

a year, from late June to August, and for the rest of the year it is frozen over. Transportation of new prisoners as well as Cheka personnel, foodstuffs, clothing, tools, machinery and construction materials from Krasnoyarsk to Norilsk and the Taymyr took place during the short period of ice melt.

It was late at night when we arrived in Krasnoyarsk. I was taken to the transit camp, another prison. The receiving guard threw me into the barracks with a rude gesture and locked the door. It was full of detainees, another sight of the misery of humankind, of the physical, psychological and moral tragedy of the “homeland of Socialism.” Most of the prisoners were asleep. I looked around and began anxiously pacing the room.

“Hey! What are you doing?” a man shouted at me. “What are you looking for? This ain’t no Grand Hotel here. Lie down and go to sleep.” He probably figured out that I was new to the situation.

At dawn, the wretched victims of the regime woke up and, one group after another, they went to the latrine (*barasha*) in a corner of the barracks to satisfy their natural needs. A few employees came in to check whether there had been any escapees during the night, after which the orderlies on duty that day took the latrine tank out to empty it. The stench was gone and the air became relatively breathable. Then breakfast was served: a soup made of fish heads and 300 grams of soggy black bread full of sand. The prisoners ate their meal, thanked God and cursed Father Stalin, the leader of all humanity.

At the Krasnoyarsk transit camp, the inmates were