



FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY of the Proclamation of the Restoration of the Independence of Ukraine June 30th 1941

THE RIGHT OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE IS UNIVERSAL

No man, woman or child in a free democratic national state could imagine life without freedom. Nobody even bothers to study the meaning of this word, so freedom and democracy have been taken for granted.

In a free and independent state the ordinary man in the street has the right not only to question and criticize his government's policies, but he has the right, through a democratic electoral process, to change an unpopular government and elect another one of his own choice. Nobody is thrown into prison for voicing a different opinion from the official one.

But do you know that over 50 million Ukrainians do not have such a choice? Since Ukraine lost her war for independence against Russia in 1918-1920, the Ukrainian nation has been subjected to a most brutal and unparalleled persecution amounting to genocide and ethnocide. Many millions of Ukrainians have been physically liquidated. Everybody knows about the Jewish holocaust in which 6 million Jews lost their lives at the hands of the Nazis, but hardly anybody in the West knows that only ten years before the Jewish holocaust the Soviet-Russian dictators, in order to crush the Ukrainian resistance, created in Ukraine an artificial famine in which not less than 6 million Ukrainians were deliberately starved to death.

Yes, the Moscow totalitarian regime was capable of killing 6 million innocent people in one year! But at the same time they were not capable (and never will be) of killing the desire for national freedom felt by every Ukrainian.

During the Second World War the Ukrainians tried once again to free themselves from foreign domination. June 30th marks the 40th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Restoration of the Independence of Ukraine.

Taking advantage of the turmoil in Eastern Europe during the Second World War, at the beginning of the German occupation of Ukraine, the Ukrainian people, with the initiative and support of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists (an underground organisation) in defiance of an occupying power, formed a national government with Yaroslav Stetzko as its Premier and proclaimed the independence of Ukraine in the city of Lviv on June 30th, 1941. Units from OUN gained control of the radio station in Lviv as well as of all the important towns in occupied territories. The idea was to put before the Nazi German government an accomplished fact which would force them to disclose their policy in respect of Ukraine and other enslaved nations.

Hitler's reaction, as might have been expected, was swift and ruthless. The chief of the Gestapo ordered the Ukrainian Provisional Government to withdraw the Proclamation of Independence, but when his ultimatum was not accepted by Yaroslav Stetzko and the Government, arrests followed of the Provisional Government and Stepan Bandera, the leader of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists. Next followed repressions of all the leading Ukrainians in the occupied territories — mass arrests and executions. Stepan Bandera and Yaroslav Stetzko were imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp until the end of the war.

This proclamation of Ukrainian's independence began a new phase in the struggle for Ukrainian independence. The arrests and repressions served only to unite the Ukrainian people and make them even more determined to fight for the freedom of Ukraine. Armed underground units, which were being organised by the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists, became the nucleus of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) which grew into a several thousand strong army and fought against the Nazi occupation of Ukraine.

After the renewed occupation of Ukraine by the Russian Red Army in 1944, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army continued to fight red Russian imperialists until the early fifties.

The Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) was virtually the only European underground movement during the Second World War to fight Nazi Germany and Bolshevik Russia at the same time. The will for independence and freedom amongst the Ukrainian nation will never die. Today one sees how a similar struggle has been taken up by the heroic Afghan people against the same ruthless enemy, the enemy of the whole free world, the centuries-old Russian imperialism.

While celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the 30th of June 1941 we appeal to the Governments and Peoples of the still free world to remember those who have lost their freedom through no fault of their own and give the enslaved nations your moral and practical support. By helping to safeguard their national freedom, you are safeguarding your own.

FREEDOM FOR NATIONS! FREEDOM FOR INDIVIDUALS!

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