourable direction. They therefore turned from being enemies of the regime into passive, and in some cases even active, supporters of it.

Outside the Soviet Union the most crucial development was the Nazi seizure of power in Germany. In response to the Nazi threat some European countries such as France and Czechoslovakia, both with large émigré communities, sought alliances with the Soviet Union, which now emerged from its previous diplomatic isolation. In the early 1930s the few

[1] e.g. an article entitled 'Golod v Rossii', in *Russkii Golos*, 82 (30 Oct. 1932).

countries which had held out against giving diplomatic recognition to the Soviet regime, such as the United States, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia, finally gave in and recognized it. This had a terrible effect on émigrés' morale as it undermined their hopes of finding allies against the Soviets. In addition, it became harder and harder for anti-Soviet organizations to continue their work unmolested as Soviet diplomats put pressure on their new allies to curb their activities. Meanwhile in Germany, ROVS found itself under continuous threat of being closed down by the Nazi authorities who suspected it of being pro-French. As the world split into two opposing blocs, émigrés were obliged to bend in different ways in different countries in order to remain unmolested by the local authorities. This made it very difficult for them to retain their unity.

Another factor undermining the emigration was the simple passage of time. By the mid-1930s many of the more charismatic White leaders, such as Wrangel and Kutepov, were dead. Years of exile had also undermined émigrés' morale. Continual disappointments eroded faith in the cause, while poverty and deprivation ate at men's nerves and undermined their patience and sense of proportion. It required only a small spark to set off major quarrels. These processes were further accentuated by the Great Depression, which had a catastrophic effect on the lives of émigrés. Many lost their jobs, especially because some European nations, seeking to protect their own citizens from the effects of the depression, passed discriminatory laws restricting the labour rights of refugees. Russians in Bulgaria were particularly badly hit. A typical report of the situation was sent from Bulgaria in February 1930:

> From 3 February the factories in Sliven, because of the change to a 3-day working week, will be reducing workers' salaries by 20 per cent . . . which will leave us—Russians—in a very difficult position . . . If the situation does not improve, they will close the factories. We are condemned to death by starvation, for we have no reserves for a 'rainy day'.[2]

In 1931 the situation worsened as the Bulgarian government brought in legislation restricting the rights of non-Bulgarians to hold jobs. In March 1932, for instance, the Bulgarian Ministry of Labour asked a factory in Plachkovski for a list of its workers. On discovering that fifty Russians were working there it ordered that ten of them be dismissed immediately and gave the remainder until June to leave.[3] Similarly, in

[2] BAR, ROVS, Box 6, Folder '1 Armeiskii Korpus, 1930–1933' (*Informatsionnyi List Alekseevskogo Pekhotnogo Polka*, 16 Aug. 1932).

[3] BAR, ROVS, Box 4, Folder 'Central Office (7)' (Report, Voennyi Chinovnik Poltoratskii to Stogov, 1 Feb. 1930).

April 1932, government inspectors visiting a sugar factory in Gorno-Orekhovitsa demanded that eleven Russian workers be dismissed. The eleven applied for Bulgarian citizenship as the only means of keeping their jobs.[4] By 1935 only one in three Russians in Bulgaria had full-time work.[5]

The situation was not much better in other countries. In Luxembourg, where the Gallipoliitsy shared a hostel, conditions were described as 'terrible'.[6] Between 1930 and 1937 the number of Russians employed at the Renault factory in Billancourt in France fell from 8,000 to 300 as the result of laws discriminating against immigrants.[7] As Colonel Matsylev noted in November 1934, 'Our position is becoming worse with every month. Unemployment has increased significantly since autumn. In November the Renault and Citroen factories reduced the number of workers significantly, dismissing foreigners and Russians first of all, so that many of us have lost our jobs.'[8] In Czechoslovakia an unemployed member of the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo* commented that when applying for jobs, 'I often hear the reply "You are a foreigner, why don't you go back to Russia?" '[9]

From 1932 to 1934 many émigrés considered leaving Europe to go to Paraguay, where they hoped that they could build a better life. The first Russian to go was a former senior officer in Wrangel's Russian Army, General Ivan Beliaev. Beliaev arrived in Paraguay in 1924, and soon acquired a reputation as an explorer and anthropologist. He was extremely sympathetic to the plight of the native people, and his studies of the culture of the indigenous people of the Chaco region broke new ground.[10] In 1932 Paraguay was attacked by neighbouring Bolivia, and Beliaev recruited Russians to serve in the Paraguayan army. The Chaco War of 1932–5 was won by Paraguay, and up to eighty Russians served on

[4] BAR, ROVS, Box 6, Folder '1 Armeiskii Korpus, 1930–1933' (*Informatsionnyi List Alekseevskogo Pekhotnogo Polka*, no. 4, 25 Apr. 1932).

[5] J. A. Hutchins, *The Wrangel Refugees: A Study of General Baron Peter N. Wrangel's Defeated White Russian Forces, both Military and Civilian, in Exile*, MA thesis (Louisville, Tex., 1972), 129.

[6] *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev*, 12 (15 June 1934), 22.

[7] Hutchins, *Wrangel Refugees*, 140.

[8] BAR, ROVS, Box 86, Folder 'Correspondence, Zinkevich to Matsylev, 1934–1936' (Letter, Matsylev to Zinkevich, 9 Nov. 1934).

[9] GARF, f. 5759, o. 1, d. 64 (Letter, D. Stetsenko to the directorate of the Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo, 2 Oct. 1937).

[10] Beliaev's life is described in B. F. Martynov, *Paragvaiskii Miklukho-Maklai: povest' o generale Beliaeve* (Moscow, 1993).

the Paraguayan side.[11] Buoyed by success, Beliaev hoped to attract more Russians into the country to establish agricultural colonies, where Russian culture could be preserved until the Soviet regime collapsed and the Russians could return home. In 1934 something akin to a 'Paraguay fever' swept the Russian émigré community in Europe, and several thousand Russians emigrated to Paraguay. The agricultural colonies failed and most of the Russians left Paraguay to live in other South American countries.[12] But the fact that so many Russians were willing to give the country a try suggests that their conditions of life in Europe were very bleak indeed.

Back in its headquarters in Paris, ROVS was weakened by a lack of strong leadership. By now in his mid-sixties, and in ill health, General Miller had many positive qualities, but he also had certain weaknesses which made him unable to cope with the emerging crisis. A Guards cavalry officer, he had served much of his career as a military attaché, in Brussels, the Hague, and Rome. He was well-educated, erudite, spoke several languages, and his diplomatic experience made him well-suited to many of the tasks required of a leader in exile. Miller believed in the cause and stayed at his post, despite his failing health, because of a genuine sense of duty, which was recognized by those around him.[13] Miller's weakness was that he was a micro-manager, who insisted on doing everything himself, did not know how to delegate, and could not distinguish between trivial and truly important matters.[14] He was also terribly indecisive. Whereas Wrangel perpetually sought confrontation and brushed his opponents aside, Miller always sought compromise. As Wrangel noted, he was afraid of clear, definite decisions.[15] By attempting to bring people together he all too often succeeded only in dragging out their quarrels until they finally erupted into something dramatic. In the worsening situation of the 1930s ROVS desperately needed decisive leadership, but this was to be noticeable only by its absence.

By the early 1930s the external environment had turned the Russian

[11] *Russkii Golos*, 150 (18 Feb. 1934), 2. *Chasovoi*, nos 135/6, 143, 174, & 176 (Oct. 1934–Oct. 1936).

[12] M. Karateev, *Po sledam konkvistadorov: istoriia russkikh kolonistov v tropicheskikh lesakh Paragvaia* (Buenos Aires, 1972).

[13] HIA, WA, Box 146, File 32, pp. 51–2 (Letter, Wrangel to Shatilov, 1 Feb. 1926); Box 144, File 26, 1166–71 (Letter, Shatilov to Wrangel, 30 Dec. 1923). BAR, ROVS, Box 65, Folder 'Correspondence, 1936, IV Otdel (2)' (Letter, Barbovich to Miller, 23 Nov. 1936).

[14] P. N. Shatilov, 'Memoirs', 1284, 1746.

[15] HIA, WA, Box 144, File 26, 1196–1199 (Letter, Wrangel to Shatilov, no. 1464/s, 18 Jan. 1924).

emigration into tinder which only required a small spark to burst into flames. This spark was provided by the ideology of 'activism', which was to prove one of the most divisive influences on the military emigration in the second decade of its exile. Activism emphasized the carrying out of direct action against the Soviets, be it terrorism, conspiratorial work on the lines of setting up revolutionary cells, or propaganda and subversion. To the 'activists' this was the main purpose of the Russian emigration's existence. They valued action over philosophy, deed over word. Ivan Il'in noted that 'The White is a man of will and deed, not of word.'[16] Action required a moral meaning all of its own. As the commander of the Drozdovskii Regiment, Major General Anton Turkul said, 'The White idea is action itself; action, struggle, with unavoidable victims and exploits. The White idea is the forging of strong people in struggle, the affirmation of Russia and its life in struggle, in an undying surge of will, in indisputable action.'[17] Few of the proponents of activism ever thought much about what they were acting for. Action itself was the purpose.

ROVS endeavoured to carry out 'active work' against the Soviets in the 1930s, but such work was very expensive, and without foreign backers ROVS's sources of finance were limited. Contributions to its fighting fund, the FSR, fell dramatically in the early 1930s, partly because the economic depression reduced émigrés' salaries, and partly because of increasing scepticism about the effectiveness of the work undertaken with the fund's money.[18] In such circumstances achieving anything was very difficult. Making the task even more problematic were the persistent activities of Soviet agents. The paranoia of Russian émigrés was fully justified. The Soviet secret services continued to put a great effort into infiltrating émigré organizations, and of all these ROVS was the prime target.

Two Soviet agents in particular caused immense damage to ROVS in the 1930s. One of these was Sergei Tretiakov, a former industrialist who had served as a minister in Kolchak's White government in Siberia. Once wealthy, by 1930 Tretiakov had fallen on hard times, and he agreed to spy for the Soviets in return for money. Unfortunately for ROVS, Tretiakov was their landlord, owning the building in Paris where the ROVS Central Directorate had its offices. In January 1934, Tretiakov, who lived in the

[16] *Vestnik Gallipolitsev: Trekhletie Obshchestva Gallipolitsev (1921–1924)*, 11 (Nov. 1924), 11.

[17] A. V. Turkul, *Drozdovtsy v ogne* (Leningrad, 1991), 18.

[18] BAR, ROVS, Box 2, Folder 'Correspondence, Miller to Shatilov' (Letter, Miller to Shatilov, 11 Nov. 1932).

apartment above the ROVS office, installed a microphone there, and from then on eavesdropped regularly on the conversations below.[19] The second agent was the commanding officer of the Kornilov Shock Regiment Major General Nikolai Skoblin. Having risen rapidly through the ranks during the civil war, Skoblin was only 26 years old at the time of the evacuation of the Crimea. He was completely under the thumb of his wife, a popular singer Nadezhda Plevitskaia, to the extent that he was mockingly known as 'General Plevitskii'. Plevitskaia had expensive tastes and missed the fame and fortune she had enjoyed in Russia, where she had been one of the country's most famous entertainers. After being approached by a Soviet agent in September 1930, Plevitskaia prevailed on her husband to work for the Soviets in return for money.[20] Skoblin was given the task of sabotaging the secret work of ROVS, and was to prove even more disruptive than Tretiakov.

After Kutepov's death, General Miller set up a small security organization, headed by General Globachev, who had formerly commanded the Russian Army's security service. Globachev's role was to inform ROVS leaders of any persons in the Russian emigration who were engaged in suspicious activities. Miller hoped that this would protect ROVS from further provocations such as the Trust. In 1933, as ROVS's financial position worsened, General Abramov recommended that Globachev's organization be disbanded and its tasks handed over to the Inner Line. At first Miller refused, but in 1935 he finally took Abramov's advice and dismissed Globachev in order to save money.[21] Although this was unwise, it is unlikely that the move actually hurt ROVS's security much since Globachev had in any case failed to identify the spies in ROVS's ranks.

Kutepov's failure to achieve any significant results with his terrorist campaign convinced Miller that terrorism should be abandoned. He agreed that ROVS should continue to work inside the Soviet Union, but insisted that this work should concentrate on intelligence-gathering and establishing conspiratorial cells.[22] This decision created some dissatisfaction. The proponents of activism wanted not only intelligence gathering but also headline-grabbing terrorist actions. As no such actions were

[19] L. Mlechin, 'A Minister in Emigration', *New Times*, 19 (1990), 40–3.

[20] L. Mikhailov, 'General daet soglasie', *Nedelia*, no. 48, 11.

[21] For comments on Globachev's secret work, see BAR, ROVS, Box 12 (Letters, Miller to Abramov, 17 March, 1 May, 13 June 1933); also Box 63 (Letter, Kussonskii to Abramov, 22 Feb. 1937).

[22] BAR, ROVS, Box 134, Folder 'Memoranda, 1930–1933' (Memo, *Sovershenno sekretno*, no date given); HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection (Zapiska no. 103, General Miller, 28 Nov. 1936).

being planned, their anger and impatience with ROVS's leaders increased.

Miller appointed General-of-Cavalry A. M. Dragomirov to command ROVS's underground campaign. Dragomirov in turn delegated most of the work to Major General V. G. Kharzhevskii, who was the commander of the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo* in Czechoslovakia. Kharzhevskii endeavoured to send men into Russia through Rumania, using a Colonel Zheltkovskii as his agent. Two members of the NSNP were sent into Russia in this way in November 1933. Messages were received from them for a while, but then ceased. In summer 1934 another group was sent from Rumania, but was captured by the Soviets who had been warned in advance by Tretiakov.[23] The failure of the Rumanian line of operations led to a search for an alternative, and efforts were made to send agents into the USSR via Finland.[24] Contact was established with the Finnish military general staff in order to facilitate operations, but unfortunately Miller chose Skoblin as his go-between with the Finns, and when in June 1934 three agents crossed the Finnish border, the Soviets were waiting for them, as Skoblin had betrayed the operation. The agents managed to escape back over the border, but their mission was aborted.[25] In summer 1936, the Finnish government, suspecting that ROVS was infiltrated by the Soviets, informed ROVS that it would no longer co-operate with it, nor allow it to carry out underground operations from Finnish soil.[26] With this ROVS's last serious efforts to penetrate the USSR came to an end. Captain Foss, still organizing Inner Line activities in Bulgaria, may have succeeded in sending several agents into Russia in the mid- and late 1930s, but the stories of their adventures cannot be confirmed.[27]

ROVS had been warned about Skoblin. In 1932 a Colonel Fedoseenko approached Miller and told him that he had allowed himself to be recruited by the Soviet secret services, through whom he had learnt that

[23] BAR, ROVS, Box 63, Folder 'Correspondence, 1937, III Otdel' (Circular, *Ispolnitel'noe Biuro Soveta NTSNP*, no. 205, 9 Mar. 1936); Box 65, Folder 'Correspondence, 1936, IV Otdel' (Letter, Barbovich to Miller, 12 March 1936); Leonid Mlechin, *Set' Moskva—OGPU—Parizh* (Moscow, 1991), 162–3.

[24] BAR, ROVS, Box 12, Folder 'Correspondence, Dobrovol'skii to Miller' (Letters, Dobrovol'skii to Miller, 25 May 1933; Miller to Dobrovol'skii, no. 492, 5 July 1933 and no. 613, 27 Aug. 1933).

[25] B. Prianishnikov, *Nezrimaia pautina* (Silver Spring, Md., Private Edition, 1979), 231–2.

[26] BAR, ROVS, Box 2, Folder 'Miller, E. K. to Trubetskoi, S. E.' (Letter, Miller to Trubetskoi, 3 Aug. 1936).

[27] P. Butkov, *Our Fight for Russia* (Cormack, NY, 1998), 26; *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev*, 4 (15 Nov. 1933), 6–7 and 5 (15 Dec. 1933), 2–3.

Skoblin was also a Soviet agent. Miller dismissed his report, and in 1935 Fedoseenko published his allegations in the newspaper *Vozrozhdenie*. He was not believed. Most observers felt that his story was a provocation designed to smear one of ROVS's more active generals.[28] Skoblin demanded that a court of honour meet to determine the truth of the accusations, and in July 1935 the court acquitted him of all charges.[29] Skoblin was therefore able to paint himself as a victim of provocation, and this made it all the more difficult in the future for accusations against him to be heard.

Meanwhile, the complete failure of ROVS's underground campaign was causing considerable discontent. In May 1932 V. V. Orekhov sent a report to Miller in which he commented that the lack of successful 'active work' was the prime cause of falling morale among ROVS members.[30] Orekhov said that he was obliged to tell the truth, and 'the truth is TERRIBLE'. As editor of *Chasovoi* he said that he received many letters from ROVS members complaining that active struggle had ceased. Members simply did not believe assertions that it was continuing, as there was no proof that this was the case. As a result members were leaving ROVS: 'we are gradually but surely heading for extinction.'[31]

It is hard to tell how deep such feelings went. It would appear that activism and dissatisfaction with the lack of it was primarily a characteristic of the younger generation of ROVS members, especially the Gallipoliitsy. There was little evidence of it among other groups in ROVS, such as Cossacks and First World War veterans. Squadron Commander A. N. Komorovskii, who was secretary of the ROVS 4th department, felt that to some degree activism was a pretext used by troublemakers to cause disruption.[32] In Bulgaria in 1937, the chief of staff of the Don Corps, Colonel Iasevich, attacked the supporters of activism, but noted happily that they were a small minority.[33] They were, however, a noisy and prominent minority. There were enough of them to cause serious trouble. At a

[28] M. Grey, *Le général meurt à minuit: l'enlèvement des généraux Koutiepov (1930) et Miller (1937)* (Paris, 1981), 173–7.

[29] BAR, ROVS, Box 81 (Resolution of the court of honour for generals on the case of General Skoblin).

[30] HIA, Chasovoi Archive, Box 1 (Letter, Orekhov to Miller, 15 May 1932).

[31] BAR, ROVS, Box 162, Folder 'Officers' Unions, 1924–1929' (Letter, Orekhov to Stogov, 12 Sept. 1933).

[32] BAR, ROVS, Box 63, Folder 'Correspondence, 1934, III Otdel' (Letter, Komorovskii to Zinkevich, no. 209/2, 21 June 1934).

[33] Ibid. Folder 'Correspondence, 1937, III Otdel' (Letter, Iasevich to Kussonskii, 8 Sept. 1937).

meeting with General Miller the ROVS department heads reported that members were losing faith in the route taken by ROVS, that more and more voices could be heard complaining about the lack of active work, and that ROVS had no successes to show, whereas the Soviets did.[34] General Barbovich noted that unhappiness with the absence of 'real work' 'has seized a significant part of the officer corps'.[35]

The ideology of activism contributed to a bitter dispute which erupted among ROVS members in Czechoslovakia in 1932. At the centre of this dispute were Kharzhevskii, who was the head of the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo*, and General-of-Infantry N. A. Khodorovich, who commanded the ROVS 6th department. These two men represented two entirely different strands of ROVS's membership. Born in 1857, Khodorovich was one of the most senior members of the old Imperial Army, having served in the First World War as commander of the Kiev Military District.[36] Kharzhevskii was thirty-five years younger than Khodorovich. He joined the army as a reserve NCO in 1914, and within six years had risen to the rank of major general, aged only 28.[37] Khodorovich and Kharzhevskii represented completely different generations and different modes of thinking.

There were two Russian military organizations in Czechoslovakia—the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo* and the Union of Great War Veterans, SUVV—which were both subordinated to Khodorovich. Relations between the *Zemliachestvo* and the SUVV were never good. The Gallipoliitsy complained that the SUVV had accepted members who had been expelled from the *Zemliachestvo*, while the SUVV complained that the Gallipoliitsy refused to participate in joint projects such as the creation of a joint officers' mess. Khodorovich was accused of taking the side of the SUVV in these disputes, and of interfering in the internal affairs of both organizations.[38] In protest at Khodorovich's behaviour, Kharzhevskii asked to be relieved of his post.

Miller refused Kharzhevskii's request, but did nothing to resolve the

[34] BAR, ROVS, Box 162, Folder 'Officers' Unions, (1930s)' (Report of meeting of commanders of 1st, 3rd, and 4th Departments with the President of ROVS).

[35] BAR, ROVS, Box 12, Folder 'Correspondence, Barbovich to Miller' (Letter, Barbovich to Miller, no. 82/s, 5 June 1933).

[36] N. Rutych, *Biograficheskii spravochnik vysshikh chinov Dobrovol'cheskoi Armii i Vooruzhennykh Sil Iuzhnoi Rossii* (Moscow, 1997), 255.

[37] Ibid: 253–4.

[38] GARF, f. 5797, o. 1, d. 5, l. 1–8 (*Pokazanie General Bigaeva*, 21 July 1932). BAR, ROVS, Box 6, Folder '1 Armeiskii Korpus, 1930–1933' (Letters, Kharzhevskii to Vitkovskii, no. 293, 6 May 1931 and Khodorovich to Stogov, 29 May 1931).

tensions in Czechoslovakia which simmered on from 1930 to 1932. In the mean time some Gallipoliitsy began a deliberate campaign to discredit Khodorovich. He was attacked for not understanding the Gallipoli spirit and for being opposed to activism. Khodorovich had opposed putting all the proceeds of the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo*'s annual ball into the FSR, and insisted that half be put aside to help the unemployed. This proved, the Gallipoliitsy maintained, that he was a mortal enemy of activism, whereas they felt that 'the whole sense of the White idea and the Gallipoli psychology consists of supporting the spirit of activism.'[39]

In October 1931 the French newspaper *Humanité* revealed that Kharzhevskii was running ROVS's underground operations against the Soviet Union. Miller decided that Kharzhevskii could no longer continue as head of the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo*, because there should be no official link between ROVS and underground anti-Soviet activity. ROVS had to be able to deny that it was involved in such activity, because if an official link existed foreign governments might shut ROVS down entirely.[40] Kharzhevskii, however, did not see it this way, and he wished to keep his position as head of the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo*. On 24 March 1932 he finally sent in a letter of resignation, but made it clear that he was doing so under duress.[41] Matters now came to a head.

Kharzhevskii was very popular among the Zemliachestvo's members. His resignation was greeted by them with dismay.[42] On 28 March, a group of Gallipoliitsy met in Prague and sent a letter of protest to their notional superior, the commander of the First Army Corps, General Vitkovskii, saying that Kharzhevskii's departure was a capitulation to the Bolshevik press, that he was irreplaceable, and that Khodorovich 'lacked any pathos of struggle'.[43] Despite this protest, on 1 May 1932 Miller issued an order relieving Kharzhevskii of command of the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo*, which was to be temporarily subordinated to Khodorovich

[39] BAR, ROVS, Box 12. Folder 'Correspondence, Abramov to Miller' (Letter, Miller to Abramov, no. 527, 11 Aug. 1932).

[40] BAR, ROVS, Box 2, Folder 'Miller, E. K. to Vitkovskii, V. K.' (Letter, Miller to Vitkovskii, 5 Apr. 1932).

[41] BAR, ROVS, Box 7, Folder 'Correspondence, Czech Group, 1932' (Letter, Kharzhevskii to Miller, 24 Mar. 1932).

[42] GARF, f. 5759, o. 1, d. 24, l. 2 (Letter, Lieutenant Vasnetsov to General Vitkovskii, 22 Mar. 1932).

[43] BAR, ROVS, Box 7 (Report, Lieutenant Colonel Grigor'ev to Vitkovskii, 30 Mar. 1930). GARF, f. 5759, o. 1, d. 24, l. 3–4 (*Protokol soveshchaniia raionnykh nachal'nikov grupp i rukovoditelei Gallipoliiskogo Zemliachestva*, 28 Mar. 1932).

until such time as a successor was appointed.[44] In response the Gallipoliitsy mutinied. On 22 May the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo* in Brno voted to refuse to subordinate itself to Khodorovich. Other branches of the Zemliachestvo followed suit. The Gallipoliitsy claimed that the cause of their action was ideological differences with Khodorovich on the issue of activism, which made subordination to him impossible. As one officer commented, 'The leadership by General Khodorovich of our organizations, and our subordination to him, symbolize a rejection of the continuation of our White sacrificial Struggle.'[45]

Miller sent Generals Arkhangel'skii and Zinkevich to Prague to report on the situation and take temporary command there. As a result of their reports, he settled on a compromise solution. Kharzhevskii was not restored to his command, but Khodorovich was also relieved of his post. The ROVS 6th department was disbanded and turned into a sub-department of the 1st department, under the command of a naval officer, Captain Podgornyi. An instruction was published issuing a severe reprimand to the members of the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo*.[46] Order was restored. Of itself it was a fairly insignificant incident, but it symbolized the manner in which émigré communities were being torn apart by bitter quarrels.

As usual, the universal opinion seemed to be, without any evidence, that Bolshevik *provocateurs* lay behind the whole incident. Miller himself said as much in a number of letters.[47] A member of the SUVV directorate in Prague told General Arkhangel'skii that Captain Lupenko, a close colleague of Kharzhevskii, had been spreading rumours discrediting Khodorovich and was acting as an unconscious weapon of agents of the GPU. Captain G. A. Orlov, who later became head of the Prague detachment of the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo*, was named as the most likely

[44] BAR, ROVS, Box 2, Folder '1 Armeiskii Korpus to 1 Otdel, 1931–1932' (Order, General Vitkovskii, no. 5, 1 May 1932).

[45] GARF, f. 5759, o. 1, d. 4, l. 17–18 (*Protokol soveshchaniia v Brno*, 22 May 1932). BAR, ROVS, Box 7, Folder 'Czech Group, 1932', (Letters, Colonel Almendinger to Vitkovskii, 8 June 1932 and Lieutenant Shchukin to Vitkovskii, 9 June 1932).

[46] BAR, ROVS, Box 6, Folder '1 Armeiskii Korpus, 1930–1933' (Order to 1st Army Corps, General Vitkovskii, no. 8, 23 Aug. 1932).

[47] BAR, ROVS, Box 12, Folder 'Correspondence, Abramov to Miller' (Letter, Miller to Abramov, no. 419, 20 June 1932). For similar sentiments see Box 12, Folder 'A. to Miller, E. K.' (Letter, Miller to K. D. Asepeva) and Box 16, Folder 'Correspondence, Zinkevich to Miller' (Letter, Miller to Zinkevich, no. 570, 1 Aug. 1932).

such agent.[48] General Zinkevich dismissed that as pure fantasy,[49] but it is indicative of the paranoid mind-set of émigrés by the early 1930s. Such attitudes made it very difficult to come to sensible conclusions as to what had gone wrong and what should be done to put it right.

Within two years crisis again broke out in Czechoslovakia, and once again paranoia about Soviet agents played a part. Visiting Berlin in March 1934, the head of the Prague branch of the SUVV, Colonel Tilli, made a speech to a Russian fascist group. News of this reached the Czech socialist press, which began to attack ROVS for being in league with Nazi Germany. A short while later, Tilli gave a speech in Prague about the international crisis in the Far East in which he openly sided with Japan, despite strict instructions from Captain Podgornyi to remain neutral. Tilli's speech was reported in *Poslednie Novosti* and the Czech press, and the Czech government threatened to close down Russian military organizations. As a result Tilli was reprimanded by Podgornyi and also by Kharzhevskii, who although no longer holding any official position was still the unofficial leader of the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo*.[50] Tilli responded by complaining that Kharzhevskii had reported him to the Czech police as a fascist, and in an official letter called Kharzhevskii a scoundrel and a slanderer.[51] Tilli was egged on by several officers who had been expelled from the *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo*, and wanted revenge on Kharzhevskii. One of these, Second Lieutenant Skalon, pulled a gun on Captain Orlov. In June 1934, Tilli then accused another Zemliachestvo member, Captain Gepner, of being a Bolshevik agent. The overall commander of the SUVV, Colonel Bigaev, therefore decided to get rid of Tilli and asked him to resign. Tilli refused to do so, however, and instead issued an order stating that the Prague branch of the SUVV would no longer accept the authority of Bigaev and Podgornyi.[52] The directorate of the Prague branch passed a resolution in support of him, and asked him to remain in his post.[53]

At this point the ubiquitous accusations of Bolshevik provocation

[48] BAR, ROVS, Box 16, Folder 'Correspondence, Zinkevich to Miller' (Report, Volunteer Khrennikov to Arkhangel'skii, 15 July 1932).

[49] Ibid. (Letter, Zinkevich to Miller, 6 Sept. 1932).

[50] BAR, ROVS, Box 67, Folder 'Correspondence, 1934, VI Otdel' (Report, Podgornyi to Erdeli, no. 294, 7 Sept. 1934).

[51] Ibid. (Letter, Khodorovich to Miller, 18 June 1934).

[52] HIA, Nicolaevsky Collection, Box 648, File 2 (Anonymous letter *to Poslednie Novosti*, entitled 'Krisis ROVSa: pis'mo iz Praga').

[53] BAR, ROVS, Box 67, Folder 'Correspondence, 1934, VI Otdel' (Resolution of Directorate of SUVV in Prague, 24 Aug. 1934).

cropped up. Documents were passed to Podgornyi showing that in Constantinople in 1922 Tilli had been in contact with a well-known Soviet agent, Anisimov. Confronted by this evidence, Tilli did not deny it, but he claimed that he had been acting on the instructions of General Globachev, who was Wrangel's security chief.[54] GPU reports written in 1922 confirm that Tilli was indeed one of Anisimov's agents,[55] but it is impossible to say whether he was playing a double game. Whatever the truth, the mud stuck, and Podgornyi decided that Tilli had been acting deliberately on instructions from the Soviets in order to discredit ROVS. He recommended that the SUVV in Prague, which at the time had 160 members, be expelled from ROVS.[56] Miller confirmed this decision, expelled the SUVV, and set up an alternative organization, the Russian Military Union (*Russkii Voennyi Soiuz*), to replace it.[57] By the end of 1934 over half the SUVV's members had left to join the new organization, and so rejoin ROVS, which therefore emerged from the split relatively intact. ROVS's reputation was damaged, but it proved fairly resilient in surviving the crisis. The incident revealed the degree to which years of exile had so strained everyone's nerves that personal disputes soon blew out of control. It also revealed once again the debilitating effect that the action of Soviet agents had on the emigration, souring émigrés' relations and breeding intense mutual suspicion among them.

Czechoslovakia was not the only country in which divisions developed. In 1936, Miller's assistant General Kussonskii complained that even in Australia, where ROVS had only forty members spread out over thousands of miles, splits had somehow emerged![58] The philosophy of activism produced particularly severe divisions among ROVS members in France. An important role in this was played by Skoblin. Aware that the spirit of activism was making ROVS members dissatisfied with their leaders, Skoblin became a forthright promoter of the need for 'direct action', and sought to instil its spirit into those around him. He knew that this would create desires that could not be fulfilled, and would therefore bring dissent into ROVS's ranks. Rather than do too much of this himself, and thereby arouse people's suspicions, he chose instead to act through an

[54] Ibid. (*Pokazanie Generala-ot-Infanterii N. N. Shillinga*, 3 Sept. 1934).

[55] *Russkaia voennaia emigratsiia*, Book 2, 215, 325, 327.

[56] BAR, ROVS, Box 67, Folder 'Correspondence, 1934, VI Otdel' (Report, Podgornyi to Erdeli, no. 294, 7 Sept. 1934).

[57] BAR, ROVS, Box 64, Folder 'Correspondence, 1934, IV Otdel (1)' (Orders, General Miller, no. 30, 7 Nov. 1934; no. 33, 24 Nov. 1934).

[58] BAR, ROVS, Box 63, Folder 'Correspondence, 1936, II Otdel' (Letter, Kussonskii to von Lampe, 21 Mar. 1936).

unwitting agent, General Turkul. Like Skoblin and Kharzhevskii, Turkul was very young for his rank, having been only 27 years old in November 1920. An impatient, immensely arrogant firebrand, Turkul brought disruption with him wherever he went, but he was very popular with the troops of his own regiment. He was the epitome of the spirit of activism, rarely thinking beyond the idea of action to anything else, and not overly particular in his morals. He was associated with numerous stories of financial improprieties, and seems to have been at best untrustworthy, at worst actively dishonest. Wrangel and his staff had to restrain him several times in the early 1920s for his excessive zeal.[59]

Skoblin goaded Turkul on, aware that if anyone could disrupt ROVS, it was Turkul. He told Turkul that Miller was speaking against him in private, and told Miller of criticisms made about him by Turkul.[60] Skoblin's problem was that Turkul lived in Bulgaria, and to have the maximum impact he needed to be in Paris at ROVS's centre. He therefore decided to bring Turkul to Paris, and the Soviets arranged to get him a job at a garage there. Turkul did not know how his employment was provided, and was completely duped into playing the role expected of him while being totally unaware that he was being used by the Soviets. In November 1931 he left Bulgaria and moved to France. Abramov warned Miller that his arrival would mean trouble,[61] and indeed Turkul soon lived up to expectations.

In May 1932, together with Generals Skoblin, Peshnia, and Fok, Turkul wrote to Miller demanding a renewal of active work inside the USSR.[62] He also began to demand changes to bring younger faces to the front and get rid of older officers opposed to the spirit of activism. With Skoblin he started to intrigue to get rid of the head of the Society of Gallipolians, General Rep'ev.[63] These episodes convinced Miller that Turkul was being manipulated by Bolshevik *provocateurs*,[64] but he felt unable to dismiss him because of his popularity and the scandal and possible split that any dismissal of him would cause.

[59] HIA, WA, Box 142, File 19, 274 (Letter, Ronzhin to Vitkovskii, 27 May 1922); Box 152, File 48, pp. 18–19 (Order no. 163, General Wrangel, 27 Apr. 1921); HIA Kussonskii Collection, Box 5, File 18 (Report, Major General Ostrovskii, no. 30, 14 Aug. 1922).

[60] *Signal*, 16 (1 Oct. 1937), 1.

[61] BAR, ROVS, Box 12, Folder 'Correspondence, Abramov to Miller' (Letter, Miller to Abramov, 13 Aug. 1932).

[62] Prianishnikov, *Nezrimaia pautina*, 227.

[63] BAR, ROVS, Box 12, Folder 'Correspondence, Abramov to Miller' (Letter, Miller to Abramov, 1 Sept. 1932).

[64] BAR, ROVS, Box 15, Folder 'Correspondence, Shatilov to Miller' (Letter, Miller to Shatilov, no. 511, 7 Aug. 1932).

Over the next two years Turkul continued to whip up dissatisfaction among the Gallipoliitsy in France, complaining endlessly about the lack of 'action'. Skoblin stood aside and let Turkul do the damage. All went as Skoblin planned. As the years passed and ROVS's secret work still brought no success, dissatisfaction grew ever stronger. By 1934 a sense of crisis had begun to pervade ROVS. 'We are living through a critical moment, a terrible period of falling morale and spirit', wrote one officer in March 1934.[65] Miller was sick and took a sabbatical that spring, which led to intense speculation that he would retire and produced some very public intriguing for his succession. At the same time ROVS was beginning to run out of money, the funds which had been provided by General Podtiagin in 1928 having nearly all been spent. There are stories that Miller invested the money in the financial empire of a notorious Swedish swindler, Ivan Krueger, who cheated many people of their fortunes before going bankrupt and shooting himself in March 1932.[66] There is, however, no evidence for this in the ROVS archive. It appears that Podtiagin's money was converted into gold dollars and stored in American banks for safe keeping, but as a result of the Depression the value of the dollar had fallen by about 40 per cent compared to the franc by 1935. This had a catastrophic effect on ROVS's finances[67] and in early 1935 Miller announced large cuts in the ROVS budget.

This announcement provoked what became known as the 'revolt of the marshals'. On 23 February 1935, General Vitkovskii appeared at Miller's office and informed him that fourteen unit commanders of the First Army Corps were outside and wished to see him. Miller let them in, whereupon they expressed a series of complaints about ROVS's failures, and demanded that the organization be restructured in order to revitalize it. In particular they demanded that ROVS intensify its political and underground work.[68] To stall them, Miller asked those present to produce a more detailed set of proposals, and agreed to create a commission to discuss them.[69] Unfortunately for Miller, who hoped to keep news of the 'revolt' secret, one of those present, probably Skoblin, leaked

[65] GARF, f. 5759, o. 1, d. 55, l. 23–4 (Letter, Dobrokhotov to Orekhov, 7 Mar. 1934).
[66] Grey, *Le général meurt*, 169.
[67] BAR, ROVS, Box 12 (Letters, Miller to Abramov, no. 365, 6 May 1933 and no. 452, 13 June 1933). Also BAR, ROVS, Box 63 (Letter, Kussonskii to von Lampe, 23 Oct. 1936).
[68] For a description of the 'revolt' by one of its participants, see BAR, ROVS, Box 86, Folder 'Correspondence, Zinkevich to Matsylev, 1934–1936' (Letter, Matsylev to Zinkevich, 27 Feb. 1935).
[69] BAR, ROVS, Box 164, Folder 'Proekt reorganizatsii' (Circular, Kussonskii to heads of departments, no. 145, 15 Mar. 1935).

details of what had happened to *Poslednie Novosti*, which gleefully seized on this evidence of dissent in ROVS's ranks. News of the divisions at the top of ROVS now spread to the entire emigration.

When the officers of the First Army Corps finally presented their detailed proposals, they were rejected by almost every senior officer in ROVS to whom they were sent for comments.[70] There was particular anger that a small group of officers had taken it upon themselves to speak in the name of the entire membership of ROVS. The 'praetorian methods' of the First Army Corps were unacceptable, wrote von Lampe.[71] Many commented that the basic assumption of those putting forward the proposals, namely that the morale of ROVS members had collapsed, was false. It might be true in Paris, but not elsewhere. In Yugoslavia, said General Barbovich, the authority of General Miller remained high among ROVS members, other émigrés, and the Yugoslav government.[72] In Bulgaria, wrote Dragomirov, the atmosphere was quite unlike that in Paris: 'here it is stronger, here people believe that the authority of the head of ROVS must be preserved no matter what.'[73] Even Colonel Matsylev, who had participated in the revolt, came to regret his involvement, and was obliged to admit that the mood in Paris was not representative. He wrote to Zinkevich that 'You are absolutely right that Paris is the nest out of which come all the rumours and intrigues . . . Both in the provinces and other countries the mood is undoubtedly incomparably better, and Paris cannot dictate its point of view.'[74] Backed by these comments, Miller was able to reject the proposals put to him, and reform of ROVS was indefinitely shelved.

Unhappy that the 'revolt of the marshals' had produced no results, Turkul now decided that the time had come to abandon non-predetermination. By adopting fascist-style slogans he hoped to gain financial and practical assistance from the rising powers of Nazi Germany, Italy, and Japan. In July 1936 he therefore set up a new military–political organization called the Russian National Union of War Veterans (*Russkii Natsional'nyi Soiuz Uchastnikov Voiny*). At the organization's opening meeting Turkul made a speech sharply critical of the leadership of ROVS and several days later an account of this speech was published in the

[70] Ibid. (*Proekt reorganizatsii tsentral'nogo upravleniia ROVSa*—final version).
[71] BAR, ROVS, Box 164 (Report, Gen. von Lampe, no. 187, 12 May 1935).
[72] Ibid. (Report, Gen. Barbovich, 24 May 1935).
[73] Ibid. (Letter, Dragomirov to Miller, 10 June 1935).
[74] BAR, ROVS, Box 86 (Letter, Matsylev to Zinkevich, 8 Mar. 1935).

newspaper *Vozrozhdenie*.[75] Miller had not been forewarned of this meeting, or of the plan to create a new organization, and he summoned Turkul to explain what he was doing. Miller told Turkul that he could not remain commander of the Drozdovskii Regiment and be in charge of a political organization, as a result of which Turkul handed in his resignation from ROVS. Therefore on 28 July 1936 Miller issued an order dismissing Turkul from ROVS at his own request, and sent out an explanatory circular to ROVS commanders, explaining this decision. In his circular he noted that if a senior ROVS commander was to lead a political organization with an alignment of the sort envisioned by Turkul, ROVS itself would face the risk of repression from the French authorities. It had to be made clear that any such political organization was not officially linked to ROVS.[76]

Miller told Turkul to hand over the command of the Drozdovskii Regiment to one of his subordinates, but Turkul refused to do so, declaring that he still considered himself to be regimental commander. The response of the regimental detachments was mixed. In France and Belgium resolutions were passed supporting Turkul; in Luxembourg, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria Turkul's instructions were ignored; in Yugoslavia the regiment was divided.[77] In fact, since moving to France Turkul had had little contact with the men of his regiment outside France, and so his declaration had no practical significance. Except in France and Belgium a split was avoided. ROVS proved to be very robust in its ability to survive divisions in its ranks such as those caused by Turkul and Tilli. Turkul's new organization put out a newspaper, *Signal*, but had little success. Few joined and many émigrés felt that the main loser in the whole incident was Turkul himself, as his reputation was badly damaged.[78] Skoblin's manipulation of him had been masterly.

Activism was meant to strengthen and revitalize the Russian emigration, to give it success in the one area that mattered most for many émigrés—the struggle against the Soviets. It had the opposite effect.

[75] BAR, ROVS, Box 6, Folder '1 Armeiskii Korpus, 1934–1936' (Minutes of meeting of senior commanders of the Paris branch of the 1st Department of ROVS, 16 Aug. 1936).

[76] Ibid.

[77] BAR, ROVS, Box 65, Folder 'Correspondence, 1936, IV Otdel' (Letter, Barbovich to Kussonskii, 11 Nov. 1936); Box 63, Folder 'Correspondence, 1936, III Otdel' (Letter, Kussonskii to Abramov, 12 Aug. 1936); Box 6, Folder '1 Armeiskii Korpus, 1934–1936' (Letter from unknown in Wiltz to Vitkovskii, 31 Aug. 1936); Box 86, Folder 'Correspondence, Zinkevich to Matsylev' (Letter, Zinkevich to Matsylev, 19 May 1938).

[78] BAR, ROVS, Box 86, Folder 'Correspondence, Zinkevich to Matsylev' (Letters, Matsylev to Zinkevich, 22 Oct. 1936 and Zinkevich to Matsylev, 25 Mar. 1937).

Instead of uniting the emigration, it created even greater dissent, and split it into even smaller pieces. The activists' dissatisfaction was perfectly understandable given the failure of ROVS's underground operations, but in their impatient demands for 'action' they never stopped to consider what the practical possibilities were, whether their plans had any chance of succeeding, or what sort of preparation was required to make them work. In screaming for 'direct action' they ignored the very real problems ROVS faced in trying to carry out such action. This played neatly into the hands of Soviet *provocateurs* such as Skoblin. All in all, the activists would have done well to have heeded a warning issued by Wrangel in 1927: 'We must warn against the "chattering activism" of that part of the press which summons people to "active struggle", "to action" without clear and definite possibilities. Such summonses, exciting hot heads in vain, result in inevitable disillusion, and push the gullible into the embrace of provocateurs.'[79]

[79] BAR, ROVS, Box 17, Folder 'Wrangel Headquarters (13)' (Circular, General Wrangel, no. 1883, 9 Dec. 1927).

13

ROVS Discredited

As the 1930s wore on, more and more problems were added to those that ROVS already faced. Bitter disputes over the still-active Inner Line and two dissident journalists, the brothers Boris and Ivan Solonevich, made it clear that by 1936 years of separation had created entirely different attitudes among ROVS members in the various countries of Europe. Meanwhile there was no let-up in the attacks by the Soviet secret services (by now known as the NKVD). Some very prominent traitors among the Whites were exposed in a catastrophic blaze of publicity in 1937 over yet another Soviet kidnapping, and ROVS never recovered from the damage to its reputation.

Many of the disputes which racked ROVS in the late 1930s concerned the Inner Line, which leaders of the NSNP, now known as the NTSNP, *Natsional'nyi Trudovoi Soiuz Novogo Pokoleniia* (National Labour Union of the New Generation) were convinced was continuing its efforts to infiltrate their organization and take over its leadership. In December 1935, the NTSNP leadership refused to let a Captain Voitekhovich who was a member of both ROVS and the NTSNP attend their congress in Paris. Voitekhovich belonged to the Inner Line and was known to have reported on the NTSNP's activities to it. As a result he was under investigation by the NTSNP hierarchy, which spread rumours that he was a traitor. This angered members of ROVS, who considered that their organization had been insulted by the accusations against one of its members.[1] Miller felt that the NTSNP had some justification for their actions, but they had acted insensitively and had ignored ROVS.[2] At any rate, ROVS–NTSNP relations began to be seriously strained.

On the night of 4–5 December 1935, three members of the Society of Gallipolians in Belgrade, Dr Linitskii, Captain Shklarev, and Mr Drakin, were arrested by the Yugoslav police in connection with a break-in at the house of the president of the NTSNP, V. M. Baidalakov. With them was

[1] BAR, ROVS, Box 63, Folder 'Correspondence, 1935, III Otdel' (Letter, Kussonskii to Abramov, 30 Dec. 1935).

[2] BAR, ROVS, Box 2, Folder 'Tsurikov, N. A. to Miller, E. K.' (Letter, Miller to Tsurikov, no. 159, 13 Mar. 1936).

arrested the secretary of the ROVS 4th Department, Squadron Commander A. N. Komorovskii. All four were charged with being Soviet agents.[3] The Yugoslav police discovered that Linitskii had a list of fourteen names, supposedly given to him by Komorovskii, of people who had entered the USSR with ROVS's help. It was clear that even if Komorovskii was not a Soviet agent, he was certainly guilty of carelessness in his choice of colleagues and of handing information over to people who did not justify the trust he had placed in them. NTSNP leaders claimed that they had warned ROVS about Linitskii and his colleagues, and that Komorovskii's actions proved that he must also have been in the pay of the Soviets. They were also convinced that Komorovskii was connected with the Inner Line, which they now came to believe was a Soviet provocation. They therefore decided to expose it, and in so doing they created a decisive split between ROVS and the NTSNP.

Miller set up a commission of inquiry under a prominent Russian émigré in Belgrade, Senator Tregubov, to investigate the events in Belgrade. The members of the NTSNP Executive Bureau sent Tregubov a long report, in which they laid the blame for what had happened on the Inner Line, and accused numerous prominent ROVS members of being Soviet agents. Their report claimed that the Inner Line had tried to poison two leading NTSNP members, M. A. Georgievskii and V. D. Poremskii, and that it was plotting against the leadership of both ROVS and the NTSNP. The report also claimed that General Kharzhevskii was a Soviet agent, as was Colonel Zheltkovskii, whom Kharzhevskii had used for his secret work in the Soviet Union.[4] The report contained much accurate information about the efforts of the Inner Line to infiltrate and take over the NTSNP, but in making broader accusations against respected ROVS members it went too far. The failure of ROVS's underground work was not due to the treachery of Kharzhevskii or Zheltkovskii, but to that of Skoblin and Tretiakov. The NTSNP were firing at the wrong targets, and in so doing they greatly antagonized ROVS members and made it harder for the more correct elements of their accusations to be treated seriously. They were also almost certainly wrong in regarding the Inner Line as a gigantic Soviet provocation. It is clear from the correspondence between Skoblin and his Soviet handlers that Captain Foss, the head of the Inner Line, was regarded as a dangerous

[3] *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipolitsev* (30 Jan. 1936), 1.

[4] BAR, ROVS, Box 63, Folder 'Correspondence, 1937, III Otdel' (Circular, Ispolnitel'noe Biuro Sovet NTSNP, no. 205, 9 Mar. 1936).

enemy by the Soviets.[5] However, the NTSNP was being swept along on a growing wave of paranoia, and lashed out at targets on all sides, unable to hit the right ones due to the lack of reliable information.

As relations between ROVS and the NTSNP deteriorated, some blamed one of the NTSNP's leaders, M. A. Georgievskii, for the emerging crisis.[6] Miller complained that Georgievskii wanted to pull all of ROVS's most active members into his organization and had focused on recruiting from ROVS rather than undertaking the more difficult work of attracting younger people. In their behaviour towards Voitekhovich, NTSNP leaders had shown an 'insulting' attitude towards ROVS. Their accusations against Komorovskii were not justified. The Inner Line, he said, was far smaller and less important than its accusers were claiming. The NTSNP was behaving like a hostile organization.[7]

Miller was by now regretting his decision to allow dual membership of ROVS and the NTSNP, and in April 1936 he issued a circular, which stated that in future, although he would still give permission to join the NTSNP, he would do so only in exceptional circumstances and as a general rule would not do so.[8] From Belgrade, General Barbovich wrote to Miller to complain that since the Komorovskii incident leaders of the NTSNP were taking an 'impermissible' attitude towards ROVS, attempting to weaken it by spreading tendentious facts and untrustworthy rumours, and criticizing ROVS's help to them.[9] 'From day to day it is becoming harder to work', Barbovich commented, 'our enemies are becoming braver and more insolent; all sort of intriguers and false patriots, directed by the experienced hands of the Bolsheviks, are carrying out an unceasing intrigue against ROVS.'[10]

The NTSNP continued to insist that Komorovskii was a Soviet agent and that ROVS was under the sway of a Bolshevik provocation, namely the Inner Line. In part this was a genuine belief, in part it may also have been a convenient pretext for some NTSNP leaders such as Georgievskii to assert their organization's independence and break free of ROVS. Within ROVS itself the Komorovskii incident and the accusations about

[5] Mlechin, *Set'–Moskva–OGPU–Parizh*, 120, 165.
[6] e.g. GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 62, l. 248 (Letter, Orekhov to von Lampe, 18 Oct. 1937).
[7] BAR, ROVS, Box 2, Folder 'Tsurikov, N. A. to Miller, E. K.' (Letter, Miller to Tsurikov, no. 159, 13 Mar. 1936).
[8] HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection, Box 2 (Circular, General Miller, 9 Apr. 1936).
[9] BAR, ROVS, Box 65, Folder 'Correspondence, 1936, IV Otdel (1)' (Letter, Barbovich to Miller, 3 Apr. 1936).
[10] Ibid. (Letter, Barbovich to Miller, 21 Apr. 1936).

the Inner Line produced a difference of opinion between the leaders in Sofia and Paris. Abramov, who led ROVS in Bulgaria, praised those involved in the Inner Line,[11] whereas Miller's assistant in Paris, General Kussonskii, disagreed. The Inner Line's pretensions to be above ROVS were intolerable, he wrote: 'in France the Inner Line brought only harm.'[12] Abramov defended his position. He could not understand, he said, why the ROVS central directorate was letting the NTSNP dictate to ROVS: 'It is clear to me that the NSNP wants to sow as much discord into ROVS as possible, in order to eventually take its place.' It was clear, wrote Abramov, that Paris and Sofia had fundamentally different conceptions of the direction that ROVS's work must take.[13]

In December 1936, Linitskii, Shklarev, and Drakin were convicted by the Yugoslav courts of spying for the Soviets, but Komorovskii was acquitted. In March 1937 Tregubov's report was finally produced. It concluded that Komorovskii was not a Soviet agent, but that he should not be allowed to work any more in ROVS. He was guilty at the very least of gross negligence.[14] ROVS members in Bulgaria believed that Komorovskii's two acquittals proved that he was the victim of a Soviet provocation, and rushed to his defence. The *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev* wrote that Komorovskii was the deliberate target of a provocation led by Linitskii, who had sought to compromise him by planting incriminating documents in his house.[15] But the NTSNP remained convinced of Komorovskii's guilt. The defence of him mounted by ROVS members in Bulgaria just proved in their eyes that the ROVS 3rd Department was under the control of the Soviets. NTSNP meetings continued to pursue Komorovskii, which angered his supporters in ROVS. In Belgium the commander of the Russian Shooting Squad, Colonel Levashov, complained in April 1937 that the local NTSNP group was deliberately trying to drive a wedge between the leadership of ROVS and its rank and file. One had to doubt, he continued, whether the NTSNP was still a friendly organization.[16]

Meanwhile, in Bulgaria another dispute broke out between the ROVS

[11] BAR, ROVS, Box 63, Folder 'Correspondence, 1936, III Otdel' (Letter, Abramov to Kussonskii, 8 Mar. 1936).
[12] Ibid. (Letter, Kussonskii to Abramov, 22 Mar. 1936).
[13] Ibid. (Letter, Abramov to Kussonskii, 26 Mar. 1936).
[14] HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection, Box 2 (Circular, General Kussonskii, no. 101, 25 Mar. 1937).
[15] *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev*, 47 (20 May 1937), 12–13.
[16] BAR, ROVS, V. D. Merzheevskii Collection (Order no. 2, 28 Apr. 1937, in *Kniga Prikazov: Oblastnoi Otdel O-va Gallipoliitsev v Bel'gii*).

3rd Department and the émigré journalists Boris and Ivan Solonevich. These were two brothers who had escaped from concentration camps in the Soviet Union in August 1934. Former sportsmen, immensely strong and muscular, they walked for two weeks through the forests and swamps of Karelia, and finally crossed the border into Finland and safety. Ivan Solonevich subsequently wrote a series of vehemently anti-Soviet books which exposed Stalin's prison-camp system. In his book *Russia in Chains*, which was translated into several languages, he described Russia as a country 'fertilised with millions of corpses, enriched with years of inhuman labour, [and] secured at the cost of incredible deprivation'.[17] Some people believed that the brothers could not possibly have escaped from the Soviet Union without help from the Soviet authorities, and they therefore believed that the Soloneviches were *provocateurs*. The deeply anti-Soviet nature of their writing persuaded most, however, that they were genuine dissidents, and they very rapidly gained a considerable influence in émigré circles. At first ROVS's relations with the brothers Solonevich were very good. Miller and Foss paid for them to travel from Finland to Bulgaria, and arranged for them to receive the editorship of the Sofia-based newspaper *Golos Truda* (Voice of Labour). Subsequently in the middle of 1936 the Soloneviches set up their own newspaper *Golos Rossii*.[18] At first *Golos Rossii* took a very positive line towards ROVS, but the Soloneviches were firm supporters of activism and began to publish articles in which they chronicled the divisions within ROVS between the younger 'activists' and the older generation, classifying these two as 'Staff-Captains' and 'Generals'. Although they maintained that they were simply reporting the facts of existing divisions, many felt that they were implying support for the former and criticizing the ROVS leadership by implication. Suspicions that they were Soviet *provocateurs* began to deepen.

In June 1937 the *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev* suddenly began a bitter polemic against the Solonevich brothers. Responding to questions about how they managed to fund *Golos Rossii*, the Soloneviches had claimed that this was done from profits made from lecture tours they carried out around Europe, and that ROVS's department in Bulgaria could confirm this. The 3rd department's leading officers, Generals

[17] I. L. Solonevich, *Russia in Chains: A Record of Unspeakable Suffering* (London, 1938). The Soloneviches' escape from Russia is described in the sequel, *Escape from Russian Chains* (London, 1938).

[18] BAR, ROVS, Box 63, Folder 'Correspondence, 1936, III Otdel' (Letter, Abramov to Kussonskii, 19 May 1936).

Abramov and Zinkevich, were angered by this, as it linked them too closely with the brothers, and because it was in any case not true that they could confirm the source of their funds. A reply was planned for *Vestnik Obshchestva Gallipoliitsev* but withdrawn when the Soloneviches offered to apologize. However, the Soloneviches then suddenly published an article in their newspaper complaining about Zinkevich's attitude. Abramov demanded an apology, but the proposed apology Ivan Solonevich showed him was deemed insufficient.[19]

Zinkevich now wrote to Miller to say that he was convinced that Boris Solonevich was a Soviet agent. He had been told this by General Dobrovol'skii in Finland, who had been told by the Finnish police. The German police apparently also shared the same opinion. Zinkevich claimed to have incontrovertible proof at his disposal.[20] Zinkevich later admitted that he did not actually have such proof in his hands, but he remained convinced that the Soloneviches were *provocateurs*.[21] Other ROVS leaders were sceptical about his accusations,[22] and Miller ordered Zinkevich to desist from further polemics against the brothers.[23] This induced a sense of despair in Abramov. He was bemused that Miller would not take his and Zinkevich's side in this dispute. 'Why', he wrote, 'do you trust the brothers more than us?'[24]

It was, in any case, already too late to order Zinkevich to desist. A congress of the Society of Gallipolians in Sofia passed a resolution condemning the Soloneviches and recommended to all its members that contacts with them cease.[25] Meanwhile Ivan Solonevich declared open war on ROVS, publishing for instance a pamphlet in which he wrote that ROVS was in terminal decline and heading for collapse.[26] In 1938 he left Bulgaria and moved to Berlin where he set up a fascist-orientated newspaper, *Nasha Gazeta*, which printed abusive articles attacking ROVS leaders and praising Turkul: 'Abramov is a coward', he wrote, 'Vitkovskii

[19] Ibid. Folder 'Correspondence, 1937, III Otdel' (Letter, Boris and Ivan Solonevich to Miller, 11 June 1937; Letter, Abramov to Miller, 12 June 1937).

[20] Ibid. (Letter, Zinkevich to Miller, 1 June 1937).

[21] GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 62, l. 31–2 (Letter, Zinkevich to von Lampe, 15 Aug. 1937).

[22] e.g. GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 62, l. 28–9 (Letter, von Lampe to Zinkevich, 8, 11 July 1937).

[23] BAR, ROVS, Box 63, Folder 'Correspondence, 1937, III Otdel' (Letter, Miller to Zinkevich, 8 June 1937).

[24] Ibid. (Letter, Abramov to Miller, 12 June 1937).

[25] GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 62, l. 33 (*My i 'Golos Rossii' brat'ev Solonevich*).

[26] I. Solonevich, *K sudu ofitserskoi chesti, k sudu russkoi sovesti i russkogo uma* (Aug. 1938), 4–5.

a twit, Zinkevich an idiot, Foss a Chekist.'[27] In response, the newspaper *Russkii Golos* openly accused Ivan Solonevich of being a Soviet *provocateur*.[28] Any attempt at reasoned argument had now ceased. Émigré disputes had descended into the realm of simple name-calling.

Back in Paris, by the end of 1936 Skoblin's star was on the wane. Under instructions from Moscow to keep Turkul in ROVS where he could cause maximum damage, Skoblin had tried to bring him back into the fold after his dismissal in August 1936, and had thereby antagonized many of ROVS's senior officers. By November 1936, Kussonskii was noting that Skoblin had fallen into 'extreme opportunism', and commented that 'I simply don't understand where and with what aim this marshal is heading.'[29] Rumours began to circulate that Skoblin was living beyond his means, and one member of his regiment told Kussonskii that his income could not be sufficient for what he was spending. In July 1937 Colonel Matsylev commented that even Miller, who had previously trusted Skoblin fully, had begun to doubt him.[30] Matsylev, like Kussonskii, wondered what Skoblin was up to: 'I hope', he wrote, 'that very soon the ugly role played by Skoblin in all our undertakings will be revealed.'[31] Matsylev's wish was to be fulfilled, but in far more tragic circumstances than he could ever have imagined.

On 22 September 1937, General Miller left his office in Paris to go to a secret meeting and never returned. Before leaving he handed Kussonskii an envelope and ordered him to open it in the event that he failed to return. That evening, after Miller failed to reappear, Kussonskii opened the envelope and found a note from Miller explaining that he was going to meet Skoblin, but that he suspected it might be a trap. Kussonskii summoned Skoblin to the ROVS headquarters, where he denied having met Miller. It was suggested that they go to the police, but while the backs of Kussonskii and his colleagues were turned Skoblin slipped away and disappeared. Later that night he knocked on the door of a friend and asked to borrow some money. After that he was never seen again.

[27] Cited in B. Solonevich, *Ne mogu molchat': 'Nasha Gazeta', Emigratsiia, ROVS, i I. L. Solonevich* (Paris, 1939), 21. See also B. Bel'skii, *Russkii Obshche-Voinskii Soiuz (ROVS) i I. L. Solonevich* (Tallin, 1938).

[28] *Russkii Golos*, 382 (7 Aug. 1938), 3; 385 (21 Aug. 1938), 4.

[29] BAR, ROVS, Box 63, Folder 'Correspondence, 1936, III Otdel' (Letters, Kussonskii to Abramov, 3 Nov. 1936 and 24 Nov. 1936).

[30] Ibid. Folder 'Correspondence, 1937, III Otdel' (Letter, Kussonskii to Abramov, 17 Mar. 1937).

[31] BAR, ROVS, Box 86, Folder 'Correspondence, Zinkevich to Matsylev, 1937–1940' (Letter, Matsylev to Zinkevich, 24 Feb. 1937).

Miller had been abducted by the Soviets. Skoblin had lured him to a meeting where he was drugged and kidnapped. He was then put on a boat to the Soviet Union, where he was imprisoned in Moscow. Skoblin escaped to Spain, but his fate thereafter is unknown. It is believed that he returned to Russia where he was executed by the Soviets, who had no further use for him.[32] Miller seems to have been treated reasonably well in prison. His captors hoped that he would reveal unknown secrets about ROVS's underground operations against the Soviet Union, but he told them almost nothing of any use, not so much because he resisted interrogation as because ROVS never actually achieved very much under his leadership. 'I have said nothing sensational about ROVS's activity', he wrote to his captors, 'because there wasn't anything sensational.'[33] The Soviets seem not to have known what to do with Miller, who knew nothing of value and could not be used for propaganda purposes because they could not admit to having kidnapped him. He was held in solitary confinement for 19 months, and then shot at 11.05 in the evening on 11 May 1939.[34]

It is not clear exactly why Miller was abducted. By 1937 ROVS was not the force it had been in 1930, and Miller lacked Kutepov's charisma as a leader. It is sometimes claimed that the Soviets hoped that Skoblin would succeed Miller as leader of ROVS. This is most unlikely, because Miller had already designated a successor, General Abramov. An often cited theory concerns Skoblin's involvement in the so-called 'Tukhachevskii affair'. In 1937 Stalin arrested and executed many leading Soviet generals, including the famous Marshal Tukhachevskii. It later emerged that the Nazis had forged documents purporting to show that Tukhachevskii had been engaged in negotiations with them, and they arranged for these documents to reach Stalin. It is alleged that the idea to forge these documents was given to the head of the Gestapo, Heydrich, by Skoblin, under the instructions of Stalin who was looking for a pretext to act against Tukhachevskii. Skoblin met Heydrich and informed him that Tukhachevskii was plotting against Stalin, so prompting Heydrich to act. The theory goes that Miller knew of Skoblin's involvement in this affair, and so had to be disposed of in order to prevent him revealing to the

[32] A letter written by Skoblin in Spain has been published in *Politicheskaia istoriia russkoi emigratsii, 1920–1940 gg.: dokumenty i materialy* (Moscow, 1999), 60–1.

[33] Miller's prison letters to Ezhov have been published in *Politicheskaia istoriia russkoi emigratsii, 1920–1940 gg.: dokumenty i materialy*, 50–9.

[34] Ibid. 60. See also V. I. Goldin, and J. W. Long, 'Resistance and Retribution: The Life and Fate of General E. K. Miller', *Revolutionary Russia*, 12/2 (Dec. 1999), 19–40.

outside world that Stalin had been involved in framing his own marshal.[35] This whole episode is, however, so unsubstantiated and convoluted that it cannot be given credence as the real reason for Miller's abduction. A more likely explanation is that it was part of a general cleaning out of the stables being undertaken by Stalin as war approached. It was known that ROVS hoped to win the support of either Japan or Germany, and in the event of war with either of those powers the Soviets may have feared that the White army would finally be given its chance to re-form with foreign backing. ROVS may not have been a serious threat to the Soviets, but Stalin was even more paranoid than the émigrés, and even a tiny threat was a threat too much.

More than Miller's abduction, it was Skoblin's treachery that stunned émigrés. It provoked yet another round of mutual accusations and recriminations. Skoblin's guilt soon became firmly established after the French police searched his house, and found a large collection of incriminating documents. Skoblin's wife, Nadezhda Plevitskaia, was arrested and charged with complicity in the kidnapping of General Miller. At the end of her trial, Plevitskaia was found guilty and sentenced to twenty years' hard labour in prison, but the result did not satisfy everybody. One of Skoblin's assistants, Captain Petr Savin, was convinced that Skoblin was innocent and that Shatilov, whom he hated, was the real murderer of Miller. He gave testimony alleging this at the trial of Plevitskaia, and subsequently published a pamphlet hinting that Shatilov was a Soviet agent.[36] Though false, these allegations were believed by some and fatally discredited Shatilov, while damaging ROVS in the process. In the mean time, Vladimir Burtsev again waded into the scene, and accused Savin of being an agent of the Soviet secret services.[37]

The most damaging allegations came from the NTSNP. Its leaders were convinced that the Inner Line lay behind Miller's disappearance, and decided that the time had come to expose it in public. On 9 October 1937, two NTSNP members, Ronchevskii and Prianishnikov, gave a lecture in which they repeated for the first time in public all the allegations that they had previously made in private regarding the Inner Line. ROVS leaders were infuriated. Zinkevich claimed that the NTSNP was

[35] W. G. Krivitskii, *I was Stalin's Agent* (Cambridge, 1992; first published 1939), 221–2. See also Igor Lukes, *Czechoslovakia between Stalin and Hitler* (Oxford, 1996), 91–112.

[36] Petr Savin, *Gibel' Generala Millera: Rabota GPU, 'Vozhdei' i 'Druzei' po razvalu ROVS* (Paris, 1939).

[37] V. L. Burtsev, *Bol'shevitskie gangstery v Parizhe: pokhishchenie generala Millera i generala Kutepova* (Paris, 1939), 29–33.

carrying out a deliberate campaign against ROVS, in order to destroy its influence and tear youth away from it.[38]

The revelations about the Inner Line had an electric impact. Articles were run on the subject in *Poslednie Novosti* and *Vozrozhdenie*. Many readers assumed that the NTSNP was correct and that the Inner Line was a Soviet conspiracy. ROVS was portrayed as an organization riddled with *provocateurs*. Angered at the way in which their organization was being portrayed by the NTSNP, ROVS leaders now moved to formalize their rift with it.[39] ROVS department heads ordered members to choose between the two organizations. Dual membership was forbidden, and some ROVS members were subsequently expelled from ROVS for refusing to leave the NTSNP.[40] In August 1938 an effort was made to repair relations between the two organizations, and a meeting of leading figures on both sides took place in Paris. But this was only partially successful.[41] The rift had gone too far to be healed.

The abduction of Miller was not the last of the scandals to hit ROVS in the 1930s. In October 1938 Nikolai Abramov, the son of General Abramov, was arrested by the Bulgarian police, charged with being a Soviet agent, and expelled from the country.[42] With this coming on top of all the other scandals, ROVS's reputation as an organization which was fatally penetrated by the Soviets was now firmly entrenched in peoples' minds. The credibility of ROVS as an effective anti-Soviet organization had been destroyed.

There were also problems with the succession to Miller. His designated deputy and successor was General Abramov, but Abramov had never wanted the post of president of ROVS, and he asked General Dragomirov to take over the position instead. Dragomirov refused, so Abramov reluctantly took Miller's post. This caused a big outcry in the Bulgarian press, which feared retaliation from the Soviets if the leading émigré anti-Soviet organization had its headquarters in their country.

[38] BAR, ROVS, Box 86, Folder 'Correspondence, Zinkevich to Matsylev, 1937–1940' (Letter, Zinkevich to Matsylev, 10 Nov. 1937).

[39] BAR, V. D. Merzheevskii Collection (Copy of circular, no. 1597, 18 Dec. 1937).

[40] GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 62, l. 350–1 (Minutes of meeting of Council of United Officers' Organizations, 12 Nov. 1937). BAR, ROVS, Box 6, Folder '1 Armeiskii Korpus, 1938' (Report, Levashov to Vitkovskii, no. 20, 27 Feb. 1938; Circular, Zinkevich to departmental presidents of Gallipoli Society, no. 2397, 25 Dec. 1937). BAR, V. D. Merzheevskii Collection (Copy of circular, no. 1597, 18 Dec. 1937).

[41] BAR, ROVS, Box 63 (Letter, I. Ia. Savich to Viktor Mikhailovich, 6 Sept. 1938).

[42] B. Prianishnikov, *Nezrimaia pautina* (Silver Spring, Md., Private Edition, 1979), 333–4.

The Bulgarian government asked Abramov to leave the country. Unwilling to do this, he now asked General Gulevich to take the post. This was a deeply unpopular decision among ROVS members, many of whom remembered Gulevich's struggles with Wrangel in the early 1920s,[43] and so Abramov withdrew the invitation, and again appealed to Dragomirov to accept the leadership. This time Dragomirov accepted, but only on condition that he could move the Central Directorate of ROVS to Yugoslavia. For three months negotiations with the Yugoslav government dragged on until eventually on 18 March 1938 Belgrade gave a negative response. The scandals of the past few years meant that few countries wanted to be associated with ROVS any longer, added to which the clear approach of war was making governments cautious about antagonizing the Soviet Union. Abramov had to find an alternative successor.[44] He settled on Lieutenant General A. P. Arkhangel'skii, the former director of personnel of the Russian Army, who lived in Belgium. Political considerations helped this decision. Von Lampe warned Abramov that if the ROVS Central Directorate remained in France, ROVS would be closed down in Germany.[45] Belgium, meanwhile, was willing to tolerate ROVS's presence whereas other nations were not. Arkhangel'skii accepted the post and on 25 March 1938 Abramov appointed him to take over as president of ROVS.[46] During the Civil War Arkhangel'skii had run an underground anti-Bolshevik group within the Red Army, while himself serving as the Red Army's director of personnel. Eventually he escaped to the Crimea, where he again occupied the post of director of personnel, but this time in Wrangel's Russian Army. Like Miller he was a desk officer and lacked the charisma of Wrangel or Kutepov, but he had the advantage of not being disliked by any of the diverse groups within ROVS.

The story of ROVS in the late 1930s is one of an organization struck low by all-encompassing paranoia, which made it impossible for anyone to trust anyone else, and made everyone assume the worst motives in other people. The NTSNP saw a grand conspiracy in the Inner Line, which was in truth merely a misplaced, ill-conceived intrigue by a few individuals.

[43] GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 62, l. 37 (Letter, Zinkevich to von Lampe, 6 Dec. 1937).

[44] BAR, Denikin Collection, Box 26 (Circular, General Abramov, no. 96, 20 Mar. 1938); HIA, Lukomskii Collection, Box 1 (Letter, Dragomirov to Lukomskii, 11 Jan. 1938); also, *Russkii Golos*, 347 (28 Nov. 1937), 3.

[45] GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 62, l. 226–30 (Report, von Lampe, no. 340, 12 Oct. 1937). HIA, Chasovoi Collection, Box 1 (Letter, von Lampe to Orekhov, no. 363, 26 Oct. 1937).

[46] BAR, Denikin Collection, Box 26 (Order, General Abramov, no. 8, 24 Mar. 1938).

ROVS in turn saw in the actions of the NTSNP a deliberate attack against it. In Bulgaria Zinkevich became convinced that the Solonevich brothers were spies, while the Soloneviches believed that Zinkevich and the whole 3rd Department were in the hands of the Bolsheviks. In such an atmosphere mutual co-operation became impossible. This was symptomatic of how the emigration was splitting further apart into tiny groups throwing insults and accusations at one another. Saner heads calling for calm were shouted down.

Arriving on top of this tumult of suspiciousness, the abduction of General Miller was a catastrophe for the Russian emigration. The trial of Plevitskaia revealed what many people had suspected all along—that Bolshevik agents were placed in the highest echelons of émigré organizations. But all felt that there must be more to Miller's death than just the work of Skoblin and Plevitskaia. The mutual accusations mounted, and paranoia, already over-developed, steamed out of control. ROVS's reputation was destroyed once and for all, and although the organization survived, after 1937 it would never again be a credible force. Even those who had once called for ROVS to take an active role in émigré politics and adopt a clear political position abandoned their demands for activism. V. V. Orekhov, for instance, who had been one of the main protagonists in the 'revolt of the marshals', had decided by 1938 that ROVS must abandon politics and become a purely professional organization.[47] Similarly, in 1939 General Dragomirov commented that ROVS should cease all efforts to unite émigrés and adopt a purely defensive position.[48] As the Second World War approached, ROVS had effectively given up on the struggle and turned in on itself.

[47] HIA, Chasovoi Collection, Box 1 (Memo, Orekhov, 1 July 1938; Letter, Orekhov to Abramov, 8 Nov. 1938).

[48] *Russkii Golos*, 425 (28 May 1939), 5.

14

Defencism, Defeatism, and War

As their society unravelled under the pressure of the Soviet secret services, Russian émigrés were left with only one hope—that a foreign power would declare war on the Soviet Union and the communist regime would collapse in the face of the foreign onslaught. In the 1920s this had not seemed very likely, but in 1933 Hitler came to power in Germany, and war between Germany and the Soviet Union became a genuine possibility. As the Second World War approached, a new debate polarized the weary émigrés. This time the warring ideologies were 'defencism', the view of those who believed that Russian territory had to be defended even if this meant helping the Soviet regime to resist an invader, and 'defeatism', the view of those who believed that an invader of the Soviet Union should be supported.

The most prominent supporters of defencism were Miliukov and Generals Denikin and Makhrov. The two generals had considerable prestige among military émigrés, being respectively a former Commander-in-Chief of the Volunteer Army and a Chief of Staff to the Commander-in-Chief. They approached the question of defencism from slightly different angles. Denikin continued to oppose the Soviet regime, but believed in the sanctity of Russian territory and the need to defend it. He called on Russians first to overthrow the Soviets, and then to resist any invader. Makhrov, by contrast, was taken in by the increasing nationalism and conservatism of Stalin's regime, and had become an active supporter of it. Miliukov occupied a position somewhere between the two generals. ROVS loyalists, maintaining their policy of 'irreconcilability', naturally adopted the opposite point of view, and endorsed defeatism. This made ROVS a prime target for the defencists. Miliukov used his paper *Poslednie Novosti* to print any scurrilous news or rumour about ROVS, with the aim of further discrediting it and its policies. It was no coincidence that the news of the 'revolt of the marshals' was published by *Poslednie Novosti*, which gladly leapt on all such signs of divisions within ROVS and sought to stir them up further.

Both defencists and defeatists were Russian nationalists, and during the Civil War nationalism was one of the few things that helped to unite

the White movement. But as the 1930s developed, Stalin adopted Russian nationalism as part of Soviet ideology, and it lost its force as an inspiration for anti-Soviet struggle. Furthermore, divisions emerged among émigrés about what the essence of the nation was. To some such as General Denikin, Russia was a territorial concept. For Denikin territory had an almost mystical significance, and loss of territory was seen as a loss of Russia's spirit.[1] But to many other officers, a nation was not a territorial but a spiritual concept, bound up in culture, history, and self-awareness. Less important than territory was preserving Russian culture.[2]

These theoretical differences had important practical consequences. Émigrés such as Denikin who defined Russia in territorial terms became defencists, whereas those who emphasized the cultural aspect of Russian nationhood became 'defeatists', claiming that an invader of the Soviet Union should be supported because an invasion could lead to the fall of the Soviet regime and so save Russian culture.[3] N. A. Tsurikov wrote that Denikin's views were 'territorial fetishism', and ignored the prime task of national strategy, 'the preservation of the living force of the nation'.[4] The Soviets, it was argued, were destroying Russian culture, and if they stayed in power much longer, Russia as such would no longer exist.[5] General Golovin commented that an invader of the Soviet Union should be supported: 'Some maintain that the main tragedy is that Russia will lose a part of its land. The main tragedy is not this, but the fact that *under the Bolsheviks all Russian culture, Russia's soul, could die*.'[6]

The argument over defencism and defeatism first became serious in the late 1920s when Japanese involvement in China led to the possibility of a Japanese–Soviet clash over the Chinese Eastern Railway which ran through Manchuria. A large number of Russian exiles had settled in Manchuria, mostly in the city of Kharbin. By late 1931 there was considerable interest among Russian émigrés in the burgeoning conflict between Japan and China, and in the possibility of the Japanese creating a buffer zone in the Soviet Far East. This was an idea which stretched back to the

[1] W. G. Rosenberg, *A. I. Denikin and the Anti-Bolshevik Movement in South Russia* (Amherst, 1961), 42.

[2] e.g. *Signal*, 15 (15 Sept. 1937), 2; *Russkii Golos*, 53 (10 Apr. 1932), 1.

[3] The terms 'defencist' and 'defeatist' were originally coined to describe the sides in a similar argument which took place among Russian socialists during the First World War.

[4] N. A. Tsurikov, *Sovetskoe pravitel'stvo, inostrantsy, voina i pozitsiia emigratsii* (Sofia, 1936), 10, 13.

[5] GARF, f. 5759, o. 1, d. 55, l. 23–4 (Letter, Dobrokhotov to Orekhov, 7 Mar. 1934); *Russkii Golos*, 149 (11 Feb. 1934), 2.

[6] *Russkii Golos*, 54 (17 Apr. 1932), 3.

Russian Civil War when Japanese troops had controlled much of eastern Siberia. Speculation about it revived in the early 1930s. The idea was that the Japanese would seize some territory in the Soviet Far East and create a Russian state as a buffer between themselves and the Soviets. This idea won the support of the ROVS leadership. A buffer state, noted General Stogov, would be 'a buffer for the Japanese, but for us simply Russian territory liberated from the Bolsheviks'.[7] Support for the buffer zone concept seems to have been fairly widespread among the rank and file of ROVS, especially in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Colonel Iasevich of the Don Cossack Corps, noted that the crux of the issue was whether Soviet or Japanese power was better. Most Russians, he concluded, thought that Japanese power was preferable.[8]

The defencists reacted sharply. Denikin had stayed out of émigré politics during the 1920s. In April 1932, however, he came out of retirement and made a speech criticizing those who were putting their hopes in the Japanese. Surrenders of territory to foreign powers, he said, could perhaps lead to the fall of Soviet power, 'But what then would be left of Russia?! Cut off from the sea and the granaries, surrounded by hostile formations, thrown back 500 years? . . . In the event that a foreign power invades Russia, with the aim of seizing Russian territory, our participation on its side is impermissible.'[9]

Denikin's declaration set off a series of petty squabbles. Because of his quarrels with Wrangel, he had never been popular among ROVS members. Now, however, some members who shared his views on defencism began to promote his name as a possible replacement for Miller. One of those who did so was a General Mel'nitskii, who was already carrying on feuds with other senior officers. In 1930 he had accused General Khimich of misappropriating ROVS funds in Lyons. Shatilov defended Khimich against this accusation,[10] whereupon Mel'nitskii accused Shatilov of embezzling the money that soldiers had paid *Tekhnopomoshch* to travel to France from Bulgaria in 1924 and 1925.[11] As no real evidence was offered to prove that this was the case, no further

[7] BAR, ROVS, Box 64, Folder 'Correspondence, 1931, IV Otdel (3)' (Letters, Stogov to Pronin, no. 1000, 14 Dec. 1931; no. 127, 19 Feb. 1932).

[8] BAR, ROVS, Box 63, Folder, 'Correspondence, 1932, III Otdel' (Letter, Iasevich to Kussonskii, 4 Mar. 32).

[9] A. I. Denikin, *Russkii vopros na dal'nem vostoke* (Paris, 1932).

[10] BAR, ROVS, Box 81, Folder 'French government's efforts to expel Shatilov and Abramov' (Letter, Stogov to Shatilov, no. 26, 8 Jan. 1931).

[11] Ibid. (Letter, Mel'nitskii to Stogov, no. 7, 16 Feb. 1931).

action was taken. In frustration, Mel'nitskii established contact with Makhrov, who had been expelled from ROVS for writing defencist articles for the newspapers *Mladorusskaia Iskra* and *Poslednie Novosti*, both papers extremely hostile to ROVS.[12] Makhrov was also in contact with a disgruntled member of the Society of First Campaign Participants (the *Pervopokhodniki*), General Nevodovskii, who had for some time been trying to create a new military union loyal to Denikin.[13] Meanwhile, talk of a split between Miller and Denikin was given prominence in *Poslednie Novosti*. In November 1932 Nevodovskii announced the formation of a new Union of Volunteers (*Soiuz Dobrovol'tsev*), which was designed to replicate ROVS and win members from it. When pressed by Miller, Denikin denied that he supported Nevodovskii, but also refused to condemn him or the new union.[14] Encouraged, in December 1932 Nevodovskii gave a talk to an intellectual circle, the *Chas Dosuga* (Hour of Leisure), criticizing 'certain leaders' of ROVS, and maintaining that Wrangel had deliberately sabotaged the defence of the Crimea. At that, Miller ordered that Nevodovskii be brought before a court of honour,[15] and banned ROVS members from joining the new Union of Volunteers.[16] Nevodovskii was unable to get his new union off the ground, and the project folded.

Meanwhile Makhrov and Mel'nitskii had decided to strike back at ROVS through attacks on Shatilov. A new military newspaper hostile to ROVS, *Edinyi Front*, had been set up by a Lieutenant A. N. Pavlov. In March 1933 it published accusations that Shatilov had negotiated with Trotsky in 1920 for the surrender of the Crimea.[17] On 24 June 1933, it then published articles by Makhrov and Mel'nitskii insulting both Shatilov and ROVS.[18] In response, Shatilov challenged Mel'nitskii to a duel. Generals Skoblin and Kussonskii acted as his seconds and delivered the challenge to Mel'nitskii, who duly accepted it. Skoblin and Kussonskii then met the seconds appointed by Mel'nitskii and agreed that as duels were illegal in France, it should take place on 9 July 1933 in Monte Carlo, where duelling was legal. A suitable site for the duel was

[12] BAR, Denikin Collection, Box 26 (Open Letter, Makhrov to Dragomirov, May 1932).

[13] BAR, ROVS, Box 12, Folder 'Correspondence, Abramov to Miller' (Letter, Miller to Abramov, no. 867, 23 Nov. 1931).

[14] BAR, ROVS, Box 85, Folder 'Soiuz Dobrovol'tsev' (Letter, Denikin to Miller, 9 Nov. 1932).

[15] Ibid. (Letter, Miller to Shatilov, 18–21 Jan. 1933).

[16] Ibid. (Letter, Miller to Shatilov, no. 392, 29 Apr. 1933).

[17] *Edinyi Front*, 8 (16 Mar. 1933).

[18] Ibid. 9 (24 June 1933), 2, 4.

located and marked on a map.[19] At the same time, General Vitkovskii issued a similar challenge to Makhrov, who refused to accept it. Anxious to avoid the bad publicity, Miller ordered a court of honour to examine the affair, and in a breach with tradition it offered Mel'nitskii the chance to make a public apology and avoid the duel. Mel'nitskii took this way out and on 11 July 1933 a letter from him appeared in *Vozrozhdenie* apologizing to Shatilov. Mel'nitskii subsequently withdrew his apology, saying that he had been tricked into writing it, but the duel never took place. In the meantime the entire episode was recorded in the émigré press, doing no good to ROVS's public image.

Within a couple of months of the aborted duel, ROVS members were engaged in further public squabbles. General Govorov, head of the French detachment of the Union of *Pervopokhodniki*, had written a letter to *Poslednie Novosti* which Shatilov had deemed unacceptable. He asked Govorov to resign, but Govorov refused. Relations between the *Pervopokhodniki* and the rest of ROVS had been tense even in the 1920s, as many of the former were supporters of Denikin.[20] Relations were now further undermined by a scurrilous leaflet produced by some Gallipoliitsy attacking Denikin, which Miller believed must have had Shatilov's silent approval.[21] On 1 October 1933, a general meeting of the *Pervopokhodniki* in Paris passed a resolution saying that the replacement of Govorov was not possible, and that if he was replaced they would leave ROVS.[22] A copy of the resolution was sent to Denikin, who was their honorary chairman. Govorov wrote a mutinous letter to *Poslednie Novosti*, and Miller immediately expelled him from ROVS. Some of the *Pervopokhodniki* followed him and left ROVS of their own accord. Miller had to call a general meeting of the rump to elect a new directorate of their society.[23]

Descending even further into pettiness, in October 1933 *Poslednie Novosti* published a letter from Nevodovskii accusing Shatilov of wearing

[19] This incident is recreated from the file of the court of honour which examined the affair, in BAR, ROVS, Box 81. This file contains documents such as written challenges to duels, letters exchanged by the seconds, and the proceedings of the court of honour.

[20] For an example of a dispute involving the Pervopokhodniki and Denikin in 1928, see HIA, WA, Box 147, File 34, 711–13 (Letter, Shatilov to Wrangel, 7 Mar. 1928).

[21] BAR, ROVS, Box 12, Folder 'Correspondence, Abramov to Miller' (Letter, Miller to Abramov, 9 Aug. 1933).

[22] HIA, Nicolaevsky Collection, Box 752, File 18 (*Vsem uchastnikam 1-go Kubanskogo pokhoda*, 24 Feb. 1934).

[23] BAR, ROVS, Box 2, Folder 'Tsurikov, N. A. to Miller, E. K.' (Letter, Miller to Tsurikov, no. 715, 23 Oct. 1933).

the order of St George 3rd Degree when he was not in fact entitled to it and of never having been properly promoted to the rank of major general. *Poslednie Novosti* then refused to print a reply by Miller explaining how Shatilov had won his award and rank.[24] A long polemic followed in *Poslednie Novosti* and *Vozrozhdenie*, as a series of readers sent in letters stating their opinion on whether Shatilov did or did not legally have his rank and award. Among the letter-writers was Denikin, who came down firmly against Shatilov.

More important events finally overshadowed these quarrels in 1933. The rise to power of the Nazis that year made a future Soviet–German conflict much more likely. Hitler's plans to invade Russia and enslave or annihilate its population had been laid out in *Mein Kampf* and were well known to Russian émigrés. Determining whether Hitler seriously intended to implement these plans was a crucial matter for émigrés, since, if he did, collaboration with him was clearly out of the question. Miller and other ROVS leaders were wary. In August 1933 Miller told General Dobrovol'skii that Hitler was primarily interested in displacing the population of western Russia to create German living space, and that he was 'above all a German, and does not think at all about Russia's liberation—he is completely indifferent to it. Therefore the question of negotiations with him . . . is not at all simple.'[25] However, most senior ROVS officers did not believe that Hitler meant all that he said. General Lukomskii, for instance, commented of Hitler's words in *Mein Kampf* that 'I believe that these are just terrible words, and the reality will be acceptable to Russia and not terrible.'[26] This was not just wishful thinking. It seemed incredible that any invader of Russia would fail to exploit anti-Soviet sentiment and would instead deliberately antagonize the Russian people. It would surely be in the interests of any invader to support the Russian people in fighting against the Soviet regime. As von Lampe wrote to Miller, 'The Germans are too practical not to take advantage of this circumstance.'[27]

Others took the view that the threatening tone of Nazi pronouncements about Russia's fate did not negate the need for collaborating with them, but on the contrary made it even more important that Russians do

[24] BAR, ROVS, Box 164, Folder 'Polemic between Generals Nevodovskii and Shatilov' (Letter, Miller to Iu. F. Semenov, editor of *Vozrozhdenie*, 14 Nov. 1933).

[25] BAR, ROVS, Box 12, Folder 'Correspondence, Dobrovol'skii to Miller' (Letter, Miller to Dobrovol'skii, no. 613, 27 Aug. 1933).

[26] HIA, Lukomskii Collection, Box 1 (Letter, Lukomskii to Arkhangel'skii, 2 Feb. 1939).

[27] BAR, ROVS, Box 14, Folder 'Correspondence, von Lampe to Miller' (Letter, von Lampe to Miller, no. 61, 15 Jan. 1933).

so, as this was the only way Nazi plans could be ameliorated in Russia's interests. The worse the invaders, the more important independent activity by Russians became, wrote N. A. Tsurikov.[28] This idea was opposed by Miliukov, Denikin, and Makhrov. In a speech on 22 December 1933, Miliukov praised Soviet foreign policy for protecting Russia's interests by seeking to create an anti-fascist bloc. He then drew a further lesson from this: if the Soviet Union was defending Russian interests, weakening the Soviet Union would be dangerous for Russia. Active struggle against the Soviet regime by the emigration should therefore cease.[29] Denikin, by contrast, had little faith in the Soviet government's ability to defend Russia. The Red Army could only defend Russia, he argued, if it first overthrew the Soviets. Denikin therefore urged a policy of simultaneously resisting both the Soviets and any invader of Russia.[30]

Denikin repeated his views on many occasions throughout 1934. In December of that year, for instance, he made a trip to Czechoslovakia, where he made two speeches outlining his views to émigrés. His activities earned him the hostility of the many ROVS members who were keen to keep the option of collaboration open. General Kharzhevskii, for instance, noted that Denikin's position was contradictory, as it was not possible to fight both the Soviets and an invader at the same time.[31] In response to the speeches of Miliukov and Denikin, Miller issued a circular outlining ROVS's position on the issue of collaboration. It was wrong to say that the Soviet government was defending Russia, Miller argued, as the regime was concerned primarily not with Russia's economic and cultural prosperity, but with world revolution, regarding Russia as merely a launching ground for that revolution. It was true that the moment in which the communist regime fell would be a risky period which could be exploited by foreign powers to dismember Russia, 'but this is only a "risk" and the continuation of communist rule not only risks being dangerous, but is unavoidably destroying Russia even now. Secondly, the risk of Russia's dismemberment will only grow with every extra year of . . . communist power.' The same was true of the danger of separatism. Defencists argued that any invader of Russia would exploit separatist aspirations among the minority nations in the Soviet Union and offer them independence in return for their support. But, argued Miller, 'nobody and nothing helps the separatists as much as communist power.'

[28] Tsurikov, *Sovetskoe pravitel'stvo*, 15.
[29] *Chasovoi*, 118/119 (15 Jan. 1934), 10.
[30] Ibid. 120 (1 Feb. 1934), 6.
[31] GARF, f. 5796, o. 1, d. 13, l. 69 (Letter, Kharzhevskii to Podgornyi, 10 Jan. 1935).

The longer the communists were in power, the greater the risk of separatism. The Soviets, he concluded, were Russia's main enemy, and their overthrow should be the prime task.[32]

ROVS's propagandists now went to work, attacking the position of the defencists. V. M. Levitskii commented on Denikin's statement that émigrés could only support an invader who came to liberate Russia. The problem, Levitskii noted, was that Denikin did not say where such an invader could be found. He therefore left émigrés with no plan of action. Denikin obviously did not understand that there was no hope of help from democratic Europe.[33] S. L. Voitsekhovskii called on émigrés to focus on the prime enemy—the Soviets. Foreigners were a secondary enemy, who could be dealt with once the Soviets had been overthrown.[34]

ROVS's support for collaboration with Nazi Germany did not go unnoticed by the French authorities. Shatilov had survived the various scandals which had surrounded his name, but his position was now dealt a fatal blow by the French government. On 15 June 1934, Shatilov and Abramov, who was in Paris deputizing for Miller while he was on sabbatical, were summoned to the French Foreign Ministry where they were served with verbal orders to leave the country. The reason given was that they were considered responsible for the new pro-German line which had been adopted by ROVS.[35] Miller had to rush back to Paris from his rest cure to plead the cases of Abramov and Shatilov before the French Foreign Ministry. Once again his diplomatic skills prevailed and the expulsion orders were revoked, but Shatilov had now had enough. The next week he resigned his position as head of the ROVS 1st Department, and was replaced by General Erdeli. The episode reveals the degree to which ROVS was in a highly delicate political position. In France it was accused of being pro-German, but in Germany it was suspected of being pro-French because its central directorate was located in Paris. The head of ROVS in Germany, General von Lampe, noted that the Germans were unable to understand that Denikin, who often made anti-Nazi statements, was not connected with ROVS.[36] In August 1933 von Lampe was arrested by the Nazis on suspicion of being a French spy, and he spent several months in prison before being released. ROVS's chief ideologue, Ivan

[32] *Russkii Golos*, 147 (28 Jan. 1934), 2.
[33] Ibid. 5.
[34] *Chasovoi*, 118/119 (15 Jan. 1934), 6.
[35] BAR, ROVS, Box 81, Folder 'French government's efforts' (Letter, Shatilov to French Minister of Foreign Affairs, 15 June 1934).
[36] BAR, ROVS, Box 62, Folder 'Correspondence, 1934, II Otdel' (Letter, von Lampe to Miller, no. 1071, 6 Mar. 1934).

Il'in, was also arrested in the same month. Later released, in April 1934 he was dismissed by the Nazis from his job as a professor at the Russian Institute in Berlin. Hounded for his refusal to teach anti-Semitism, in 1938 he left Germany and moved to Switzerland.[37] ROVS was being forced to bend its policies to fit the political demands of its hosts, but as these hosts divided into hostile camps it became increasingly difficult to pull off the juggling act of satisfying the authorities in every country.

Although ROVS supported defeatism, it did not endorse unconditional collaboration with any country which invaded the USSR, regardless of that country's intentions. A question and answer pack sent to ROVS leaders to enable them to answer questions on political matters stated that ROVS's reaction to an invasion of the USSR would depend on the concrete form that the invasion took. One directed against the Soviet regime would be supported, but one directed against Russian interests would not.[38] A meeting of ROVS departmental heads decided that ROVS could only work with powers that declared in advance that their struggle was directed against Soviet power, not against the Russian people or to seize Russian land.[39] ROVS's objection to the arguments of the defencists was that they ruled out collaboration in all circumstances.

ROVS leaders repeatedly made it clear that their organization must maintain its independence. In the event that they did collaborate with an invader, Russians were not to join the invader's army, but to form their own independent military units, acting as allies of the invader and not as subordinates.[40] Miller objected to those who uncritically degraded themselves in an effort to win help from others, and therefore condemned the head of ROVS in Kharbin, General Verzhbitskii, for making an excessively fawning speech praising Japan.[41]

ROVS's policy was in effect one of 'positive engagement'. It was recognized that émigrés could have no influence on the decision of a foreign power to invade or not to invade the Soviet Union. All they could do was join in and try to extract as many advantages as possible from the

[37] P. T. Grier, 'The Complex Legacy of Ivan Il'in' in J. P. Scanlan (ed.), *Russian Thought after Communism: The Recovery of a Philosophical Heritage* (Armouk, NY, 1994), 165.

[38] BAR, ROVS, Box 162, Folder 'Officers' Unions (1930s)' (*Otvety na voprosy*).

[39] Ibid. (Report of meeting of commanders of 1st, 3rd, and 4th departments with the ROVS president).

[40] GARF, f. 5826, o. 1, d. 94 (*Vypiska iz instruktsii general Kutepova*, 23 Apr. 1929). HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection, Box 2 (Circular, General Miller, no. 416, 27 April 1931).

[41] HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection, Box 2 (Circular, General Kussonskii, no. 285, 29 May 1934).

situation.[42] The emigration could not start or prevent war, wrote Tsurikov, but by engaging in talks with foreign powers could help turn an external war against the USSR into a war to overthrow the Soviet regime.[43] Miller's strategy was to seek contacts with Japan and Germany, and by means of negotiations with them find common interests, convincing them that a Soviet government was not in their interests, that supporting émigré struggles against the Soviets would help them in their own fight, that émigré activities would best be carried out by independent national organizations, and that it was in their economic interests for post-Soviet Russia to be a strong power which would provide markets for their products.[44] As a result contacts were made with both Japanese and German governmental representatives. Von Lampe, for instance, met the Nazi minister Rosenberg, who asked him to present a proposal for a joint plan of action.[45] The problem for ROVS, however, was that neither the Japanese nor the Germans were interested in having allies who were independent of them, only in puppets willing to carry out their every command. Von Lampe's talks with Rosenberg and other Nazis soon came to an end with no positive results,[46] and after the Japanese occupied Manchuria ROVS leaders soon realized that the Japanese, as Kussonskii put it, 'only value those who lick their arses'.[47] As a result, when the Japanese in Manchuria asked the head of ROVS in Kharbin, General Verzhbitskii, to lead Russian collaboration with them, he refused. In his place the role of Japanese puppet went to Konstantin Rodzaevskii, head of the Russian Fascist Party in Kharbin.[48]

By 1936 the argument between defencists and defeatists had become increasingly divisive. The defencists were especially strong in France, where a Union of Defencists was formed, along with a Union for Return to the Motherland. The Union of Defencists, led by Makhrov, took the most extreme position—that émigrés should not merely cease active

[42] BAR, ROVS, Box 2, Folder 'Tsurikov, N. A. to Miller, E. K.' (Letter, Tsurikov to Miller, 13 Apr. 1932); Box 64, Folder 'Correspondence, 1931, IV Otdel (3)' (Letter, Stogov to Pronin, no. 1000, 14 Dec. 1931); Box 134, Folder 'Orders, 1932' (Letter, Miller to Shatilov, no. 276, 15 Apr. 1932).

[43] Tsurikov, *Sovetskoe pravitel'stvo*, 12.

[44] BAR, ROVS, Box 15, Folder 'P. to Miller, E. K.' (Letter, Miller to S. A. Poklevskii-Kozell, no. 9, 3 Jan. 1933).

[45] GARF, f. 5853, o. 1. d. 54, l. 22940–3 (Letter, von Lampe to Miller, no. 1, 26 Oct. 1933).

[46] GARF, f. 5853, o. 1, d. 54, l. 22989 (Letter, von Lampe to Miller, 1 Mar. 1934).

[47] BAR, ROVS, Box 66, Folder 'Correspondence, 1935, V Otdel' (Letter, Kussonskii to M. N. Polzikov, 28 Feb. 1935).

[48] J. J. Stephan, *The Russian Fascists* (London, 1978), 68–73.

struggle against the USSR in peacetime but actively support the Soviets. Makhrov praised the new Soviet constitution of 1936 as a sign that Soviet power was evolving towards democracy. Denikin's slogan of 'defend Russia, but overthrow the Soviets' was unsatisfactory, he said. The experience of 1917 had shown that if the government was overthrown in wartime, chaos and anarchy would ensue and defence would become impossible.[49] On behalf of ROVS, Levitskii and Tsurikov struck back with more pamphlets. Levitskii argued that defencists were over-concerned with the loss of territory, and should be more concerned with the Russian people. A true patriot, he wrote, could not be in favour of defending a regime which had enslaved and impoverished its people, as had the Soviets. The only true defencist was one who defended his people by liberating them from Soviet rule. According to Tsurikov, the Soviets' repressive rule was indirectly encouraging separatist tendencies among the non-Russian nations of the Soviet Union. Defencists argued that the fall of Soviet power could lead to the break-up of the Russian empire, but it was actually the repressive nature of Soviet power which was creating this possibility. As Tsurikov noted, if the nations of the Russian Empire decided that it was impossible to have freedom *within* Russia, then they would seek freedom *from* Russia.[50]

The outbreak of the Spanish Civil War at the end of 1936 provided those who believed in active struggle against communism with an opportunity to put their ideas into practice. The struggle of General Franco's nationalist forces was seen by many ROVS members as a continuation of their own White struggle. Victory for the Republicans would be a triumph for international communism, whereas a victory for Franco would be a triumph for the anti-communist cause.[51] Some therefore felt that it was incumbent upon ROVS to organize the movement of Russian volunteers to Spain to fight in Franco's army. This, it was believed, could revitalize ROVS, by proving that it was actively engaged in struggle against communism. It could also lead, if Russian volunteers were allowed to serve together, to the re-creation of Russian military units, albeit under the Spanish banner. Prime among those pushing this line was Shatilov, who hoped to use the issue to restore his reputation. Miller himself was sceptical, but under pressure from Shatilov he agreed to

[49] P. S. Makhrov, *Chto nam delat'?* (Paris, 1938), 23–7.

[50] Tsurikov, *Sovetskoe pravitel'stvo*; V. M. Levitskii, *Plany razlozheniia emigratsii (ot 'Trestov' do Kommissii 'Oborontsev')* (Paris, 1936).

[51] HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection, Box 2 (Circular, General Kussonskii, no. 680, 15 Aug. 1936).

approach Franco. Contact was made with the Spanish through their diplomatic mission in Rome, and agreement reached that a ROVS delegation could travel to Spain to speak to Franco's headquarters. The delegation, consisting of Shatilov and two others, travelled to Spain via Italy in December 1936. In Spain they met some of Franco's senior officers who agreed to accept Russian volunteers, but, crucially, refused to pay the travel expenses of such volunteers to get them to Spain. If sufficient came, they would be formed into a Russian unit in the Spanish Foreign Legion.[52] As a result, at the beginning of February 1937, Miller issued an order calling for volunteers.

As it happened, few ROVS members volunteered to go to Spain. There appears to have been very little enthusiasm for the cause among the ROVS rank and file, many of whom were now past fighting age and in any case only wished to risk their lives in a fight for Russia. Abramov noted in February 1937 that no ROVS members in Bulgaria had expressed a desire to go to Spain. Even among those who might have considered it, the cost of the journey was beyond most ROVS members, especially those living in the Balkans. As a result, Miller's order of February 1937 elicited only two volunteers in the whole of Yugoslavia.[53] More might have been found had travel expenses been paid. General Zborovskii noted that no members of his Kuban Cossack Division could afford the journey, but if it was paid for, he would order all the officers to go. He was sure that they would obey, and many of the rank and file Cossacks would follow.[54] The Spanish Civil War did, therefore, offer an opportunity to ROVS, but the failure to get Franco to give financial support to Russian volunteers ruined this one chance to re-form Russian units.

In the end only thirty-two volunteers were sent, all from France. Four groups of eight men were smuggled across the French–Spanish border by Captain Petr Savin, who was placed in charge of the operation by Miller. Savin worked closely with Skoblin, and it is possible that the latter sabotaged the crossings by betraying the route to the French police. The fifth group was apprehended by the police, and thereafter activity had to cease.[55]

ROVS's efforts to reach agreement with the German authorities were

[52] BAR, Merzheevskii Collection (*Gibel' Generala Millera*); HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection (Circular, General Kussonskii, no. 845, 25 Dec. 1936).

[53] BAR, ROVS, Box 65, Folder 'Correspondence, 1937, IV Otdel (1)' (Letter, Barbovich to Kussonskii, 22 Feb. 1937).

[54] Ibid. IV Otdel (2)' (Letter, Zborovskii to Kussonskii, 24 Feb. 1937).

[55] BAR, Merzheevskii Collection (*Gibel' Generala Millera*).

no more successful than their attempts to become involved in Spain. The general attitude of the Nazi leadership towards ROVS was hostile. In 1938 the Germans forced von Lampe to re-form the Russian military organizations in Germany into a new organization independent of ROVS. The ROVS 2nd department was dissolved and a new Union of Russian Military Unions (ORVS: *Ob"edinenie Russkikh Voinskikh Soiuzov*) was formed in its place.[56] It became clear that however willing émigrés were to collaborate with the Germans, the reverse was not the case.

Hopes that Germany might attack the Soviet Union were dealt a severe blow in August 1939 when Hitler and Stalin signed a non-aggression pact. Many Russian émigrés felt that their last hope had been extinguished. Then in late 1939 the Soviet Union invaded Finland and émigrés were suddenly presented with an unexpected opportunity. General Arkhangel'skii believed that the war provided an ideal chance to reopen the armed struggle against the Soviets. The President of Finland, Marshal Mannerheim, was a former Imperial Russian Army officer, and both Arkhangel'skii and Abramov had served alongside him before the revolution and were still in contact with him. On 16 December 1939 Arkhangel'skii sent a letter to Mannerheim offering ROVS's help in the Finns' struggle against the Soviets.[57] However, despite his sympathies for the White cause, Mannerheim turned down Arkhangel'skii's offer.[58] The Finnish government wished to portray its war as one of a small nation struggling against Russian imperialism, and not one of Red versus White. The involvement of White Russians was therefore not desirable.

At first the Finns defeated the Soviet invasion, but in February 1940 their position seriously deteriorated and Mannerheim changed his mind. Stalin's former secretary, Boris Bazhanov, who had defected to the West some years previously, was given permission by the Finnish government to recruit a 'Russian National Army' out of Soviet prisoners of war, who were to be used behind the Soviet front lines. Bazhanov soon succeeded in recruiting 450 volunteers. They were not willing to serve under Soviet officers, so Arkhangel'skii put ROVS's sub-department in Finland at Bazhanov's disposal, and ROVS officers were then put in charge of the detachments of Soviet prisoners. In early March 1940 the first detachment went into battle, working behind the Soviet front, inciting Soviet

[56] BAR, ROVS, Box 164 (List of organizations in ROVS, 1939).

[57] HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection, Box 1 (Letter, Arkhangel'skii to one of the generals of ROVS, 17 Jan. 1940).

[58] Ibid. (Letter, Mannerheim to Arkhangel'skii, 30 Dec. 1939); HIA, Chasovoi Collection, Box 3 (Letter, O. Enkel to Orekhov, 24 Jan. 1940).

soldiers to desert, and within a short time had encouraged 300 men to do so. On 14 March 1940, however, the war came to an end, and the Russian National Army was disbanded. ROVS's involvement in the Finnish war had come too late to make any difference.[59]

ROVS's difficulties mounted in April 1941 when Germany invaded Yugoslavia. Russian émigrés there felt a great loyalty towards the Yugoslav government and people, who had treated them extremely generously over the previous twenty years. As a result the head of ROVS in Yugoslavia, General Barbovich, and the commander of the Kuban Cossack Division, General Zborovskii, put themselves and their troops at the disposal of the Yugoslav army. As it happened, Yugoslavia was overrun so rapidly that the Russians never had the time to join in the fight, but their offer did not pass unnoticed. The German authorities responded by banning ROVS in Yugoslavia.[60] German suspicions that Russian nationalists were not to be trusted increased.

Nevertheless, ROVS leaders still hoped that they might be able to come to some sort of agreement with Germany. In Berlin, von Lampe was aware that the German army was about to invade the Soviet Union and on 21 May 1941 he sent a letter to the Commander-in-Chief of the German armed forces, Field Marshal von Brauchitsch. Stating his belief that Germany's conflict with communism would end with war against the USSR, von Lampe commented that he was sure that such a war would be fought not against the Russian people, but against communism. He ended by offering the services of both himself and all those under him to the German High Command.[61]

Arkhangel'skii agreed with von Lampe that the Germans would fight against communism, not against the Russian people. In June 1940, he had noted that a strong Russia was in Germany's interests, as Germany would desire external markets, and this required peaceful, strong, prosperous neighbours.[62] As it was, the Germans refused von Lampe's offer, and after the invasion von Lampe was told by the German War Ministry that Russians would not be used by the German armed forces. The Nazis, it turned out, were interested in destroying Russia, not in promoting

[59] B. Bazhanov, *Vospominaniia byvshego sekretaria Stalina* (France, 1980), 295–300. HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection, Box 1 (Memo, General Arkhangel'skii, 30 Mar. 1940).

[60] D. P. Vertepov, *Russkii Korpus na Balkanakh vo vremia II velikoi voiny, 1941–1945 gg.* (New York, 1963), 11–12.

[61] HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection, Box 2 (Letter, von Lampe to von Brauchitsch, no. 392, 21 May 1941).

[62] Ibid. Box 4 (Letter, Arkhangel'skii to Biskupskii, 28 June 1940).

Russian nationalist organizations. Rejected by the Germans, on 17 August 1941 von Lampe issued an order to members of military organizations subordinate to him giving them all the right to choose for themselves whether to support Germany.[63]

Russian émigrés reacted to the German invasion of the Soviet Union in many different ways. Some responded with joy and confidently awaited a German victory which would destroy the Soviet regime and allow them to return home. Others experienced a great upsurge of patriotic emotion and longed for the Soviets to defeat the Germans. A third group, unwilling to choose between the two extremes of Hitler and Stalin, preferred to stay neutral. Most ROVS members belonged to the first category. They welcomed the invasion wholeheartedly and rushed to offer their congratulations to the German government. General Gulevich, for instance, wrote to the German commander in Paris, General von Stupnagel: 'I welcome with all my heart the war undertaken by the Führer against the Bolsheviks, and we express our hope for your quick victory'.[64] Many others expressed similar sentiments.

Those émigrés who hoped that the Germans would wish to use them as allies against the Soviets were soon disappointed. Their offers of support received the same rebuff that von Lampe had received in May 1941. The German authorities were unable or unwilling to distinguish between pro-Soviet and anti-Soviet Russians. All Russians were considered potential enemies. Generals Shatilov and Kussonskii were arrested by the German authorities, Shatilov was later released, but Kussonskii was beaten to death in a German concentration camp.[65]

Soon after the Germans attacked the Soviet Union, a communist uprising began in Yugoslavia. General M. E. Skorodumov, a Legitimist officer who was not a member of ROVS, approached the German commander in Yugoslavia and asked him to do something to protect Russian émigrés against attacks by the communist partisans. As a result in September 1941 the Germans agreed that the Russians could form their own self-defence unit, known as the Russian Corps (*Russkii Korpus*).[66] At first only Russians in Yugoslavia were permitted to join, as the Germans were still reluctant to give Russian émigrés any role in their war against

[63] V. V. Almendinger, *Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo v Brno: pamiatnaia zapiska o zhizni Gallipoliitsev v Brno, Chekhoslovakia 1923–1945* (Private Edition, 1968), 56.

[64] BAR, Denikin Collection, Box 26, Folder 'Emigration (9)' (Letter, Gulevich to von Stupnagel, no. 97, 30 June 1941).

[65] B. Prianishnikov, *Nezrimaia pautina* (Silver Spring, Md., Private Edition, 1979), 381.

[66] Vertepov, *Russkii Korpus*, 13–14.

the Soviets. Indeed Skorodumov was soon arrested by the Germans and General Steifon took his place as commander of the Russian Corps. As its Yugoslav branch had been closed down, ROVS played no part in the formation of the Russian Corps, and the former head of ROVS in Yugoslavia, General Barbovich, refused to join because he did not want to betray the Yugoslavs.[67] Thousands of other Russians did, however, volunteer to join the unit.

In 1942, as its campaign in the Soviet Union ran into difficulties, the German army began to reconsider its attitude to Russian émigrés. Membership of the Russian Corps was opened to émigrés from Bulgaria, and General Abramov was invited to Yugoslavia to visit units of the corps. Abramov mobilized the ROVS 3rd department in Bulgaria and thousands of émigrés moved to Yugoslavia to join the Russian Corps.[68] Prominent members of the corps included Generals Zborovskii and Zinkevich, who served respectively as a regimental and battalion commander, and who were both killed in action in 1944. The Russians hoped that their unit would be sent to the Eastern Front to fight the Red Army, but the Germans were never able to overcome their suspicions of the Russians, and the Russian Corps was kept throughout the war in Yugoslavia where it fought the partisans and suffered heavy casualties.[69]

Some ROVS members from Bulgaria took an active role in the war even before the Russian Corps was formed. Although it was an ally of Germany, Bulgaria was not formally at war with the Soviet Union, but it did send observer missions to join the German army in occupied Russia. Captain Foss persuaded the Bulgarian government to use Russian émigrés to man these missions, and he organized several small groups of young ROVS members, who travelled into occupied territory under his command. These missions helped the German army to administer the areas under its control, and tried to create a Russian nationalist organization among captured Soviet soldiers. The aim was to form these prisoners into the nucleus of what could become a Russian national army. These efforts brought Foss's men into conflict with Nazi administrators who were determined to stamp out any manifestations of Russian nationalism. The hostility of these administrators ensured that Foss's plans were

[67] V. G. Bortnevskii, ' "Stavia Rodinu vyshe lits" (iz arkhiva generala I. G. Barbovicha)', *Russkoe Proshloe*, 5 (1994), 117.

[68] HIA, Denikin Collection, Box 26, Folder 'Emigration (9)' (Excerpt from conversation of Abramov with group commanders of 3rd Department of ROVS, 26 May 1942; Excerpt from letter, Abramov to Arkhangel'skii, 1 June 1942).

[69] The history of the Russian Corps is told in Vertepov, *Russkii Korpus*.

thwarted.[70] Foss later worked at Hitler's headquarters in Ukraine, and after the war lived in West Germany, where he was reputed to be in the pay of American intelligence.[71]

Members of the NTSNP, by now known as the NTS, also played an active role in occupied Russia. The German High Command forbade NTS members from entering Russia, but many managed to do so anyway, and they attempted to build branches of their organization in the occupied territories. NTS members also acted as political advisers to General A. A. Vlasov, a senior Soviet officer who had been captured by the Germans and who commanded the numerous units of Soviet prisoners who agreed to serve the Germans. The NTS helped to draw up the Prague Manifesto which was the programme of the political wing of the Vlasov movement. Among those who signed the manifesto was General Abramov, who was also a member of the political committee of Vlasov's army.[72] Abramov survived the war, and went to live in California, where he was killed in a car crash in 1963, aged 93.

In France and Belgium, Russian émigrés were not allowed to pay an active role in the war. Some managed to join the German army as volunteers, but most were not permitted to do so. The Germans' attitude towards émigrés was full of contradictions, as they could never quite make up their mind what to do with them. General Arkhangel'skii complained that he was forbidden to carry out his role as ROVS President, his house was searched, and his mail intercepted.[73] Despite encouraging ROVS members to collaborate with the Germans,[74] General Vitkovskii, who from 1937 was head of ROVS's 1st Department in France, was forced to resign. The Germans insisted that all émigré matters be dealt with through one official representative in each country, thus depriving organizations such as ROVS of any means of talking with them directly. In France the official representative was General Golovin, who had the good fortune to die of natural causes in January 1944 just a few months before the liberation of Paris. He had been sentenced to death by the French resistance, and thus escaped almost certain execution. Another victim of the war was ROVS's landlord Sergei Tretiakov. From

[70] P. Butkov, *Our Fight for Russia* (Cormack, NY, 1998), 30–117.

[71] Prianishnikov, *Nezrimaia pautina*, 384.

[72] C. Andreyev, *Vlasov and the Russian Liberation Movement: Soviet Reality and Émigré Theories* (Cambridge, 1987), 216–23.

[73] HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection, Box 2 (Letter, Arkhangel'skii to Maklakov, Jan. 1945).

[74] HIA, Denikin Collection, Box 26, Folder 'Emigration (9)' (Excerpt from letter, Vitkovskii to group commanders of the 1st Department of ROVS, 7 July 1942).

captured Soviet documents, the German army learnt that he was a Soviet agent. In 1942 German troops carried out a search of ROVS's office in Paris, and discovered Tretiakov's microphones. He was then arrested and subsequently executed.

At the end of the war the Russian Corps escaped into Austria where its men were captured by the British. Unlike many Cossacks, who were repatriated to the Soviet Union, the men of the Russian Corps were not handed over to the Soviets and were eventually freed. Many of them subsequently moved to the United States. They were joined by those veterans of the Vlasov Army who managed to escape the advancing Red troops. Those who were less fortunate and fell into the hands of the Soviets were imprisoned and in most cases executed. The war, which they had hoped would lead to the destruction of the Soviet regime, instead led to their own defeat, and left the Soviets stronger than ever before.

Epilogue

After the war, the face of Russia Abroad had changed dramatically. The Nazi invasion of Russia had caused the exodus of a new wave of Russian émigrés. Leadership of the Russian emigration passed into the hands of these more recent arrivals, and a new era was ushered in. Those Russians who had not collaborated with the Germans turned on ROVS and accused it of active collaboration. General Arkhangel'skii defended the organization, saying that although ROVS had wanted to collaborate with the Germans, the Germans had refused to let it do so. Many ROVS members in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria had collaborated, but as an organization ROVS played no part in the war and was at best scarcely tolerated by the Germans.[1] General von Lampe defended his attempts to collaborate with the Germans, saying that he had acted to protect Russian national interests, and that if he had not done what he did the Germans would have cast all émigrés as enemies. His behaviour, he believed, had saved thousands of émigrés from persecution.[2]

Although ROVS survived the war, the accusations of collaboration seriously damaged it. In addition, thousands of its members in the Balkans were killed. After the war it was not as important in émigré life as it had been beforehand. Tens of thousands of new émigrés had come West, and they had no link with the White armies. Whereas once ROVS members had made up a significant percentage of Russia Abroad, after the war this was no longer the case. In consequence, from 1945 ROVS gradually sank into obscurity. It abandoned any attempt to play an important political role or to renew the armed struggle, and focused instead on its social functions, acting as a simple veterans' association for what was an ever-diminishing number of members. In 1957 General Arkhangel'skii died, and General von Lampe became president of ROVS. He held the post until his own death in 1967, after which the presidency passed into the hands of General Kharzhevskii, who ran the organization until he retired in 1979, two years before his death in 1981. Kharzhevskii was the last of the White generals. After him the leadership of ROVS passed into the altogether more modest hands of Captain M. P. Osipov, who lived in

[1] HIA, Arkhangel'skii Collection, Box 2 (Letter, Arkhangel'skii to Maklakov, Jan. 1945).
[2] Ibid. (Memo, Colonel Matsylev, 26 June 1947: this contains a justification by von Lampe of his wartime actions).

Paris. By this stage there were few White veterans left, and during the 1980s several succeeded each other in quick succession as head of ROVS until in 1988 the leadership passed to the second generation of émigrés, some of whom had fought with the Russian Corps and the Vlasov army in the Second World War. The current president of ROVS, Lieutenant V. N. Butkov, succeeded to the post in 1999.

The last of the original Whites, Boris Pavlov, who fought in the Crimea in 1920 aged only 14, died in California in 1994.[3] In his last years, Pavlov became something of a historical curiosity, visited by Russian television crews, who took advantage of their new-found freedom to explore a forgotten part of their history by interviewing the last living White.

ROVS still exists. It has even set up several branches in Russia. Its members are people who for whatever personal reasons want to preserve the memory of the White armies. One of its Russian branches, for instance, consists of a small Civil War re-enactment society, whose members, like those of similar societies in the UK and the US, like to dress up in Civil War uniforms and re-enact the battles of the past. ROVS may no longer be an organization of any importance, but its continued existence is remarkable nonetheless.

Russian military exiles suffered terribly from poverty and a lack of legal and civil rights in many of the countries in which they lived, a situation which only worsened as time went on. Nevertheless, they remained remarkably loyal to their military identities and the ideology of the White armies. This was especially true outside the confines of Paris, where most of the scandals and intrigues were concentrated. While others came to terms with the Soviet regime, ROVS kept the flame of 'irreconcilability' burning and did its best to pass the torch on to the younger generation of émigrés. It is true that ROVS itself was organizationally chaotic, and that in France in particular its membership declined severely over time. Yet even in France as late as 1936, Colonel Matsylev was able to persuade eighty members of the Alekseevskii Infantry Regiment to meet together once a month, demanding written explanations from those unable to attend. Members were instructed to research and report on military and political developments in the USSR, and appear not to have questioned Matsylev's right to give them orders sixteen years after the Civil War had ended.[4] Among these members was probably Georgii Kononovich with

[3] Pavlov's experiences in the Civil War are described in his memoirs: B. Pavlov, *Pervye chetyrnadsat' let* (Moscow, 1997).
[4] BAR, ROVS, Box 86, Folder 'Correspondence, Zinkevich to Matsylev, 1934–1936' (Letters, Matsylev to Zinkevich, 16 July and 8 Sept. 1935, 24 Mar. 1936).

whose grave this book began. Despite all the pressures, all the crises, and all the scandals, such men remained loyal to their regiments, and decades after they had shed their uniforms they died believing that they were still officers of the Russian Army.

The determination with which military émigrés clung to their beliefs, their identities, and their organization, can be seen to have resulted from a genuine conviction that these beliefs were right, and from the advantages which émigrés gained from these organizations. The army's High Command protected its men at Gallipoli and in Bulgaria, found employment for many thousands of its troops in Yugoslavia, and helped thousands of others to move to France and Belgium to find work. Later, ROVS and its component parts provided much needed humanitarian aid to its members. But the support that émigré military organizations gave their men was not merely material. It was also moral and spiritual. ROVS's image of itself as an 'order of knights' may have borne little relation to reality, but it gave émigré officers a sense of their own worth at a time when they had been thrown to the bottom of the social ladder and had to endure terrible physical hardship. The Russian Army in exile thus served a genuine purpose, made a positive contribution to émigré life, and helped many thousands of its members both morally and physically.

GLOSSARY OF ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

ORGANIZATIONS

Fond Spaseniia Rodiny (FSR) Fund for the Salvation of the Motherland. Raised money for underground operations inside the USSR.

Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo Gallipoli Friendly Society. Student society of former Gallipoli veterans in Czechoslovakia.

Mladorossy Young Russians. Political organization: Slogan 'Tsar and Soviets'.

Natsional'nyi (Trudovoi) Soiuz Novogo Pokoleniia (N(T)SNP) National (Labour) Union of the New Generation. Political organization of émigré youth.

Obshchestvo Gallipoliitsev Society of Gallipolians. Association of Russian veterans who were at Gallipoli in 1920 and 1921.

Russkii Obshche-Voinskii Soiuz (ROVS) Russian General Military Union. Federation of Russian military organizations.

Soiuz Russkikh Ofitserov Uchastnikov Voiny (SROUV) Society of Officer War Veterans. Based in Paris.

Soiuz Uchastnikov Velikoi Voiny (SUVV) Society of Great War Veterans. Societies with this name existed in Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia.

Sokols Falcons. Gymnastics youth movement.

Zemgor Humanitarian organization, controlled by liberal and socialist intellectuals.

INDIVIDUALS

Abramov, Lieutenant General F. F. (1870–1963). Commander of the Don Cossack Corps. Head of ROVS's 3rd Department 1924–44. President of ROVS, 1937–8.

Arkhangel'skii, Lieutenant General A. P. (1872–1959). Head of personnel department of Russian Army, 1920–2. President of ROVS, 1938–57.

Barbovich, Lieutenant General I. G. (1874–1947). Commander of Cavalry Division. Head of ROVS's 4th Department, 1933–41.

Burtsev, V. L. (1862–1942). Journalist, socialist politician, and spycatcher.

Denikin, Lieutenant General A. I. (1872–1947). Commander of the Armed Forces of South Russia, 1918–20.

Dragomirov, General-of-Cavalry A. M. (1868–1955). Head of Society of Officers of the General Staff. In charge of ROVS's secret operations, 1930–5.

Ekk, General-of-Cavalry E. V. (1851–1937). Head of ROVS's 4th Department, 1924–33.

Foss, Captain K. A. (dates not known). Secretary of ROVS's 3rd Department.

Golovin, Major General N. N. (1875–1944). Military historian and theoretician. Head of the Higher Military Courses in Paris and Belgrade.

Il'in, Professor I. A. (1883–1954). Political and religious philosopher.

Kharzhevskii, Major General V. G. (1892–1981). Head of Gallipoliiskoe Zemliachestvo, 1923–32. Assistant to General Dragomirov in secret work of ROVS, 1930–5. President of ROVS, 1967–79.

Khol'msen, Lieutenant General I. A. (1865–1941). Russian military representative in Germany, 1920–2, and in France, 1922–4. Head of ROVS's 1st Department, 1924–30. Treasurer of ROVS, 1930–5.

Kirill Vladimirovich, Grand Duke (1876–1938). Pretender to Russian throne.

Komorovskii, Squadron Commander A. N. (dates not known). Secretary of ROVS's 4th Department.

Kussonskii, Lieutenant General P. A. (1880–1941). Deputy chief of staff of the Russian Army, 1920–6. Assistant to General Miller, 1930–7.

Kutepov, General-of-Infantry A. P. (1882–1930). Commander of 1st Army Corps, 1920–4. In charge of secret operations in Russia, 1924–8. President of ROVS, 1928–30.

Lampe, Major General A. A. von (1885–1967). Russian military representative in Hungary, 1920–2, and in Germany, 1922–4. Head of ROVS's 2nd Department, 1924–45. President of ROVS, 1957–67.

Larionov, Captain V. A. (1897–198?). White terrorist. Carried out bomb attack on Leningrad Party Club in 1927.

Levitskii, V. M. (dates not known). Writer and propagandist.

Lukomskii, Lieutenant General A. S. (1868–1939). Senior adviser to Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich and General Miller.

Makhrov, Lieutenant General P. S. (1876–1964). Former Chief of Staff to generals Denikin and Wrangel. Russian military representative in Poland, 1920–5. Prominent 'defencist'.

Matsylev, Colonel S. A. (1893–1954). Commander of Paris detachment of Alekseevskii Infantry Regiment. Secretary of ROVS's 1st Department, 1937–40.

Miliukov, P. N. (1859–1943). Liberal politician. Editor of newspaper *Poslednie Novosti*.

Miller, Lieutenant General E. K. (1867–1939). Commander of White forces in the far north of Russia during the Civil War. Chief of Staff of the Russian Army, 1922–4. Seconded to staff of Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, 1924–8. President of ROVS, 1930–7.

Nikolai Nikolaevich, Grand Duke (1856–1929). Former Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Russian Army. Supreme Commander of Russian Army and ROVS, 1924–9.

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Skoblin, Major General N. V. (1894–1937?). Commander of the Kornilov Shock Regiment. Soviet agent.

Steifon, Major General B. A. (1881–1945). Commandant of Gallipoli camp, 1920–1. Commander of Russian Corps, 1941–5.

Stogov, Major General N. N. (1872–1959). Head of military chancellery of ROVS's central directorate, 1930–4.

Struve, P. B. (1870–1944). Political philosopher. Foreign Minister of Wrangel's government in the Crimea, 1920.

Trubetskoi, Prince S. E. (dates not known). Head of political chancellery of General Kutepov, 1924–30. Head of information department of FSR, 1930–7.

Tsurikov, N. A. (1886–1957). Writer and propagandist.

Turkul, Major General A. V. (1892–1957). Commander of Drozdovskii Infantry Regiment.

Vitkovskii, Lieutenant General V. K. (1885–1978). Deputy Commander of 1st Army Corps, 1920–2. Commander of 1st Army Corps, 1922–37. Head of ROVS's 1st Department, 1937–41.

Wrangel, Lieutenant General P. N. (1878–1928). Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army, 1920–1928.

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