

PROF. VASYL PLYUSHCH

GENOCIDE OF THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE



Cymbal: "The Year 1933"

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The Artificial Famine in the Years 1932-1933

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FOREWORD

A Year of Horror

Forty years ago, in 1932/1933, Russia perpetrated the most outrageous genocide in the history of mankind. Over seven million Ukrainians, hundreds of thousands of Don Cossacks, North Caucasians, Byelorussians and other non-Russians fell victim to artificial famine, systematically organized by Russian colonialists.

The Russian position in Ukraine had been undermined. Millions of Ukrainian peasants resisted forced collectivization. The collectivization of agriculture is not only an economic category, but also a military one. It is a tool of Russia's domination over the subjugated nations. Collectivization is a Russian way of life, which Russia imposes forcefully upon the oppressed peoples in order to rule over them. It is a means of stifling private initiative, a totalitarian form of imperio-colonialist domination.

Hundreds of thousands of privately owned farms are tantamount to hundreds of thousands of points of resistance to the Russian way of life. A collectivized village means total control over the farmer. It is a massive attempt at mastering him. It is an attempt to prevent food assistance to the insurgents as well. The collective farms in the subjugated countries are the Russian control centers of this aspect of life too. A Ukrainian peasant is an individualist. He despises collective economy. He stands for a peasant's private ownership of land. Collectivization of agriculture, therefore, is a thoroughly political and ideological category, not only an economic one. A kolkhoz and private property means a collision of two worlds — Russia and Ukraine — in the national and political respect. It is a clash of an amorphous mass, a herd, controlled by the tyrants and — the individuality which has its own dignity, its own human and national "I". Collectivization is a levelling of life in order to stifle everything creative in a human being. Collectivization is a method of national oppression with the help of massive efforts to impose a hostile ideology of life upon a subjugated nation.

The French, the English, the Dutch and the Belgians by no means imposed their way of life upon the countries acquired by them. The Russians do the contrary. They force their way of life upon the subjugated nations as a means of dominating them.

And thus, for instance, in literature or art socialist-realism is a form of Russian imperialism. It is an attempt at spiritual Russification, which hand in hand with linguistic Russification is to force the subjugated peoples to accept the "reality" of Russian slavery, the dictates of Russia, as the subject of their creativity.

Militant atheism is a form of Russian imperialism in the religious sphere, for, by destroying Christianity and other traditional religions, it attempts to liquidate the millenary spiritual traditions of a nation and to reduce a human being to cattle. The Russian official Kremlin-style "Orthodoxy", as a Caesaro-papist religion, as a "Church" which serves the

atheistic Russian regime, is another form of Russian imperialism, which follows the line of the "Third Rome". Side by side with linguistic Russification there is an attempt at the Russification of the spirit . . . Sovietization is Russification. The Soviet people do not and cannot exist. There are only the Russian people and the subjugated peoples, who engage in a ceaseless and merciless struggle for life or death. Widespread nationalization and socialization are also a form of Russian colonialism in Ukraine and other subjugated countries. Scores of millions of private owners in the subjugated nations are a difficult category for total control. For this reason, all measures adopted by Russia in the subjugated countries must be viewed as nothing other than the forms of Russian imperialism and colonialism.

Forty years ago, Russia committed the greatest crime of genocide in order to drive Ukrainians into the kolkhozes. Ukraine — the richest agricultural country of Europe — lost over seven million inhabitants. Russia sent its troops to take away the harvest, the bread, from Ukraine by force.

Hundreds of thousands of Russian troops plundered Ukrainian villages, confiscating all grain and killing people. The Ukrainian peasant resisted joining the kolkhoz, resisted giving his land to the Russians. An uneven battle ensued. The Ukrainian village rose against collectivization. The peasants perished in battle with Russian troops, but did not go to the kolkhozes. The struggle continued for many months. The Russian armies crushed the peasants' uprising against collectivization. They took bread from Ukraine to Russia. The Ukrainian peasants perished by the millions in the villages and in the streets of cities. Dantean scenes were the order of the day. Ukraine did not succumb. When the mothers and children, and the elderly and the sick were dying in the streets of towns and villages, the insurrection was crushed by the Russians. The Russian tyrants, Stalin and Molotov, temporarily crushed the resistance of the Ukrainian nation at the price of millions of Ukrainian victims.

Several million so-called kulaks, i. e. Ukrainian well-to-do farmers, were forcefully deported to Siberia either to concentration camps or to dig canals. At that time, the Ukrainian nation lost over ten million victims of Russian Bolshevik terror.

However, Russia failed to break the Ukrainian nation. It revived again. The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) organized the struggle of the nation anew and continue to do so at present. Ukraine continues to fight. The Ukrainian people will never forgive the Russian occupants for the ten million victims of Russia's hunger siege of Ukraine.

On this fortieth anniversary of the greatest crime of genocide known in the history of mankind, Ukraine warns the free world against the Russian tyrants who are preparing a similar genocide for it.

It is a tragedy for the free world that it is silent in the face of such outrageous crimes and continues to support Russian domination over hundreds of millions of people and scores of nations.

Caveant consules !

Genocide of the Ukrainian People

In the history of Ukraine, there were quite a few difficult periods and sad anniversaries. At the very dawn of state existence of Ukraine-Rus, our lands were plundered by various nomads, such as the Polovtsi and the Pechenigs, for Ukraine was then an outpost of European civilization in the East. In the 13-14 century Ukraine suffered a dangerous Tataro-Mongol invasion, again defending Europe from destruction. Horrible were the plagues of the 14-15 century, when Ukraine was visited by black death, which exterminated scores of thousands of people, wiping out hundreds of villages and towns.¹⁾

In the more recent history of Ukraine, we can also record distressing periods when our nation sustained heavy losses. A long-drawn-out struggle with the Poles, with many bloody battles and the ruining of our economy and culture by the enemy; the conquest of Ukraine by the Russian state, when tens of thousands of our people died in wars and later at so-called canal construction projects; the division of Ukraine between the Russian empire and Poland and later between Russia and Austria, which was also paralleled by destruction not only of the human potential of our native land, but also of our statehood, culture, traditions, even by the prohibition to use our native language.²⁾

Very painful for the Ukrainian nation has been its defeat in the liberation struggle of 1917-21, when following the reestablishment by the will of the

Ukrainian people of the Ukrainian state — the Ukrainian National Republic, after long resistance, Ukraine was occupied again, this time by Communist Russia.³⁾

But the most horrible years in Ukraine's history were 1931-1933, the years of so-called Stalinist famine.

In the normal world, when we mention famine, we think of disaster most often called forth by natural phenomena, such as frost, draught, floods or other natural catastrophes, an evil which in the contemporary civilized world, highly developed both economically and socially, most often occurs in underdeveloped, overpopulated, poor countries, as for instance India, South America, Africa and so forth. The outbreak of famine, and of such dimensions as had been the 1931-33 famine in Ukraine, a European country with the richest and most fertile soil in the whole world, a country known as the breadbasket of Europe, a country which for almost ten years had been included in the **planned**, so-called socialist economic system of the USSR, that is a huge state with immense areas of land and theoretically unlimited reserves of agricultural production, attracted close attention immediately.⁴⁾

How could famine occur in a country in which the harvest constituted 18,000,000 tons even in a bad year like 1931, i. e. it was greater than in 1928? How could it assume such catastrophic proportions, in particular when one considers that Ukraine was a component in the planned economy of the

USSR and could obtain deliveries from other parts of the USSR even in case of crop failure?

In order to grasp the dreadfulness of this event, perhaps unique in world history, one must briefly pause over the history preceding the Stalinist famine.

For centuries the Ukrainian nation stubbornly fought for its independent state existence against its subjugator — Russia.

The national revolution of Marc 1917 at last liberated it from the infamous prison of nations — the Russian empire, and led to the establishment of an Independent Ukrainian State. But Russia — Communist by now — did not wish to reconcile itself with the loss of its richest colony, Ukraine, its breadbasket and supplier of countless natural resources. Concealing themselves behind the slogans of world revolution and the liberation of the workers from exploitation, the Red rulers of Moscow, with the help of an overwhelming military force reoccupied the territories of our native country, a state which then had the most progressive social legislation and was governed primarily by socialists.⁵⁾ Our people could not reconcile themselves with foreign rule, with the Communist system, completely alien to their mentality, and finally with overt plundering of their land and property by the occupants, and engaged for years in guerrilla warfare. This struggle was crushed by the most brutal terror. But open armed struggle was replaced by secret nationwide resistance to the Russian occupants. Resistance was carried on by numerous Ukrainian underground organizations; resistance was practiced by the Ukrainian intelligentsia; finally resistance was carried on by the peasants.⁶⁾

In the years 1929-30, Russia dealt a severe blow to the Ukrainian nation. In these years, almost the entire national elite of the Ukrainian people had been arrested or terrorized, and

not only in the cultural centers such as Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odessa, Dnipropetrovsk, but also in provincial and county towns and even in villages.

Yet, one force remained, which in spite of the heavy losses, continued to put up resistance to the Russian occupants in Ukraine. It was the Ukrainian peasantry.

The mammoth work done in the time of the Ukrainian national revolution, in the time of the Ukrainian statehood, in the time of the Ukrainian national, cultural renaissance which began in 1917, the work of SVU (Union for the Liberation of Ukraine) and SUM (Ukrainian Youth Association), and the UAPTs (Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church) and other underground anti-Soviet organizations and of hundreds of thousands of the Ukrainian intelligentsia had not been in vain.

The Ukrainian peasantry, strengthened spiritually, nationally and economically, constituted a giant force opposing the Russian occupation regime and the Communist ideology. This was very well understood both by the leaders of the Russian Communist party and the local Communist lackeys. Without a victory over the Ukrainian peasants, Russia's victory over Ukraine, the victory of the Communist system, was impossible.

Russia was particularly clearly aware of the power of the Ukrainian peasantry in the time of the so-called New Economic Policy. Ukrainian peasants at one time had believed the sweet promises of the Soviet government and the Communist party concerning the improvement of their economic conditions. The distribution among the peasants of lands belonging to landlords, monasteries and churches, the promises to secure this land for perpetual use of the poor and middle peasants, the abolition of "food requisitioning" and open plundering of the Ukrainian peasants by provision and Chekist detachments, economic relaxations, permission to engage in free

trade, a substitution of a tax in kind for "food requisitioning", encouragement of intensification of agriculture — all this gave impetus to the initiative of our hard-working peasants, to the development of agriculture. On the other hand, active work in the villages of tens of thousands of Ukrainian intelligentsia, who in the years of blossoming of the national life, the first years of Soviet government, having no opportunity to engage in active political work turned their energies to the raising of the economic and cultural level of the Ukrainian peasants, produced a great effect. The Ukrainian peasants with the assistance of the then national cooperative system, the agricultural credit system, the Ukrainian Church and the Ukrainian agronomists largely improved their farms, began to prosper and to become nationally more conscious. But the enrichment of the Ukrainian peasants and their further national enlightenment in no way decreased their negative attitude to the socialist-Communist system and the Russian occupying power.

The Ukrainian peasants became a threat to the Russian occupants. It was

enough for the Ukrainian peasants to stop or even to decrease their deliveries to the cities of Ukraine, particularly the delivery of grain and other agricultural products to Russia, for all the plans of the Communist government in the sphere of development of so-called socialist industry to become completely illusory. Food deliveries to Russia, to the army, to the cities depended on the good grace of the Ukrainian peasants. In addition, as is always the case, the raising of the peasants' economic level, increased their national self-consciousness and their political awareness.

The work of the SVU had already shown clearly that the Ukrainian peasant is beginning to be quite aware of the fact that without Ukrainian statehood his well-being and his economic and political rights cannot be guaranteed.

The occupation regime had to cope with this growing economic, political, but primarily national power.

The leaders of the Communist party always treated the peasants with contempt and hatred, in particular those in Ukraine as the stronghold of "bour-



A dispossessed peasant

geois" and national element. Incorporating Ukrainian peasants into the Communist system by way of arguments, agitation and propaganda proved impossible. Hence, Russia was faced with the problem of either yielding before this element, or breaking its resistance by whatever means.

The Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), under direct leadership of Joseph Stalin, worked out and put into practice an inhuman, and really diabolical plan to break this resistance, not only through forced collectivization of agriculture, i. e. the impoverishment of the Ukrain-



Primitive hut over a hole in the ground



Ukraine, 1933: victims of starvation

ian peasantry, but also by way of physical annihilation of the Ukrainian population by the millions.

The basis of the plan was to break the biological and moral stamina of the Ukrainian people, the liquidation of private ownership of land and the complete enslavement of the Ukrainian peasants.

Tactical measures included the following:

1) Carrying out of forced, mass, sudden collectivization, i. e. confiscation

4) Carting away of all types of agricultural products from the villages of Ukraine;

5) Introduction of artificial famine, hence physical extermination of millions of the Ukrainian people.

A swift ushering in of collectivization produced shock on one hand, but on the other hand it resulted in active resistance to collectivization.

How mercilessly was the collectivization (a process of forced transition from private ownership of land to so-



A starved peasant

of land, the means of production and food reserves from the Ukrainian peasants;

2) Liquidation of all, without exception, active, enterprising elements of the village, i. e. the so-called kulaks and middle peasants;

3) Imposition upon the robbed Ukrainian peasants of too difficult, utterly impossible plans for the delivery of grain and other agricultural products;

cialist, collective agriculture) being introduced could be seen from the press of the time, and from the reports of regional and district governments and party committees. In a span of several weeks, or even days, dozens of villages were reported to have been converted 100% to a collective system. Cattle and agricultural implements were pulled together to separate, unsuitable farmsteads. In the process of collection the

implements were either broken or left in the open. The cattle was left unattended, even unfed, for days, even weeks. Scores of families of so-called kulaks were driven from each village into the fields and left in the open; their property was either robbed or sold for next to nothing; their houses were demolished or left unattended.

Much has already been written about collectivization and the artificial famine in Ukraine in 1932-33. It is not the purpose of this pamphlet to describe in detail all the horrors of forced col-

in particular in Ukraine where the individualism of the Ukrainian peasantry was quite marked and where the so-called communal agriculture, rather widespread in ethnic Russia, always encountered resistance.⁹⁾

Thus, in 1928, for instance, after a prolonged and persistent agitation on behalf of collective farms, there existed only 9,734 kolkhozes throughout Ukraine, which owned only 2.5 % of all farms and 2.9 % of all land.¹⁰⁾

According to the first version of the First Five-Year-Plan of the Ukr. SSR,



Young victim of the famine

lectivization and so-called Stalinist famine. We shall only make a brief summary.

The collectivization of agriculture, that is the conversion of agriculture from private ownership into the socialist-Communist state ownership was anticipated by Marx⁶⁾ and was included in the Marxist social programs, including the program of the RCP (B)*.⁷⁾ But according to F. Engels the process of collectivization of agriculture was to have taken place completely voluntarily and slowly.⁸⁾

Even Lenin recommended a very cautious introduction of collectivization,

collectivization of agriculture was to have reached 12 % by the end of the Five-Year-Plan.¹¹⁾

Such slow tempo of collectivization of agriculture in Ukraine could never satisfy Moscow. Therefore, it was first necessary to break the resistance of all the Ukrainian peasants, hence, to break the resistance of the entire Ukrainian nation, which we mentioned above. Secondly, it was necessary to guarantee fantastic plans for the industrialization of the USSR, for which adequate funds were lacking. These funds could be obtained only by way of merciless exploitation of the peasants, but the U-



A peasant dies of hunger

Ukrainian peasants did not wish to deliver grain to a **foreign state** at extremely low prices and sabotaged Moscow's plans. Thirdly, it was necessary to deprive the Ukrainian peasants of private means of production, to drive them out of villages, to proletarianize them. Finally, it was necessary simply to decimate the stubborn Ukrainian nation, which for centuries struggled with Russia for freedom and national independence.

On November 17, 1929, the plenum of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) resolved to accelerate collectivization of agriculture, decreeing with respect to Ukraine:

"Ukraine should provide an example of organization of large-scale socialization of agriculture within a very short time."¹²⁾

The question arises: why Ukraine, when it was well known that Ukrainian peasants in particular were com-

pletely unused to communal agriculture, that particularly in Ukraine, collectivization was encountering unusually stiff resistance.

The November plenum of the Communist Party of Ukraine (Bolsheviks) and the government of the Ukr. SSR¹³⁾, being well aware of the attitudes of the Ukrainian peasants, prudently resolved to bring collectivization of agriculture to 21.6 % of all land by October 1930, but this did not please Moscow. By a resolution dated January 5, 1930, the CC RCP (B)¹⁴⁾ ordered an acceleration of collectivization and its conclusion in one or two years' time. At the same time "the kulaks as a class" should be liquidated. In as much as not only rich or well-to-do Ukrainian peasants were considered to be "kulaks", but all those who resisted collectivization, this was an order calling for the extermination of all Ukrainian peasants, that is, an order of conscious genocide.

(Thus, for instance, the USSR government resolution dated January 30, 1933 "On the Consolidation of Kolkhozes" permitted confiscation of all property and deportation to Siberia of all peasants who refused to join the kolkhozes.)

Attempts by members of the government of the Ukr. SSR and various prominent Ukrainian Communists to protest against Moscow's barbarous decisions were answered by the CC RCP (B) and Stalin with repressions against the insubordinate.

The government of the Ukr. SSR and the CP (B) U had to comply obediently with the orders from Moscow. 74,500 party members and 10,500 industrial workers, without counting around 20,000 persons who were sent only temporarily, were dispatched to the villages in order to put into effect the obviously forced collectivization of agriculture.¹⁵⁾

Agitators from the party and mobilized public servants, including teachers, agronomists and doctors, went from village to village agitating for the

kolkhozes, promising earthly paradise to the future kolkhoz workers. But the Ukrainian peasants resisted and did not want to join the kolkhoz. Statements on the entry to kolkhozes were signed by them only under pressure of open terror, often physical tortures. The insubmissive were evicted from their homes as kulaks, thrown out into the open or deported to Siberia.

The following figures give an idea of the tempo of collectivization of agriculture in Ukraine:

By October 1, 1928, 3.4 % of all homesteads and 3.8 % of all land have been collectivized. By October 1, 1929, 8.6% of all homesteads and 8.9% of all land have been collectivized. By March 10, 1930, 65% of all homesteads and 70% of all land have been collectivized. By March 10, 1930, 70% of all working cattle has been collectivized.¹⁶⁾

But such collectivization ruined agriculture and caused uprisings. Famine, which we shall describe below, was the result.

Stalin feared that the Ukrainian element will topple him, will topple his



Cemetery in Kharkiv, 1933: the frozen bodies of the starved

government, will destroy Russian Communism. He later told his friends, the great Western statesmen during and after World War II, about this most frightening period in his life. A recollection of this horror prevented him from committing total genocide against the Ukrainian people during World War II, which he planned to carry out. This was openly related by N. Khrushchev at a Party Congress after Stalin's death.¹⁷⁾

Forced collectivization was halted temporarily. As a result, by July 1, 1930, the percentage of collectivization fell drastically (only 30.4% of all homesteads and 39.7% of all land remained in the collectives.¹⁸⁾

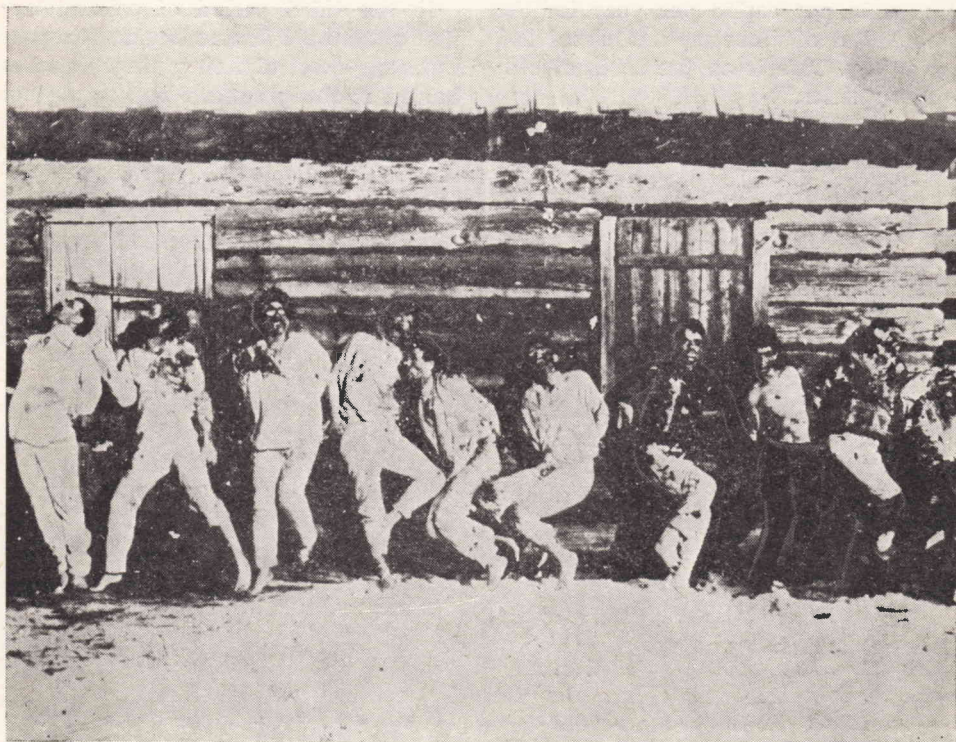
In 1930 Russia increased requisitioning plans in Ukraine by 115 % in comparison with 1926-27, with the credit going mainly to private owners¹⁹⁾, but

Ukrainian peasants continued to leave the kolkhozes en masse, taking back their cattle and equipment. Were this trend to continue, not a trace of the kolkhozes would have remained in Ukraine.

But after a short breathing spell Russia mobilized its forces again. A purge of party and government apparatus in Ukraine was carried out; thousands of Russian Communists were mobilized; the punitive apparatus of the NKVD was established and military units were mobilized for action in Ukraine.

An even more intensive, more brutal collectivization began. Stalin's original plan calling for the liquidation of at least one-tenth of the Ukrainian nation had to be implemented.

By April 1, 1931, 55.4% of all homesteads and 61.9% of all land were collectivized. By January 20, 1932, — 70%



Execution of peasants

and 73.5% respectively; by June 1, 1933, — 69.5% and 86.1%; by June 1, 1934, — 78% and 90.6%; by October 1, 1935, — 91.3% and 98.0%.²⁰⁾

The extermination of Ukrainian peasants by famine began already in 1931. The 1931 harvest constituted 18,300,000 tons, of which 30-40% were lost during harvesting and in transit.²¹⁾

From the actual harvest of 1931 the Russian government requisitioned 7 million tons, leaving for the Ukrainian population an average of 112 kg. of grain per capital per year, and this primarily for the urban population, not that of the villages.²²⁾

Upon the 1932 harvest, which equalled about 12-13 million tons before the harvest and on which losses at harvesting amounted to 50%, Moscow imposed a state purchase quota of 6.6 million tons, taking away more than 5 million tons, that is almost everything. In 1933 on the average there were 83 kg. grain per capita per year for the population of Ukraine, i. e. about 250 gr. a day. This is on the basis of official statistics.²³⁾

In practice, things looked as follows. In the first phase of collectivization in 1929-1930, the Ukrainian peasants, resisting collectivization, i. e. the pillaging of their property, forced confiscation of grain, cattle and agricultural implements, increased their consumption and began to conceal grain from the government in and under their houses, in gardens, orchards, fields, meadows, forests, burying it in the ground, slaughtering and eating cattle and making boot-leg whiskey from grain. The collected farm implements were taken back by the peasants. They came out to work in the kolkhozes only when forced by a whip, but the work was sabotaged. Nourishment was adequate but abnormal.

In the second short breathing spell, most of the peasants left the kolkhozes and began to work intensively on their own land, securing almost a normal harvest in 1931.

In the third period of collectivization a tolerable famine began. The peasants ate most of their grain which was buried in the ground. Another part of



Collection and loading of the corpses



A victim of the artificial famine

grain was confiscated by brigades sent from Russia in search of grain, and those of local activists, who went from house to house, and through gardens, orchards, fields and forests, cutting the ground with special long steel pikes.

Naturally, grain stored in pantries, barns and houses was confiscated to a grain, often including the freshly cooked beet soup and the newly baked bread.

The peasants ate all the cattle which still remained here and there, as well as all pigs, goats, chickens, and even dogs, cats and crows.

In the fourth period, when nothing edible remained in and around homesteads and in the fields, the peasants began to steal from kolkhoz warehouses and to cut off ears from unripened crops in the fields, for which they were shot in compliance with a law "on the pilferage of kolkhoz property". They ate herbs, straw from the houses' roofs, bark from trees. They swelled from hunger and died in their homes, courtyards, in the streets and fields. At that time the government prohibited physicians to write death

certificates showing famine as the cause of death and ordered them to state dysentery, infectious diseases or vitamin deficiency as the cause of death.

At the same time, a mass exodus of peasants from the villages to the cities began, where it was possible to procure some bread. The Ukrainian peasant, a food supplier of the cities of Russia, a nourisher of all of Western Europe in the past, crawled (because he could no longer stand on his feet) to the cities and begged for bread, begged for deliverance from death by starvation. But Russia was merciless. Earlier it has been forbidden to issue passports to peasants, and without passports it was impossible to buy a railroad ticket and in general to appear in town. But in spite of this, the peasants converged on the cities. There they were met by the militia and the NKVD detachments, seized and driven out of the cities and into the open fields.

In as much as not all the peasants who managed to get to the cities could be seized and driven out, they began to die in the streets, markets and squares of cities and towns. Thousands of corpses lay about the cities. They

were piled as logs on trucks and driven outside the towns.

Citizens, who were hungry themselves, but who still had not lost a minimal sense of shame and from their miger share tried to help their hardly alive and swollen brothers from the country, were severely prohibited from giving even a piece of bread to the "cursed kulaks", this being viewed as assistance to the enemies of the people.

As a result of forced collectivization and raging terror, privately owned agriculture was almost completely li-

Thus, for instance, Prof. V. Kubijovyc writes in the Ukrainian Encyclopedia that in the Ukr. SSR 2.5 million people perished as the result of famine, 1 million as the result of repressions, 2-3 million were deported, with the total losses of the Ukrainian population equalling 5-7 million.²⁶⁾

The majority of researchers believe that the number of those dying of famine was considerably larger.

S. Sosnovyi, in a well-argued work "The Truth about Famine in Ukraine in 1932-33", places the deficiency



Starvation in the fields

quidated in the years 1930-1933. All land²⁴⁾ was confiscated from the Ukrainian peasants. All means of production were seized, as well as all cattle²⁵⁾ and the peasants were converted into the most pitiful slaves of the state.

As a consequence of artificial famine no less than 5 million Ukrainians were physically annihilated. Various students of the consequences of the famine and terror in Ukraine mention different figures concerning population losses.

in the population of Ukraine between two censuses at 7.5 million.²⁷⁾

D. Solovey, a very serious and conscientious student of the Soviet occupation of Ukraine, is of the opinion that the losses of the Ukrainian population have reached 6 million people.²⁸⁾

N. S. Timoshov, a Russian emigrant, believes that about 3 million Ukrainians perished from famine alone.²⁹⁾

A Polish researcher, St. Skszypek, argues that in the years 1932-1933, 2.5 million Ukrainians died of hunger while

1.2 million were exterminated as kulaks.³⁰⁾

W. H. Chamberlin and M. Prykhodko mention that 15% of Ukraine's population perished of famine; C. Manning places the losses as a consequence of starvation at 10% of the rural population.³¹⁾

S. Schwarz maintains that 7-8 million persons perished of famine in the USSR, but it is well known that a lion's

population under Soviet occupation, Prof. T. S., places population losses in Ukraine as a result of famine and terror at 10.3 million persons.³⁴⁾

Ukraine was on the verge of death. These were frightening times. The Soviet government banned all assistance to the hungry, swollen peasants who managed to reach the cities. The people became insane, committed suicide. There were instances of cannibalism.



Kharkiv, 1933: orphan in a deserted street

share of the deceased of famine fell upon Ukraine.³²⁾

Yu. Horlis-Horskyi in his work "Ave dictator" maintains that at the end of 1932, 2.4 million persons were deported from Ukraine only to the north of the USSR, including women and children, at a time when all children deported from Ukraine who were less than 8-9 years old perished from hunger and cold.³³⁾

One of the prominent students of the changes in the composition of Ukraine's

Nothing similar had ever occurred in the history of Ukraine. Indeed, had anything similar ever occurred in the history of mankind? ³⁵⁾ ³⁶⁾ ³⁷⁾ ³⁸⁾ ³⁹⁾

One should not hold the view that the Ukrainian peasants perished in silence, without resistance. From a scientific point of view, the struggle of our people in that period has not been adequately expounded in Ukrainian emigre literature.

A considerable number of materials on this resistance is to be found in

Soviet archives. Some of it penetrated to the pages of the Soviet press of the time and is even reflected in historical works and in Soviet propaganda literature and literary works. There are valuable literary works on this subject in emigre literature (T. Osmachka, D. Humenna and others).

It is understandable that in the Soviet press and literature this period is presented in a distorted light, from the point of view of Communist ideology. There, this period is elucidated from the standpoint of "victorious construction of socialism", "the liquidation of the kulak, as a class", "the struggle with hooliganism", etc. But even in that "literature" one can read what a ferocious and uncompromising struggle was then being waged by the Ukrainian nation, decimated and deprived of its leading stratum.

The first phase of this struggle had been resistance to collectivization, in

particular a determined sabotage of all ordinances of the Soviet Russian government concerning the raising of productivity of agriculture and an increase in the rate of delivery to the state of food products and agricultural raw materials.

As a result of resistance by the Ukrainian peasants the area under cultivation decreased considerably, leading in turn to a catastrophic decrease in delivery of agricultural products to state store-houses. The USSR was threatened not only with a decrease or even complete depletion of food and other agricultural reserves which were being stockpiled for the event of war, but even with the problem of interrupted supplying of the cities with food products. The Ukrainian peasants cultivated only as much of the land area as was necessary in order to feed themselves and to sell agricultural products to the Ukrainian cities.



Horrors of the famine

This was answered by the Russian colonial government with an intensification of collectivization and an introduction at the same time of drastic measures, including special taxes, confiscation of property, land, food reserves and even simple, undisguised terror.

Not only the so-called kulaks, but also prosperous and semi-prosperous farmsteads were burdened with contributions beyond their strength (the so-called "homestead plan"), and mass deportation of so-called kulaks and middle peasants to the north of Russia, to Kazakhstan, and Siberia was launched, accompanied by horrible terror and the extermination not only of the adults but also of children.

The intensification of collectivization and the Red Russian terror produced a whole series of overt opposition to the Soviet Russian occupation government in general and its local agents in particular.

This opposition can be classified as follows:

1. **Liquidation** of forcefully established Societies of Conscientious Cultivation of Land (SCCL) and kolkhozes only several days after their creation. The peasants took back to their own farms agricultural implements forcefully requisitioned from them for the kolkhozes, recovered their horses and cattle. In the beginning the entire population of a village or villages participated in these actions. Inasmuch as the organs of the Soviet Russian government retaliated for such actions with terror against the heads of households and adult males, arresting them and deporting them beyond the borders of Ukraine, later the liquidation of the Societies of Conscientious Cultivation of Land and kolkhozes was conducted primarily by women. Such female disturbances or so-called "women's rebellions" took place in all regions of Ukraine without exception and are described very often in both emigre and Soviet literature.

2. **Concealment of grain** and other agricultural products from government authorities and kolkhoz leadership into underground caches located on their farms, in orchards, gardens or in the fields and woods. The Soviet press and Soviet statistics reported in good time that in this manner hundreds of thousands of poods of grain and other agricultural products were hidden from the Soviet state purchasing organs. Thus, for instance, according to V. Holubnychy, in 1930 out of the 23.1 million ton harvest Russia was able to requisition from Ukraine only 7.7 million tons of grain. In 1931 out of 18.3 million tons of grain 30-40% was lost at harvesting. In 1932 out of the harvest totalling 13.4 - 14.7 million tons, 40-50% was lost.⁴⁰⁾

Of course, not all of the above-mentioned millions of poods were hidden by the peasants. A great deal of grain perished in the fields, as a result of the above-mentioned sabotage of the Ukrainian people or as a consequence of unusually bad management which then prevailed in the kolkhozes.

3. **Mass slaughter** of large and small cattle to prevent it from being taken over by SCCLs and kolkhozes.

Thus, for instance, Ya. Shumelda in his work "From Marx to Malenkov" quotes the following figures, on the basis of information supplied by H. Schwarz: In July 1928 on the territory of the USSR there were 33.5 million horses, 70.5 million cattle, 26 million hogs, 146.7 million sheep and goats. In July 1934 there were only 15.6 million horses, 40.7 million cattle, 17.4 million hogs, 51.9 million sheep and goats.⁴¹⁾

4. **Damaging of agricultural implements**, burning of agricultural buildings and even houses. Holubnychy mentions on the basis of Soviet sources that breaking of machinery was noticed in 9.6% of cases⁴²⁾, but in reality damage or destruction of agricultural equipment was widespread. Not only machinery, but steel and wooden

ploughs and even small implements were broken. In addition a great bulk of the implements perished in SCCLs and kolkhozes thanks to mismanagement.

Inasmuch as the pressure upon the Ukrainian peasants from the side of the organs of the Russian occupational government did not cease, but to the contrary, the Red terror was increased more and more, the Ukrainian population shifted to armed struggle with the occupant.

5. Initially, these local armed clashes with the agents of the Soviet Russian government had a non-organized or semi-organized character.

The Ukrainian peasants, revolutionaries (it is hard to call them anything else in view of the situation), began to introduce retaliatory acts of individual terror. In almost all Ukrainian villages representatives of the terroristic Soviet apparatus were killed, including members of district party committees, district executive committees, employees of the GPU (Political State Administration), militia, Communists and members of the Komsomol (Young Communist League) sent from Russia and the cities of Ukraine and activists of the local kolkhozes.⁴⁵⁾ According to official Soviet data, in 1931 alone attacks on activists were recorded in 44% of the kolkhozes⁴⁶⁾, but strictly speaking, there was not a village in Ukraine where instances of retaliatory terror were not recorded.

6. When Soviet Russian terror assumed mass character and the most brutal forms — deportation not only of individual families, but of entire villages, arrests and deportations not only of the "kulaks" and "semikulaks", but also of the poor — when whole families were evicted en masse from their homes in the wintertime, when all means of subsistence, including freshly baked bread and freshly cooked soup, were arbitrarily seized from the entire rural population, when mass star-

vation set in — organized uprisings began.⁴⁵⁾

In the literature accessible to us, we find information about uprisings in the Haysyn district, in the town of Soborivka, in the villages near Kryzhopil, Zhashkiv, Bohuslav, Uman, in Rudchyn, in the Holovaniv and Pervomay posts near Tarashcha, in the Okhtyr and Trostyanets districts, in the Kharkiv region in Bohodukhiv, Velykopysariv, Baklaya districts, in the Dnipropetrovsk region and others. The author was an eye-witness of uprisings in the Odessa and Chernihiv regions.

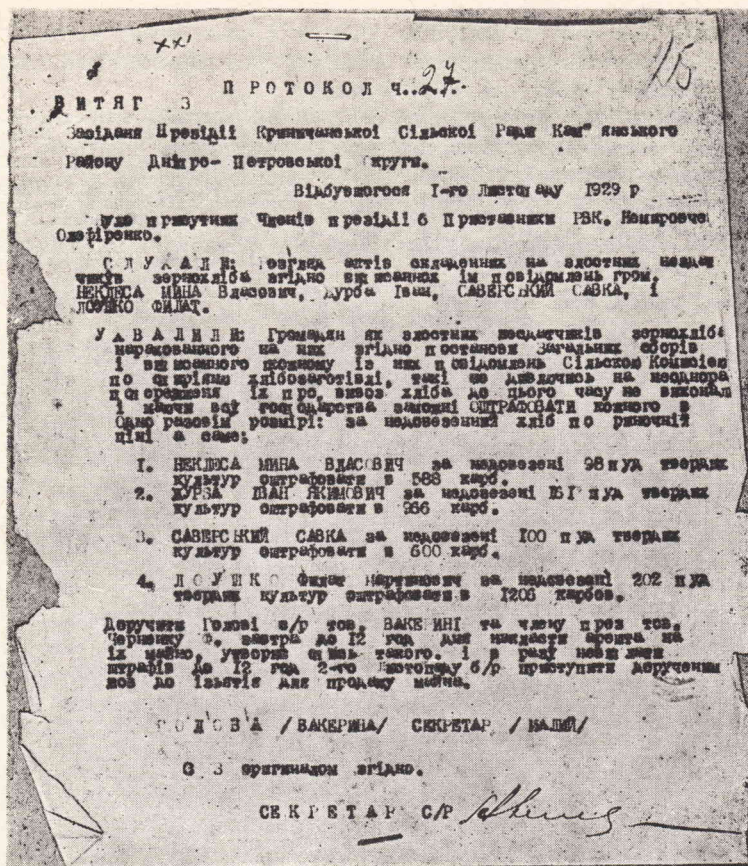
According to Pidkova, "in many localities the authorities fled to large towns. The peasants began to take the kolkhozes apart. In some localities regular units of the Red Army, militia and GPU troops received orders to attack."⁴⁶⁾

Yu. Horlis-Horskyi reports about an uprising in the Kherson region in August 1930;⁴⁷⁾ I. Naddnipyrianskyi — about the so-called East Podillya uprising in the spring of 1930⁴⁸⁾; D. Solovey — about an uprising in the Dnipropetrovsk region in 1930 and an uprising in the Poltava region in 1931 under the leadership of Tymofiy Karamzyn.⁴⁹⁾ Lev Orlyhora talks about a revolt in the Bohodukhiv area of the Kharkiv region in the spring of 1930.⁵⁰⁾

We have very interesting accounts about the large-scale uprisings of Ryabchenko in the Chernihiv region, of Ivan Kozlov in the Poltava region and of Volodymyr Bendyk in the Vinnytsya and Kyiv regions.

The insurrection under the leadership of Ryabchenko in the Chernihiv region in 1930 included the Horodnya, Synyavka and Tupychev districts, Ryabchenko with his closest associates, the Zub brothers, organized his headquarters in the so-called Hrymyachiv Dacha. From there he commanded guerrilla detachments in a number of districts in the Chernihiv region.

Being aware of the fact that an uprising could develop successfully only



Excerpt from protocol No. 27 (Nov. 1, 1929): Kulaks are dispossessed by the government (from O. Kalynyuk, Communism, the Enemy of Mankind, Ukrainian Youth Assn. in Great Britain, London, 1955)

when he could attract military units of the Red Army to his side, Ryabchenko established contact with the 21st Chernihiv territorial regiment. The guerrillas planned to launch an attack on Chernihiv, free about 8,000 arrested peasants from the Chernihiv jails, win over to their side the 21st regiment, seize the weapon reserves of that regiment, arm the freed peasants and the peasants from the Chernihiv villages, disarm the militia, start military operations against smaller regular units of the Red Army, then carry the insurrection further, encompassing all of the Chernihiv region and then the entire Ukraine.

And in fact, at the beginning the rebellion unfolded rather successfully. Units of the 21st regiment which were sent to battle the insurgents went over to the side of the revolting people. Upon orders from Moscow, the most loyal army units were mobilized for the liquidation of the insurrection, in particular the Regiment School of the 21st regiment, but it also joined the insurgents.

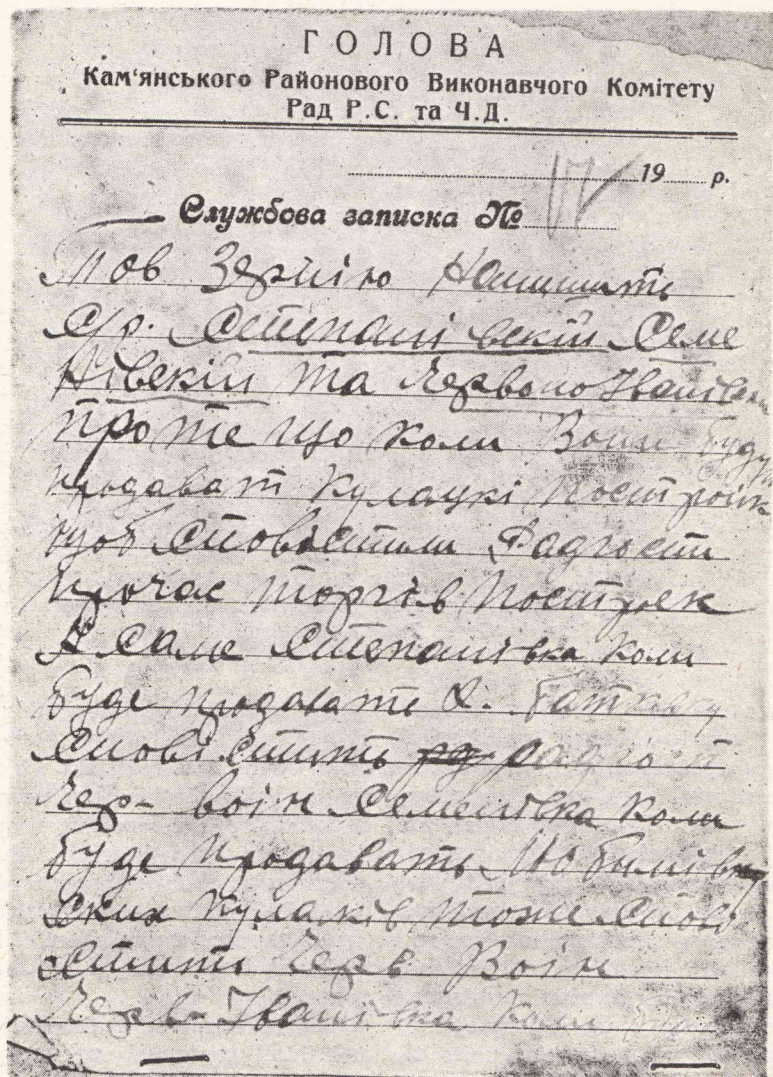
The revolt spread further and further and finally assumed such proportions that Moscow was forced to deploy the so-called Moscow Proletarian Division to crush it. Under the pressure of the overwhelming forces of the adversary, the

insurgents were forced to retreat into the famous Chernihiv swamps and peat-bogs of the natural boundary Zamhlay. Here they fortified their position and for about three weeks withstood the advance of regular troops.

But obviously, the struggle was uneven. The Zub brothers and many in-

surgents were killed in action; Ryabchenko was captured and later annihilated.

After the liquidation of the uprising, a retaliatory action was launched. It was characterized by merciless terror. Not only were the insurgents executed, but all those who looked suspicious.



Official note No. 17 (Sept. 23, 1930): the sale of property confiscated from the Kulaks (from O. Kalynyk)

Thousands of peasants from these districts were deported to concentration camps.⁵¹⁾

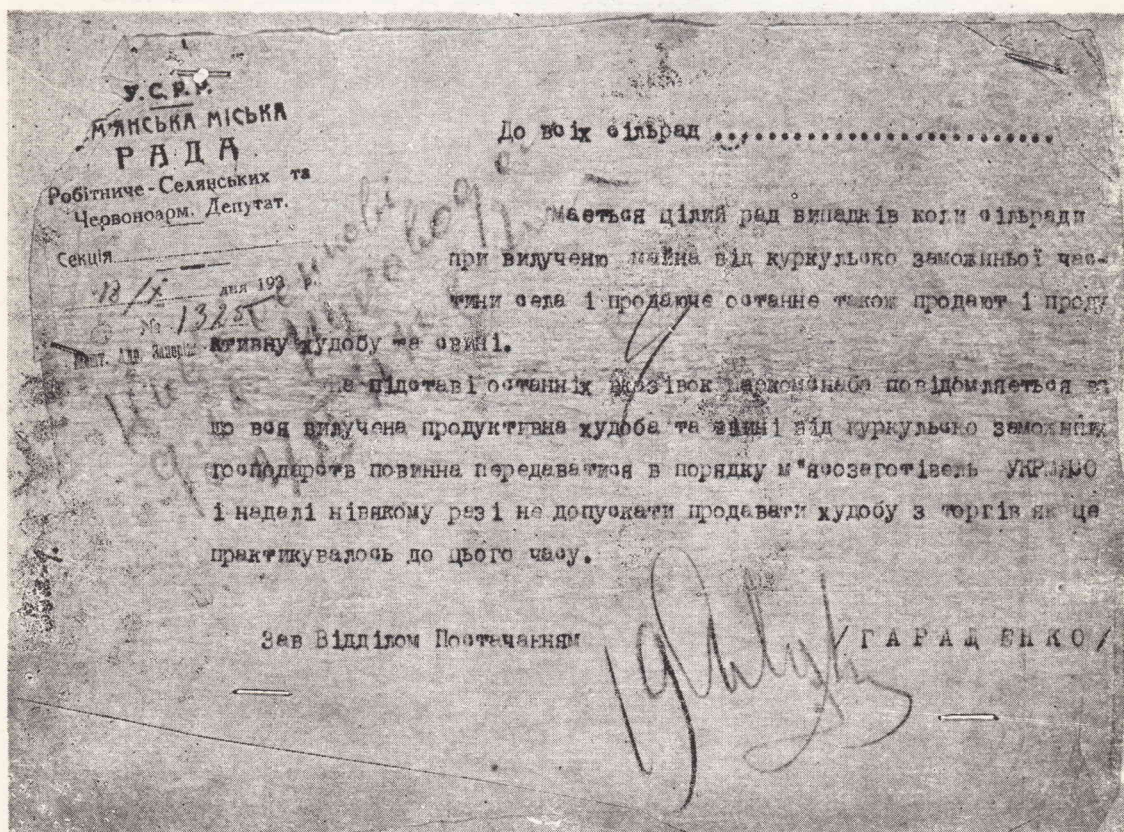
Of considerable importance was an uprising under the leadership of Ivan Kozlov, who initially organized an underground peasant organization which included several districts in the Poltava and Sumy regions, and then started an insurrection which lasted for about two weeks. It was quelled only with the help of special GPU troops. As an act of reprisal, a series of villages of these districts was burned and the population deported to the North.

All the insurgents were executed by shooting. Kozlov, however, was spared and deported to Solovky. It is interesting to note that during the investiga-

tion Kozlov justified his actions by the teachings of Karl Marx. He maintained that Karl Marx said that it is better to die by the sword than to starve to death. Hence, he was defending the peasants for just the same: "One way or another, they would have had to die. So it is better to die in battle than as a starving slave."⁵²⁾

A large insurrection was organized by Volodymyr Bendyk, an elementary school teacher, who, according to N. Pavlushkova, was a leading member of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine.⁵³⁾

S. Pidhaynyi writes that Bendyk stood at the head of "a huge peasant insurrection of the year 1930, which



Directive to village soviets (Oct. 18, 1930): the government confiscates the meat supply (from O. Kalynyk)

spread from Kamyanyets-Podilskyi to Vinnytsya and Kyiv. "Bendyk", writes Pidhaynyi, "enjoyed great authority among the peasants and was a staunch Ukrainian patriot". Critically ill, he appealed to all: "Love your Fatherland and never put down your arms." He said: "There has never been a nation which has won freedom without struggle and without victims."⁵⁴)

Naturally, uprisings in times like these were doomed to inevitable failure. At one end of the struggle there stood a large empire, armed to the teeth, with a huge army, a grandiose government apparatus, a wide-reaching network of secret police (GPU-NKVD), a large party with its auxiliary organizations, and on the other end masses of Ukrainian peasants, without weapons, half-starving or totally hungry and exhausted. Only despair, the total hopelessness of the situation, and on the other hand, the unconquerable human spirit, the invincible spirit of the Ukrainian nation, could have aroused the masses to a desperate struggle.

These were horrible years.

These were the years which covered with eternal shame not only those who arranged the famine and terror — the Russian Communist Party under the leadership of Stalin — but also the heads of governments of Western Europe, North America and the intellectual elite of the whole world, who viewed these

horrors in silence and even maintained, through the utterances of some of their representatives, as for instance Herriot, that there is no famine at all, that the USSR is the most progressive and the most humane country of the world.

Entire villages were dying out.

In the streets of Ukraine's cities, starving people died by the hundreds. "Black marias" transported Ukrainian intelligentsia from the cities every night, while trucks removed the corpses of those who starved to death.

In the streets, in offices, schools and universities, the radio was basting: "I do not know another country where a man breathes so freely."⁵⁵)

At meetings, in the press, in official announcements, "the happy life under the sun of the Stalinist constitution" was discussed and written about. Russian Communist terror, unconcealed raged over Ukraine. Ukraine was dying.

But it had not died. The people, brought down to their knees by the sword of terror bent down but did not perish. **The nation lost 7 million of its children.** The birth-rate in Ukraine, in the past the highest in the world, dropped to a minimum.⁵⁶) Again, in fact, it has been prohibited to speak in the native language, and higher and special secondary schools have been Russified, but the nation lives and continues to fight. This is proved by the recent events in Ukraine.

Footnotes

1) See works in Ukrainian history by M. Hrushevskyi, D. Doroshenko, N. Polonska-Vasylenko and others, as well as the work by the author "The Incidence of Illness and Death of the Population of Ukraine" (in print in: **Ukrainian Encyclopedia**, Vol. 6.)

2) See works mentioned above.

3) See works by D. Doroshenko, I. Mazepa, P. Khrystyuk and others.

4) Famine occurred in Ukraine in earlier periods as well, as for instance in 1833-34, 1844-46 and at other times, but it had mostly a local character. Large-scale famine raged in Ukraine in the years 1921-1922, but we are not mentioning it in this work for it is a separate subject. Still it had not been so terrible as the famine in 1932-1933.

5) See the above-mentioned works by D. Doroshenko and others.

6) See "A Struggle for the Ukrainian State under the Soviet Russians" by the same author. London-Munich, 1973.

7) The Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Kyiv, 1962.

8) Marx, Karl and Engels, F., **Works**, Vol. 1-29, Moscow-Leningrad, 1931-1948.

9) Lenin, V. I., **Works**, Vol. 1-38, Kyiv, 1958.

10) According to V. Holubnychyi: "Collectivization of Agriculture", **Ukrainian Encyclopedia**, Vol. II, Book 3, Paris-New York, 1959.

11) Ibid.

12) **Communist Party of the Soviet Union in Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and Plenums of the Central Committee**, Moscow, 1960.

13) **Communist Party of Ukraine in Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses and Conferences 1918-1956**, Kyiv, 1958.

14) According to V. Holubnychyi — see note 10.

15) Ibid.

16) V. Holubnychyi: "Collectivization of Agriculture", **Ukrainian Encyclopedia**, Vol. II, Book 3, Paris-New York, 1959.

17) N. S. Khrushchev: Report of the CC CPSU to the XX Party Congress, Kyiv, 1956. Also: N. S. Khrushchev's Speech at the 20th Congress of CPSU, "Prolog" Publishers, 1959.

18), 19), 20), 21) and 22), see note 16.

23) Narkomzakh SSR. Byulleten po khlebnomu dyelu. (People's Commissariat of Official Grain Purchases, Bulletin on Grain Affairs). Moscow, 1932-1934.

24) By October 1, 1930, 98% of all land was incorporated into the kolkhozes.

25) By March 10, 1930, 70% of all cattle was taken to the kolkhozes. Later, all cattle was confiscated.

26) V. Kubijovyc. "The Movement of the Population." **Ukrainian Encyclopedia**, Vol. 1, Book I, Munich-New York 1949.

27) T. Sosnovyi. "The Truth about Famine in Ukraine in 1932-33" in **Ukrainski Visti**, No. 10-11 for 2-5 Feb. 1950. Neu Ulm.

28) D. Solovey. **Ukraine's Golgotha**, Winnipeg, 1953.

29) N. S. Timoshov. "Is Russia Doomed?" in **Noviy Zhurnal**, No. 17, 1947.

30) St. Skrzypek, **Przegląd Polski** (Polish Review), 7, 1948.

31) According to V. Markus, "Famine", **Ukrainian Encyclopedia**, Vol. II, Book 2, Paris-New York, 1955-1957.

32) S. Schwarz. "The Demographic Face of Russia" in **Noviy Zhurnal**, No. 8, 1944.

33) Yu. Horlis-Horskyi. "Ave dictator", Ukrainian Publishers, Lviv, 1941.

34) Prof. T. S. "Changes in the Composition of the Population under the Soviets" in **Narodnya Volya**, No. 19-32, 1950.

35) D. Solovey. **Ukraine's Golgotha**, Winnipeg, 1953.

36) **The Black Deeds of the Kremlin. A White Book**. Toronto, 1953.

37) H. Sova. **Famine in Ukraine**. 1933. Munich, 1948.

38) O. Kalynyk. **What Does Communism Bring with Itself**, Munich, 1954.

39) **Ukraine: A Concise Encyclopedia**, Vol. I-II, Toronto, 1963-1971.

40) V. Holubnychyi, *Collectivization of Agriculture*, **Ukrainian Encyclopedia**, Vol. II, Book 3, Paris-New York, 1959.

41) Ya. Shumelda. *From Marx to Malenkov*, Paris, 1955. He refers to the work by H. Schwarz, **Russia. Soviet Economy**, New York, 1951.

42) The above-mentioned author, V. Holubnychyi, mentions in his work "Collectivization of Agriculture" that between 1928 and 1932 the number of large horned cattle as a whole decreased in the Ukr. SSR from 8.6 million head to 4.8 million.

V. Holubnychyi "Collectivization of Agriculture", **Ukrainian Encyclopedia**, Vol. I, Book 3, Paris-New York, 1959.

43) According to V. Holubnychyi. The Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine at the time dispatched 74,500 party workers, primarily Russians. See above. In 1930 alone, 10,500 industrial workers and 19,400 workers and civil servants were diverted from the cities to the villages.

44) As above.

45) The following facts serve to illustrate how collectivization of agriculture was being effected:

The head of the government of the Ukr. SSR, Vlas Chubar, stated that collectivization was conducted in line with the principle, "Join the kolkhoz; if not — then off to Solovky."

M. Skrypnyk said in one of his speeches, "There is nothing left to take; everything has been swept away."

On January 30, 1933, the government of the USSR issued a decree on "The Consolidation of Kolkhozes", which permitted confiscation of all property and deportation to Siberia of all peasants who refused to join the kolkhozes. All the above mentioned facts and classification of the forms of resistance of the Ukrainian peasants are also supported by the author's own observations and materials.

46) Stepan Pidkova. "To the History of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine." Union for the Liberation of Ukraine. Symposium. Vol. I, Munich, 1953.

47) Yu. Horlis-Horskyi. "Ave dictator", Ukrainian Publishers, Lviv, 1941.

48) I. Naddnipyrianskyi. "East Podillya Uprising" in **Ukrainskyi Prometey**, No. 19, May 8, 1952.

49) D. Solovey. **Ukraine's Golgotha**, Winnipeg, 1953.

50) Lev Orlyhora. **For the Judgement of History**, "Nova Epokha" Publishers, 1946.

51) V. Skuybida. "In Memory of the Unknown. Ryabchenko and the Revolt of the 21st Regiment." **Nedilya**, No. 13, 1951. Also, the author's own recollections.

52) S. Pidhaynyi. **Ukrainian Intelligentsia at Solovky. Reminiscences 1933-1941**. "Prometey" Publishers, 1947.

53) Nataliya Pavlushkova. **Union for the Liberation of Ukraine and Association of the Ukrainian Youth**. SVU-SUM. Symposium No. 2. New York-Munich, 1964.

54) S. Pidhaynyi. **Ukrainian Intelligentsia at Solovky. Reminiscences 1933-1941**. "Prometey" Publishers, 1947.

55) This was a song of the lowest form of servile flattery which resounded (under compulsion of course) throughout the USSR. The music for it was composed by Isak Osyповych Dunayevskyi.

56) In 1966 the birth-rate in Ukraine — 15.6 per thousand inhabitants — was lower than in the USSR as a whole (19.6) and lower than that of the USA (21.2), Holland (20.7) and other European countries.

The natural population growth fell catastrophically in Ukraine. For instance, in the Poltava region it equalled 5.6 (the average for the USSR being 12.7.).

See V. Plyushch, "The Present State of Health Protection in Ukraine", **Likarskyi Visnyk**, No. 1-2 (52-53) for 1969, New York-Chicago.

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