

DOCUMENTS OF UKRAINIAN SAMVYDAY

**THREE PHILOSOPHERS —
POLITICAL PRISONERS
IN THE SOVIET UNION**

SMOLOSKYP SAMVYDAY SERIES

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Translated and Edited

by Taras Zakydalsky

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of Ukrainian political prisoners in the U.S.S.R.**

PREFACE

Three young philosophers—Vasyl Lisovy, Yevhen Pronyuk, and Mykola Bondar—dared to criticize the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and to demand respect for human rights. They knew from what had happened to others that they were risking their careers, their well-being, even their lives and the happiness of their loved ones. Yet, they refused to remain silent, for to be silent is to collaborate. Like thousands of Soviet citizens, they have become prisoners of conscience—inmates of prisons, labor camps, and psychiatric hospitals, whose sole “crime” was to protest against the violation of religious, national, and individual rights by the state.



Vasyl Lisovy with his wife Vira and their eldest daughter, Myroslava, now 11 years old.

It is not true that we, the citizens of democratic countries, can do nothing to help the victims of state repression in the U.S.S.R. Soviet leaders are not sensitive to world opinion, but they are not immune to it. Under its pressure

they have permitted thousands of their victims to emigrate, have freed some dissenters, and have improved the treatment of some prisoners. We can help Lisovy, Pronyuk, and Bondar by informing the public about their tragic fate, by protesting to Soviet officials on their behalf, by requesting intervention from our governments in their interest, by expressing moral support in personal letters to these men.

"The world is indivisible, and the struggle for freedom is also indivisible" (Andrei Grigorenko). Without our help the movement for human rights in the U.S.S.R. cannot succeed, and without its victory our own freedom can never be secure. And not only is our freedom dependent on the struggle for human rights, but our survival as well. As Andrei Sakharov has argued in his Nobel lecture, respect for human rights throughout the world is the necessary condition for peace and progress. For this reason we cannot be indifferent to the fate of prisoners of conscience in the U.S.S.R. For this reason we cannot ignore what has happened to Lisovy, Pronyuk, and Bondar.

* * *

THE CASE OF VASYL LISOVY

BORN: 1937. Married to Vira Hrytsenko, philologist. They have two children. Member of the Communist Party.

PROFESSIONAL WORK: Lisovy held the degree of Candidate of Philosophical Sciences (similar to Ph.D.) and worked as a research associate at the Institute of Philosophy, Academy of Sciences of the Ukr.S.S.R. He was also a lecturer at the Shevchenko University of Kiev.

PUBLICATIONS (partial list):

"Zvychayna mova ta yiyi vykorystannya z tochky zoru lohiky" (Ordinary Language and its Use from the Viewpoint of Logic), *Filosofiya ta sotsiologiya*. Ed., V. O. Nosenko. Kiev: Institute of Philosophy, Ac. of Sc. Ukr.S.S.R. 1969, pp. 233-42.

"Pro sposoby analizu tekstiv povsyakdennoyi movy" (On the Methods of Analyzing Texts of Ordinary Language), *Filosofska dumka*, No. 3 (1970), pp. 50-59.
"Krytyka stsiyenystskykh kontsepsiy naukovo-tekhnichnoho prohresu" (A Critique of Scientific Concepts of Scientific-Technological Progress), *Filosofska dumka*, No. 3 (1971), pp. 63-71.

Introduction to *Logic* of Kononovych-Horbatsky, *Filosofska dumka*, No. 2 (1972), pp. 81-82.

ARREST: With Yevhen Pronyuk, Lisovy composed a letter of protest against the wave of arrests in Ukraine in early 1972 and against the party's cultural and economic policies in Ukraine. The letter was sent to the CC CPSU and the KGB. A few days later Pronyuk was searched and about 70 photocopies of the letter were found on him ready for mailing to various prominent Soviet citizens. When Pronyuk was arrested, Lisovy acknowledged his part in composing the letter. He was dismissed from work and arrested in early July, 1972 (*A Chronicle of Current Events*, Nos. 27, 30).

Lisovy's wife was dismissed from work and left without the means to support herself and her children (*The Ukrainian Herald*, Nos. 7-8).

TRIAL: In Nov. 1973 Lisovy was tried with his friend Pronyuk and his student, Ivan Semanyuk, who had protested against his arrest. He was charged with preparing and disseminating anti-Soviet materials with the intention of undermining the state, and with helping in the preparation of two issues of the *Ukrainian Herald*. Lisovy pleaded not guilty, but was sentenced under Art. 62 of the Criminal Code of Ukr.S.S.R. ("anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda") to 7 years in a strict-regime camp and 3 years' exile from Ukraine (*A Chronicle . . .*, No. 30).

IMPRISONMENT: Lisovy was sent to Camp No. 3 in Mordovia, where he has been harassed by the administration and severely punished for minor infractions of the regulations. On Nov. 15, 1974 he was thrown into an isolation cell for 15 days and lost his visiting rights for refusing to work and to wear an identity tag (*A Chronicle . . .*, No. 35). In July 1975 Vasyl Stus was stabbed by a criminal and Lisovy wrote a letter to R. A. Rudenko, the Procurator-General of the U.S.S.R., describing the incident. For this letter he was punished with 3 months in solitary confinement on a diet of under 1900 cal. per day (*UIS SMOLOSKYP*, August 31, 1976). In December, 1975, he was brought to Kiev and pressure was exerted to get a statement of retraction and repentance from him. His wife was allowed to see him in January. Lisovy did not budge from his former position and by the end of the month was returned to camp (*Svoboda*, May 14, 1976). Although his health has improved somewhat since January and he has been permitted a visit from his wife and children, he is very weak and exhausted. Most recently, Mykola Rudenko, head of the Ukrainian section of the Group to Promote the Implementation of the Provisions of the Helsinki Act, formed in the Soviet Union, reported that in November 1976 Lisovy was twice put into a punitive cell.

Lisovy's wife is barely supporting herself and her children by working in a kindergarten. The children are not getting the necessary care and are frequently ill. The son Oksan, who is four, has not been as deeply affected by the events of the last few years, but his older sister, Myroslava, who is eleven, has been so shaken that she has a nervous disorder. Former friends and acquaintances avoid the family. The KGB keeps a very close watch on Vira Lisovy, and, she believes, has installed listening devices in her home.

**To Amnesty International,
from Vira Lisovy**

This letter has been circulating in the Soviet Union by means of *Samvydav*, and has recently reached the West. It is written in Ukrainian and was published in full in *Suchasnist*, No. 9, 1976. Letters of similar content were addressed by Vira Lisovy to the International Committee for the Defense of Human Rights, to G. Marchais, the Secretary General of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party, and to V. Kashtan, the Secretary General of the Canadian Communist Party.

I do not know whether it is despair or a glimmer of hope that has prompted me to turn to you. If this is a common weakness of women, then, is it such a great sin to surrender to it when two small children ask daily why their father is not with them? I too have demanded an answer to this question from officials, but no one has been able to convince me that my husband has been imprisoned according to legal norms. And no one probably intended to convince me, for I received the same stereotyped answer from all sides: "He is punished justly for anti-Soviet activity."

In January 1972 a national calamity befell Ukraine: many Ukrainian intellectuals were arrested in various cities of the republic. A large majority of those who were arrested are widely known in our society because of their cultural and civic work.

My husband and I regarded the arrests of 1972 as grossly unjust and groundless from the juridical and ideological points of view. Both of us were born in a socialistic country. We were raised in working class families and in Soviet schools. We were active members of Komsomol and dreamed of dedicating our lives to high social ideals. The terrible repressions of the Stalin period seemed to us to belong to a distant past—distant although not forgotten. Hence the events of 1972 greatly alarmed us. My husband, Vasyl Semenovych Lisovy, born in 1937, was a member of the CPSU [Communist Party of the Soviet Union]. He held the degree of Candidate of Philosophical Sciences, and was a researcher at the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian S.S.R. and a lecturer at the T. Shevchenko State University. He described his feelings in an "Open Letter to the Members of the CC CPSU [the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union]." Appealing to the interests of socialism and to the constitutional and legal

norms of our society, he directed the attention of the CC to the illegal and socially groundless nature of KGB's actions and requested that the CC intervene in the events in Ukraine. Because of his devotion to socialist and democratic ideals, because of his civil and party conscience, Lisovy could not remain silent. The statutes of the party not merely give him the right but make it his duty to react when socialist legal norms are violated. Vasyl Lisovy fulfilled his duty. On July 4, 1972, he sent a letter to the highest council of the party. Two days later, on July 6, "the reply arrived" in the form of several KGB agents who presented to Lisovy a search warrant from the Procurator of Ukraine. After the search they took my husband away, and promised for the sake of appearances, to release him in one or two days—I was to give birth in a few days. For twenty months they instructed him in the rights and duties of a Soviet citizen, emphasizing that he had meddled in affairs that were no concern of his and that he would be better to occupy himself with his family. Then they sent him to be "re-educated," sentencing him to seven years in a strict-regime camp and three years of exile. Soon four years will have passed since my children saw their father. When we visit him (once a year), he gazes at them with bitterness because he cannot participate in their upbringing. I still cannot believe that his cruel sentence is real, and because of this I have written appeals to various authorities in my country—to the CC CPSU, care of L. I. Brezhnev, and to the 25th Party Congress.

"Anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda" . . . But who can quote one sentence from Vasyl Lisovy's mouth or pen which rejects socialism or the Soviet order?! Is his "open letter" judged to be anti-Soviet because he considers the economic prosperity and the spiritual vitality of the nation to be dependent on the democratization of every facet of life in our country?!

The trial is called "open" in the official documents. Yes, it was "open," because over ten people with special passes were induced to attend it. Even I could get in only at the end of the trial. In order to keep me out of the courtroom "legally," I was classified as a witness and summoned last among the witnesses to testify . . . that I am the wife of V. S. Lisovy.

There were hardly any witnesses at Lisovy's trial. But even the few selected colleagues of my husband from the Institute of Philosophy gave him a positive character reference, stressing his talents, broad erudition, and high moral qualities. His lawyer, V. V. Didenko, who is experienced in such cases, found no legal basis for imposing on Lisovy the maximum penalty under Art. 62, part 1, of the Criminal Code of the Ukr.S.S.R. The

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court took none of the extenuating circumstances into account: the poor state of Lisovy's health, his two small children, his father's death at the front in the 1941-45 war, his mother's (who raised five children single-handedly) condition as an invalid of the first and second category, the high quality of his scholarly work, his spotless record as an active party member who carried out important assignments up to the level of the CC CPU [Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine].

Out of the three and a half years that Vasyl Lisovy has served in a strict-regime camp (his last address was Mordovskaya S.S.R., Zubovo-Polyansky R-n, poselok Lesnoy, Zh-kh 385-19), he has spent two and a half years under prison conditions (in punishment cells and isolation cells) "for misbehavior," as the camp officials call it, *i.e.*, most likely for participating in political activities at camp—hunger-strikes, written and oral protests against the cruel camp regime—and for recognition of the status of political prisoner. My husband was punished for failing to fulfill the production quota, although there were objective reasons for this—a defective sewing machine which, for all his complaints, was never repaired.

One can judge the "educative" conditions and the actions of the camp authorities from the following incident. At the end of the July 1975 a criminal assaulted Vasyl Stus and almost plunged a knife into his back. As a result of a violent blow Stus began to bleed profusely. It is true that Stus was saved from death and that at the insistence of his wife he was operated on in a special Leningrad hospital. Lisovy, who probably knew the direct causes of this incident, wrote a protest letter to the Procurator-General of the U.S.S.R., R. A. Rudenko. For this he was thrown into camp prison for six months, while totally different grounds were officially announced.

The criminal got off with two weeks in prison. Moreover, Lisovy had returned from a five-month imprisonment only one month before this incident. He returned so exhausted that he could walk only by leaning against a wall. (I saw him in this condition during a visit. He was completely exhausted and so emaciated that I could hardly recognize him.)

I had no legal relation to the actions of my husband, but I was dismissed from work "according to my own wish," and for two and a half years I and my ill children have been forced to live with my parents. Nor am I free of psychological pressures and intimidations. Thus, one of the investigators, who did not give me his name, told me that if my husband does not repent and does not publicly renounce his "anti-

Soviet" position, then his term of imprisonment can be prolonged, and after he is released he will not be permitted to resume his scholarly work. In fact, on April 5, 1974, the All-Union Commission of Certification (VAK) deprived Lisovy of his candidate's degree. The same investigator informed me that I too was engaged in libel and anti-Soviet activity because I am passing information to foreigners. This accusation was based on a letter I had mailed to my former student who now lives in the U.S.A. In this letter I described the trip I made with my children to visit my husband.

At our meeting at the KGB prison in Kiev in January 1976, my husband assured me that he stands on Marxist principles and regards himself to be ideologically and legally blameless.

Respected friends! Help me to release from imprisonment a man who is innocent—a Communist, a scholar-philosopher of great creative potential, a highly intelligent and selfless person. Help return their father to my children!

March, 1976 .

Vira Lisovy

Ukr.S.S.R.

m. Kiev 140

vul. Bratislavska 4, kv. 192.

LETTER ABOUT VASYL LISOVY

NEWS ABOUT LISOVY FROM VIRI'S LETTER TO HER FORMER STUDENT

received in June 1976

We have just come back from our visit to Vasyl Semenovych (i. e., Lisovy—ed.) This time he looks better, but he feels ill. He lacks the energy to work at philosophy. He is writing poetry. These poems are better than the one you read. They are highly valued here. He is writing philosophical essays on literature: T. Mann's Buddenbrooks, a commentary on Rilke's poetry, a philosophical dictionary, a grammar of the Ukrainian language (conceived in an original way that will make children eager to learn grammar), notes on the poetry of Drach (on his contribution to Ukrainian literature). As to his health, he has frequent headaches, pains in the stomach, liver, intestine. The skin on his feet is in ulcers (which are bleeding). After treatment with sulphuric ointment they heal and then break out again.

He does not discuss his convictions with anyone. It would be ridiculous; after all, he is a mature man.

He was very nice with the children, talked and played with them. He gave me a lot of advice on bringing them up.

The children were exhausted by the journey, and yet they are ready to go next year (we waited for two and a half days before we were allowed to see Vasyl), because with him we all become different persons.

THE CASE OF YEVHEN PRONYUK

BORN: 1936. Married to Halyna Ditkovska, philologist. They have 2 children.

PROFESSIONAL WORK: In 1965 he received the degree of Candidate of Philosophical Sciences (similar to Ph.D.) for his dissertation, *The Ideological Struggle in Galicia in the Seventies of the 19th Century: The Revolutionary-Democrat O. Terletsky*. Since 1962 he worked as a research associate at the Institute of Philosophy, Academy of Sciences, Ukr.S.S.R. Because he was involved in the trial of Ya. Hevrych in 1966, and because *Samvydav* materials were discovered in his office, he was demoted to a bibliographer and denied the right to defend his doctoral dissertation (*A Chronicle of Current Events*, No. 27).

PUBLICATIONS (partial list):

"Shevchenko i O.Terletsky" (Shevchenko and O.Terletsky). *Borotba mizh materiyalizmom ta idealizmom na Ukraini v XIX st.* Ed. V.Yu.Yevdokymenko. Kiev: Ac.Sc.Ukr.S.S.R., 1964, pp. 168-84.

"Aktualni pytannya z istoriyi filozofiyi na Ukraini" (Current Problems in the History of Philosophy in Ukraine), *Ukrayinsky istorychnyy zhurnal*, No. 7 (1965).

"Ideolohichna borotba v Halychyni 70-ykh rokiv XIX st. u vysvitleni radyanskykh doslidnykiv" (The Ideological Struggle in Galicia in the Seventies of 19th cent. as Presented by Soviet Scholars). *Z istoriyi filozofskoyi dumky na Ukraini*. ed. V.Yu.Yevdokymenko. Kiev: Ac.Sc.Ukr.S.S.R., 1965, pp. 148-49.

"Z istoriyi idealizmu v Halychyni (druha pol. XIX st.)" (From the History of Idealism in Galicia [Second Half of the 19th cen.]. *Z istoriyi filozofiyi na Ukraini*. Ed. V.Yu.Yevdokymenko. Kiev: Ac.Sc.Ukr.S.S.R., 1967, pp. 178-85.

"Z istoriyi poshyrennya marksystskoyi filozofiyi na Ukraini (From the History of the Spreading of Marxist Philosophy in Ukraine). *Rozvytok filozofiyi v Ukrayinskyi R.S.R.* Ed. V.Yu.Yevdokymenko. Kiev: Ac.Sc.Ukr.S.S.R., 1968, pp. 39-50.

"Z istoriyi sotsyalistychnykh idey na Ukraini (Ukrayinska sotsyalistychna literatura 70-kh rokiv XIX st.)" (From the History of Socialist Ideas in Ukraine [Ukrainian Socialist Literature in the Seventies of the 19th cent.]). *Z istoriyi filozofiyi ta sotsyolohiyi na Ukraini*. Ed. V.Yu.Yevdokymenko. Kiev: Ac.Sc.Ukr.S.S.R., 1968.

Articles on I.F.Fesenko and O.S.Shklyarevsky in *Ukrayinska radyanska entsyklopediya* (The Soviet Ukrainian Encyclopaedia), Vol. XV, p. 248 and Vol. XVI, p. 336.

ARREST: On July 8, 1972, Pronyuk was detained on the street. In his briefcase were found about 70 photocopies of a letter to the CC CPSU, all ready to be mailed to various prominent Soviet citizens. The letter was written by Pronyuk and Lisovy. It expressed concern over the wave of illegal arrests in Ukraine in early 1972, and gave an analysis of the disastrous effects of the party's cultural and economic policies in Ukraine (*A Chronicle* . . . , Nos. 27,28).

While Pronyuk was in prison his wife was dismissed from the Institute

of Languages and her recently defended Candidate's dissertation was rejected by the Higher Certification Commission (*A Chronicle* . . . , No.28).

TRIAL: Pronyuk, who was tried with Lisovy and I.Semanyuk in Nov. 1973, was charged with preparing, possessing and disseminating anti-Soviet materials with the intent to undermine the state, and with helping to prepare two issues of the *Ukrainian Herald*. Pronyuk pleaded not guilty. Nevertheless, he was sentenced under Art. 62 of the Criminal Code of Ukr.S.S.R. ("anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda") to 7 years in a strict-regime camp and 5 years' exile. He concluded his final statement before the court with the words: "*pareal mundi, fiat justitia!*" [Though the world may perish, let there be justice!].

IMPRISONMENT: Pronyuk was sent to camp No. 35 in the Perm Region, R.S.F.S.R. On May 12, 1974, he felt ill and did not report for work. In ignorance of camp regulations, he did not report that he was ill. He was severely punished for this: a scheduled visit from his wife was cancelled. His wife had come thousands of miles, and he had not seen her for 2 years. This cruel blow to Pronyuk provoked a month-long hunger strike against the lawlessness of the camp administration. About 25 prisoners participated in the strike. In spite of threats from Col. Shabadin, Pronyuk would not end his strike. In August, 1974 he joined another hunger strike (*Possev*, No.11,1974). In mid-September, 1975 he wrote a protest letter to N.Podgorny, threatening to renounce his Soviet citizenship if prisoners were not given better treatment (*UIS SMOLOSKYP*, August 31, 1976). He has spent much time in solitary confinement in a cold, damp cell on a diet of less than 1300 cal. per day. His condition deteriorated rapidly in the winter of 1975 and since July, 1975, he has been suffering from tuberculosis of the lungs. According to a recent report he has been transferred to Vladimir Prison, where conditions are even worse than they are in camp (*Svoboda*, May 14, 1976):

THE CASE OF MYKOLA BONDAR

BORN: 1939.

PROFESSIONAL WORK: In 1968 Bondar began to lecture in philosophy at Uzhhorod University in southwestern Ukraine. In 1969 he was dismissed from work for commenting about the immoderate celebrations marking the Lenin centenary and for criticizing the Communist Party at a department meeting. He supported himself by doing odd jobs. At one time he worked in a boiler house in Cherkassy (*A Chronicle of Current Events*, No. 23, and *Sobranie dokumentov Samizdata*, vol. 22, doc. 1102).

ARREST: He was arrested on November 7, 1970, on Khreshchatyk Boulevard in Kiev, where during an official demonstration he mingled with the marchers and unfurled a banner with the words "Shame upon the present leaders of the CPSU" (*A Chronicle . . .*, No. 23, *Sobranie . . .*, 22).

TRIAL: He was charged with spreading slanderous lies about the Soviet political and social systems among his university colleagues, in letters to Redko (the chairman of the philosophy department at Uzhhorod University), to leaders of the CP and the state, and to a friend. All these documents, including the letters to Brezhnev, Kosygin, and Podgorny, were attached to the case. On May 12, 1971, Bondar was sentenced by Judge Matsko of the Kiev Regional Court to 7 years in a strict-regime prison camp for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda" (Art. 62 of the Ukrainian Criminal Code). Bondar pleaded not guilty, and declared, "It is my love for Communism, my faith in it that has led me to do what I did" (*Sobranie . . .*, 22).

IMPRISONMENT: Bondar has been a persistent fighter for recognition of the status of political prisoner by the state and for better prison conditions. September 10-12, 1971, he participated with seven other prisoners in Camp No. 17, Mordovia, in a hunger strike to protest the mistreatment of prisoners' relatives, illegal denial of visits, packages, etc. (*A Chronicle . . .*, No. 22). From November 10 to December 10, 1971, he refused food in protest against his conviction (*A Chronicle . . .*, No. 23). In December 1971, on the eve of Human Rights Day, Bondar, with seven other prisoners, signed an open letter to the deputies of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet and the Human Rights Commission of the UN, describing the lawlessness to which they and their families are subjected and demanding an investigation by a special UN committee and recognition of the status of political prisoners by the U.S.S.R. (*A Chronicle . . .*, No. 23).

In 1973 Bondar was transferred from Mordovia to Camp No. 35 in the Perm Region, R.S.F.S.R. and then to Camp No. 36. From there with six other prisoners he wrote a letter addressed to the governments of all countries, to the UN, and to all honest men, describing the life of political prisoners (*Suchasnist*, Nos. 7-8, 1975). In August 1975 he was transferred to Vladimir Prison, but his protests did not cease. In February 1975 he demanded the status of political prisoner and was punished with 10 days in solitary confinement. In June with several other prisoners he refused to work and demanded recognition as a political prisoner. From October 1975 to January 1976 he has kept on a low diet of about 1300 cal. per day (*UIS SMOLOSKYP*, August 31, 1976). In a letter to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. Bondar declared civil disobedience, beginning with February 24, 1976.

DECLARATION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

*To the Presidium of the
Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.
from prisoner Mykola Vasylevych Bondar*

I was sentenced by the Kiev Regional Court on May, 12, 1971, under Art. 62, sec. 1 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian S.S.R. to 7 years in a strict regime camp. Since then I have frequently written to various state and social institutions and organizations, demanding that my case be reviewed objectively. The interpretation of the motives of my civil protest that appears in my accusation is an intentional and conscious distortion. I have met with a heartless indifference to my fate, and this has forced me to declare several prolonged hunger strikes in protest. But not a single person wished to manifest at least that minimum of civic virtue that is a part of human dignity.

If the state finds it necessary to condemn me for purely political reasons and feels the urgent need to keep me in strict isolation, then it is obliged to recognize me officially as a political prisoner and to provide the required prison conditions for me.

For this reason I turned to the MVD of the U.S.S.R. in January 1975 and demanded the status of a political prisoner. Unfortunately, the state saw no need to demonstrate any objectivity, even out of respect for itself. Moreover, having deprived me of the right to defend my human dignity, the state began to repress me in a deliberate and systematic manner. It continually subjected me to the torture of solitary confinement in reprisal for a single declaration of nonconformity to the penal regime that was destroying me. This declaration was my response to the state's refusal to recognize me as a political prisoner. Then, by depriving me of food and medicine, the state tried to force me into renouncing my just demands.

Although the administration of Camp VS/389/36 realized that this torture was senseless and did not believe that I could possibly renounce my demands, it was motivated also by the idea—"Let this be a warning to others."

As for myself, I sent out a large number of petitions about the repressions I was suffering. The numerous letters that I sent to the deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. were redirected to you. To the subsequent series of petitions that I addressed to you, you preferred to reply at first with a mere supposition (which, by the way, was irrelevant to the main point of my grievances).

The Chusovsky People's Court, which on August 4, 1975, ordered that I be transferred to a prison, was too "ashamed" to call things by their name, to give the real reasons why I refused to conform to the penal code, and preferred to conceal them under the standard phrase: "For refusing to work and for infringing the ITU code."

Since I can find no other means to defend my human dignity, I declare as of February 24, 1976, civil disobedience, as a protest against the state's violence and stubborn refusal to recognize me as a human being. My civil disobedience will consist of the following:

- 1. refusing any correspondence until the end of my term;*
- 2. refusing any visits;*
- 3. refusing any packages that are permitted by the code;*
- 4. renouncing my Soviet citizenship;*
- 5. boycotting the Soviet state;*
- 6. boycotting the prison administration;*
- 7. preserving absolute silence;*
- 8. declaring a hunger strike.*

In entering into a mutual contract with the state to acquire the civil rights and liberties that were offered to me, and whose genuineness I did not doubt at the time, I trustingly gave the state the right to control my views, to form them according to its outlook. I subordinated my will and personality to the state. I sincerely hoped that I would fulfill my obligations, and at the same time had faith in the good will of the other side. It never occurred to me that the state could claim the right to deceive me, to speculate . . . (illegible—ed.) . . . Rejecting the agreed-upon obligations, the state swiftly hurled at me the full force of its coercive institutions. Although by this act the state had already broken our contract, I tried during the long years of imprisonment to maintain some juridical relations with the state (by means of grievances and declarations). I naively hoped that fair relations might be re-established.

Now I realize that it is necessary to legally dissolve our contract.

I no longer wish to identify myself as a citizen of the U.S.S.R. Hence as of February 24, 1976, I renounce my Soviet citizenship.

But I have no intention of abandoning my Fatherland—Ukraine, where I was born and where I intend to live when my term is up.

After serving my term I do not intend to get a citizen's passport or exercise the rights and liberties that exist in the U.S.S.R.—because they are powerless to guarantee my personal freedom. Hence I demand to be

recognized as a person without any citizenship and to be granted the corresponding status (according to point 4 of my declaration of civil disobedience).

In connection with this I voluntarily renounce the right, granted me by the state, to defend myself by means of grievances and petitions to state and social institutions and organizations—which deliberately ignore me—and I surrender myself completely to the arbitrary will of the state.

And if tomorrow the state should want to take life itself from me, I shall not resist or grumble. I shall not lift a finger to defend myself (according to point 5 of my declaration).

As of February 24, 1976, I do not recognize the prison regulations as binding upon me and I reserve the right to govern my conduct in every concrete situation according to my own will and the dictates of my conscience (in accordance with point 6 of my declaration).

From February 24, 1976 to November 7, 1977, I declare absolute silence. While I am imprisoned, I shall not utter one word (in accordance with point 7 of my declaration).

On the day I begin my civil disobedience I declare a one-day hunger strike (in accordance with point 8 of my declaration).

Mykola Bondar

(Translated from *Arkhiv Samizdata*, No, 2559)

Amnesty International, the human rights organization, included Mykola Vasylevych Bondar in its "Prisoners of the Month Campaign" for December 1976.

You can help Vasyl Lisovy, Yevhen Pronyuk, and Mykola Bondar by writing letters of protest and appeals for leniency on their behalf to:

U.S.S.R.		Ambassador A. Dobrynin
R.S.F.S.R.		Embassy of the U.S.S.R.
Moskva, Kreml	and	1125 16th St. NW
Generalnomu Secretaryu TsK KPSS		Washington, D.C. 20136
L. I. Brezhnevu		

Please send personal letters of encouragement to:

U.S.S.R.
Mordovskaya A.S.S.R.
p. ya. Zh.Kh. 385/19
Lisovy, Vasyl

U.S.S.R.
Vladimirskaya Obl.
gor. Vladimir 600020
uchr. OD-1, ST-2
Pronyuk, Yevhen

U.S.S.R.
Vladimirskaya Obl.
gor. Vladimir 600020
uchr. OD-1, ST-2
Bondar, Mykola

S M O L O S K Y P S A M V Y D A V S E R I E S

DOCUMENTS OF UKRAINIAN SAMVYDAV

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“Three Philosophers—Political Prisoners in the Soviet Union”

TRANSLATED AND EDITED BY TARAS ZAKYDALSKY

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