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**ORGANIZED FAMINE
IN UKRAINE
1932-1933**

by

MYKOLA HALIY

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C O N T E N T S

1. The methodically organized famine and its purposes	5
2. "The great drama"	9
3. Famine as "an instrument of national policy"	21
4. Moscow denied the existence of famine	29
5. The famine and world conscience	36
6. Conclusion	41

Nothing solid can be built on lies.
We must see things the way they are.

Andre Gide

THE METHODICALLY ORGANIZED FAMINE AND ITS PURPOSES

Thirty years ago, 1932-1933, millions of people were dying of hunger in Ukraine. This tragedy was even deeper because it took place in a country which was known as the breadbasket of Eastern Europe and even exported food products to the countries of the West. The moral aspect of this drama is gloomy, indeed. The famine was not caused by a natural disaster as a flood or draught, nor by any historic cataclysm, such as war, but was deliberately planned and methodically carried out by the Communist Government of Moscow which was at not at war, but enjoying a period of peace. The catastrophe happened not in some remote, little known part of the world, but in European country. However, it did not move the conscience of the world to any considerable relief action. Instead, that conscience of the world was often lulled by Moscow's contradictory statements, as for example, that the famine in Ukraine was merely a figment of the imagination of the counter-revolutionaries.

Today the world knows more and even the Communist side tries not as much to contradict the facts as to cover them up with silence or, in exceptional cases, to get around them by half-admissions.

...When, in the course of his struggle for leadership, Krushchev came out with his select catalogue of Stalin's crimes, he told only half the story. Nearly all the crimes

he listed were crimes against the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. He had very little to say about crimes against the Soviet people — nothing about the civil war against the peasants during the collectivisation; nothing about the tens of millions of harmless citizens (by no means only Russians) condemned to suffering and death in the great slave camp network administered by the Soviet Home Office (the M. V. D.)

For a long time it looked as though it was going to be left to us, outside Russia, to see that these victims were not quite forgotten. But now, in the past three or four months, the Russians have themselves been permitted publicly to remember them: two books, one about life in a labour camp and one appalling action against the peasants of the Ukraine in 1930, have brought into the open aspects of the Soviet past never before in Russia recorded for all to read.

Edward Crankshaw, Russia after Stalin. *The Observer*, London, March 3, 1963.

The passage of time, more than thirty years, and the catastrophe of World War II have dulled the realization of the people of the scope of Ukraine's sufferings and the famine's number of victims. It is the purpose of this brief outline not only to remind the world of this dark page in modern history and not merely to recall the past. The purpose of this selection of documents is to help clarify the true significance of that tragedy.

The artificially created famine of 1932-1933 is but one of the piercing manifestations of the struggle which had been in progress for several centuries between Ukraine and Moscow. Moscow's strategic aim is to destroy the separate individuality of the Ukrainian nation, Ukraine's spiritual and intellectual culture and her struggle for national independence. Such a concept of famine was already then finding its way into the consciousness of the world. The Paris newspaper *Le Matin* stated:

The systematically organized famine has as its objective the destruction of a nation, whose only crime is that it is striving for freedom... Ukraine has come under the imperious rule of Moscow and the communist regime against

her will... This regime has quickly managed to reduce the land to its present situation.

Le Matin, Paris, Dec. 31, 1933.

In more recent times, this struggle took on particularly vivid forms in the sphere of intellectual and spiritual culture, literature, art and science as well as in the political sphere. In the Revolution of 1917-1918 Ukraine regained national independence and proclaimed the Ukrainian National Republic in Kiev on January 22, 1918. In 1920, after a long war, Moscow occupied this Ukrainian State and resumed the traditional policy of levelling the Ukrainian nation, trying to melt it in a common pot into one, so called Soviet, but essentially Russian people. Blocking the way to the achievement of this goal, as the years of the Revolution of 1917-1920 have shown, were two forces: the Ukrainian intelligentsia, the creative bearer of the new Ukrainian culture, the force which shaped the new Ukrainian statehood; the second force, from which the Ukrainian intelligentsia emerged and upon which the intelligentsia leaned, was the Ukrainian peasantry, vigorous and healthy, with a millennial tradition of individual farming, a tradition of private ownership, a force which defended those principles in numerous uprisings, long after the occupation of Ukraine by the Bolsheviks.

Thus, to destroy Ukraine meant to destroy these two forces. Moscow undertook to destroy the intelligentsia by mass arrests, executions and exile to the slave labor camps of the Far North, from which there was no return, but a slow death. This was the fate in the 1930s of the leaders of Ukrainian culture, writers, artists and scholars. This was also the fate of the Ukrainian political leaders and economists who stayed home when the red armies of occupation overran Ukraine. The truth of the situation was known at that time to experts on Eastern Europe who looked deep into issues and refused to be put on a false scent by official Soviet propaganda.

The real reason for bringing a charge against Jefremov, Chekhivsky and the others is the desire to destroy the Ukrainian intelligentsia by getting rid of its chief representatives.

The Soviet policy in Ukraine, carried on since 1923 and

called Ukrainization, aimed at obtaining a hold on the national culture of Ukraine and changing it into a culture of the working classes dependent on Moscow. After five years this policy failed entirely. The Ukrainian intelligentsia themselves made use of Ukrainization in all branches of life for its own purposes, deepening the Ukrainian national culture and winning the ideological fight with the Communists by their strong resistance. Realizing its failure, Bolshevism has taken to its alternative weapons — terrorism and provocation. By these means it seeks to kill the creative efforts of Ukrainian culture.

Saturday Review, London, Jan. 18, 1930.

However it was not possible to destroy the peasantry by methods of executions and deportations. Nikita Krushchev was quite frank about this.

The Ukrainian avoided meeting this fate only because there were too many of them and there was no place to which to deport them.

The Anti Stalin Campaign and International Communism. A Selection of Documents. Columbia University (New York, 1956), p. 57.

Thus, to break once and for all resistance of the peasantry and force it into the yoke of collective and fully controlled farming, Moscow resorted to an artificially created famine.

Consequently, the 1932-1933 famine in Ukraine must be looked upon not only as a clash between totalitarian Communism and free individual farming which had its strongest representative in Eastern Europe in the Ukrainian peasantry. The famine was another step in Moscow's struggle to destroy the spiritual, political and national separate individuality of Ukraine.

The method of this work will be to illustrate those facts by the voices of foreigners — eyewitnesses of the events of 1932-1933, articles from the world's press, appeals made to world opinion at that time. The voice of the Ukrainians themselves, among whom there are many who in those years lost their families, might seem too subjective, dictated by bitterness and pain. The voice of foreign, objective observers are usually heard with greater trust.

Unfortunately, the cited authors, following an old custom, are frequently using the terms "Russia" and "Russian" for the entire Soviet Union and its numerous nations, although the name Russian today applies only to the part of the USSR known as the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. Ukraine is not a part of the latter. This confusion creates in the minds of uninformed readers an impression of a single-nation, monolithic Russian giant, and constitutes an obstacle in the struggle for the liberation of colonial peoples enslaved by Moscow. Since we have no right to correct erroneous terminology in quotations, we leave the originals intact, but forewarn our readers about it.

II

"THE GREAT DRAMA"

What I saw there made me think again and again: "Why does not a new Jeremiah arise to lament in a voice that would make the whole world tremble the millions that are perishing on this soil? Why? Why?"

Harry Lang

American and European authors who were eyewitnesses of the events in Ukraine in 1932-1933 describe them as "gigantic tragedy" (W. H. Chamberlin), "starvation stalks through the Ukraine" (Th. Walker), "one of the world's biggest tragedies" (S. Swift), "starvation according to plan" (W. Williams), "battlefield" (M. Muggeridge) and "planned extirpation of a great people" (Neue Zuericher Zeitung).

A grim chronicle...

...In the autumn of 1933, when the ban on travel in the Ukraine by foreign journalists was lifted, I went with my wife, to learn at first hand what had happened in the Ukraine. We visited two widely separated regions, Poltawa, the other near the town of Bila Tserkva. We also made system-

atic inquiries at railway stations as we traveled across the country.

No one, I am sure, could have made such a trip with an honest desire to learn the truth and escaped the conclusion that the Ukrainian countryside had experienced a gigantic tragedy. What had happened was not hardship, or privation, or distress, or food shortage, to mention the deceptively euphemistic words that were allowed to pass the Soviet censorship, but stark, outright famine, with its victims counted in millions. No one will probably ever know the exact toll of death, because the Soviet Government preserved the strictest secrecy about the whole question, officially denied that there was any famine, and rebuffed all attempts to organize relief abroad.

But every village I visited reported a death rate of not less than ten per cent. This was not an irresponsible individual estimate, but the figure given out by the local Soviets...

Walking through the dusty streets of the village one was impressed by the sense of death and desertion... The young secretary of the village Soviet, whose name was Fischenko, reported that 634 out of the 2,072 inhabitants of the village had died. There had been one marriage in the village during the last year. Six children had been born, of whom one had survived....

There was Anton Samchenko, who died with his wife and sister; three children were left. In Nikita Samchenko's family the father and two other children died; five children were left... Gerasim Samchenko died with his four children; only the wife is still alive. And Sidor Odnorog died with his wife and two daughters; one girl is left. Yura Odnorog died with his wife and three children; one girl is still alive.

This kind of grim, stark chronicle could have been compiled in almost any village in the Ukraine in that terrible winter and spring of 1932-33.

William Henry Chamberlin, *The Ukraine, A Submerged Nation*, (New York 1944), pp. 60-61.

Starvation stalks through Ukraine...

Starvation stalks through the Ukraine section of Soviet Russia, leaving a ghastly trail of death and agony...

The Ukraine is the most fertile grain producing district in Russia. The facts contained in the series of articles(...)

were obtained by *Thomas Walker*, an American newspaperman(...) at the peril of his life.

I have recently toured the Ukraine district of Soviet Russia, where 6.000.000 peasants have perished from starvation in the past eighteen months, due to the excessive tolls made on their crops by the Bolshevik government.

Last winter, Red Army soldiers, under orders from Moscow, took so much of the season's crops from the peasants that they were unable to feed themselves and their livestock through the winter.

About twenty miles south of Kiev, I came upon a village that was practically extinct by starvation. There had been fifteen houses in this village and a population of forty-odd persons.

Every dog and cat in the village had been eaten. The horses and the oxen had all been appropriated by the Bolsheviks to stock the Collective Farms (...)

In one hut they were cooking a mess that defied analysis. There were bones, pigweed, skin, and what looked like a boot top in this pot. The way that the remaining half dozen inhabitants eagerly watched this slimy mess showed the state of their hunger.

New York Evening Journal, Febr. 18, 1935.

The occupants of one cabin were a very thin girl of fourteen and her brother of two and one half years. This younger child crawled about the floor like a frog, and its poor little body was so deformed from lack of nourishment that it did not resemble a human being. Its mother had died of starvation when it was one year old. This child, I learned from the girl, had never tasted milk or butter... These two infants carrying on, with no hope of relief, was one of the most agonizing scenes of the entire trip. Death seemed kind in comparison to the starvation meted out as severely and ruthlessly as it had been to these children...

While at Moscow I had visited a world-famous home for children, run by the GPU. To be able get into this home, however, a child must have had the good judgment to pick parents of pure Bolshevik stock. There was no place for the children of ordinary peasants...

Conversation with the people convinced me that the

so-called Famine of Russia was no famine. A famine is the result of a drought or shortage of crops.

There was no unusual crop shortage last year. Demands by the State on the pitiful harvests of these peasants, which was, in fact, a planned process of extermination by Moscow, is what caused the terrific loss of life in this district in the past year.

The powers in Moscow offer no alternative to these people other than death. They cannot work on a State farm. They cannot grow food for themselves. *They must starve.*
New York Evening Journal, February 19, 1935.

Homeless and hungry, there are thousands of the peasants wandering through Ukraine, seeking for a scrap of bread to sustain life.

...Despair was written all over the mother's face. She first asked for a drink of water for her son. Then she asked if we would permit her to take the shoes off the corpse and boil them, as she thought there might be some nourishment in a soup from such a process. Her son had not eaten in three days. This mother's story was like all the others. She kept a picture in her heart of the Hetman of the Ukraine instead of Lenin, Stalin and Kalinin. Her husband had been sent to Siberia for ten years for the grave crime of trying to provide enough bread for his little family.

New York Evening Journal, February 19, 1935.

He paused, and repeated: "Six million"...

Mr. Harry Lang was born in Russia 1888. He came to the United States in 1904. For several years he was labor editor of the Jewish language *Daily Forward*, a Socialist newspaper. He is now a member of the editorial staff of that newspaper.

(Article Two by H. Lang.)

We arrived in Kharkov, then the capital of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. The first street scenes I saw spoke their own language. Men and women were returning at sunset from great tractor plant and other factories. Their clothes were old, dirty strips of sacking... Many women were carrying infants in their arms.

And all, men and women alike, thousands of them, had lumps of black bread under their tattered sleeves. On the

way, they nibbled at the bread and swallowed every crumb. The hand of hunger was sticking out from the mutilated chunks of bread.

A high official of the Ukrainian Soviet, with whom we established contact, confidentially advised me to take a trip to the villages. Only there, he said, would I see the full handiwork of the famine. And he added:

"Six million people have perished from hunger in our country in 1932-33." Then he paused, and repeated: "Six million."

One of the grave-diggers came up to me and started a conversation.

"You are looking at our fresh graves?" he said. "You see, Kiev has also made its contribution to the second five-year plan. Tell my brothers in America about it."

In the Kiev cemetery I saw hundred of people scarified by the GPU, bearing the marks of torture from persecution and hunger. They stood over the graves of their dear ones and begged the dead for bread.

I walked along until came to a woman sobbing and crying aloud.

"What shall I tell you, my dear sister? You are well off. You see nothing, you hear nothing. Mother wanted to come and join you today. But she hasn't the strength. We have nothing to eat at home, dear sister. Do you remember the beautiful home which we once had?" She was talking to the dead.

A young man, with his eyes half-closed, was addressing himself to two graves over which stood one headstone:

Can you do nothing for me? Nothing? How long must I continue to suffer?

With bated breath I was watching the Soviet investigators at work. Suddenly something else caught my eye. A peasant woman, dressed in something like patched old sacks, appeared from a side path. She was dragging a child of three or four years old by the collar of a torn coat, the way one drags a heavy bag-load. The woman pulled the child into the main street. Here she dropped it in the mud... The peasant woman was the mother. The child's little face was bloated and blue. There was foam around the little

lips. The hands and tiny body was swollen. Here was a bundle of human parts, all deathly-sick, yet still held together by the breath of life.

The mother left the child on the road, in the hope, that somebody might do something to save it.

My escort endeavored to hearten me. Thousands and thousands of such children, he told me, had met a similar fate in the Ukraine that year...

Selected excerpts from *N. Y. Evening Journal*, Apr. 16, 1935.

My ears still ring with the wail of children...

Four years the cables and mails have been telling second-hand stories of tragedies in the Ukraine. They have piled up fragmentary details of unrest, conflagrations, executions, deportations, famine, starvation, terrorism. But no American newspaper has obtained an accurate, first-hand story of what was actually going on behind the wall of silence erected by Soviet Russia around the Ukraine. The life and fate of the millions of human beings living across the Dniester was a mystery... And now, for the first time, a newspaper correspondent has come out of the Ukraine alive to tell the story of one of the world's biggest tragedies.

Detroit Sunday Times, July 14, 1935. Part 2, p. 10.

Repeated reports of horror have come from the Ukraine. Travelers have seen peasants arriving in Kharkov from the land, showing signs of debility and despair. If they know anything of the language they may be able to get covert details of the famine and the horrible starvation, the slow process of the decomposition of Russia's richest part, its grain house, the once happy Ukraine...

...One of the first settlements I saw was a village near Rymarov, 29 peasant homes. All empty, not a single soul in the entire village, the fences broken or torn up; the houses falling in. My guide explained: The inhabitants have all been taken to Siberia. In 1931 they refused to join the Kolchos. In 1932 they refused to give half of their crop to the state. It was taken from them, but the remaining half was not to be theirs...

We drove into a small village of about 20 homes. Save for the representatives of the political authorities, there was not a man left in the entire village. Only women and

children. No grown boys either, they had run away. The women do all the work and wait. Wait for their husbands and sons to return. From where? Nobody knows. The "boss" cannot tell them. He was transferred to this place only four weeks ago and the men have been gone for a year.

Village after village followed. Each one had its own tragedy. In only a few of them was a contented face to be seen. It was usually a child's.

The children were born after the revolution. They have never know better times. They have not even heard about them.

Thirty-five miles farther to the east we met with real famine. A youngster, just about 10 years old stopped our car and begged food. His bones were covered tight by his skin, his eyes had an eery light. His clothing consisted only of a long torn brown shirt.

Men, women and children were dragging toward the city, where they believed they could get something to eat. The city guards weren't attempting to stop them. Most people did not even look at them.

Some of them die on the open road...

The heart of an onlooker from a civilized country cannot bear the experience without pain. My ears still ring with wail of children: "Nothing to eat."

"We are hungry", is the echo from every corner".

(Selected excerpts from an article of *Stephen K. Swift*.)

A common grave for dead and living...

The Neue Zuericher Zeitung published a report from an eyewitness, a foreign engineer employed in the Donetz industry, who had to go regularly to Kharkov. "Conditions in the provincial centers of the south are infinitely worse than in the capitals. When the train arrives one enters the station building. It is clean, and no one is to be seen but the railway officials and OGPU agents. But than one goes into the open air, on the station square. The whole square is covered with dead bodies. Dreadful skeletons lie in the dust on the stones. Some are still moving, the rest motionless."

The same eyewitness then describes in particular the terrible fate of the children in the famine areas. In one of

these accounts he said: "It was beyond my comprehension. I would not at first believe my own eyes. Some of the children dragged themselves to their feet for the last time and gathered their remaining forces to look for something eatable in the street. But they were so weak that they fell down and remained lying where they fell. The poor children were the strongest impression of any journey."

Quoted from E. Ammende, *Human Life in Russia*, p. 63.

Peasants from the surrounding countryside, women and children, were dying of hunger every day in the streets of Kharkiv, Kiev, Odessa, and other cities of Ukraine. A starved corpse in the streets of the city was an everyday sight in those days.

Dr. E. Ammende, *op. cit.* p. 61.

It was beyond my comprehension... In Kharkiv I saw a boy, wasted to a skeleton, lying in the middle of the street. A second boy was sitting near a keg of garbage picking eggshells out of it. They were looking for edible remnants of food or fruit. They perished like wild beasts.. When the famine began to mount, the parents in the villages used to take their children into the towns, where they left them in the hope that someone would have pity on them.

Dr. E. Ammende, *op. cit.* p. 63.

...The grain collections in Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus had been carried out with such ruthlessness and brutality that the peasants were left completely without food. Thousands were expelled, and in some instances the entire population of a village was sent to do forced labor in the forests of the north.

Dr. E. Ammende, *op. cit.* p. 56.

...The number of corpses was so great that they could only be removed once a day. Often, no distinction was made between the corpses and those not yet quite dead; all were loaded on to lorries, to be flung indiscriminately into a common grave.

Dr. E. Ammende, *op. cit.* p. 61.

The report of Mr. and Mrs. Stebelo was published on August 29, 1933, in the New York Times, and on August 30 and 31 in the *Matin* of Paris. "When we arrived in

Kiev we didn't first find much change in the town, till we went into the suburbs. There the people's appearance horrified us. Most were lying down and not moving. Their legs were swollen. They seemed to be ill. Others were walking in pairs, bent double. Their eyes were unnaturally distended and stared straight ahead. No one uttered a word".

All eyewitnesses declare that things there are far better than in the country, though even in the towns only the members of the so-called "privileged categories" are at all well provided for. The "non-privileged categories" have to starve and die... If you look at these districts from the train windows on the journey to the health resorts in the Crimea and the Caucasus nothing particular will be noticed... But it is enough to go five or ten miles away from the stations, into the hinterland, and conditions are quite different. There are corpses lying on the roads, with flocks of ravens wheeling around them; the villages are desolate, dead, abandoned; the fields are overgrown with weeds.

Dr. E. Ammende, *Human Life in Russia*, p. 64.

Starvation "according to plan"

In a far-off Chinese mission, a doctor, weary of an unavailing fight with death, whispers the word — and the whisper grows into a shout that echoes round the world. And presently the relief ships are racing across the oceans, carrying grain and rice to the coolies whose harvest has failed.

It is Nature's challenge to man — and man meets it always in the twentieth century with the proud pledge: "They shall not starve"! There are many things about which the nations bicker, but let one of them be facing this gaunt horror of hunger, no matter how it has been brought about, and the rest will show that "the brotherhood of man" is no idle phrase but a living reality.

Here, indeed, is the truest internationalism earth has ever known — an internationalism based, not on fine words or theories, but on the hearts of men and women who have children of their own, and cannot bear the thought of little ones starving in any corner of the world.

Yet, in spite of all this, during the last twelve months, in one European country, millions of people have died of starvation. They are still dying like flies to-day. Dying in a land which was formerly one of the richest of all peasant states, after what has been officially described as "the biggest wheat crop for fifty year's.

...I am not reporting merely what I have heard. Once I saw with my own eyes the victims of famine. Men and women were literally dying of hunger in the gutter... ("Wild children") they sat in the streets, their eyes glazed with despair and privation, begging as I have never seen anyone beg before... There was one youngster I saw in Kharkov. Half-naked, he sunk, exhausted, on the carriage-way, with the kerbstone as a pillow, and his pipe-stem legs sprawled out, regardless of danger from passing wheels. Another — a boy of eight or nine — was sitting among the debris of a street market, picking eggshells out of dirt and examining them with heartbreaking minuteness in the hope of finding a scrap of food still sticking to them. His shrunk cheeks were covered with an unhealthy whitish down that made me think of those fungoid growths that sprout in the darkness out of dying trees.

...There are hordes of those wild children in all the towns. They live — and die like animals.

From other sources I heard whispers of a still stranger and more dreadful possibility — that some of the leaders of Russian Communism to-day might regard the continuance of the famine over this winter as being quite useful, because it would drive home to peasants and factory hands alike the grim but essential lesson: "work or starve."

Personally, I find it difficult to believe this — it is too inhuman! — but I know that one British agricultural expert, who has travelled widely in Russia, and knows the psychology of its rulers, has suggested quite seriously that the famine may be starvation "according to plan".

Whiting Williams, *Answers*, London, Febr. 24, March 3. Quoted from *Famine in Ukraine*, publ. by United Ukrainian Organizations of the USA (New York, 1934) pp. 16-27.

Another few excerpts from the world press of these and the immediately following years, and fragments from books by authors who described the events, in order to make the picture more complete.

Travelling through the countryside was like running the gautlet: the stations were lined with begging peasants with swollen hands and feet, the women holding up to the carriage windows horrible infants with enormous wobbling heads, stocklike limbs, swollen, pointed bellies... You could exchange a loaf of bread for Ukrainian embroidered kerchiefs, national costumes and bedcovers.

Arthur Koestler, *The Yogi and the Commisar*, (New York, 1961), p. 128-129.

On a recent visit to the Northern Caucasus and the Ukraine, I saw something of the battle that is going on between the government and the peasants. The battlefield is as desolate as in any war and stretches wider; stretches over a large part of Russia. On the one side, millions of starving peasants, their bodies often swollen from lack of food; on the other, soldier members of the GPU carrying out the instructions of the dictatorship of the proletariat. They had gone over the country like a swarm of locusts and taken away everything edible; they had shot or exiled thousands of peasants, sometimes whole villages; they had reduced some of the most fertile land in the world to a melancholy desert. The conquest of bread, like the conquest of glory seemed a vain pursuit.

Malcolm Muggeridge, *The Forthnightly Review*, London, May 1, 1933, p. 564.

Here is what a British agricultural expert reported to his principals in London after travelling hundreds of miles through the farmlands of the North Caucasus (Kuban):

"In whole districts the extinction of the population through famine is in full swing. In some villages I visited the population is now almost extinct. In others about half the population has died off. In the villages I visited the number of deaths varied between twenty and thirty a day. There are still villages in which death from famine is not so frequent. But famine in some degree reigns everywhere in the regions I have visited."

The man who wrote that had no thought of his report, or any part of it, ever being published. He was writing simply and solely for the information of his principals. He had no political axe to grind.

Answers — London Feb. 24, 1934.

Yes, in huge areas of Russia — we saw it with our own eyes in Ukraine — real, unrestrained famine ravaged and does to this day, along with hunger typhus, swollen, naked corpses, empty villages whose inhabitants have been deported, died, or run away, and with cannibalism that has ceased to be a punishable crime.

New York Jewish Daily *Forward*, Dec. 27, 1933.

The terrible famine in Ukraine is a fact which no longer can be kept secret from the world. This is confirmed among other things by the Draconic laws against the so-called snippers, who cut off, during June and July, the unripe ears of grain, in order to bake, out of unmilled wheat and barley, mixed with bran, something those miserable people called bread. It is possible that in this summer millions of Ukrainian peasants have died of hunger. This unprecedented plunder, this planned extirpation of a great people is carried out not in some distant uncivilized country, but within the limits of our own Continent.

Neue Zuericher Zeitung, (Switzerland), Sept. 1. 1935.

This is but a small part of the documents of the tragedy, taken from newspapers of various countries and from books of various authors. The language of these documents is eloquent and convincing for every honest human being.

III

FAMINE AS "AN INSTRUMENT OF NATIONAL POLICY"

The American author, W. H. Chamberlin, correspondent of *The Christian Science Monitor* in Moscow, gives not only a picture of the Ukrainian drama of 1932-1933 but reveals its true essence in his books "Russia's Iron Age", (Boston, 1934), and "The Ukraine, a Submerged Nation" (New York, 1944).

William Henry Chamberlin, the very competent correspondent of the *Christian Science Monitor* at Moscow, represented his newspaper in Russia for the past ten years. Unlike most correspondents in Moscow, he speaks Russian fluently. He has traveled far and wide in the Soviet republic, and is considered the best informed of any American correspondent.

Mr. Chamberlin is now free of Soviet censorship. As he has been transferred to the Far East, he need no longer consider the effect of his dispatches on the rulers of Russia.

In one of his first uncensored articles he declares that more than 4,000,000 peasants died of starvation in Ukraine and the North Caucasus during the winter of 1932-1933.

He visited many parts of these districts, and he found the same story — 10 to 25 per cent of the population in towns and villages wiped out.

Mr. Chamberlin makes the amazing assertion that the Soviet officials deliberately allowed millions to starve to death to "teach the peasants a lesson" and force them into the co-operative farms.

Some communities that showed a resistance to co-operative farming were driven by force from their homes and exiled en masse to the frozen wastes of Siberia.

Heavy requisitions of food for the cities or export often left entire villages with not enough food to sustain life, and the inhabitants perished.

Mr. Chamberlin points out, that this is the first instance on record of a civilized nation actually resorting to famine as a deliberate instrument of national policy, dooming millions to death to break down resistance to government edicts.

Mr. Chamberlin's story is a ghastly one. Why it should be delayed a year can be readily understood by anyone who knows the rigid restrictions on correspondents in Russia.

But now that some of them, like Mr. Chamberlin, Eugene Lyons of the United Press, and some veteran English correspondents, are leaving Russia and are free to print the truth as they saw it during their long service in Russia, we are getting facts instead of Soviet propaganda.

The Boston Post, May 31, 1934.

Famine was quite deliberately employed as an instrument of national policy, as the last means of breaking the resistance of the peasantry to the new system where they are divorced from personal ownership of the land and obliged to work under conditions which the state may dictate to them and deliver up whatever the state may demand from them.

W. H. Chamberlin, *Russian's Iron Age*, p. 88.

This famine may fairly be called political because it was not the result of any overwhelming natural catastrophe or such a complete exhaustion of the country's resources in foreign and civil war as preceded and helped to cause the famine of 1921-22. The government was determined to teach the peasants a lesson by the grim method of starvation to force them to work hard in the collective farms.

W. H. Chamberlin, *The Ukraine, a Submerged Nation*, (New York, 1944), p. 59.

The "de-kurkulization" was an extremely painful operation. There has been a huge liquidation of the more well-to-do and incorrigibly individualistic peasants loosely and conveniently dubbed "kurkuls". They have been packed off in hundreds of thousands, if not in millions, for forced labor in timber camps, on canals, and in new construction enterprises.

W. H. Chamberlin, *Russia's Iron Age*, p. 67.

...There were many arrests, especially among Ukrainian intellectuals, and as remedial measures the Party Central Committee proposed that there should be a careful purge of scientific and educational institutions where the presence of separatists suspected; that the works of Marks, Engels,

Lenin, and Stalin should be published in Ukrainian; and that "Bolshevik control" should be established over Ukrainian literature and art, evidently for the purpose of rooting out any traces of separatism.

This disaffection in Ukraina had its roots not only in a systematic preference of Russians to Ukrainians in state offices,... but in the ruthless agrarian policy dictated from Moscow, which led to hunger as early as 1931 and to widespread famine in 1932-1933.

W. H. Chamberlin, *Russia's Iron Age*, p. 283.

And yet, when one sums up all that can fairly be said about the constructive sides of the Soviet regime, there remains a formidable burden of facts on the other side. There is the permanent and odious system of terrorism and espionage. There is decimation of the intelligentsia through secret arrests and banishments and most unconvincing "sabotage" trials. There is the subjection of the peasantry to wholesale deportations and to a "military feudal exploitation" that reached its terrible and inevitable climax in the great famine of 1932-1933 — all for the sake of imposing on the peasants an alien and unfamiliar system which certainly has yet to prove its productive advantages.

How can one reconcile such apparent contradictions: establishment of children's nurseries and sending of some children, with their kulak parents, to Arctic wastes; setting up of technical research institutes and application of inquisitorial methods to scientists of world eminence — to mention two of the more obvious? It is my personal belief that the Bolshevik Revolution and the Soviet regime which grew out of it can only be understood as an example of historical tragedy of the deepest and truest type, a tragedy of cruelty, of the crushing out of innumerable individual lives, not from sheer wanton selfishness, but from perverted, fanatical idealism — always the surest source of absolute ruthlessness...

Such major atrocities as the liquidation of the kulaks as a class, the state-organized famine, and the persecution of the intelligentsia have harmful results that go far beyond their immediate victims...

W. H. Chamberlin, *Russia's Iron Age*, pp. 373, 374.

The number of people who lived in famine areas was in the neighborhood of sixty million; the excess of deaths

over a normal mortality rate can scarcely have been less than three or four million...

Of the historic responsibility of the Soviet Government for the famine of 1932-1933 there can be no reasonable doubt.

W. H. Chamberlin, *Russia's Iron Age*, p. 88.

The interconnection between the agrarian policy of the Soviet authorities and the famine induced by them as part of Moscow's nationality policy was quite clear to Dr. Ewald Ammende, General Secretary of the Congress of European Minorities.

Parallel to the fight for bread, a determined fight against the nationalities, their rights and their cultural individuality, has been carried on for some time. This struggle, too, may be regarded as, to a certain extent, a consequence of the famine... It is a matter of course that the peasants in the Ukraine, White Russia, Kazakhstan, the German Volga region, etc., feel aggrieved at being drained for the benefit of Moscow, and the muttered grumblings in the different regions often break out into open protests, which the terrified and starved population is altogether too weak to emphasize by action. In view of the entire attitude of the Soviet regime it is inevitable that this dissatisfaction should be ascribed to the machinations of alleged "counter-revolutionaries", „saboteurs", or some "elements hostile to the State". The more so that the protests against Moscow's methods are actually accompanied by a stressing of local interest, and emanate from the intellectual class of the local population, such as the teachers, the doctors, the representatives of the newly created cultural institutions, and also the officials of the local Communist organizations. The most drastic steps are now being taken against this class — the so-called "national elements" among the Ukrainians, White Russians, Germans, Armenians, Finns, Bulgars and the rest, even if they have hitherto been the most convinced Communists.

Dr. E. Ammende, *Human Life in Russia*, pp. 104-105.

The fact that the famine in Ukraine was intentionally planned is confirmed by the data which show that in the years of the famine

there still were sufficient food supplies in Ukraine, even after the increased exports abroad. The regime allowed the spoilage of grain but did not give it to the starving population, just to weaken the resistance against collectivization.

I saw with my own eyes, the fertile farmlands of Soviet Ukraine, field after field covered with ungarnered grain, that had been allowed to rot... There were districts where it was possible to travel for a whole day between these fields of blackening wheat, seeing only here and there a tiny oasis where the harvest had been got safely in.

It's because so many farmers starved or were shipped away last spring, was one answer which I got repeatedly, when I inquired about this mysterious waste.

Whiting Williams, "My Journey Through Famine-Stricken Russia", *Answers* (London, Febr. 24, 1934).

This is also confirmed by Soviet sources which printed news about the waste of food during the period of the famine catastrophe. Grain losses in 1932 reached 3,360,000 tons (*Pravda*, Aug. 22, 1933). — At the railroad station Kiev-Petrivka there is a huge pile of wheat. During the night of September 2 it rained. Everything rots. (*Proletarska Pravda, Kharkiv*, Sept. 4, 1933.) — At the Tractorsky collecting point 20 freight cars of wheat are flooded by water. (*Moloda Guardiia*, №. 1020, 1933.) — At Krasnograd thousands of wheat have perished. Much of the wheat rots in bales and stacks. (*Visti, Kharkiv*, № 188, 1933.) — In Bakhmach the wheat was thrown on the ground and is rotting... (*Communist*, June 27, 1934). — These are just a few examples. This chronicle of waste can be continued. It is based on reports in the Soviet press.

That the famine had clearly socially-political aims and was planned and systematically carried out by the Moscow government, is proved also by the fact that the Bolsheviks prevented any help from reaching the dying population. What more, they isolated the villages so that no help even from the neighboring towns could get through to save the dying.

The Soviet government could easily have averted the famine from its own resources if it had desired to do so. A complete cessation of the export of foodstuffs in 1932 or the diversion of a small amount of foreign currency to the purchase of grain and provisions would have achieved this end... President of the Poltava Soviet Mr. Mezuyev, said to me: "To have imported grain would have been injurious to our prestige. To have peasants keep their grain would have encouraged them to go on producing little".

W. H. Chamberlin, *Russia's Iron Age*, p. 89.

In order to make the famine more bitter Moscow organized a blockade of the Ukrainian countryside. Villages which did not fill the grain quotas that were demanded from them were blockaded in the sense that no city products were allowed to reach them.

W. H. Chamberlin, *ibid.* p. 86.

The often cited E. Ammende quotes a statement made by P. Postyshev on February 4, 1933 in which he said that there can be no thought of any help in grain on the part of the state, on the contrary, the grain must be delivered to the warehouses by the collective farm members themselves. Ammende added:

"It is hard to believe, that in a time of the most acute distress, when the whole world was already beginning to be aware of the calamity, the emissary of Moscow in the Ukrainian capital could make a declaration amounting to a strict order to his subordinates to set aside all human emotions in collecting the grain".

Ewald Ammende, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-60.

When some village managed to fulfill the quotas required of it, new food taxes were imposed upon it in order to deprive it of the means of living. Testimony of this is given by the admissions of V. Molotov at the Second All-Ukrainian Party Conference.

Pravda, July 14, 1962.

The hunger-stricken population tried to save itself by gathering and cutting down even the yet unripened ears of grain. But the

government labeled it as theft of state property and imposed severest punishments, even executions, for such transgressions.

Prawda, of August 8, 1932 reports about the resolution of the Party and Government to identify in point of importance collective property with government property and intensify the protection of this property from malefactors, applying execution by firing squad and confiscation of all property, and only under extenuating circumstances at least 10 years of penal servitude and confiscation of property. No amnesty could be granted to this category of criminals.

Children and young pioneers were engaged to do espionage work in the protection of fields and harvesting of ears. Pursuant to the statement by Postyshev, 540,000 children were mobilized for this purpose and 10,000 for combating thieves (*Prawda*, November 27, 1933). Newspapers of that period often gave reports of sentencing and execution of the unfortunates (*Visti*, June 11, 1933 and Febr. 2, 1933).

Even the communist leaders made inadvertent admission which shed a vivid light upon the real events in Ukraine in 1932-1933. At the 17th Party Congress the tragic events in Ukraine of 1932-1933 were referred to as "great victories in the cruel class warfare against the remnants of capitalist elements. The fight was relentless. The fact that we went about the task with deliberation decided our success of 1933." (Stenographic Report of the 17th Party Congress, 1934, p. 197).

At that Congress Moscow's emissary to Ukraine, Postyshev boasted that last year, i. e., in 1933

We have annihilated the nationalist counterrevolution during the past year, we have exposed and destroyed nationalist deviationism...

This is a frank admission that the famine was an instrument of the nationality policy. A similar admission was made by Postyshev's successor, S. Kossior, in an address to the 13th Congress of Soviets in January 17, 1935. To all attempts to alleviate the pressure

on Ukraine, there was but one answer as instructed by Molotov and Kaganovich:

"There will be no concessions or vacillations in carrying out of the tasks set the Party and the Soviet government".

"The collective farmers this year have passed through a good school. For some, this school was ruthless".

This was how President Kalinin, in a speech delivered early last summer, referred to the food situation in Ukraine and the North Caucasus.

(William H. Chamberlin, *The Christian Science Monitor*) Boston, May 29, 1934.

In this connection there was an instructive conversation between Churchill and Stalin in the Kremlin on August 16, 1962:

"Tell me", I asked, "have the stresses of this war been as bad to you personally as carrying through the policy of the Collective Farms?"

This subject immediately aroused the Marshal.

"Oh, no", he said, the Collective Farm policy was a terrible struggle."

"I thought you would have it bad", said I, "because you were not dealing with a few score thousands of aristocrats or big landowners, but with millions of small men."

"Ten millions", he said, holding up his hands. "It was fearful. Four years it lasted... It was all very bad and difficult — but necessary".

Winston Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. 4. The Hinge of Fate. (Boston, 1950), p. 498.

When lady Astor, in company with Bernard Shaw and Lord Lothian, met Stalin in summer 1931, she blurted out unconventional question: "How long are you going continue killing people?" And Stalin, possibly taken a little off his guard, shot back the retort: „As long as it is necessary".

W. H. Chamberlin, *Russia's Iron Age*, p. 152.

IV

MOSCOW DENIED THE EXISTENCE OF FAMINE

For Communist Moscow the planned famine was a weapon of domestic policy. Its aim was to break the resistance of the peasantry against collectivization, in particular to break and undermine the Ukrainian peasantry. Moscow realized that world opinion would condemn this method of domestic policy. Therefore, Moscow stubbornly denied the existence of the famine and used all means to prevent reports about the famine from getting outside the borders of the U. S. S. R.

Thus, first of all, Moscow closed Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus to foreign correspondents. On August 21, 1933, P. B. Barnes, Correspondent of *The New York Herald Tribune*, reported the following:

New censorship measures exclude accredited foreign correspondents from those regions of the USSR where conditions are unfavorable. Ukraine, and the Northern Caucasus, where a great famine was known to have raged during the winter and spring, are now closed to individual trips by correspondents.

P. B. Barnes, *The New York Herald Tribune*, August 21, 1933.

W. H. Chamberlin, who was quoted above, reported on page 60 of his book "The Ukraine, a Submerged Nation", as follows:

Early in 1933 the Ukraine was declared "out of bounds" for foreign correspondents, so that there could be no widely circulated accounts of the great human tragedy that was taking place there. Moscow was flooded with rumors of widespread starvation, of carts going about the streets of Poltava and other towns, picking up the dead".

W. H. Chamberlin, *The Ukraine, a Submerged Nation*, p. 60.

Hawing thus fenced off Ukraine from the outside world, the Soviet government kept silent about or denied the fact of the famine.

What has the Soviet government done in the face of the catastrophe within its borders? It has simply denied the existence of the famine... Moscow, guilty of organizing the famine, denied it even existed. Arthur Koestler's statement, that "today the catastrophe of 1932-1933 is more or less frankly admitted in Soviet circles" is not borne out by subsequent statements of the Soviet government. Now as then, the Soviet press maintains a silence on the subject of the extermination of the Ukrainian peasant population by means of famine.

Ewald Ammende, *Human Life in Russia*, (London, 1936) p. 150.

The official Austrian newspaper, Reichspost, has printed on its first page an article in which it stated that millions of Soviet citizens in the Volga regions, Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus had died of starvation. This vulgar slander, dirty invention about famine in the USSR has been cooked up by the editors of Reichspost in order to divert the attention of their own workers from their hard and hopeless situation.

Pravda, Moscow, July 20, 1933.

"Political cheats propose to aid starving Ukraine... only the most decadent classes are capable of producing such cynical elements", said Kalinin to the 4th Session of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR.

Pravda, Moscow Dec. 29, 1933).*

When Congressman Herman Koplemann of Connecticut called the attention of the then Soviet foreign policy chief, Litvinov, to the news from Ukraine, Litvinov replied:

"I am in receipt of your letter of the 14th inst. and thank you for drawing my attention to the Ukrainian pamphlet. There is any amount of such pamphlets full of lies circulated by counter-revolutionary organizations abroad, who specialize in the work of this kind. There is nothing

*) Abundant material on the attitude of Moscow towards the famine can be found in: **The Black Deeds of the Kremlin**. A White Book. Vol. 2. The Great Famine in Ukraine in 1932-1933. — Ed. by Dobrus (Detroit, 1955).

left for them to do but to spread false information or to forge documents.

"However, I am instructing Mr. Skvirsky in Washington to supply you with data on the real situation in the Ukraine. Moscow, January 3, 1934.

Yours sincerely M. Litvinov.

Cited by Congressman J. E. Rankin in his speech of March 11, 1952, Congr. Record, Vol. 98, p. 2110. (Washington, D. C. 1952).

What is more, instead of publicizing information about the famine, as any civilized country would do, at the very peak of the famine the Soviet press was full of reports on the rich harvest, on the difficulties of reaping the crops on time, and on the enthusiasm of the Ukrainian peasants in fulfilling and everfulfilling the goal set by the state. Being mere dependencies of Moscow, the puppet governments of the Union Republics and the Communist Parties all over the world joined in the conspiracy to cast a pall of silence over the existence of the famine and contradict the truth about the situation in Ukraine.

Having at its disposal a most effective and the largest propaganda apparatus, in the world, a subservient press and also obedient Communist parties in various countries, the Communist dictatorship of the U. S. S. R. shut off its peoples from the outside world with a tight curtain and transformed in the eyes of the West Ukraine's tragedy of 1932-1933 if not into a malicious invention, than at least into a fact not fully proved.

...Prince Potemkin had villages painted on walls of canvas along the route where the Czarina Catherine traveled to see her country.

The Soviet government has set scenes for modern minds and trained eyes. They have surpassed Potemkin in the actuality, but not in the idea.

The groups of foreigners who sightsee in Russia, or even those who go there to study the conditions, see the window display of the publicity department: the great factories, the warehouses, the imposing hydroelectric plants and the well-fed actors in the great comedy of collective

farming on the state farms. They may see 10,000 at work or even a few hundred thousand.

But behind these scenes lies Russia with one hundred fifty millions of human souls, unseen and unobserved.

Behind the scenes is Ukraine.

Stephan K. Swift, *Detroit Sunday Times*, July 14, 1945.
Part 2. p. 10.

Such well known personalities as Edouard Herriot, several times Prime Minister of France, Bernard Shaw and other Western visitors became victims of the Communist technique of deceit. Impressed by the lavish receptions in their honor in Kiev and Moscow, they did not notice the famine in Ukraine. Herriot was in the U. S. S. R. in August and September of 1933, and, as the Soviet newspaper *Pravda* of September 13 of the same year reports, he

"E. Herriot told representatives of the press that everything he saw in the USSR was wonderful. He categorically denied the lies of the bourgeois press about a famine in the Soviet Union".

Pravda, Moscow, Sept. 13, 1933.

Ewald Ammende in his book "Human Life in Russia", pp. 230-231, comments on this statement:

Among Moscow's guests of honour a special place must be assigned to the former French Prime Minister, Edouard Herriot. M. Herriot's categorical declaration that there was no famine in Russia naturally made the very greatest impression throughout Europe. His duty to weigh his words was equally categorical... the fact that it was precisely in the year of the severest famine that he made his journey of investigation. His action has had a disastrous influence upon the incipient will to bring relief to Russia which was beginning to make itself felt in a number of countries. Letters published in Swiss papers (in the *Berne Bund*) and elsewhere show to what a degree M. Herriot's evidence hampered and misguided ready helpers. M. Herriot, on his return, not only disputed the existence of any famine in Russia; he went on to say generally that people who talked about a famine could be doing so only in the

interests of a definite anti-Russians policy, of separatist tendencies, or the like. Such assertions are apt to make the uninitiated to see in a false light any attempts made to help the famine victims in Russia... It is important to treat of M. Herriot's journey for a further reason — because it throws a startling light upon conditions in this age of wireless, aviation and speed records of every kind: an age in which it is possible for millions to die of hunger in the richest agricultural districts of Europe, while the Chinese wall separating them from the rest of the world remains unsealed, and even official travellers in the Soviet Union have failed to observe a trace of the tragedy being enacted in their immediate vicinity.

M. Herriot's expedition took from August 26 to September 9, 1933; and more than half of this fortnight was spent in Moscow. The stay in the south took no more than five days, a mere two days being devoted to Kiev and Odessa — or, rather, twelve hours to Odessa and twelve to Kiev. Half of this period was devoted to official receptions and banquets, and the other half to a series of inspections in exact accordance with a time-table worked out by the authorities beforehand... M. Herriot was accompanied not only by French journalists and Soviet officials, but also by the French Ambassador, M. Alfand... On August 26, M. Herriot arrived at Odessa in the Soviet vessel Chicherin after "delightful journey"... In a later article (*Pester Lloyd*, October 1) M. Herriot confidently declares:

"Nowhere did I find a sign of distress, not even in the German villages (Belyaevka farm a few miles away from Odessa").

Dr. E. Ammende, *Human Life in Russia*, pp. 232-233.

"We were staying at Kiev when the French delegation was expected, and thus became witnesses of the camouflage practiced at that time. On the day before the arrival of the delegation the entire populace was mobilized at two A. M. to clean the streets and decorate the houses... Food-distributing centers, co-operative shops, etc. were closed. Queues were prohibited, "bezprizornie", (i. e. the hordes of neglected children), beggars and starving people suddenly vanished... The guests arrived, inspected with visible satisfaction, entered their names in the city's roll of visitors, and went

away... at the moment when the papers were containing Herriot's interview, in which he stated that he had seen no trace of a famine in Russia. One should have seen the faces and heard the angry, bitter laughter when this interview was read".

Ewald Ammende, *Human Life in Russia*, pp. 230-231.

The quips of George Bernard Shaw were out of place and scandalous, as reported by W. H. Chamberlin in his book.

We were at lunch with Bernard Shaw and the members of his party at the Metropole Hotel. Shaw had celebrated his seventy five birthday the night before by delivering a speech full of enthusiastic encomiums for the Soviet regime... Shaw answered to a critical remark:

„Where is there any food shortage here?" retorted Shaw, pointing to the well-appointed dining room of the Metropole Hotel.

W. H. Chamberlin, *Russia's Iron Age*, pp. 366-367.

Similarly, the greatest newspapers permitted themselves to be deceived and helped Moscow conceal the crime of famine from the world. Eugene Lyons frankly chided the press that it had not fulfilled its duty and did not give truthful reports on conditions in Ukraine.

"There is no actual starvation or deaths from starvation but there is widespread mortality from diseases due to malnutrition".

This amazing sophistry, culled from a New York Times Moscow dispatch on March 30, 1933 has become among foreign reporters the classic example of journalistic understatement. It characterises sufficiently the whole shabby episode of our failure to report honestly the gruesome Russian famine of 1932-33...

The episode, indeed, reflects little glory on world journalism as a whole..

Not until August 23 did the Times out of Moscow admit the famine. "It is conservative to suppose", it said, that in certain provinces with a total population of over 40,000,000 mortality has "at least trebled". On this basis there were two million deaths more than usual. In addition, deaths were also "considerably increased for the Soviet Union as a

whole." This dispatch came one day behind uncensored cable to the New York Herald Tribune by Ralph Barnes...

The Barnes story was front-paged and the Times could no longer ignore the subject. Its own admission followed, raising Barnes' ante. By a singular twist of logic, the Times story introduced the admission of famine with this remarkable statement:

Any report of a famine in Russia is today an exaggeration or malignant propaganda. The food shortage which has affected almost the whole population in the last year and particularly in the grain producing provinces — the Ukraine, North Caucasus, the lower Volga region — has however caused heavy loss of life.

The dividing line between "heavy loss of life" through food shortage and "famine" is rather tenuous. Such verbal finessing made little difference to the millions of dead and dying, to the refugees who knocked at our doors begging bread.

This philological sophistries, to which we were all driven, served Moscow's purpose of smearing the facts out of recognition and beclouding a situation which, had we reported it simply and clearly, might have worked up enough public opinion abroad to force remedial measures. And every correspondent, each in his own measure, was guilty of collaboration in this monstrous hoax on the world.

Verdict of Three Decades. From the Literature of Individual Revolt against Soviet Communism 1917-1950. Edited by Julian Steinberg, (New York, 1950), pp. 271, 272, 273.

V

THE FAMINE AND WORLD CONSCIENCE

In Ukraine the Soviet-Moscow invader was wreaking vengeance on the Ukrainian intelligentsia and the Ukrainian peasantry. At the same time, in the outside world Moscow tenaciously struggled against the truth about the situation in Ukraine which despite all the obstacles managed to get through the Iron Curtain.

The Ukrainian Catholic Bishops of Western Ukraine under Poland, issued an appeal to the world, on July 24, 1933.

Ukraine is in the clutches of death. Her population is dying of starvation. Built upon injustice, fraud, godlessness and unrighteousness, the present regime has brought this formerly rich country to complete ruin... In the face of these crimes, human nature revolts. Unable to give our dying brethren any help, we appeal to all of you to do all you can...

Before the whole world we raise a mighty protest against the persecution of the little ones, the poor, the weak and innocent.

The blood of workmen who, starving, toiled the rich black soil of Ukraine, cries for revenge to heaven and the voice of the hungry reapers reaches our Almighty God.

In August 1933, the Archbishop of Vienna, Cardinal Innitzer, issued his appeal to the world in the matter of the famine in Ukraine. He provided the initiative to establish the Interconfessional and International Relief Committee for Famine Areas.

The President of the Council of the League of Nations, Prime Minister of Norway, Mowinkel, raised the question of aid to the starving people of Ukraine in the League of Nations. The Council resolved to call it to the attention of the International Red Cross.

The General Secretary of the Congress of European Minorities, Dr. Ewald Ammende, gave to the Viennese newspaper in August 1933 an accurate report on conditions in Ukraine, and raised the question of help for Ukraine at the Congress meeting on September

16-19, 1933 in Berne (Switzerland). The Congress stated in its resolution that

it is the policy of red Russian imperialism to destroy the physical existence of the Ukrainian nation according to some preconceived plan.

The problem of the famine in Ukraine was also put before the American Congress.

73rd Congress H. Res. 399.

2nd Session

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES MAY 28, 1934

Mr. Hamilton Fish Jr. submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed.

RESOLUTION

Whereas several millions of the population of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the constituent part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, died of starvation during the years of 1932 and 1933; and

Whereas the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, although being fully aware of the famine in Ukraine and although having full and complete control of the entire food supplies within its borders, nevertheless failed to take relief measure designed to check the famine or to alleviate the terrible conditions arising from it, but on the contrary used the famine as a means of reducing the Ukrainian population and destroying the Ukrainian political, cultural, and national rights; and

Whereas intercession have been made at various times by the United States during the course of its history on behalf of citizens of states other than the United States, oppressed or persecuted by their own governments, indicating that it has been the traditional policy of the United States to take cognizance of such invasions of human rights and liberties: Therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives express its sympathy for all those who have suffered from the great famine in Ukraine which has brought misery, affection, and death to millions of peaceful and law-abiding Ukrainians; be it further

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives express its earnest hope that the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will speedily alter its policy in respect to the famine in Ukraine, take active steps to alleviate the terrible consequences arising from this famine, and undo so far as may be possible the injustices to the Ukrainian people; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives express its sincerest hope that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Government will place no obstacles in the way of American citizens seeking to send aid in form of money, foodstuffs, and necessities to the famine-stricken regions of Ukraine.

Unfortunately it must be stated that all these reports on the famine and all those noble appeals to save the population of Ukraine which was doomed to die of hunger, brought no action, except resolutions. The conscience of the world was easily lulled by statements and in the words of the English newspaper, *The British Daily Telegraph*, September 9, 1933:

"Pilate took water and washed his hands... Is this attitude the British people are to take, when they are told about things they find hard to believe in the year 1933? The famine started when the authorities took all the grain away from the people. Children under 14 were first to feel the pangs of hunger. Only strongest are managing to exist, the majority are dying. It is a long time since there have been dogs, cats, not to mention poultry in the villages. When a cow dies it is consumed immediately".

This was not a healthy moral attitude. But it was dictated not only by moral indifference and the fear of international complications. This attitude also had some more human motives.

For a civilized person a planned famine, imposed by the government, famine as an instrument of policy, was a monstrosity beyond comprehension. A person refuses to believe that a monstrosity of this kind is possible in Europe, in the 20th century, and in peacetime at that.

In the above quotations from various authors who were eyewitnesses there is an often repeated admission that they did not believe their own eyes at first. It was all the more difficult for people who never saw Soviet reality to accept the horrible descriptions.

...We had suppressed all memory of the events of 1931-33, and we regarded what had happened then as a misfortune, but a misfortune in the same category as a natural catastrophe, an earthquake or tidal wave. We had never thought that Stalin had deliberately brought about the deaths of ten millions peasants...

Alexander Weissberg, *The Accused*. (New York 1951)

Sharp-witted people were the exception. They were beginning to see even then, as, for example, the American socialist leader, Norman Thomas:

My hope for Russia ran high. Its revolution I thought a milestone of human progress. Slowly events like the man-made famine in the Ukraine (the truth about which I learned belatedly), the purge trials in 1936-38, and what I saw and heard in Russia and Spain in 1937, convinced me that communism was an incredibly dangerous denial of true socialism.

Norman Thomas: *A Socialist's Faith*. A Personal Footnote (New York 1951). p. 312.

But such merely personal, human motives were not the only ones which chased away the gloomy reports about famine in Ukraine. The general political situation and the moods and views based upon it also helped Moscow to cover up the crime. These were the years when the United States extended official recognition to the Soviet government and established normal diplomatic relations. Just as in the 1940-s Mao seemed to some to be an idealistic revolutionary

who was trying to remove the shackles of old which stood in the way of China's evolution, thus Stalin often appeared in the eyes of some in the West as a revolutionary who was pushing Russia ahead in spite of the resistance of the counter-revolution. Those were times when the great communist deceit was not yet realized by the consciousness of the world while a "democratic" constitution, which "guaranteed" to the occupied nations "the right to secede from the federation" quieted the conscience:

...Here is something epically and indescribably tragic in this enormous dying out of millions of people, sacrifices on the altar of a policy which many of them did not even understand; the horror of this last act in the tragedy of the individual peasantry is perhaps intensified by the fact that the victims died so passively, so quietly, without arousing any stir of sympathy in the outside world.

W. H. Chamberlin, *Russia's Iron Age*, p. 88.

These were the times when research work on the Soviet system was clearly biased in its favor, and the greatest amount of confusion was aroused in the English-speaking world by the book written by the famous Sidney and Beatrice Webb, and widely read at the time, but which is referred to by critical Soviet experts today as "the most famous memorial to the naivete and ignorance, not only of the authors, "Soviet experts", but also of the public which was buying it in masses and reading it with enthusiasm."*)

Thus matters stood in the 1930s. Yet even today, when the famine, Stalin's bloody purges of 1937-1938, the cruel vengeance on the population are known and when there are more detailed report on the situation in the U. S. S. R., the knowledge of Moscow's nationality policy — in particular that toward Ukraine — is obscured and moreover in decisive quarters which do not see beyond the Russian language and the suburbs of Moscow.

*) Compare "The Western Image of the Soviet Union, 1917-1962", Survey, a Journal of Soviet and East European Studies; № 41, April 1962, p. 200.

Frank L. Kluckhohn, a ranking officer of the U. S. State Department, 1955-1961, states:

The appearance of a strong monolith, created by Soviet propaganda, has been maintained for Americans by the fact that most of our Soviet experts... have been Russian language experts, and oriented to Russian thinking. Except for occasional trips, often made unpleasant by the Soviet bureaucracy or police, foreign diplomats have not, for years, been able to spend much time outside Russian Moscow. They know only the official Russian viewpoint.

The Naked Rise of Communism. (Derby, Conn., 1962) p. 220.

And yet today, all this explains and somewhat lessens the moral weakness of the world's attitude in the face of the hunger in Ukraine 30 years ago. But by no means does this justify or wash out the moral stain off mankind's history of the middle of the twentieth century.

VI

CONCLUSION

There is a tendency to explain the 1932-1933 famine in Ukraine as the result of hurried industrialization, and hence a tendency to explain it exclusively by economic causes. An example of such an interpretation can be the thoughts expressed by the author of the study on "Soviet Economics", Alec Nove, who teaches this subject at London University*). However, such a merely economic conception cannot answer the question, why in Ukraine there were incomparable more victims than in the other Soviet republics, especially, in the Russian Federation.

*) Compare his article "Was Stalin Truly Indispensable?" in "Der Monat", Berlin, March 1963.

The *Manchester Guardian* of October 19 and October 21, 1933, stated:

It can be definitely stated that no provinces within a radius of several hundred miles of Moscow experienced the Ukrainian and North Caucasian extremities.

This was stated even more clearly by *Novoye Russkoye Slovo*, incidentally the organ of Russian imperialism.

One had only to cross the border and outside Ukraine the conditions were right away better. People were buying railroad tickets to the stations on the border of Ukraine and there, after walking a short distance, they could reach the Russian S.F.S.R. where potatoes were available. Or, already being in the Russian S.F.S.R., they took tickets to get into the vicinity of Moscow and there — by foot or street-cars, they reached Moscow itself. Here all kinds of bread were in abundance and could be gotten without standing in line. With such an abundance of bread in Moscow, it simply did not seem believable that somewhere, dying of starvation, were families, farmsteads and whole villages. Hundreds and thousands of corpses were piling up in towns and on railroads..."

Novoye Russkoye Slovo, New York, March 29, 1963.

Beyond purely economic causes there were other factors and those factors were the ones that gave the events in Ukraine the character of a national disaster rather than of an economic crisis.

The transition to collective farming was easier in the Russian S. F. S. R. because there the remnants of common land-ownership still alive.

Ukraine had a long and strong tradition of individual farming, therefore the resistance against compulsory collectivization was strongest there. The ruthlessness in carrying out this collectivization, with famine as a weapon, can be fully understood only if one bears in mind the centuries-old struggle of Moscow against Ukraine, against Ukraine's spiritual, cultural and national independence. To drain Ukrainian blood to weaken Ukraine was and remains the goal of Moscow's policy.

...In the U.S.S.R. operations are not concerned solely with Communism but are simultaneously concerned with the imperialism of the Great Russian-Soviet-state. This imperialism can change in form and method, but it can no more disappear...

Milovan Djilas, *The New Class*, an Analysis of the Communist System (New York) p. 178.

How many people died of starvation in those years?

The then American Ambassador in Moscow, William C. Bullitt, cites the figure of up to five million.

Other authors cite, as mentioned above, even bigger numbers. It is impossible to state an exact number of victims of the 1932-1933 famine in Ukraine because Moscow had kept the very existence of the famine secret.

Officially, no one dies of hunger in the land of The Soviets. The doctors are Government employees, and they dare not report any death as caused by starvation. "Weak heart" or "exposure" is the favorite formula.

Whiting Williams, *Answers*, Febr. 24, (London, 1934).

To arrive at exact figures is, of course, impossible; this can be done only in the future after careful investigation have been made locally... In principle, it may be said, from the point of view of the relief work for the benefit of those threatened with starvation in Russia, it does not matter whether the number of dead is 5, 6, 8 or 10 millions: it is enough to show that figure runs into millions.

Dr. Ewald Ammende, *Human Life in Russia*, p. 96.

But one thing can be said with certainty: even by such a cruel method as the man-made famine, Moscow did not achieve its goal, did not destroy the Ukrainian people and did not stop the struggle of the Ukrainian people for their cultural and national selfdetermination. This is stated by the well known Yugoslav author.

..Among Stalin's errors, even Khrushchev admitted, was the terrible truth of the extermination of entire peoples...

The various nations, each of which once had its own form and color, its own history and hopes, stand virtually still now, gray and languid, beneath the all-powerful, all-knowing, and essentially non-national oligarchies. The Communists did not succeed in exciting or awakening the nations; in this sense they also failed to solve nationality questions. Who knows anything nowadays about Ukrainian writers and political figures? What has happened to that nation, which is the same size as France, and was once the most advanced nation in Russia? You would think that only an amorphous and formless mass of people could remain under impersonal machine of oppression.

However, this is not the case.

Just as personality, various social classes, and ideas still live, so do the nations still live; they function; they struggle against despotism. If their consciences and souls are smothered, they are not broken. Though they are under subjugation, they have not yielded. The force activating them today is more than the old or bourgeois nationalism: it is an imperishable desire to be their own masters, and, by their own free development, to attain an increasingly fuller fellowship with the rest of the human race in its eternal existence."

Milovan Djilas, *The New Class, An Analysis of the Communist System* (New York), pp. 100, 101, 102.

These words express correctly the aspirations and aims of the struggle of the Ukrainian people.

INDEX OF AUTHORS

Ammende, Ewald	16, 17, 24, 26, 30, 32, 33, 34, 37, 43
Barnes, Ralph	29, 35
Chamberlin, William Henry	9, 10, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 28, 29, 34, 40
Crancshaw, Edward	6
Churchill, Winston	28
Djilas, Milovan	43, 44
Fish, Hamilton jr.	35
Kluckhohn, Frank L.	41
Koestler, Arthur	19
Lang, Harry,	9, 12
Litvinov, Maksim	30
Lyons, Eugene	22, 34
Muggeridge, Malcolm	9, 19
Nove, Alec	41
Swift, Stephen	9, 15, 32
Thomas, Norman	39
Walker, Thomas	9, 11
Webb, Sidney and Beatrice	40
Wissberg, Alexander	39
Williams, Whiting	9, 18, 25

BOOKS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

The Accused (Alexander Weissberg)	39
The Anti Stalin Campaign and International Communism.	
A Selection of Documents	8
Appeal of Ukrainian Bishops	36
The Black Deeds of the Kremlin. A White Book (Ed. by Dobrus)	30
Famine in Ukraine	18
The Human Life in Russia (E. Ammende)	16, 17, 24, 26, 30, 32, 33, 34, 43
The Naked Rise of Communism (F. L. Kluckhohn)	41
Russia's Iron Age (W. H. Chamberlin)	21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 28, 34, 40
A Socialist's Faith (N. Thomas)	39
The Ukraine, a Submerged Nation (W. H. Chamberlin)	21, 22, 29
Verdict of Three Decades. From the Literature of Individual Revolt against Soviet Communism 1917-1950	

PERIODICALS

Answer (London)	18, 20, 25, 43
The Boston Post	22
Christian Science Monitor (Boston)	21,28
Communist (Kharkiv)	25
Detroit Sunday Times	14, 32
The Forthnightly Review (London)	19
Forward (New York)	20
Manchester Guardian	42
Le Matin (Paris)	6, 7
Moloda Guardiia (Odessa)	25
Der Monat (Berlin)	41
Neue Zuericher Zeitung	9, 15, 20
New York Evening Journal	11, 12, 14
New York Herald Tribune	29,35
New York Times	34, 35
Novoye Russkoye Slovo (New York)	42
Observer (London)	6
Pravda (Moscow)	25, 26, 27, 30, 32
Proletarska Pravda (Kharkiv)	25
Reichspost (Vienna)	30
Saturday Review (London)	8
Survey (London)	40
Telegraph (London)	38
Visti (Kharkiv)	25,27



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