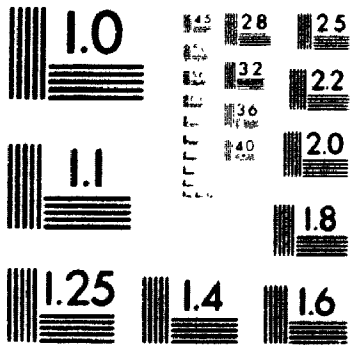


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THE UNION FOR THE LIBERATION OF UKRAINE, 1914-1918

by

GREGORY SMOLYNEC, B.A.

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of

(Master of Arts)

Institute of Central/East European and Russian Area Studies

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

January 12, 1993

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ABSTRACT

The Union for the Liberation of Ukraine was formed in Austrian Galicia at the outbreak of World War I. The goal of this organization was an independent Ukrainian state. The Union, consisting of prominent socialist exiles from the Russian Empire, was the first political organization to articulate unequivocally the demand for Ukrainian statehood. The exiles believed that through the defeat of Russia a Ukrainian state could arise. For this reason, they supported the Central Powers in the war against Russia.

The Union occupies a pivotal place in the history of Ukrainian political thought. The political theories of the Union represent a transition in the history of Ukrainian political thought from social democratic and federalist constructs to corporatist, statist and separatist theories. The Union was the first Ukrainian political organization to adopt a realist approach to international affairs and the first to elaborate on the place of Ukraine in the international system.

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INTRODUCTION

On August 4, 1914 the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, SVU) was founded at Lviv in Austrian Galicia. The SVU consisted of prominent socialist exiles from Russian-ruled Ukraine. Their goal was the formation of an independent Ukrainian state. This, they believed, would be possible following the military defeat of Russia at the hands of Austria-Hungary and Germany. In pursuit of this goal the Union adopted a pro-Central Power orientation. It launched large-scale information campaigns in the capitals of Europe with the purpose of alerting public opinion to the Ukrainian question and influencing governments to adopt policies supporting Ukrainian independence. The SVU was also responsible for a massive organizational effort among the hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians of the Russian army taken prisoner by the Central Powers. The purpose of this effort was to develop cadres who would become independent Ukraine's civic and military leaders. To develop these cadres, the SVU sought to raise the prisoners' level of national consciousness through education and the formation of civic-minded organizations in the prisoner-of-war (POW) camps. In addition to these activities, the SVU tried to establish a network of sympathizers behind the lines in the Russian Empire. On the territories populated by Ukrainians and occupied by the

Central Powers, the Union tried to form Ukrainian administrations. As a result of the SVU's efforts, a Ukrainian school system was established on the occupied territories, and numerous agents and agitators were sent behind the lines to contact revolutionary circles in Kiev and to promote independence. In 1917-1918 three infantry divisions were formed from among the Ukrainian POWs which were sent to help the Ukrainian National Republic counter the Bolshevik invasion of Ukraine. As a result of the SVU's efforts, influential elites in Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey came to believe that Ukrainian statehood should be an objective of their countries' foreign policies. In spite of the scope of the SVU's activities and the significance of its accomplishments, the history of the Union has largely been ignored by historians.

The oversight of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine in the historiography of Eastern Europe is surprising since the history of this organization is of importance in understanding issues such as the rise of Ukrainian nationalism, the war aims of the Central Powers, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, and the Ukrainian Revolution. The history of the SVU also serves as an insightful example of national liberation and revolutionary movements and their sponsorship by great powers, and it contributes to an understanding of international systemic processes in the Balkan-Black Sea region. With dramatic changes in the

international system in the post-Cold War era, the emergence of a Ukrainian state and major disturbances in the Balkans, new insight on historical international systems in this area is timely.

In the context of Ukrainian history, the SVU's significance lies in the role the Union played in the development of Ukrainian political thought. It was the first political organization to declare unequivocally its goal to be the formation of an independent Ukrainian state. The history of the SVU shows how the Ukrainian revolutionary movement and its disparate currents in both the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires moved from programs advocating cultural autonomy to clearly articulated demands for statehood. The history of the SVU serves as a window through which to view changes in Ukrainian political thought from the federalist ideas at the turn of the century through social-democracy to statist, corporatist theories. Most importantly, the members of the SVU were the first Ukrainian realists in their approach to international affairs, developing theories concerning Ukraine's place in the international system. In its practical work, the SVU contributed greatly to the development of the Ukrainian state of 1917-1921, specifically in the formation of military units from among the Ukrainian POWs and in the information campaigns which the SVU conducted in various European capitals which helped the Ukrainian National

Republic receive diplomatic recognition from several countries.

The history of the SVU and its relationship to the Central Powers tells of the development and changes in the foreign policies and war aims of the Central Powers and contributes to a greater understanding of the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk which led to the conclusion of a separate peace on the Eastern Front. At the beginning of the war, the Central Powers exhibited great interest and activity in promoting national revolutionary movements among the peoples of Russia. In 1915, Germany moved toward favouring social revolution over national revolution in destabilizing Russia. At Brest-Litovsk, both Ukrainian nationalists who had been sponsored by the Central Powers and the Bolsheviks who had also received such sponsorship, were represented.

The SVU provides insight into other national liberation and revolutionary movements. During the First World War, the SVU maintained close ties to other national movements of the Russian Empire such as the Estonian and Georgian national movements. The Union also had intriguing connections to Lenin and other Bolsheviks, and its emissaries and agents met with or were linked to individuals and groups such as Mussolini and the Irish Sinn Fein. During World War I, the Great Powers on both sides sponsored national liberation movements among the aggrieved nationalities of their enemies. The Central Powers sponsored Ukrainian, Polish,

Caucasian and Baltic rebels from among the peoples of Russia and the Irish and Indians of the British Empire. The Russians sponsored the Czechs of Austria. And while the Turks tried to raise the Muslims of the British Empire against their British overlords, the British incited the Arabs of the Ottoman Empire to revolt. Since the Great War, the sponsorship of national liberation and revolutionary movements by various states has been a common feature of foreign policy behaviour. During the Second World War, Germany again engaged in the sponsorship of aggrieved nationalities as did the Allies. During the Cold war the phenomenon manifested itself in the sponsorship of proxies by the United States and the Soviet Union in numerous theatres of conflict such as Latin America and Africa. More recently, the use of the Kurds and the Shiites in the Persian Gulf War shows that this practice continues to be an important instrument of foreign policy.

The involvement of the SVU in the diplomacy of the Balkan-Black Sea international sub-system is perhaps the most relevant aspect of the Union's history to current international problems. With the emergence of many new states and conflicts in this region there is a pressing need for ideas on creating a viable international sub-system in this corner of the world where historically there have been many conflicts. The SVU devoted much attention to the Balkan-Black Sea region, and advanced many ideas on the role

of an independent Ukrainian state in providing a balance of power in that area of Europe and Asia Minor.

The origins of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine lie in the pre-war period when Ukrainian revolutionaries in the Russian Empire were grouped around the first-ever Ukrainian political party of the Russian Empire: the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party (RUP). In 1904, a schism occurred in RUP which led to the formation of Spilka, the Ukrainian faction within the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP), and the Ukrainian Social-Democratic Labour Party (USDLP). From the time of the schism to the time of the Balkan Wars, Spilka and the USDLP were irreconcilable political competitors. By the outbreak of war in 1914, the leading exiles of both organizations reunited in the formation of the SVU. What brought about the confluence of these two currents in the Ukrainian revolutionary movement? The answer lies in the transformation of the political thought of the exiles and in the threat to Ukrainian identity posed by the prospects of a Russian conquest of Austrian Galicia. Therefore, an essential aspect in the founding of the SVU was the role played by the Ukrainian Piedmont - Eastern Galicia. The pre-war origins of the SVU will be discussed in chapter one of the paper.

In August 1914 the SVU sprang into action very quickly, developing a platform, establishing high-level contacts with

the governments of the Central Powers, sending agents and emissaries to numerous capitals and behind the lines, as will be seen in chapter two. Soon after the Union was founded it started working among the prisoners of war. The SVU's organizational efforts among the prisoners of war is the central topic of chapter five. This activity continued well into 1918 by which time the SVU had become preoccupied with the revolutionary events in Ukraine which will be dealt with in chapter six.

An issue of particular interest in the history of the SVU is the nature of the relationship between the Union and the Central Powers. In chapters three and four, a detailed examination of the activities of the SVU and the behaviour of the Central Powers toward the organization will bear out the thesis that the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine was not constrained in its decision-making or its activities by the financial backing that the organization received from the Central Powers. From its inception in August 1914 to the organization's liquidation in July 1918, the SVU, in pursuit of its independently devised program, spent most of its time and effort trying to influence the political and military decision-makers of the Central Powers, often in opposition to Central Power policies. At no time was the SVU under the control of any of the agencies of the governments of the Central Powers. This reluctance to subordinate the SVU to the Central Powers led to many difficulties in the relations

between the Union and government officials of the Central Powers. In January 1915, the Austro-Hungarian government ordered that the Union leave Austro-Hungarian territory and tried to distance itself from the SVU. Relations between the Central Powers and the SVU were further complicated by the increasing tendency of Austro-Hungarian and German officials to accommodate Polish aspirations throughout 1915-1916. With the Poles and Ukrainians having conflicting claims on the same territories, the Polish ascendance in the Central Power planning for the post-war international order varied inversely with Ukrainian influence and importance with the Central Powers.

Several members of the Union published post-war memoirs or accounts of the SVU, but these are all quite dated interpretations of the history of the organization and none is comprehensive or very detailed.¹ Of the secondary sources that deal with this period, few give more than passing mention to the Union. Those that do discuss the SVU at length are tendentious.² Two studies stand out: Jerry Hans Hoffman's unpublished 1967 PhD dissertation, "The

¹. See for example, Oleksander Skoropys-Ioltukhovs'kyi, "Moi 'zlochyny'," Khliborobs'ka Ukraina, zbirnyk, Nos. II, III, IV, (1920-1921), Vienna, pp.191-237. See also Volodymyr Doroshenko, "Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy," 8 part series Svoboda, Nos. 149-156, (1954), and Andry Zhuk, "Do istorii ukrains'koi politychnoi dumky pered svitovoiu viinoiu: I Grupa 'Vil'na Ukraina,'" Vyzvolennia, Vienna & Prague: Vol. 1, No. 2, (March 1923), pp. 30-43.

². See for example, Roman Rozdol's'kyi, "Do istorii 'Soiuzu Vyzvolennia Ukrainy,'" Ukrains'kyi Samostiinyk, six parts, Nos. 1-6 (531-536). (January-June, 1969).

Ukrainian Adventure of the Central Powers 1914-1918," and Dmytro Doroshenko's Z istorii ukrains'koi politychnoi dumky za chasiv svitovoi viiny (From History of Ukrainian Political Thought During the World War), published in 1936.³ Hoffman discusses the SVU, but his account is based entirely on German and Austrian government archives to the total exclusion of SVU materials. Hoffman is primarily concerned with the issue of German war aims and deals with the SVU only tangentially. The value of this study lies in its interpretation of Austro-Hungarian and German foreign policy behaviour which is well documented. Doroshenko's study deals primarily with the political thought of Lev Iurkevych, a Ukrainian Social-Democrat. This book was based largely on Iurkevych's personal archive and contains many insights into pre-war Ukrainian politics, the exile community and the SVU's origins. O. Fedyshyn in Germany's Drive to the East and the Ukrainian Revolution, 1917-1918 briefly discusses the SVU and is an excellent source on German-Ukrainian relations in the last years of the First World War.⁴

The paucity of secondary sources on the SVU in no way reflects the availability of archival and other primary

³. Jerry Hans Hoffman, "The Ukrainian Adventure of the Central Powers 1914-1918," unpublished PhD. dissertation, (University of Pittsburg, 1967). Dmytro Doroshenko, Z istorii ukrains'koi politychnoi dumky za chasiv svitovoi viiny, (Prague, 1936).

⁴. O. Fedyshyn, Germany's Drive to the East and the Ukrainian Revolution, 1917-1918, (New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1971).

sources on the Union. There exist several well-organized collections of archival material dealing with the SVU and many of the organization's numerous publications can be found in libraries. The most important documents and many SVU publications are in the Andry Zhuk Collection at the Public Archives of Canada.⁵ Zhuk was an activist of the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party (RUP), a General-Secretary of the USDLP and a member of the four-person SVU Presidium. This collection contains hundreds of volumes of notes, diaries, correspondence, reports, financial statements, manuscripts and publications, much of it concerning the SVU directly. In this archive there are also many official documents and publications issued by the Union. Another collection which is pertinent to the study of the SVU is the Batchinsky Collection at Carleton University.⁶ Batchinsky was one of the SVU's representatives in Switzerland and editor of the SVU-funded La Revue Ukrainienne. In addition to these sources there are German and Austrian archives that cover this period and relations between the Imperial Governments and the SVU.⁷ These archival sources were the

⁵. The Andry Zhuk Collection, MG 30, C 167, Manuscript Division, Public Archives of Canada. Hereafter cited as Zhuk Collection.

⁶. The Batchinsky Collection, Special Collections, MacOdrum Library, Carleton University. Hereafter cited as Batchinsky Collection.

⁷. Politisches Archiv of the German Foreign Office in Bonn, the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, the Deutsches Zentralarchiv in Potsdam and the Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchive of the

basis of several much debated studies published in the 1960s concerning German war aims and some researchers addressed the issue of SVU-Central Power relations using these archives.⁸ The documents in European archives have been used in this study only to the extent that they have been made accessible through secondary interpretations, notably Hoffman's dissertation and through published collections.⁹

Osterreichisches Staatsarchiv in Vienna.

⁸. Franz Fischer's Germany's Aims in the First World War, (New York, 1967) was the subject of much debate. There are several German-language studies of the SVU including Wolfdieter Bihl, "Osterreich-Ungarn und der 'Bund zur Befreiung der Ukraina'," in Festgabe fur Hugo Hartsch zum 70 Geburtstag, pp. 505-526 and Helga Grebing, "Osterreich-Ungarn und die 'Ukraine Aktion' 1914-1918," Jahrbucher fur Geschite Osteuropas, VII (1959), pp. 270-296.

⁹. Z.A.B. Zeman, ed., Germany and the Revolution in Russia 1915-1918: Documents from the Archives of the German Foreign Ministry, (London, 1958).

CHAPTER I -- ANTE-BELLUM, 1900-AUGUST 1914

The origins of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine lie in the period 1900-1914 and in the political ideas of the Ukrainian exile community in Eastern Galicia. Every member of the Union had a background of revolutionary activity in Tsarist Russia and was forced to seek refuge from the repression that followed the Revolution of 1905. Most of these activists spent some time in Western Europe before gravitating toward Lviv in Eastern Galicia which was widely regarded at that time as the centre of the Ukrainian national movement - the Ukrainian Piedmont. The pre-war experiences of the individuals who would later constitute the SVU provide the background to the genesis of the Union. An examination of the political biographies of these people also gives a good indication of the motivation behind the formation of the SVU, its policies and activities.

The ideas of the SVU have their origins in the changes that occurred in the Ukrainian social-democratic movement before the First World War. There were four members of the top decision-making body of the SVU - the Presidium: Marian Melenevs'kyi, Oleksander Skoropys-Ioltukhovs'kyi, Andry Zhuk and Volodymyr Doroshenko. All four had been members of the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party (RUP) before it split into the

Spilka faction of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP) and the Ukrainian Social-Democratic Labour Party (USDLP). Melenevs'kyi and Skoropys went on to become leading members of Spilka while Zhuk and Doroshenko occupied top posts in the USDLP.

RUP was founded in Kharkiv in 1900 by a group of students together with prominent Ukrainian activists such as Dmytro Antonovych and Mykhailo Rusov.¹ It was a conspiratorial party whose aim was the unification of various generations and classes in the struggle for national rights and social revolution.² From its inception RUP was a divided party. In 1902 a small faction of the party led by the fiery nationalist Mykola Mikhnovs'kyi left RUP to form the Ukrainian National Party. By 1905 another split signalled the end of RUP. This was when Spilka broke away and RUP subsequently transformed itself into the USDLP. Initially the national question had been of great concern to RUP. By 1905 there was an intense debate within the party over the question of nationality policy within the context of the social democratic movement. The majority led by Mykola Porsh, and his associates the writer Volodymyr

¹. The most comprehensive and authoritative study of RUP, Spilka and the USDLP up to 1907 is George Boshyk, "The Rise of Ukrainian Political Parties in Russia, 1900-1907: With Special Reference to Social Democracy," Unpublished D.Phil Thesis, (Oxford University, 1981).

². Orest Subtelny, Ukraine: A History, (Toronto, 1988), p.294.

Vynnychenko and the journalist Symon Petliura, both of whom would go on to lead governments during the period of Ukrainian statehood 1917-1921, argued that RUP should be a national party combining nationalism with Marxism. The foremost spokesperson and principal financial backer of Spilka - Marian Melenevs'kyi, wanted RUP to become an autonomous branch of the RSDLP which would represent all workers and peasants in Ukraine regardless of nationality. During the Christmas holidays of 1904 RUP held a conference at Lviv where the differences between the two factions proved insurmountable. Shortly after the meeting, the faction favouring unification with the RSDLP left RUP to form Spilka. Spilka had a status within the RSDLP similar to that of the Jewish Bund. RUP activists who joined Melenevs'kyi in Spilka were Petro Kanivets', Victor Mazurenko and Oleksander Skoropys-Ioltukhovs'kyi.³

Most RUP members stayed with the old organization. At a December 1905 conference RUP transformed itself into the USDLP, with Andry Zhuk being elected General-Secretary of the Central Committee of the USDLP.⁴ The other SVU Presidium member, Volodymyr Doroshenko, was also a prominent USDLP member contributing many articles to the party press.

³. D. Doroshenko, pp. 3-4.

⁴. Myron Momryk, "A Biography of Andry Zhuk," The Andry Zhuk Collection, MG 30 C 167, Public Archives of Canada, Manuscript Division, Finding Aid No. 1663, (Ottawa, 1986), p. viii.

Several issues from the 1900-1914 period are pertinent to the history of the SVU. First, what were the ideological and tactical differences between Spilka and the USDLP? Secondly, what circumstances made possible the reconciliation of the exiles of the two groups in the SVU and led to their adopting a position advocating independence? And lastly, what ideological factors made possible the cooperation of Ukrainian social-democrats with the Central Powers?

Spilka, according to its statute, was "a part of the RSDLP with the goal of organizing the Ukrainian-speaking proletariat."⁵ It was a Menshevik faction.⁶ Spilka maintained that the social and economic emancipation of workers of all nationalities would end the oppression of one nation by another. During his Spilka days, Skoropys wrote that "efforts must be made to make the proletarian-peasant masses politically and socially conscious, but the masses' national Ukrainian identity will, so to speak, remain just that: Ukrainian."⁷ This view came from one of the most prominent Ukrainophiles in Spilka. Many other members were either indifferent to the question of national rights or principled opponents of the Ukrainian national movement.

⁵. D. Doroshenko, p. 21.

⁶. Subtelny, p. 297.

⁷. O. Skoropys-Ioltukhovs'kyi, Nash Holos, 1911, vol XI-XII p. 511, as cited in D. Doroshenko, p. 8.

According to the historian of Spilka, Arnol'd Rish, after Spilka had been integrated with the Southern Provincial Bureau of the RSDLP, it was intended that the organization would become an all-Russian body that would unify work among the peasantry not only in Ukraine but across the Russian state.⁶

During the Revolution of 1905, of all the Ukrainian parties, Spilka was the most dynamic, effectively mobilizing peasants for strikes and demonstrations.⁹ The apex of Spilka activity occurred in 1906-1907 when several members were elected to the Second State Duma.¹⁰ According to O. Hermaize, "the widening of Spilka's activities fatally tore it from its Ukrainian base, sending it along the line of all-Russian (obshche russkoi) work and culture."¹¹ Gradually Ukrainophiles such as Melenevs'kyi and Skoropys gravitated toward the positions of the USDLP. "It could not have been different," Hermaize wrote, when "local Spilka organizations which often were made up of non-Ukrainians, along with the centre [of the RSDLP] could fight not only with Ukrainian petty-bourgeois radicalism, but also with the

⁶. Arnol'd Rish, "Ocherki po istorii "Spilki", Letopis' Revoliutsii, No. 3(12), (May-June 1925,) pp. 99-107.

⁹. Subtelny, p. 297.

¹⁰. They were: Kyrienko, Vovchyns'kyi, Fedorov, Humenko, Sakhna. See D. Doroshenko, p. 22.

¹¹. Hermaize, O., Narysy z istorii revoliutsiinoho rukhu na Ukraini, (Kiev, 1926), p. 280, as cited in Doroshenko, p. 23.

very idea of Ukrainian renaissance."¹² During the post-revolution reaction, Spilka was devastated by police infiltration. In 1907 almost all of its Supreme Committee was arrested and by 1908, Spilka had all but ceased to exist. That same year Melenevs'kyi, also known by his party alias as Basok, tried to resuscitate Spilka from abroad. The Vienna-based newspaper Pravda, in its first three issues appeared as an organ of Spilka before Lev Trotsky overruled his editorial colleague Basok and removed the Spilka label from its masthead.¹³ After a few more false starts, Melenevs'kyi issued the last official document to come out in the name of Spilka in 1912. By this time many of its members had gone over to Russian social-democratic organizations and to the Jewish Bund. The Ukrainians for the most part drifted back to the USDLP.¹⁴

During the period 1906-1914, the USDLP adopted the German social-democratic Erfurt program adding to it a point advocating autonomy for Ukraine.¹⁵ The party program called for "a separate parliament with legislative powers on those internal affairs which affect only those people who

¹². Ibid., p. 23.

¹³. Rish, Letopis' Revoliutsii, No. 3(12), (May-June, 1925), p. 99.

¹⁴. D. Doroshenko, p. 24.

¹⁵. For an interpretation of the ideology of the USDLP and Spilka, see Boshyk pp. 311-334 and D. Doroshenko p. 25. For the Erfurt program, see Karl Kautsky, The Class Struggle. (Erfurt Program), translated by W.E. Bohn, (New York, 1971).

reside on the territory of Ukraine."¹⁶ This did not mean complete independence, only autonomy within a federal Russia.

The Stolypin repression of 1907-1908 affected the USDLP almost as badly as Spilka. Local party organizations fell apart and many members went into European exile. In the summer of 1909, the publication of the newspaper Pratsia, under the editorship of Dmytro Dontsov, Volodymyr Doroshenko and Andry Zhuk represented an effort at revitalizing the USDLP, but factionalism persisted. Two prominent members of the party, Mykola Porsh and Lev Iurkevych, labelled the paper "opportunistic" and "liquidatoristic." In 1910, however, Iurkevych overcame his criticism of Zhuk and Doroshenko and cooperated closely with them. In this year the USDLP newspapers Pratsia and Robitnyk stopped publication and the party decided to publish a new periodical, Nash Holos. The paper was financed by the wealthy Iurkevych. In the following year, the two Spilka leaders, Melenevs'kyi and Skoropys, returned to the fold and took part in the work of Nash Holos. Iurkevych stopped funding this paper at the end of 1911 and aside from the formal acceptance of Spilka members in the USDLP, the party in effect ceased to function.¹⁷ As Volodymyr Doroshenko

¹⁶. D. Doroshenko, p. 5.

¹⁷. Ibid., p. 26.

commented, "everything went quiet."¹⁸ Iurkevych then came up with the idea to publish a legal journal in Kiev. Early in 1913 his plan was realized and Dzvin appeared on the political scene. This publication united the most prominent members of the Ukrainian intelligentsia including Dmytro Antonovych, Iulian Bachyns'kyi, Volodymyr Vynnychenko, Svitozar Drahomanov, Dmytro Dontsov, Petro Diatlov, M Kotsiubyns'kyi, V. Levins'kyi, Symon Petliura, V. Sadovs'kyi, V. Stepaniuk (also known as Oksen Lola), Mykola Trotskyi, Lesia Ukrainka, M. Khvyliia, Iurkevych and Melenevs'kyi, Skoropys and Volodymyr Doroshenko. Among its non-Ukrainian contributors there were A.V. Lunacharsky and P. Axelrod.¹⁹

Writing in Dzvin, Iurkevych came out against the "old petty bourgeoisie" (staromishchanstvo) represented in his eyes by the publications Rada and Ridnyi Krai and against the "new petty bourgeoisie" typified by Dmytro Dontsov's Literaturno-Naukovyi Vistnyk and Petliura's Ukrains'kaia Zhizn'.²⁰

Seeking to engage the Russian social-democrats of the Bolshevik faction in the work of Dzvin, Iurkevych, in the name of the editors of Dzvin, turned to G. Zinoviev who in turn passed along the message to Lenin then resident in

¹⁸. Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁹. Ibid., p. 30.

²⁰. Ibid., p. 30.

Krakow in Western Galicia.²¹ According to a letter sent in March 1914 from Zinoviev to Levins'kyi, the official editor of Dzvin, the Bolsheviks were very interested in negotiating with Dzvin regarding Bolshevik cooperation with the publication. They were particularly encouraged by Iurkevych's pledge to oppose the "liquidators" since this was Lenin's priority at the time. Lenin, however, in a postscriptum to the letter noted his displeasure with the "separation of Ukrainian workers in a separate social-democratic organization."²²

During the period July 1913 - August 1914, Lenin appears to have been preoccupied with the issue of Ukrainian separatism and in his articles and correspondence the matter takes on a sense of urgency. In December 1913, he published his "Critical Notes on the Nationalities Question" in which he attacked bourgeois nationalism and the "strengthening of nationalist leaning among various 'national' s-d[']s."²³ In this article Lenin reserved especially harsh criticism for Iurkevych and Dontsov. In February 1914, in an article in Put' Pravdy, Lenin discussed a Duma speech by Savenko, the spokesperson for the Black Hundreds, in which Savenko attacked "Mazepism" and decried the "Ukrainians linking

²¹. Ibid., p. 31.

²². Zinoviev's letter D. Doroshenko, p. 33. Lenin's post-scriptum in ibid. and in V. I. Lenin, Polnoe sobranie sochinenii, 5th ed., Vol. 48, (Moscow, 1964), p. 283.

²³. Lenin, Vol. 24, p. 115.

their hopes for the realization of autonomy with the destruction of Russia in the upcoming war with Austria-Hungary and Germany." As Lenin retold Savenko's speech, he too must have been concerned that, as Savenko put it, "On the ruins of great Russia under the spectre of the Habsburgs and within the borders of Austria-Hungary, autonomous Poland and Ukraine will be founded."²⁴ According to E.H. Carr, Lenin tried to "overtrump" his national social-democratic opponents by arguing for the rights of nations to self-determination up to and including outright political separation.²⁵ In "The Rights of Nations to Self-Determination," Lenin further develops his theory.²⁶ His correspondence from this time shows that in addition to trying to coopt the national sentiment of the minorities of Russia, Lenin was covertly trying to drive a wedge into the Ukrainian social-democratic movement. In an April 1, 1914 letter to Inessa Armand, Lenin discussed a ruse to make it appear that there was significant Ukrainian social-democratic opposition to Iurkevych. He writes that "this must be done tactfully and quickly against Iurkevych and without his knowledge or this swindle will become a

²⁴. Ibid., p. 324-325.

²⁵. E. H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, Vol. 1, (Baltimore: 1966), p. 265.

²⁶. Lenin, Vol. 25, pp. 255-320.

nuisance."²⁷ On April 24, 1914, Lenin again wrote to Armand and with a sense of urgency urged her "with all your powers, try to see Ukrainian s-d's, straighten out their position on the question of a separate national-Ukrainian s-d organization and try to organize even a small group of anti-separatists."²⁸

What caused Lenin to adopt the tactic of publicly theorizing about the right national self-d termination while privately trying to split the unity of Ukrainian social-democracy? It was probably Lenin's perceptive analysis of the direction of Ukrainian social democracy in exile and his fear as expressed in the words of Savenko that the Ukrainians socialists in exile were pursuing a separatist program and pinning their hopes on the Central Powers to defeat Russia and give them autonomy.

Several developments in the USDLP must have alarmed Lenin. Firstly, there was the unification of the Ukrainian intelligentsia including many social-democrats around Dzvin following the demise of Spilka. There were the strident calls for national affirmation on its pages. Most of Lenin's attention was devoted to the Ukrainian exiles in Galicia. Perhaps most alarming was the rapprochement of exiled Ukrainians of various parties and classes in an increasingly

²⁷. Ibid., Vol. 48, p. 277-278.

²⁸. Ibid., Vol. 48, pp. 281-282.

nationalistic grouping which was abandoning social-democratic tenets. The people involved in this development were seeking to bring the Ukrainian question to light on the European political stage.

In 1911 Iurkevych, Zhuk and Volodymyr Stepankivs'kyi decided to publish a newspaper "under the banner of an independent Ukrainian state."²⁹ At this time both Zhuk and Iurkevych were members of the Central Committee of the USDLP. They sought to make the national question a top priority and to create an all-Ukrainian political organization.³⁰ According to Zhuk, the most enthusiastic participant in these plans was Iurkevych even though he rejected on principle political conceptions that were not based on Marxism, including separatism as it was formulated by Zhuk or Stepankivs'kyi.³¹ Iurkevych, deploring the stagnation of Ukrainian political activity, privately supported this initiative financially.³²

In a curious confluence of Ukrainian ideological currents, Iurkevych brought Viacheslav Lypyns'kyi, his

²⁹. A. Zhuk, "SVU," Pamiatkova knyha soiuzu vyzvolennia Ukrainy i kaliendar na 1917 rik, (Vienna, SVU, 1917), pp. 366-384.

³⁰. A. Zhuk, "Do istorii ukrainskoi politychnoi dumky pered svitovoiu viinoiu, I Grupa 'Vil'na Ukraina,'" Vyzvolennia, Vol. 1, No. 2, (March 1923), p. 33.

³¹. D. Doroshenko, p. 34.

³². Ibid., p. 34.

childhood friend, in on the initiative.³³ Lypyns'kyi was the founder of modern Ukrainian historiography based on the idea that national statehood was a deciding factor in Ukrainian history. He believed the task of modern Ukrainian historiography to be the revival of the historical tradition of the Ukrainian Hetman state, and after the First World War, he became a theoretician of the anti-socialist Hetmanite movement. In contrast to the Ukrainian populists and socialists, Lypyns'kyi advocated the formation of a socially diversified, all-class national community as a precondition to political independence. Lypyns'kyi's objective was the reintegration of the Polonized and Russified elites into Ukrainian national life.³⁴ During the turmoil of 1917-1921, these ideas found expression in the Ukrainian Democratic Agrarian Party, the Free Cossack movement, the Congress of Landowners and the regime of Hetman Pavlo Skoropads'kyi. In the 1920's Lypyns'kyi was the leader and ideologist of the Ukrainian Union of Agrarian-Statists later renamed the Ukrainian Union of Hetmanite-Statists, which advocated a hereditary hetmanate with a corporate constitution: "a labour monarchy."³⁵ Lypyns'kyi's conservative ideology opposed liberal democratic

³³. Ibid., p. 27.

³⁴. I. L. Rudnytsky, "Conservatism," Encyclopedia of Ukraine, Vol. I, (Toronto, 1984), p. 565.

³⁵. Ibid., p. 566.

republicanism. In the period following the First World War, a member of the SVU Presidium, Skoropys-Ioltukhovs'kyi, became an adherent of the elitist, statist and corporatist Hetmanite movement.

On March 4, 5, and 6, 1911 a conference took place in Lviv, which attracted, Lypyns'kyi, Iurkevych, Zhuk, Volodymyr Stepankivs'kyi and Volodymyr Kushnir, the editor of the Vienna-based Ukrainische Rundschau. According to Zhuk, Iurkevych assumed a "special position" at the conference.³⁶ On one hand, he fell into despair at the thought of the political desolation in Ukraine, and he more than anyone wanted some sort of action, a revival of the national political movement. On the other, as an orthodox social democrat, holding a class-based point of view, he could not wholly support the planned action, saying that the struggle for national forms of life and statehood must have a class character. According to Zhuk, Iurkevych believed that "the proletariat must struggle for its own proletarian school, for its proletarian state, and he [Iurkevych] could not cooperate with those who in word wanted a state above classes, but in deed were working to create a class-based bourgeois state."³⁷

As a result of this conference a couple of initiatives were taken. A newspaper was planned. It was to be entitled

³⁶. Zhuk, Vyzvolennia, Vol. 1, No. 2, (March 1923), pp. 37-38.

³⁷. Ibid., pp. 33-37.

Vil'na Ukraina, and it was to be financed by Iurkevych. In addition, a program was drafted based on the principle that an independent Ukraine could be the outcome only of a Ukrainian national revolution which could be achieved through the destruction of Russia. As for the Ukrainian lands of the Habsburg Empire, that is Galicia, Bukovyna and Transcarpathia, in the short term they should be accorded autonomy in a contiguous province of the Habsburg Empire.³⁸ Although it remained unstated due to the political sensibilities of the Austrian authorities and the local Polish administration, the eventual unification of all Ukrainian lands in an independent state was implied in the program.

Soon after the conference, Iurkevych abandoned the group, and as a result of the lack of financial backing, Vil'na Ukraina never materialized. Something that did come from these meetings was the creation of the Ukrainian Information Committee (Ukrains'kyi Informatsiinyi Komitet) in 1912.³⁹ At the March 1911 meetings, it had been resolved that there was a need for pro-independence political activity, and that independence groups in Ukraine should be organized. These local groups would be united in a centre that would also have an external department based abroad.

³⁸. D. Doroshenko, p. 35.

³⁹. A. Zhuk, "Iak dishlosia do zasnuvannia SVU," unpublished manuscript, Zhuk Collection, Vol. 16, File 15, p. 3.

This external representation would publicize the Ukrainian question across Europe. The pro-independence groups in Ukraine did not come into being, but an external representation of Ukrainians in the Russian empire was organized. But differences of opinion delayed its appearance until 1912. In fact there were many divisions. Iurkevych, as has been noted, extricated himself and his finances soon after the March meetings. During the war, Iurkevych would be one of the most vitriolic critics of the SVU. Stepankivs'kyi and Kushnir wanted to establish ties with Austro-Hungarian government officials and were always concerned with Austro-Hungarian reaction.⁴⁰ In fact, Stepankivs'kyi declared himself to be an Austrophile and wanted to call the proposed newspaper Vyzvolennia (Liberation), rather than Vil'na Ukraina (Free Ukraine), as this would be more acceptable to the Austrian authorities. They also wanted to get Austro-Hungarian funding for the newspaper.⁴¹ To Zhuk and Lypyns'kyi, the name Vil'na Ukraina represented their goal: a Ukraine neither Russian nor Austrian. Vyzvolennia, according to Zhuk, referred to the need to liberate Ukraine from the Russian yoke, but did not go any further.⁴² After

⁴⁰. Ibid., p. 3. For the wartime exploits of Stepankivs'kyi, see Jerry Hans Hoffman, "V. Stepankovsky, Ukrainian nationalist and German Agent," The Slavonic and East European Review, Vol. L No. 121, (October 1972), pp. 594-602.

⁴¹. A. Zhuk, "Iak dishlosia do zasnuvannia SVU," unpublished manuscript, Zhuk Collection Vol. 16, File 15, p. 3.

⁴². Ibid., p. 3.

the war Zhuk wrote:

I had nothing against Austrophilism, that is the resolution of the Ukrainian problem in connection with Austria. I only regarded this as a problem with respect to our diplomatic actions in the future. I believed that it would be necessary to have official contacts but only in the future. With regard to promoting Ukrainian statehood among Ukrainians, Lypyns'kyi and I agreed that we did not need Austrophiles to do this.⁴³

At the time the SVU was founded Stepankivs'kyi was barred from the Union because of his Austrophilism and Zhuk's suspicion of it. As a result of the March meetings, Stepankivs'kyi founded the Young-Ukrainian Committee (Molodoukrains'kyi Komitet) and Zhuk founded the Ukrainian Information Committee. Zhuk's committee had as its goal the popularization of the Ukrainian question in Europe and especially in Austria-Hungary. It was composed almost exclusively of Galician Ukrainians. The head of this committee was Roman Zalozets'kyi, the honorary British consul in Lviv. Prompted by international tensions caused by the Balkan Wars, the Ukrainian Information Committee resolved on December 7, 1912 that in the event of a war between Austria-Hungary and Russia, it would support the former. In spite of this, the Austro-Hungarian government was not favourably inclined toward the Committee. The Austrians feared that an irredentist Ukrainian movement on their territory would eventually lead to calls for Ukrainian independence from Austria. In addition, the Austrians were

⁴³. Ibid., p. 4.

loath to give the Ukrainian movement any support should this upset their delicate Polish policy.⁴⁴ The Ukrainian Information Committee in Lviv developed close ties with the Ukrainian Committee that had been founded in London by Stepankivs'kyi in 1910. In effect the London Ukrainian Committee, headed by the publicist George Raffalovich, also known as Bedwin Sands, came to be an arm of the Lviv-based Ukrainian Information Committee and was funded first by the Lviv Committee and later by the SVU.⁴⁵ Although Lypyns'kyi did not become a member of the Ukrainian Information Committee, it was his program that was adopted by the Committee. It called for an independent Ukraine with a constitutional monarchy with broad civil liberties.⁴⁶ At the March 1911 meetings, Lypyns'kyi had proposed that the pro-independence movement call itself the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (SVU). Zhuk later claimed that aside from the name, almost nothing remained from Lypyns'kyi's suggestion in the program of the organization that came to call itself the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (SVU).⁴⁷

How can one explain the reconciliation of such seemingly divergent currents in the Ukrainian political

⁴⁴. Ibid., p. 4.

⁴⁵. Ibid., p. 4.

⁴⁶. Ibid., p. 4.

⁴⁷. Ibid., p. 10.

arena? In 1917 The SVU reprinted Mikhnovs'kyi nationalist manifesto, Samostiina Ukraina, which was first published by RUP in 1902. In an afterword to this manifesto, the former Spilka member Skoropys-Ioltukhovs'kyi tried to show that from the time of RUP the issue of independent statehood for Ukraine "never disappeared, never left the daily order of business" for the original RUP members whether they were in Spilka or the USDLP.⁴⁸ In the tract, Skoropys maintained that the SVU was a direct descendant of RUP. He made several points:

1. RUP began its publishing program with the brochure Samostiina Ukraina, and in many subsequent publications did not mention its basic slogan [that is an independent Ukraine].

2. The general radical democratic views of the RUP which characterized the first years of RUP activity were steadily mixed with socialist demands and during the course of 1904 all RUP publications acquired a thorough social-democratic character.

3. The social-democratic character of RUP is evident in the worldview of RUP publications and greatly influenced the tactics of the party, but did not destroy the party's national character...

4. The schism in RUP at the beginning of 1905 was the result of tactical issues: the question of how RUP should participate in the nascent revolution [of 1905].⁴⁹

⁴⁸. Skoropys-Ioltukhovs'kyi, "Vid vydavtsiv," afterword in Samostiina Ukraina, first published 1902 by RUP, reprinted 1917 by the SVU, 1917 edition, (New York, 1971), p. 33.

⁴⁹. Ibid., pp. 30-31.

Skoropys argued that national independence was a fundamental cause of RUP, common to the Ukrainian Spilka members and the USDLP, but it was a tacit goal. It remained an unarticulated demand, according to Skoropys, because circumstances were unfavourable. He argued that "although the 'language' of politicians changes and has to be geared to contemporary circumstances and political forces, what is immutable in honest, serious, farsighted politicians is the substance of that which they defend and fight for."⁵⁰ Skoropys claimed that the demand for independence never disappeared after the schism in RUP. Neither the Ukrainians in Spilka nor the USDLP voiced the demand for independence, but they all were working toward it in their own ways, and once circumstances became favourable, they united in the SVU and unequivocally voiced the demand for independence. The circumstances that made this possible were the international crises that led to the outbreak of war between the Central Powers and Russia.⁵¹

Although Skoropys might have minimized the differences between RUP, Spilka, the USDLP and the SVU in an attempt to justify his own political transformation and to provide the SVU with a reputable political pedigree, his comments do give an indication of the degree to which nationality issues underpinned these organizations. During the Revolution of

⁵⁰. Ibid., p. 26.

⁵¹. Ibid., p. 37.

1905, the members of these parties advanced Marxist platforms, but when international circumstances changed, they quickly, moved to a position advocating Ukrainian statehood through national as opposed to social revolution.

International tensions had a particular significance to the Ukrainian revolutionaries. Firstly, war between the Central Powers and Russia was seen as an opportunity for a national revolution out of which a Ukrainian state could arise. More immediately, Ukrainian activists were concerned with Russian claims on Galicia. In the late nineteenth century and throughout the twentieth century, Galicia was the centre of the Ukrainian national movement. While Ukrainians in the Russian Empire were subject to extremely repressive measures aimed at elimination of their national distinctiveness, such as the Ems Ukaz of 1876 which prohibited the use of Ukrainian in the arts, publishing and schooling, Ukrainians in the Austrian realm had far greater cultural and political opportunities. Although Ukrainians and Poles were constantly being played off against one another by the Austrians, and the local Polish administration of Eastern Galicia fervently tried to inhibit the growth of the Ukrainian movement, Ukrainian political parties, civic organizations, and the arts and sciences flourished especially when compared to Russian-ruled Ukraine. Eastern Ukrainians were attracted by the burgeoning national activity of the western Ukrainians and used Galicia

as a base for political activities. People such as V. Antonovych, O. Kinsky, P. Kulish and later M. Drahomanov and M. Hrushevsky set up organizations in Galicia and published their works there. By the First World War, Lviv was home to numerous eastern Ukrainians exiles and their organizations.

Tsarist foreign policy always maintained the expansionist objective of "gathering the lands of Rus'." For many Russians from the Black Hundreds through Liberals such as Struve down to Lenin, Russian identity was based on an imperial conception. Savenko stated that the "Mazepist" [that is the Ukrainian separatist] problem "injures Russia at the origin of its existence as a great power."⁵² Struve viewed the Ukrainian national movement as a "gigantic and unprecedented schism of the Russian nation."⁵³ Lenin subsumed the Ukrainians to the "Rus' narod."⁵⁴ Worried about the impact of the Ukrainian movement in Galicia on the population of the bordering provinces, the Tsarist regime funnelled funds to the significant Russophile movement in Galicia which disseminated the pro-Russian point of view in its press. Galicia became a focal point of Russo-Austrian tensions. In accordance with its imperial mission, the Tsarist regime sought to reclaim all of Rus,' including

⁵². R. Szporluk, "The Ukraine and Russia," The Last Empire: Nationality and the Soviet Future, Conquest, R., ed., (Stanford, 1986), p. 155.

⁵³. Ibid., p. 155.

⁵⁴. Lenin, Vol. 46, p. 198-199.

Galicia. It then would be free to eliminate once and for all the "Mazepists." This is precisely what was attempted during the Russian occupation of Galicia during the Great War. Ukrainian organizations were banned, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was attacked and all manifestations of Ukrainian distinctiveness were suppressed. Even the possession of Ukrainian literature was viewed as a sign of Mazepism and was punishable by arrest and exile to Siberia.⁵⁵

To the Ukrainian exiles in Lviv, the tensions between Austria and Russia over Galicia put the issue of national rights for Russian Ukraine into stark relief. Not only was the Tsarist regime unwilling to concede cultural autonomy to its Ukrainian subjects, but it was inclined to wage war to root out what it viewed as the contagion of Ukrainian nationalism in Galicia. This perception of the Russian threat to Galicia consolidated Ukrainian social-democrats, stimulated the movement toward nationalist conceptions of independence and placed it within camp of the enemy of its enemy.

In summary, the differences between Spilka and the USDLP centred around the place of the nationality issue within the social-democratic movement. Spilka emphasized

⁵⁵. To date there does not exist a thorough study of Russian war aims vis-à-vis Galicia nor of the Russian occupation of Galicia 1914-1916. Such studies would fill a void in the historiography of Tsarism, the First World War and Ukraine and would contribute greatly to our knowledge of that period.

social revolution and believed that the achievement of socialism would resolve the issue of national rights. The USDLP, while adopting a social democratic program, made the attainment of national rights a priority. The main tactical differences between the two organizations was Spilka's integration with the RSDLP and its aim to represent all workers in Ukraine regardless of nationality, while the USDLP wanted to maintain organizational independence and an exclusively Ukrainian constituency. Ideological reconciliation between the Ukrainians in Spilka and the USDLP was made possible largely because of the demise of Spilka. A combination of the disorganization of Spilka as a result of police repression and the drifting of the faction away from its Ukrainian base, led the Ukrainians members to seek expression in Ukrainian social democratic circles once again. Once Spilka members were back in the USDLP, there developed a growing tendency toward non-Marxist, nationalist conceptions of Ukrainian statehood, resulting in part from the socialists' reaction to Russian claims on Galicia. Hurkevych, after toying with the idea, repudiated this direction of the Ukrainian movement. Other social-democrats focused increasingly on the national question. The outbreak of war in 1914 decisively resolved the issue. Because of the threat of the war to Ukrainian identity, the leading members of the Ukrainian exile community supported the Central Powers and sought the creation of a Ukrainian state.

The Ukrainians were not a special case. Within the Russian Empire, the socialist parties of the various nationalities also became spokesmen for national demands. The First World War was catalysed by rivalry between Austria-Hungary and Russia. The rivalry in the Balkans is well documented. Not so well known is the rivalry between the two powers in Galicia. Around the world socialists were breaking with each other and rallying with their countrymen around the idea of nationalism.

CHAPTER 2 -- THE WAR BEGINS, AUGUST 1914

Germany declared war on Russia on August 1, 1914 and Austria-Hungary followed suit on August 6. On August 4, 1914, the same day that the Germans launched their offensive against Paris, a group of Ukrainians exiles in Lviv convened at the Shevchenko Library on Suspinski Street. Present at the meeting were Andry Zhuk, Volodymyr Doroshenko, Mykhailo Havrylko, Dmytro Dontsov, Mykola Zalizniak, Liubars'kyi-Pysmennyi, Marko Mutievs'kyi and Oleksa Nazariev.¹ At the founding meeting, Dmytro Dontsov was elected the head of a new organization, the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine. Volodymyr Doroshenko was chosen as the group's Secretary.² Dontsov, along with Mykola Zalizniak, the leader of the Ukrainian Socialist Revolutionary Party abroad, were delegated to represent the SVU on the newly created Galician Ukrainian Supreme Ukrainian Council (Holovna Ukrains'ka Rada). Andry Zhuk was to act as an alternate delegate. The selection of Dontsov and Zalizniak to the leadership of the SVU proved to be very inauspicious for the organization. Before long, Dontsov left the SVU to set up the unaffiliated

¹. V. Doroshenko, "SVU," Svoboda, No. 5, Vol. 149, (VIII), (1954).

². Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 14.

Ukrainian Press Bureau in Berlin from where he would denounce the SVU. Dontsov was succeeded by Zalizniak as head of the SVU. This was an even more inauspicious selection. Already in July, 1914, Zalizniak was in close contact with Austro-Hungarian officials. He had been introduced to them by his mentor, Baron Mykola Vasyl'ko, a wealthy Bukovynian landlord. Without the knowledge of his SVU co-founders, he took it upon himself to incite revolution in Russian-ruled Ukraine by smuggling Austrian supplied arms and revolutionary literature. This was done in the name of the Ukrainian Socialist Revolutionary Party. For this subversive activity Zalizniak received one million Austrian crowns.³ This affair had a scandalous ending. Zalizniak gathered around him a few Galicians and exiles, and conducted a prodigious activity over the Austro-Hungarian diplomatic wire, apparently directing agents to the Black Sea coast. He sent propaganda material to them for agitation among sailors and dock workers, and requested more and more money for this or that purpose from German and Austrian officials.⁴ With the Russian border sealed, it was impossible to verify how the money was being spent. According to a memorandum sent by the German Consul General at Lviv, Carl Heinze, the Zalizniak action defied all "fiscal or bureaucratic

³. Zhuk Collection, Correspondence between A. Zhuk and Dr. Helga Grebing, Vol.7, file 35.

⁴. Hoffman, p. 47.

considerations."⁵ After six weeks, Zalizniak was unable to produce any evidence of the effectiveness of his activities and Consul Urbas, the Austro-Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs official responsible for Ukrainian affairs in Lviv, became suspicious. Zalizniak's lifestyle improved noticeably, but nothing in fact was being done to subvert the Black Sea area. After Zalizniak's own co-conspirator, Mykola Tsehels'kyi, denounced him, the Austrian authorities became aware of a massive fraud perpetrated by Zalizniak, and forced him to give back the unspent money.⁶ Zalizniak managed to preserve some credibility with the Austro-Hungarians because his powerful friend Baron Vasyl'ko defended him before the government officials saying that Zalizniak had deposited most of the money he had received for the covert activity in a Vienna bank where it could be easily confiscated again, and he maintained that five-hundred-thousand Crowns were still on deposit and would be returned.⁷ From August 4 until after Dontsov was replaced as head of the SVU, the others SVU members were unaware of Zalizniak's clandestine activities. After the Zalizniak scandal became known, the SVU expelled him from the organization and created a four-person Presidium to act as

⁵. Memorandum of Heinze to German Foreign Ministry, as cited in Hoffman, p. 48.

⁶. Zhuk Collection, Notes by A. Zhuk, Vol. 15, File 13.

⁷. German diplomatic correspondence, Nobelius to Roselius Dec. 12, 1914, as cited in Hoffman, p. 51.

the top decision-making body of the Union. For the duration of the SVU's existence, the Presidium consisted of Andry Zhuk, Volodymyr Doroshenko, Marian Melenevs'kyi and Oleksander Skoropys-Ioltukhovs'kyi. Zalizniak, however, remained a problem for the SVU as he managed to continue to exert some influence in Austro-Hungarian government circles through Vasyl'ko.

Melenevs'kyi and Skoropys did not join the SVU at the beginning of August. When the war broke out, both were in London. Realizing the political opportunity that the war presented to the Ukrainian movement, they immediately made efforts to get to Galicia, and presented themselves to the Austro-Hungarian Embassy in London. They explained their purpose in wanting to travel to Lviv and the benefits of an anti-Russian Ukrainian movement to the Embassy officials, but were rebuffed. So the two former Spilka members turned to the German Embassy which provided them, as Russian citizens, with a guarantee of safe passage through Germany to Vienna. They left on the last ship leaving England for Holland.⁶ In Vienna, they met with Victor Adler, the leader of Austrian social-democracy, and presented their plan to bring about a decisive change in Austria's Ukrainian policy with regard to Ukrainian separatism. Adler viewed these plans as Utopian and stated that such plans could have been

⁶. O. Skoropys-Ioltukhovs'kyi, "Moi zlochyny," Khliborobs'ka Ukraina, zbirnyk, Nos. II, III, IV, (1920-1921), p. 200.

created only by those "don't have a clue about the dimwitted nature and the absurdity of Austrian politics."⁹ Given Adler's Russophile views on the Ukrainian question, Melenevs'kyi and Skoropys did not pay great attention to his opinion. Perhaps they should have listened, for Adler foreshadowed the confusion and vacillation of Austrian policy toward the separation of borderlands from Russia. In Vienna Melenevs'kyi and Skoropys learnt that the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had appointed a special consul for Ukrainian affairs and that he was then in Lviv. They promptly left Vienna for Galicia to meet Consul Urbas.

In Lviv Urbas was expecting them and immediately inquired about what resources Melenevs'kyi and Skoropys had and what practical steps they were taking to incite a revolution in Ukraine. When he heard that they were less interested in precipitous calls for revolution than in the position of Austria-Hungary vis-a-vis Ukrainian independence, the official dismissed the two former Spilka leaders and told them that these issues were being decided in conjunction with Austrian Ukrainians and that they could join an already existing group such as the SVU or the Ukrainian Socialist Revolutionaries. This type of interplay became a recurrent theme in the history of the SVU. Austro-Hungarian and German officials consistently tried to avoid

⁹. V. Adler as cited by Skoropys, Khliborobs'ka Ukraina, zbirnyk, Nos. II, III, IV. (1920-1921), p. 200.

committing themselves to public declarations supporting Ukrainian independence while trying to engage the SVU in subversive guerilla activities behind the lines. On the other hand, the SVU's main preoccupation was avoiding involvement in any adventurous intrigues while trying to secure official public support from the Central Powers for Ukrainian independence. Skoropys and Melenevs'kyi were soon admitted to the SVU. Zhuk was amazed at the patriotism of the two former Spilka members, but it proved to be enduring.

The SVU experienced a few more growing pains aside from the misfortune of having chosen as its first two leaders people who would come to be outspoken opponents of the organization. In its relations with the western Ukrainians, the SVU experienced several problems. Two of the most influential people in western Ukrainian circles at the time were Kost' Levyts'kyi, the leader of the Ukrainian parliamentary faction in Vienna, and Mykola Vasyl'ko, the Bukovynian leader. Vasyl'ko jealously guarded his privileged position in Austrian society and was not favourably inclined to the SVU and viewed the organization as a threat. The SVU's position in Galicia was also slightly unusual. The main Ukrainian Galician parties and organizations rallied to the Austro-Hungarian war effort in the hope of winning greater favour from the Austrians in the Polish-Ukrainian rivalry and took to organizing military legions (the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen). The Galicians were centring their

war effort around the Supreme Ukrainian Council, on which the SVU had its representatives. This body, however, had its own agenda and was constrained in articulating pan-Ukrainian demands by the need to maintain a loyal Austro-Hungarian platform. The irredentism of the SVU often conflicted with the policies of the Supreme Ukrainian Council. Nonetheless, the SVU devoted much time and energy to the Council with a view toward promoting Ukrainian unity and was instrumental in transforming it into the General Ukrainian Council (Zahal'na Ukrains'ka Rada), a body that was more representative of all Ukrainians. The SVU found a wellspring of support in many other members of the Galician, Bukovynian and Transcarpathian intelligentsia.¹⁰ In fact the army of lecturers, instructors and clerical staff that helped the SVU in its publishing, diplomatic and prisoner-of-war work consisted largely of western Ukrainians. Tremendous support was forthcoming particularly from the Galician social-democrats whose leader Lev Hankevych became the SVU representative in the Balkans. Formal membership in the Union was reserved, however, for citizens of Tsarist Ukraine. This gave the SVU more latitude in its relations with the Central Powers.

Relations with the Austro-Hungarian government proved to be a constant problem for the SVU. In short, some

¹⁰. Zhuk Collection, A. Zhuk, Unpublished manuscript, Vol. 15, File 4, p. 23.

factions in the Austro-Hungarian government wanted to sponsor groups that would incite revolution behind enemy lines in Ukraine and elsewhere; other factions wanted nothing to do with such groups fearing that new independent nations and irredentism would further destabilize the Danubian Empire. None wanted to support publically an independent Ukrainian state. For the duration of the war the only binding factor between the SVU and the Austro-Hungarians was their common enemy - Tsarist Russia. In Germany, Bulgaria and Turkey, the SVU's relations with the governments of these countries were not encumbered by such internal political considerations, and the SVU idea of Ukraine as a buffer state to counter Russian expansionism was received more favourably than in Austria-Hungary. The relations between the SVU and the Austro-Hungarian government provide a good example of the complexity of a foreign policy involving the sponsorship of national liberation or revolutionary groups. Conflicting interests and internal considerations make such sponsorship a dangerous game. The Austrians feared that should the Ukrainians be overly successful, this would lead to the separation of Austria-Hungary's Ukrainian territories and adversely affect Austrian commitments to the Poles. The British in raising the Arab Revolt during the Great War also had to be mindful of the effects of Arab success on their position in Egypt, and of how Arab success might affect

British commitments to their French allies in Syria and Lebanon (Sykes-Picot) and to the Jews (Balfour Declaration).

From the outset, the Austrians were reluctant to promote insurrection in Ukraine let alone give any public guarantees regarding independence. This was in contrast to the German approach to the Ukrainian question. Before the war and for most of its duration, the idea of dismembering the Tsarist empire through the separation of its western border nationalities, or Randvölker, had a widespread currency in influential government circles in Germany.¹¹ Various interest groups in German society had different plans for the Reich's foreign policy in the east. These differences were based on ideology and were constrained by the military situation at the front.

As Hoffman indicates, three main groups interested in the dismemberment of Russia could be discerned in Germany.¹² One advocated the outright annexation of certain detached areas. This group consisted of monarchists who were concerned with the growing social imbalance in the Reich resulting from industrial development. They believed that this imbalance could be corrected through the acquisition of agricultural land for colonization in the east. The second group sought the creation of a series of buffer states under German influence. This group was composed almost exclusively

¹¹. Hoffman, p. 7.

¹². Ibid., p. 8.

of Social Democrats who, along with an inflated view of Germany's role in the world, had a long-standing tradition of antipathy toward Tsarist absolutism. The third group proposed the creation of a confederated Mitteleuropa under German economic and political predominance which would include former Russian territories.¹³ Moderate conservatives and liberals were the mainstay of this group. They had been the principal backers of Wilhelmian imperialism. Their prewar designs for overseas expansion had been frustrated, and now they based their Weltpolitik on the creation of a German-led Mitteleuropa. As far as the dismemberment of Russia was concerned, the principal areas considered by all three groups were, in order of importance: Poland, the Baltic region and Ukraine.¹⁴ Prior to the war only a few Germans included Ukraine in their schemes for Russian dismemberment and German expansionism. But once the war broke out, interest in Ukraine rose dramatically. Hoffman attributes this development primarily to the efforts of publicists like P. Rohrbach and A. Schmidt and to the "propagandists of the Ukrainian exiles' liberation movement organized in the early days of the war," that is the SVU.¹⁵

During the first days of the war, the chief of the German General Staff, General von Moltke, sent to the German

¹³. Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁴. Ibid., p. 9.

¹⁵. Ibid., p. 11.

Foreign Office some military-political plans in which he pointed out the potential of using the nationalities of Eastern Europe as a weapon in the war against Russia.¹⁶ Specifically, he reported that the General Staff had already taken measures toward inciting national revolutions in Poland, Finland and the Caucasus in conjunction with the execution of the Schlieffen Plan and the need to relieve Russian pressure in the east.

As it turned out neither the Foreign Office nor the Kaiser needed any prompting in this direction. Days before hostilities commenced, Wilhelm II had ordered the subversion of the Muslims against the largest Islamic realm in the world, the British Empire. At the Foreign Office on Wilhelmstrasse, the Undersecretary, Arthur Zimmermann would become the most outspoken proponent of all German political and military leaders of the use of national insurrections as an instrument of German policy. In the absence of his superiors,¹⁷ Zimmermann became the senior official in Berlin responsible for external affairs. In November 1916 he became Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. It is important to note that the members of the Presidium of the SVU had repeated meetings with Zimmermann personally during

¹⁶. Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁷. Wilhelm II followed the anachronistic tradition of moving into the field with his armies and of governing from there. This necessitated the presence of his ministers, thus the Chancellor and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs were mostly absent from Berlin from August 1914 to January 1915.

the course of the war. These top-level contacts are indicative of the degree to which the Germans took the prospect of the separation of Ukraine from Russia seriously, and reflects the high level of access accorded to the SVU and the influence it exerted on German decision-making. The German treatment of the Ukrainians is in contrast to the treatment of other national liberation movements by their sponsors. During the course of the Arab Revolt, the Arab rebels had access only to a low-level British intelligence operative by the name of Lawrence, who luckily for the Arabs, proved to be a popular hero and as a result a good and influential advocate of their cause.

Initially, the principal contact for the SVU and the Galician Ukrainians with the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs was Consul General Carl Heinze. Heinze was impressed with the representations of the Galician leader Levyts'kyi.¹⁸ The Galicians had already advanced the idea of national revolution in Ukraine to political and military officials in Vienna, but had not found a receptive audience. Heinze urged Berlin to take control of the entire project even if the Austrians refused to go along. The German Ambassador in Vienna, Heinrich von Tschirschky und Bogendorff, agreed and urged both his own government and the Austrians to support the Ukrainians in their plans.¹⁹ The

¹⁸. Hoffman, p. 19.

¹⁹. Ibid., p. 19.

Austrian reluctance at arousing Ukrainian nationalism was the result, in part, of the influence of Austria's Poles. This influence reached as far as the office of the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister Count Leopold Berchtold.²⁰ Polish and Ukrainian claims on Eastern Galicia conflicted directly and the Poles were unwilling to allow the Ukrainians even cultural concessions such as a Ukrainian university lest these concessions undermine Polish demands for sovereignty over Galicia. Tschirschky commented that "the hesitant and ultraconservative nature of Count Berchtold resisted all efforts toward insurrection."²¹ Nonetheless, Berchtold allowed Consul Urbas to pursue negotiations with the Ukrainians. Meanwhile, Heinze's telegrams to Berlin were deemed important enough by Zimmermann that they were moved across the desks of the Emperor, the Chancellor, and the Foreign Secretary. Wilhelm II himself, ordered that the Ukrainians be given the full support of his government. Remarking on his ally's hesitation in this matter, the Kaiser scribbled "Esel!" (jackass) in the margin of a memorandum concerning Ukraine.²² In accordance with the Emperor's directive, Foreign Secretary Gottlieb von Jagow drew up instructions on the Ukrainian project which were sent to the German Embassy

²⁰. Ibid., p. 20.

²¹. Ibid., p. 20.

²². Ibid., p. 21.

in Vienna as a directive of the chancellor on August 11.²³ The subversion of Ukraine and Poland were deemed very important for several reasons: firstly, as an immediate weapon against Russia; secondly, as a part of the long-range objective of pushing back the Russian Empire; and thirdly as a ploy to direct Rumanian territorial ambitions toward Russian controlled Bessarabia and away from Austro-Hungarian controlled Bukovyna and Transylvania. A Ukrainian buffer would lessen Rumanian fears of Russia and make Bessarabia a more attractive prize.²⁴ This would help bring Rumania to the side of the Central Powers in the war against Russia. Tschirschky presented Jagow's reasoning to Berchtold, and under continuous German remonstrations, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister decided that it was preferable to maintain a degree of control over the Ukrainian project rather to leave it entirely in the hands of the Germans who had no concern for the nationality structure of the Dual Monarchy.²⁵ But the Austrians were not able to harmonize their objectives and plans with those of the Ukrainians.

As far as the western Ukrainians were concerned, the Austrians never allowed the full potential of the Ukrainian population to be used in the war effort. The western Ukrainians wanted to and easily could have organized a

²³. Ibid., p. 21.

²⁴. Ibid., p. 21.

²⁵. Ibid., p. 22.

substantial army. The Austrians viewed this as an attempt to counter the Polish legions and to increase Ukrainian leverage which would then be used to demand a Ukrainian crownland in Austria or worse be a first step toward Ukrainian independence from Austria. So the Austrians limited the Ukrainian legions to a few thousand Ukrainian Sich Riflemen and conscripted many more hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians into regular Austrian formations. To the chagrin of the western Ukrainians, the Austrians, under constant Polish pressure, never made any cultural concessions to the Ukrainians. Not even their demand for a Ukrainian university was fulfilled. The Austro-Hungarian treatment of its western Ukrainian citizens inevitably affected the relationship between the SVU and the Austro-Hungarian government.

As far as Russian-ruled Ukraine was concerned, there immediately emerged an unbreachable gap between the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine and the Austro-Hungarian government. Once Berchtold had conceded to German demands for Austrian initiative on Ukraine, the Austrians manifested a predilection for, as Zhuk put it, trying to organize "Albanian bands."²⁶ The Austrians wanted saboteurs and immediate insurrections. For this they found a not so reliable volunteer in Mykola Zalizniak. In contrast, the SVU from the outset, rejected precipitous calls for

²⁶. Zhuk Collection, A. Zhuk, Draft article, Vol. 15, File 14.

insurrection, totally refused participation in schemes for sabotage or guerrilla activity, and aimed at the creation of an organized Ukrainian army and institutions. The Union wanted to create state structures. It insisted on official Austro-Hungarian commitment to independent Ukrainian statehood before it would engage in organizing structured armed forces from the Ukrainian prisoners of war and using them to promote a national revolution in Ukraine. Indicative of the differences between the Ukrainians and the Austrians was the refusal of the Ukrainians to cooperate with the Austrian plan to attack Kamianets' in the early days of the war.

Consul Urbas had proposed to the Supreme Ukrainian Council that they organize a Ukrainian attack on Kamianets' which lay on the Russian side of the old frontier. The purpose of the mission would be to agitate the local Ukrainian population before the imminent arrival of the Russian army and then to withdraw. Although the Ukrainians liked the plan in general, the SVU refused to participate in it because of the Austrians' refusal to declare publically their intentions vis-a-vis Ukraine, and the Supreme Ukrainian Council refused to participate because the Austrians were severely limiting the size of the Ukrainian legions. In any event, the mission was executed but not by Ukrainian units but by a regular Austro-Hungarian army unit with Ukrainians in it.

Initially the SVU must have appeared to the Austrians as excessively demanding and presumptuous. As soon as Melenevs'kyi and Skoropys arrived in Lviv, they took it upon themselves to draft two imperial manifestos to the Ukrainian people which were intended by them to be issued by Wilhelm II of Germany and Franz Joseph of Austria-Hungary.²⁷ These proclamations were meant to serve as guarantees of Ukrainian independence and reflected the fear of the Ukrainians that should revolution sweep Ukraine, or should the Central Powers advance and occupy Ukraine, the Austrians and the Germans might abandon private assurances regarding their intentions and either sign a separate peace with Russia to the detriment of the Ukrainian cause or take advantage of the situation to annex Ukrainian territories themselves or agree to the inclusion of Ukrainian lands in a new Polish state. Throughout the war the SVU would lobby the top levels of the German, Austro-Hungarian, Bulgarian and Turkish governments for public proclamations on Ukrainian independence.

A few more problems complicated the first weeks of the SVU's existence. After several years of exile the members of the SVU had grown accustomed to expressing themselves without fear of repercussion from the authorities. This put them out of touch with the situation inside Russia, and they

²⁷. O. Skoropys-Ioltukhovskyi, Khliborobs'ka Ukraina, zbirnyk II, III, IV, (1920-1921), p. 203.

were unprepared for the reaction of leading Ukrainian activists on the other side of the battle lines to the war. This reaction could best be described as declarations of loyalty to Russia and passivity in the Russian war effort. In Moscow, Symon Petliura writing in Ukrains'kaia Zhizn' tried to stem the anti-Ukrainian tide in Russia resulting from the outbreak of hostilities by declaring Ukrainian loyalty to Russia. He also communicated to the SVU the danger of its anti-Tsarist activities to Ukrainian institutions in Russia.²⁸ In a letter to Osyp Nazaruk, a prominent Galician journalist who had been sent to Stockholm as the SVU's representative, Petliura wrote: "every step, word, or deed which tends toward creating in Russian Ukraine conditions subversive to the unity of the Russian state, or toward a weakening of that state at the present time, is severely condemned in Ukraine [by public opinion] because it is considered harmful also to Ukrainian interests."²⁹ The

²⁸. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 11.

²⁹. S. Petliura, Statti, lysty, dokumenty, (New York, 1956), as cited in I.L. Rudnytsky, "The Fourth Universal and Its Ideological Antecedents," Essays in Modern Ukrainian History, P.L. Rudnytsky, ed., (Edmonton, 1987), pp. 392-393. Rudnytsky notes that one has to take into account that Petliura was probably trying to provide an alibi for himself and his political associates in case the letter should fall into the hands of the Russian authorities. This would explain the exaggerated wording of the letter, but it also reflected the preference of federalism over separatism among the Ukrainian leaders still inside Russia. Petliura, as Rudnytsky notes, defined his political creed in the following manner: "in this critical moment we must make a clear decision. Our decision is the logical consequence of our old principles: to build the future of our people together with the peoples of

Russians, however, needed no pretext as Ukrainian newspapers were shut down and Ukrainian activists were arrested. The Ukrainian historian Mykhailo Hrushevsky also found it necessary to dissociate himself from the SVU. Hrushevsky had been caught by the war at his summer retreat in the Carpathians on the Austro-Hungarian side of the border. There he was threatened with arrest as a Russian citizen by the local Hungarian command before the SVU intervened and secured his safe passage to Vienna. The SVU proposed that he go to Switzerland for the duration of the war and act on neutral soil as an authoritative representative of Ukrainian interests before world opinion. Hrushevsky declined the proposition and in spite of considerable difficulties, returned to Russia by way of Italy. L. Vynar argues that Hrushevsky wanted to refute the Russian allegation that the Ukrainian movement was pro-Austrian by voluntarily returning to Russia. Thus Hrushevsky hoped to deter the persecution of the Ukrainian movement which was often identified with him.³⁰ I.L. Rudnytsky points out that in addition to these concerns, Hrushevsky's return was also in accordance with his general populist political philosophy and, as in the case of Petliura, with the preference of Ukrainian leaders inside Russia for the traditional federalism over the SVU's

Russia, and with their support."

³⁰. L. Vynar, "Chomu Mykhailo Hrushevsky povernuvsia na Ukrainu v 1914 rotsi?" Ukrainskyi istoryk 4, nos. 3-4, (1967), pp. 103-108.

unprecedented separatist position.³¹ In spite of his disassociation from the SVU, he was arrested and spent the war in exile in Kazan and Moscow before returning to head the Central Rada and becoming the President of the Ukrainian National Republic in 1917.

A major setback for the SVU in the first weeks of the war came when the Austro-Hungarian forces withdrew from Eastern Galicia in the face of Russian advances on that part of the front. In spite of the German rout of the Russians at Tannenburg, the Russian Army under Brusilov continued to advance further to the south, and Lviv fell to the Russians on September 3. The SVU and the Galician Ukrainian organizations were forced to withdraw from Lviv to Vienna. This caused much organizational disruption and the Ukrainians lost much of their population base from which they were able to extract human and financial resources. The effect of the Russian advance on the Austrians and Hungarians precipitated two unexpected developments. Firstly, looking for excuses for their defeat, Austrian and especially Hungarian commanders listened to the accusations of the Polish provincial administration that their defeat was due to the treachery of the Ukrainians who allegedly sympathized with and abetted the Russians. In revenge, the retreating Austro-Hungarian army unleashed a reign of terror

³¹. I. L. Rudnytsky, "The Fourth Universal and Its Ideological Antecedents," Essays in Modern Ukrainian History, edited by Peter L. Rudnytsky, (Edmonton, 1987), pp. 392-393.

among the Ukrainians. Atrocities were initially directed against known Russophiles, and then against Ukrainians in general. There were mass arrests and mass killings. Thousands of people were summarily executed, and thousands more were interned in Austrian concentration camps, the most notorious of which was Talerhof where thirty-thousand Russophiles and Ukrainophiles were kept in atrocious conditions. Thousands died of disease before the parliament in Vienna, scandalized by the treatment of its own citizens, ordered these camps disbanded in 1917.³² In consideration of these massacres the SVU left undistributed its first declaration in which it introduced the Union to the Ukrainian population and listed among its objectives the goal of creating a hospitable atmosphere among the Russian Ukrainian population for the armies of the Central Powers.³³ In that declaration the SVU stated that it was acting in the "faith that in the event of Austrian and German victory and the occupation of Ukraine, there would be an opportunity to create an independent Ukrainian state."³⁴ The Austrian and Hungarian massacres hardened the SVU's position, and the Union became even more insistent that any proposal to help the Central Powers in a direct way behind the lines be preceded by the issuance of a public

³². Subtelny, p. 341.

³³. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, file 14.

³⁴. Ibid.

proclamation from the Central Powers guaranteeing Ukrainian independence. The second completely unexpected and ironic consequence of the loss of Galicia, was that the Austrians no longer felt encumbered by the fear of the effects of Ukrainian nationalism in Eastern Galicia and Bukovyna as these territories were already lost to the Russians. Ukrainian nationalism could now be used to disrupt the Russian rear, and all of a sudden the SVU found much greater support in Austrians circles for its ideas and proposed activities. These were summarized in the SVU Platform.³⁵

The Platform of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine is an interesting historical document that set out the theoretical constructs on which a Ukrainian state was to be built and outlined the steps the SVU would take to achieve its goals. The document represented a significant evolution of Ukrainian political thought in its call for independence for Ukraine. It recognized the Russian attempt to destroy Ukrainian identity in Galicia through the Russian occupation of western Ukraine, and anticipated the futility of federalist constructs. A brief overview of the origins of federalist and separatist currents in Ukrainian political thought provides a context for the political ideas developed by the SVU.

³⁵. "Pliatforma Soiuzu vyzvolennia Ukrainy," reprinted in L. Tsehel'skyi, Z choho vynykla viina ta shcho vona nam mozhe prynesty, (Vienna, SVU, 1915), pp. 12-14.

Federalism had a well established tradition in the history of Ukrainian political thought. I.L. Rudnytsky has traced the lineage of Ukrainian federalism from the Decembrist Society of United Slavs through its maturation in the Cyrillo-Methodian Brotherhood of the 1840's to the outstanding Ukrainian political theorist Mykhailo Drahomanov.³⁶ In his article in the Encyclopedia of Ukraine, Rudnytsky summarizes Drahomanov's contribution to political philosophy.³⁷ Drahomanov's ideas combined liberal-democratic, socialist, and Ukrainian historical elements with the theories of Proudhon. He envisaged the final goal of humanity's progress as a condition of anarchy: a voluntary association of free and equal individuals with the end of authoritarianism. Drahomanov insisted that this ideal could be achieved through federalism and the self-government of communities and regions. He insisted on the priority of civil rights and free political institutions over economic class interests and of universal human values over exclusive national concerns. He believed Ukrainian separatism to be unrealistic, and based on his philosophical anarchism, independent statehood was not an objective. He admonished his compatriots to focus on the democratization

³⁶. I. L. Rudnytsky, "The Fourth Universal and Its Ideological Antecedents," Essays in Modern Ukrainian History, P. L. Rudnytsky, ed., (Edmonton, 1987), p. 390.

³⁷. I. L. Rudnytsky, "Drahomanov, Mykhailo," Encyclopedia of Ukraine, Vol.1, (Toronto, 1984), p. 754.

and federalization of Russia and Austria-Hungary which he thought would provide sufficient scope for the development of the Ukrainian nation. Drahomanov drafted a constitution for Russia, "Vol'nyi soiuz/ Vil'na spilka" (A Free Union) based on the rule of law, civil rights, regional and local self-government and the equality of nationalities. The plan included the right of minorities, especially the Jews to corporate national-cultural autonomy. Drahomanov's political thinking was followed closely in Galicia at first by Ivan Franko and the Radicals and in Eastern Ukraine by the social democrats and the liberal populists. His theories were still profoundly influential in political circles in Ukraine well into 1917. Hrushevsky, in the pamphlet Iakoi my khochemo avtonomii i federatsii (The Kind of Autonomy and Federation We Desire), published in Kiev at the beginning of the Revolution wrote: "The political goal of the Ukrainians is a broad national-territorial autonomy for Ukraine within a federated Russian Republic."³⁸ The ultimate expression of the strength of federalism among Ukrainian political leaders who had spent the war inside the Russian Empire was the Third Universal issued by the Central Rada on November 20, 1917 (New Style) which proclaimed the creation of the Ukrainian National (Narodna) Republic and the pledge to "stand firmly on our own soil, in order that our efforts may

³⁸. M. Hrushevsky as cited in I. L. Rudnytsky, "The Fourth Universal and Its Ideological Antecedents," p. 390.

aid all of Russia, so that the whole Russian Republic may become a federation of equal and free peoples."³⁹ It was only after the Bolshevik invasion of Ukraine in January 1918, that the Central Rada issued its Fourth Universal declaring independence.

The independence concept (samostiinytstvo) found expression first in the pamphlets Ukraina Irredenta (1895) by Iulian Bachyns'kyi and Mikhnovs'kyi's Samostiina Ukraina. Bachyns'kyi used economic arguments within a Marxist framework to argue for independence, while Mikhnovs'kyi used a historical and legal basis to support his position.⁴⁰ The great Galician writer Ivan Franko also came to be a proponent of independence. Other prominent advocates of independence included Lypyns'kyi and Dontsov.

Rudnytsky points out that the federalist tendency in Ukrainian political thought was more important than separatism because federalist theories were much more elaborately developed and they had many more adherents before the war.⁴¹ He points out that although Mikhnovs'kyi, Lypyns'kyi and Dontsov were natives of Dnieper Ukraine, their ideas never had a mass following prior to the war and that the independence movement found many adherents only in

³⁹. I. L. Rudnytsky, "The Fourth Universal and Its Ideological Antecedents," p. 389.

⁴⁰. Ibid., p. 392.

⁴¹. Ibid., p. 392.

Galicia. He mentions the SVU but minimizes its significance by noting that it was an emigre group which owed its existence to the Galician Ukrainian environment, and that its activities took place entirely outside of Ukraine.⁴² Rudnytsky neglects to take into account that the SVU attracted virtually the whole of the sizeable Russian Ukrainian exile community, that the SVU found tens of thousands of adherents in the POW camps and in Galicia, and perhaps most importantly from a theoretical perspective, the ideas of the SVU included unprecedented considerations of Ukraine in the international system and the Ukrainian nation in the context of the First World War. The members of the SVU were among the first Ukrainian realists in their approach to international politics. The SVU's most important contribution to the development of Ukrainian political thought was its idea of Ukraine as a buffer between Russia and Europe, particularly the Balkan-Black Sea states of Bulgaria, Rumania and Turkey. Most of their predecessors and contemporaries in the Ukrainian movement developed interesting theoretical constructs concerned with the internal development of the Ukrainian nation that had humanistic value but little chance of being realized. The SVU on the other hand was perceptive in its analysis of the contemporary international system and developed theories that demonstrated the geopolitical security interests of

⁴². Ibid., p. 392.

foreign powers in Ukrainian statehood. These theories found expression in the SVU Platform and more elaborately in the desiderata the SVU presented to the governments of Austria-Hungary, Germany, Bulgaria, Rumania and Turkey. It was the SVU's realism that made possible the Union's pro-Central Power orientation, and the cooperation of Ukrainian socialists with Austrian and German officials.

In the Platform, the SVU noted that Ukraine is one of the main theatres of the war and indeed a reason and object of the war. The preamble of the Platform stated that a fundamental issue of the war is the fate of Ukrainians, that is whether as a result of the war "the Ukrainian Piedmont in Austria will be destroyed or will Ukrainian national life flourish on the other bank of the Zbruch, to the Dnieper and unto the Black Sea."⁴³ This analysis of the war in the Galician theatre cannot be considered an exaggeration of the predicament of the Ukrainians. Russian intentions toward Galicia were succinctly put by Sergei Sazanov, the Tsarist foreign minister who declared that the war "is exactly the right moment to rid ourselves of the Ukrainian movement once and for all."⁴⁴ Once Galicia was overrun by the Russian Army, it was declared to be "reunited forever with Mother Russia."⁴⁵ The regime established in the newly acquired

⁴³. "Platforma SVU," p. 12.

⁴⁴. Sazanov quoted in Subtelny, p. 343.

⁴⁵. Subtelny, p. 341.

territories was not a regime of temporary occupation, rather Galicia was integrated into the Empire, as a province under the Governor-Generalship of Count Georgii Bobrinski. The principal objective of the new regime was the total elimination of "Mazepism," as the Tsarist officials referred to the Ukrainian movement.⁴⁶ All Ukrainian cultural institutions, cooperatives and publications were shut down. Restrictions were placed on the use of the Ukrainian language, and as a precursor to the Soviet annexation of Galicia during the Second World War, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was targeted for enforced integration into the Russian Orthodox Church.⁴⁷ Metropolitan Andrei Sheptyts'kyi of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, along with thousands of others was arrested and exiled deep into Russia. At the time, the Russian occupation of Galicia became something of a European scandal. Miliukov denounced it as such in the Duma.⁴⁸ Lenin went further and denounced Miliukov and the entire liberal Russian intelligentsia for masking Russian imperialism and chauvinism in Galicia with sophism and democratic phraseology while in effect

⁴⁶. The historiography of the First World War includes very little on the Russian occupation of Galicia. One of the best existing sources is Dmytro Doroshenko's Moi spomyny pro nedavne mynule, 1914-1920 (Lviv, 1923-24). Doroshenko was Governor-General of Galicia during the time of the Provisional Government, and he inherited the gubernatorial archives which form the basis of his work on the occupation.

⁴⁷. Subtelny, p. 341.

⁴⁸. Ibid., p. 343.

supporting the same war aims by supporting the war.⁴⁹ The SVU, whose members had seen Eastern Galicia as a sanctuary for the Ukrainian movement, now feared for the very existence of the Ukrainian movement and even discussed plans for the preservation of the Ukrainian nation in Canada.⁵⁰ The Russian assault on the Ukrainian movement was the sine qua non for the SVU to call unequivocally for Ukrainians to exercise their "right to national independence."⁵¹

An important contribution to Ukrainian political thought was the SVU's use of international systemic analysis and its realist position. Lypyns'kyi also wrote of Ukraine's international position between Poland, Muscovy and the Ottoman Empire.⁵² It is important to note, that the SVU did more than any individual or organization to promote Ukrainian statehood in the international arena. "Historic necessity demands," the SVU declared in its Platform, that a "Ukrainian state arise between western Europe and Russia for the creation and maintenance of European balance of power."⁵³ The SVU maintained that Ukrainian independence

⁴⁹. Lenin, Vol. 26, pp. 273-274.

⁵⁰. Zhuk Collection, Correspondence, Vol.7, file 4.

⁵¹. "Pliatforma SVU," p. 12.

⁵². Rudnytsky, I.L., "Viacheslav Lypynsky: Statesman, historian, and Political Thinker," Essays in Modern Ukrainian History, P. L. Rudnytsky, ed., (Edmonton, 1987), p. 443.

⁵³. "Pliatforma SVU," p. 12.

was in the interest of the peoples of the Austro-Hungarian state and the German people of both empires. Similar arguments are advanced today by international system theorists such as Zbigniew Brzezinski. In the numerous position papers the SVU presented to the governments of the Austria-Hungary, Germany, Rumania, Bulgaria and Turkey, the SVU argued that independence for Ukraine was the only way of sufficiently weakening Russia to ensure a balance of power in Europe and Asia Minor and to create a buffer between these states and Russia.

The Union for the Liberation of Ukraine is described in the Platform as a "all-national [that is, not class-based] organization which took upon itself the representation for the present time, the national-political and socio-economic interests of the Ukrainian people in Russia." The realization of the national-political and economic aspirations of the different political tendencies represented in the Union was for the moment tied to the destruction of Russia in the war. The Platform described the SVU as an organization in which different political views were represented, and it stated that the SVU was a provisional body.

The Platform called for independent statehood for Ukraine and proposed the type of regime that the state should have: "The form of government of the independent Ukrainian state will be a constitutional monarchy, with a

democratic internal political order, a unicameral legislative system, civil, linguistic and religious liberties for all nationalities and religious denominations, and an independent Ukrainian Church." Here the SVU drew upon the tradition of Ukrainian revolutionary democrats in its proposals for civic and religious liberties, but underestimated the strength of republicanism among the Ukrainian people in proposing a constitutional monarchy. The monarchial element in the political theories of the SVU has been attributed by the former members of the Union to the need to adapt the regime of an independent Ukraine to the governmental forms of the Central Powers to give the organization and the idea of an independent Ukraine greater acceptance in those countries. The monarchial idea was also the result of the influence of Lypyns'kyi and the ideas he imparted to the future SVU members at the time of the March 1911 meetings in Lviv. According to Rudnytsky, Lypyns'kyi's monarchism was, in retrospect, the most questionable part of his program.⁵⁴ Lypyns'kyi's monarchialism was the result of his interpretation of the Cossack Hetmanate, and Khmelnyts'kyi's failure to make the hetmanate hereditary which resulted in the diminution of the authority of that office and facilitated the spread of anarchic factionalism and foreign domination. A monarchy would provide a unifying

⁵⁴. I. L. Rudnytsky, "Lypynsky's Political Ideas from the Perspective of Our Time," Essays in Modern Ukrainian History, edited by Peter L. Rudnytsky, (Edmonton, 1987), p. 454.

force for Ukrainian society which Lypyns'kyi envisaged to be socially and politically differentiated and pluralistic. A monarchical order would also provide the principle of legitimacy to a Ukrainian government and unite the people much in the same way as monarchies were instrumental in the building of states such as Germany, France, and Italy and in the rebirth of nations such as Bulgaria, Rumania and Norway.⁵⁵ The inclusion of the idea of a constitutional monarchy in the Platform of the SVU caused much suspicion of the SVU in the POW camps and accounts in part for the suspicion with which the SVU was regarded by the republicans in the Central Rada in 1917. The Union must have been sensitive to the problems of monarchy, for the organization did not stress this element in its program. When the Skoropads'kyi coup occurred in 1918 and appeared to be the realization of Lypyns'kyi's theories, the SVU's advocacy of a monarchy did not prevent the military unit formed by the Union from being used to topple the Hetman. The SVU Platform was not merely an extension of Lypyns'kyi's theories. Social democratic theories also found expression in the Union's program. The "fundamental economic postulate" of the SVU is described in the Platform as radical agrarian reform for the benefit of the peasantry.⁵⁶ Never was this contradictory radical economic demand reconciled with the SVU's

⁵⁵. Ibid., p. 455.

⁵⁶. "Pliatforma SVU," p. 13.

conservative political ideas.

The Platform goes on to outline the practical measures that the SVU would take to realize its call for an independent state. The SVU would convene a national congress which would decide the type of government Ukraine would have. The congress would represent the interests of the Ukrainian people before the warring states and international conferences, and it would popularize the Ukrainian question across Europe.

The Platform of the SVU represents an interesting crossroads in Ukrainian political thought. It was landmark in the development of Ukrainian separatism. The strength of the document is in its perspective of Ukraine in the war and Ukraine's role in the international system. As Zhuk pointed out, the creation of independent states is not just the result of indigenous national movements, but as in the case of the Balkan states, the interests of other states.⁵⁷ In the document several of the most prominent Ukrainian social-democrats also endorsed the idea of monarchy for Ukraine. This curiosity can be explained by the influence of Lypyns'kyi and the SVU's decision to try to make its views more palatable to the Central Powers. In retrospect, the monarchical element of the SVU Platform was a political blunder causing much suspicion of the SVU in Ukraine. The

⁵⁷. Zhuk Collection, A. Zhuk in Pamiatkova Knyzhka SVU i kaliendar na 1917 rik, Vol. 143, File 39.

idea of monarchy found a following only after the war in the emigre statist and corporatist hetmanite movement. During the war and the Revolution, instead of serving as a unifying force as it was intended, the idea of monarchy caused many divisions in the Ukrainian movement and ironically weakened the Ukrainian state. Currently there is renewed, albeit marginal discussion about the utility of the restoration of monarchies in Eastern Europe, including Bulgaria, Rumania, and even in Russia. So far there have been no calls for the creation of a Ukrainian monarchy, although with the on-going revival of Cossack traditions, there may yet arise a monarchist movement.⁵⁸ Because the ideas of the SVU concerning governmental forms were never more fully developed than in the SVU Platform, and because they never found expression in a Ukrainian government, it would be very speculative to extrapolate from these ideas and to predict the form they may have taken had they been developed further. In them are reflected both the humanistic, democratic values of theorists like Drahomanov, and the Ukrainian social-democrats, as well as the corporatist, statist and elitist values of the Ukrainian right. The political thought of the SVU serves as an interesting example of pan-European trends, and in its statist, corporatist and elitist aspects it foreshadows the descent

⁵⁸. In 1991, there was some discussion in Ukraine on the subject of whether the title Hetman or President should be used by the Ukrainian head of state.

of European political thought into fascism.

Aside from issuing its Platform, the SVU also defined itself in other ways. A telling characteristic of the Union is that it remained a public organization in which pseudonyms were not used. The SVU was conscious of the fact that its pro-Central Power orientation would compromise it in the eyes of many socialists, Russian citizens and the Entente, and it wanted to give itself as much legitimacy as possible. It thus refrained from covert operations that were not in its direct interests and from the trappings of covert groups. In spite of the SVU's monarchial program and non-class basis, some members of the SVU never abandoned their social-democratic beliefs and parallel to their SVU activity continued to organize social-democratic groups. Melenevs'kyi and Petro Benzia, another Ukrainian Social-Democrat in the SVU, formed a group called "Ukrainian Social Democracy" which had many adherents among the prisoners of war. This group published brochures and the newspaper Robitnyk and tried to establish contacts among the exiled social-democrats of the various nationalities of Russia. Melenevs'kyi was the SVU member most active in this area, and he was the one responsible for recruiting the well-known Russian social-democrat Alexander Helphand, also known as Parvus, to work with the SVU.⁵⁹

⁵⁹. Zhuk Collection, Correspondence between A. Zhuk and Dr. Helga Grebing, Vol. 27, File 35.

Because the armies of the Central Powers did not advance into Russian Ukrainian territories, the SVU was forced to confine its activities to publicizing the Ukrainian question and to trying to influence the Central Powers to commit themselves publicly to Ukrainian independence. Its first major effort was directed at publishing an "Appeal to the Public Opinion of Europe" and appeals to specific countries. The "Appeal to the Public Opinion of Europe" was published in all the European languages. It described pan-slavism as an aggressive policy and argued for the creation of a Ukrainian state to act as a bulwark between Europe and Russia.⁶⁰ There were also "Appeals" to Rumania, Bulgaria, Turkey and Sweden. These appeals advanced the idea that even the greatest blow to Russia would only be temporary without the separation of Ukraine, that only the separation of Ukraine would permanently weaken Russia. The appeals to the Balkan-Black Sea peoples drew attention to the threat that Russia posed to their countries. They were published in large numbers and were distributed to embassies, the press and individual politicians and diplomats.⁶¹ These appeals had considerable resonance, and in the first months of the war they found their way into many newspapers. The Balkan-Black Sea area

⁶⁰. Zhuk Collection, Appeals, Vol. 7, File 13.

⁶¹. Zhuk Collection, A. Zhuk, "Politychna aktsia SVU v Chornomors'komu-balkans'komu prostori v rokakh svitovoi viiny," unpublished manuscript, Vol. 15, File 25, p. 1.

and Scandinavia were specifically targeted because the countries in these areas were not yet involved in the hostilities, and because these countries had immediate concerns about Russian expansionism. Furthermore, there were historical precedents of alliances between Ukraine and Sweden, and Ukraine and Turkey. The SVU wanted to see these countries align against Russia and include among their war aims the creation of an independent Ukraine. It was intended that the idea of Ukrainian independence be seen as a way of permanently weakening Russia. Thus Ukrainian independence would become an issue of Bulgarian, Rumanian, and Turkish independence. If this way of thinking took root in the Balkan-Black Sea area, the countries of that region could carry this point of view to Vienna and Berlin. Of course, it was also in the interests of Austria-Hungary and Germany to get Bulgaria, Rumania and Turkey as allies. Furthermore, the idea of the separation of Russia's western borderlands could only be relevant to the Balkan-Black Sea states if Ukraine were included. The idea of Ukraine as a buffer on the Black Sea certainly was of greater consequence to these states than the concept of Poland or the Baltics as a buffer states given the geographic location of Ukraine on the Black Sea. The distribution of the "appeals" represented the first time since Mazepa's exile that a Ukrainian political organization entered the international arena as the representative of the interests of the Ukrainian people. The appeals also prepared

the ground for further informational activity by the SVU abroad.

It is important to note that the Ottoman Empire only entered the war on October 29, 1914 and that while Turkey, Bulgaria, and Rumania were not yet belligerents, the influence of the SVU on Austro-Hungarian and German decision-making was relatively strong. As can be seen from Jagow's directives, the Germans were trying to influence the Rumanians by redirecting their territorial ambitions away from Austrian Bukovyna toward Russian Bessarabia which could be made more desirable by sheltering it from Russian pressure with an independent Ukraine.⁶² The SVU tried to use its strengthened position vis-à-vis the Central Powers to its advantage demanding a clarification of the position of Austria-Hungary and Germany on the Ukrainian question and lobbying for official proclamations on this subject.

For many of the political adversaries of the SVU, the Union was seen as an agency of the Austro-Hungarian and German governments. Socialists opposed to the war or to the Central Powers viewed the SVU as having been compromised by its pro-Central Power orientation and even more so by the Union's acceptance of Austro-Hungarian and German funds. The matter of funding definitely caused problems for the SVU. At

⁶². In December 1991, following the ratification by referendum of the Ukrainian declaration of independence, Rumania for the first time since the Second World War made territorial claims on adjacent Ukrainian territories.

the outset of the war it received fifty thousand Austrian crowns and subsequently several hundred thousand more Austrian crowns and several hundred thousand German marks from the Austro-Hungarian and German governments.⁶³ At the contemporary exchange rate of five Austrian crowns to one American dollar, the extent of Central Powers funding of the SVU amounts to several hundred thousand US dollars which in today's values would represent several million dollars. The imprecision of these figures results from the lack of a complete financial record. There exist detailed accounts for certain periods that provide considerable information about the nature of SVU activities, and there is mention of the receipt and dispensation of certain sums, but there is no comprehensive financial picture.⁶⁴ The SVU accepted the funds, but viewed them as loans to the yet-to-be-created Ukrainian state. This is how the SVU treated the subvention it received from the German and Austro-Hungarian Ministries of Foreign Affairs in its memoranda to these ministries.⁶⁵

⁶³. A report for Sept. to Dec. 1914 indicates that the SVU received: 25 600 Crowns in donations, 4300 from the sale of SVU literature, 17 637 in loans, 273 660 from the Austro-Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and 260 000 from the German Embassy in Vienna for a total of 581 137 Austrian Crowns. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 14, File 14.

⁶⁴. See for example report of expenditures for September 1914 to December 1914. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 4 and a report on income for the same period Zhuk Collection, Vol. 14, File 14.

⁶⁵. See memoranda to the Austro-Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Zhuk Collection Vol. 7, File 14.

Nowhere, however, were the sums given to the SVU accounted for as loans by the Central Powers. The SVU conducted some fund raising among Ukrainians in Galicia and the Union's publications also generated some revenue but, by far, most of the SVU's funding came from the governments of Austria-Hungary and Germany. In addition to these sources, the SVU also received some income from German non-governmental interest groups which were specifically created by Germans who had particular interests in promoting Ukrainian independence.⁶⁶ An interesting point about the Central Powers' funding of the SVU and Zalizniak is that they received large lump sum payments. Such payments allowed the SVU to pursue its own agenda and gave the organization considerable latitude in dealing with the Central Powers. There was no need for the SVU to fulfil certain missions with which it disagreed in order to secure funding for immediate needs. In contrast, the British maintained the Arab rebels they sponsored during the Great War on a very short fiscal leash, delivering monthly payments in low sums. Although the Germans and the Austro-Hungarians did not put any specific conditions on the large lump sums that they provided to the SVU, they no doubt hoped that this money would be used for promoting an insurrection behind Russian lines. The SVU, however, openly rejected the promotion of

⁶⁶. See financial accounts presented in Skoropys, Khliborobs'ka Ukraina, zbirnyk II, III, IV, (1920-1921), pp. 230-233.

rebellion in Ukraine and concentrated its resources on influencing the governments and press of the Central Powers and several neutral countries to support Ukrainian independence and on raising the level of national consciousness among the Ukrainians in the prisoner-of-war camps in Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey.

CHAPTER 3 -- ADVANCES ON MANY FRONTS,
SEPTEMBER 1914-JANUARY 1915

September 1914 to January 1915 was the period of greatest activity for the SVU in its four-year existence. It was during this period that the Union reached the apex of its influence with the governments of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria. In a flurry of activity, the organization launched an intensive lobbying campaign aimed at securing public declarations committing the governments of the Central Powers to support Ukrainian independence, and emissaries and agents were dispatched to Bulgaria, Rumania, Turkey, Sweden, Switzerland, Italy and behind the lines to Ukraine. The SVU started a massive publishing effort to back up its missions to the various European countries. SVU literature was also directed toward Ukrainians, with the aim of winning more converts to independence. It was at this time that work among the prisoners of war began. After the problems of August and the retreat to Vienna, the SVU began to advance its cause relentlessly and not without some success.

Upon evacuating to Vienna the SVU quickly settled into its offices housed in humble rooms on the second floor of a building at 79 Josephstadterstrasse. Because of the cramped

quarters, meetings would often spill out into the corridors. Here Petro Diatliv, who later became a prominent Ukrainian Bolshevik, headed a team of ten office workers. He refused on principle to become a member of the organization, rationalizing his work for what he considered a bourgeois organization as technical work akin to that of an industrial worker employed by a capitalist concern.¹ The SVU drew the best of the exile community and western Ukrainian society to its effort and managed its human resources very skilfully. Journalists, writers, lawyers, politicians and scholars wrote articles, pamphlets and books for the SVU. They acted as the Union's representatives abroad, and lectured in the POW camps. Among the people who helped the SVU were the journalist Osyp Nazaruk, the lawyer and Galician Social-Democrat Lev Hankevych, the historians Myron Korduba and Ivan Krypiakevych, Professors Stepan Smal'-Stocky, Vasyl Simovych and many others. The SVU had at its disposition formidable intellectual resources, and this was reflected in the quality of the Union's publications and the position papers (memorialy) that the SVU presented to the governments of the Central Powers.

In repeated presentations and position papers, the SVU reiterated its rejection of plans for insurrections and

¹ V. Doroshenko, "SVU" in Svoboda, No. 8, 156 (14 VIII), (1954). The office workers included Petro Trylowsky, the son of Kyrylo Trylowsky the founder of the Sich organization.

"anarchistic methods".² The focus of all SVU lobbying of the Central Powers was an effort to secure a firm commitment supporting independent Ukrainian statehood in the form of an official public proclamation which would guarantee Ukrainian sovereignty and social reform in the event of a Central Powers victory. To get the proclamations, the Union advanced geopolitical arguments for an independent Ukraine as a buffer state between the Central Powers and Russia. To strengthen its position and encourage the Central Powers to comply with its requests, the SVU outlined the consequences of disregarding Ukrainian interests to the Central Powers. One position paper suggested that the armed forces of the Central Powers "could meet with hostility in occupied Ukraine as they were met in Belgium, or they could be met with indifference as in occupied Russian Poland or they could be met with joy and full cooperation on which the army can count as in a friendly country."³ It was argued that a public declaration of German or Austro-Hungarian support for Ukrainian independence was needed to secure Ukrainian cooperation in territories occupied by the Central Powers. The position papers also raised the need for radical economic reform in conjunction with the creation of an independent Ukraine. In one paper the SVU declared that "not

². Zhuk Collection, "Memorial: Z chym povyni ity avstriiski i nimetski viiska na territoriu Ukrainy u viini z Rossieiu," Vol. 7, File 16.

³. Ibid.

a step can be taken on Ukrainian territory against the interest of the Ukrainian peasant masses... Only full decisiveness and openness with respect to the social rights of our people can immediately align our people with the Central Powers and direct them against Russia."⁴ In 1914, the SVU's predictions about a harsh reception for German and Austro-Hungarian occupants might have appeared as mere posturing by the SVU to secure its much sought after public declarations. In 1918, however, they proved to be accurate. Once the Central Powers actually occupied Ukraine after the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, German and Austro-Hungarian infringements of Ukrainian sovereignty and their exploitative agrarian policies led to a Ukrainian peasant jacquerie which resulted in large-scale guerrilla activity against the Central Powers and the deaths of tens of thousands of Germans and Austro-Hungarians. Thus it can be argued that the SVU was correct in predicting that the Central Powers would encounter hostility from the Ukrainian population if they violated Ukrainian sovereignty and did not carry out land reform. In raising the social interests of the Ukrainian peasantry, the SVU found support in Consul Urbas. In a September 1, 1914 memorandum to the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry Urbas reported on his meetings with the SVU and underlined that "the national objective... recedes entirely behind economic ones," and supported the

⁴. Zhuk Collection, SVU position paper, Vol. 143, File 39.

arguments of the Union that Ukrainians would cooperate with the Central Powers only if advancing Austrian and German armies brought with them real prospects for agrarian reform.⁵

In early September, 1914, the SVU delegated Melenevs'kyi and Lev Hankevych to undertake a lobbying mission to the Balkans and Turkey. Before their departure they met with Alexander Hoyos, Berchtold's chief advisor on Ukrainian affairs. According to an SVU record of the meeting, Hoyos assured the two Union representatives:

Austria-Hungary stands for the freeing of Ukraine from Russian servitude and for Ukrainian statehood. Austria-Hungary will cooperate with Russian Ukrainians toward this goal. In the event of Russia's destruction and the occupation of Russian Ukraine by allied armies, Austria-Hungary will give the Russian Ukrainians the opportunity to organize their own administration, to see through their own political and economic reforms in the name of a Ukrainian government, especially in the area of agrarian reform in the interest of the masses of the Ukrainian people.⁶

This position of the Austro-Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was confirmed by Hoyos on November 7, 1914 when he added that the SVU could call upon this position in its lobbying effort in other countries and that this position would be communicated to the Austro-Hungarian embassies in

⁵. Memorandum of Urbas, Sept. 1, 1914, as cited in Hoffman, p. 33.

⁶. Zhuk, Collection, "Politychna aktsia SVU v Chornomorsko-Balkanskomu prostori v roky pershoi svitovoi viiny," Vol. 15, File 25, p. 3.

Sophia and Istanbul and to the governments of Bulgaria and Turkey. This commitment was given to the SVU by the Austrians with the concurrence of the German government, but with the caveat that it must not be made public.⁷ The SVU protested against Hoyos' insistence that the Austrian pledge to the Union remain confidential, and once again requested that public proclamations by the heads of government or state be made. Not only would such declarations commit Austria-Hungary and Germany to abide by their private assurances, but they would have also justified the pro-Central Power orientation assumed by the SVU and the western Ukrainians. Nonetheless, the decision by the Austro-Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs of November 7, 1914 to communicate its secret position on Ukraine to the governments of Bulgaria and Turkey represented a major triumph for the SVU. The Hoyos assurances in effect became semi-official policy as they were now known to foreign governments and not just to the SVU. This development was skilfully used by the SVU to secure a public declaration from the Ottoman Empire which made independent statehood for Ukraine a Turkish war aim.

Melenevs'kyi and Hankevych left for the Balkans on October 20, 1914. After a three-week trip to Bucharest, Sophia and Istanbul, Melenevs'kyi returned to Vienna for a week and then went on a lengthy posting to Istanbul.

⁷. Ibid., p. 4.

Hankevych remained in Sophia. Bulgaria, Rumania, and Turkey were targeted not only because there existed in these countries anti-Russian sentiment, but also because of their proximity to Ukraine. They were to serve as bases for SVU operations in Russian Ukraine. The purpose of the SVU's clandestine operations in Ukraine was to establish a network of SVU groups across the country in preparation for asserting Ukrainian sovereignty in the event of the advance of the Central Powers onto Ukrainian territory.⁸ The SVU agents sent to Ukraine were not on espionage or sabotage missions, rather they were sent to organize Ukrainians to prepare for independence.

Melenevs'kyi arrived in Sophia just days before the start of Russo-Turkish hostilities. At this time a Turkish advance into the Kuban-Caucasus region of the Russian Empire seemed to be a distinct possibility. Melenevs'kyi found many Turkish officials eager to win the support of the Ukrainians and other nationalities of that region. He quickly gained access to the upper echelons of the Porte's political and military establishment. His meetings culminated in an audience with Talaat Bey, the Turkish Minister of the Interior. At this meeting, Talaat Bey declared that the Ottoman Porte, like Germany and Austria-Hungary recognized the necessity of liberating Ukraine from Russian domination and pledged that when Russia was defeated the Ottoman

⁸. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 4.

government would help the Ukrainian people create an independent state.⁹ While the Austro-Hungarian commitment to the SVU was deemed confidential, the Turks followed up their declaration with a media blitz, reprinting their commitment to Ukrainian independence and placing numerous favourable articles about the SVU in newspapers.¹⁰ The Turkish declaration and the reports on it in the press indicated that the Ottoman position was the same as that of its allies, Germany and Austria-Hungary. This was the result of a Turkish decision to publicize the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' confidential assurance to the SVU. The Ottoman decision to make Ukrainian independence an official war aim was also the result of the efforts of the German officials in Istanbul who were especially sympathetic to the SVU and helped Melenevs'kyi in any way they could.¹¹

At the German embassy in Istanbul, Max Zimmer and Heinrich Nebel were charged with organizing revolutionary movements in Russia.¹² Zimmer had spent many years farming in Ukraine along the Black Sea and was knowledgeable about Ukrainian affairs. Working closely with the secret war cabinet of the Porte, under the leadership of War Minister Enver Pasha, Zimmer was trying to raise an insurrection in

⁹. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 7, File 2.

¹⁰. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 7, File 32.

¹¹. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 4.

¹². Hoffman, p. 59.

the western Caucasus and the Kuban.¹³ To establish contacts with the revolutionary groups there, the Germans and the Turks turned to the SVU. Melenevs'kyi, who had many pre-war revolutionary contacts, proved to be very valuable as a liaison between various revolutionary groups and the Central Powers. He also developed close ties with the Young Turks and influential Turkish military officers.¹⁴ According to an SVU report, everywhere Melenevs'kyi went in Istanbul he was met with complete understanding and readiness for active support in the event of a Turkish advance into Ukrainian territories.¹⁵

Zimmer and Melenevs'kyi drew up detailed plans in consultation with Enver Pasha that called for the landing of fifty thousand Turkish marines on the northeastern shore of the Black Sea.¹⁶ Four hundred Ukrainian soldiers from the ranks of the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen and one hundred Ukrainian soldiers from among the prisoners of war were to be attached to the Turkish expeditionary force. The purpose of this operation was to incite an insurrection among the

¹³. Ibid., p. 59.

¹⁴. Zhuk Collection, A. Zhuk, draft article, Vol. 15, File 4, p. 11.

¹⁵. Zhuk Collection, A. Zhuk, draft article, Vol. 15, File 4., p. 10. Melenevs'kyi also contacted the Mahometan Committee in Istanbul which was inciting the Muslims of the British Empire to rebel, but they disagreed over the future of Crimea, and nothing came of these contacts. See Zhuk Collection, Vol. 8, File 9.

¹⁶. Hoffman, p. 60.

Caucasian peoples and Kuban Cossacks and to found a Ukrainian state in the ethnically Ukrainian Kuban region.¹⁷ Such a plan was not without precedent. During the Crimean War Michal Czajkowski, also known as Sadyk Pasha, a Polish-Ukrainian adventurer, organized a Ukrainian Cossack legion in Turkey which was to be used against Russia.¹⁸ In addition, Austrian military intelligence had discovered that seven hundred Kuban Cossacks had been arrested on the Galician front by the Russians for refusing to fight against the Ukrainians in the Austro-Hungarian army. Apparently the Kuban Cossacks had declared that they were ready to defend their homeland against the Turks, but did not wish to fight fellow Ukrainians.¹⁹ The attachment of the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen to the Turkish force was meant to weaken the national enmity of the Cossacks for the Turks and to get the Cossacks to view the Turks as allies against Russian oppression. Zimmer and Melenevs'kyi's plans for the landing were actively pursued. The Austro-Hungarian Ministry of

¹⁷. Hoffman notes that in some of the diplomatic correspondence regarding this operation the phrase "to attempt the founding of a Ukrainian state" is used while in a letter to Hranilovic, the Chief of Austro-Hungarian military intelligence, it is deleted and replaced with "to attempt to call to life a revolutionary movement in Ukraine," Hoffman p. 60.

¹⁸. I. L. Rudnytsky, "Michal Czajkowski's Cossack Project during the Crimean War: An Analysis of Ideas," Essays in Modern Ukrainian History, P. L. Rudnytsky ed., (Edmonton, 1987). pp. 173-186.

¹⁹. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 8, File 7.

Foreign Affairs endorsed the plan and the Austro-Hungarian Army Chief of Staff gave his permission for the formation for the Ukrainian auxiliary force from among the Sich Riflemen and from among the Ukrainian prisoners of war.²⁰ A commander of the Ukrainian expeditionary force was named. He was to be Colonel Stepan Sheptyts'kyi, the brother of the Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. The SVU worked with the Staff (Boieva Uprava) of the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen in planning the operation. The Staff and the SVU decided to make their participation conditional. The Ukrainian Sich Riflemen wanted Germany and Austria-Hungary to declare publicly and officially their full support for Ukrainian statehood and to guarantee that the Ukrainians in the expedition would be used only to set up the administration in Ukrainian territories occupied by the Turkish army and to serve as intermediaries between the local population and the Central Powers.²¹ In any event, Enver Pasha, while approving of the plan in principle, had made any Turkish military action in the Kuban dependent on prior control of the Black Sea. Since this was neither the case in 1914 nor in 1915, he refused to commit Turkish troops for the expedition. Instead, he offered to land a Ukrainian force if the Ukrainians were willing to operate on

²⁰. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 7, File 2.

²¹. Ibid.

their own.²² This would have been impossible since the Ukrainians lacked the resources for such an undertaking. The Austro-Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs tried to influence the Porte to change its mind and to proceed with the plans arguing that "everything must be done to foster the secession of Ukraine...the existence of such a state would ... be of the greatest interest to Turkey, since the position of Russia on the Black Sea would thereby suffer significant damage if not total dislocation."²³ Zimmermann also instructed the German Ambassador to support the Austrian efforts to have the Turks attempt the landings. This was to no avail. With a rebellion in their own rear, British pressure in the Dardanelles and no opportunity on the Caucasian front, the Turks never did attempt the landings in the Kuban, and the whole of the planning effort remained academic.

While Melenevs'kyi was successfully advancing the SVU's cause in the Ottoman Porte, Hankevych was doing his utmost in Bulgaria and Rumania to get these countries to support Ukrainian independence. With the help of Drahomanov-Shishmanov, the daughter of the great Ukrainian political theorist, and her husband, an influential academic, Hankevych managed to gain access to the most highly placed

²². Hoffman, p. 62.

²³. Foreign Ministry to Ambassador Pallavicini, Nov. 20, 1914, as cited in Hoffman, p. 62.

politicians and bureaucrats in Sophia. He also established close relations with the Bulgarian National Union. As was the case in Istanbul, the diplomatic support of the Austro-Hungarian and German missions helped the SVU in Sophia. Here too, Austro-Hungarian officials testified that their government supported Ukrainian independence, and this had the effect of bringing the Bulgarian government to a similar position.²⁴ The Bulgarians, unlike the Porte, did not make an official proclamation supporting Ukrainian independence, and there was some negative reporting in the Sophia press which perceived the SVU as an "Austrian intrigue."²⁵

Hankevych made frequent trips to Rumania from his base in Sophia. In Rumania he had close ties to Professor Zamfir Abore, a close friend of Drahomanov and founder of the League for the Liberation of Bessarabia (Liga pentru liberanea Basarabie), and Khristo Rakovsky, the leader of Rumanian Social-Democracy who went on to become the first head of the Soviet Ukrainian government. The SVU's representative managed to place several articles supporting Ukrainian independence in Rakovsky's newspaper Lupta and in several other periodicals.²⁶ Public opinion in Rumania was divided. Most of Romanian society, imbued with Francophile

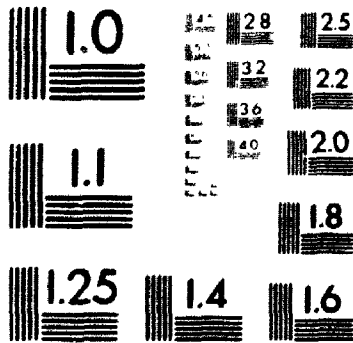
²⁴. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 4.

²⁵. Zhuk Collection, A. Zhuk, draft article, Vol. 15, File 4 p. 15.

²⁶. Ibid., p. 7.

2

PM-1 3 1/2" x 4" PHOTOGRAPHIC MICROCOPY TARGET
NBS 1010a ANSI/ISO #2 EQUIVALENT



and Russophile sentiment, opposed the Central Powers and supported the annexation of Austrian-ruled Bukovyna. A minority was anti-Russian and focused on annexing Bessarabia. The Social Democrats were opposed to the war and believed that Rumania should remain neutral. This limited the SVU's potential in Rumania as did Rumanian claims on Transdnistria up to and including Odessa. In addition, Russian intelligence was very active in Rumania spending large sums in influencing Rumanian opinion makers against the Central Powers.²⁷ As a result of this unfavourable climate, the SVU's activities in Rumania were largely confined to illegal border crossings into Russian-ruled Ukraine. Once Rumania entered the war against Austria-Hungary, SVU activities were even more drastically curtailed.

To transmit propaganda and agents from the Central Powers into Russian-ruled Ukraine, the SVU sought to establish illegal border crossings on the Rumania-Russian frontier. It enlisted the help of the former crew of the battleship Potemkin who had mutinied during the Revolution of 1905 and had consisted mainly of Ukrainians led by Opanas Matiushenko of Kharkiv. One of the few officers to join the mutineers was O. Kovalenko, a leading member of the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party.²⁸ After the mutiny, many of

²⁷. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 25.

²⁸. Subtelny, p. 296.

the sailors found refuge in Rumania with the assistance of Professor Arbore. One of them, Mykola Ryzhyi, volunteered to work for the SVU and was made responsible for the illegal border crossings.²⁹ According to an SVU report, Ryzhyi "with much money and much effort was able to secure the border with the help of fishermen on the Prut river which follows the Rumanian-Russian border."³⁰ With the assistance of Dr. Kateryna Arbore, the professor's daughter, and local Rumanian Social Democratic "specialists," who had expertise in illegal border crossings and revolutionary contacts in Odessa, boats, a fishing license, nets and other fishing paraphernalia were purchased which gave onlookers the impression that the business at hand was commercial fishing. A network of safe houses and contacts was established on the Russian side of the border and several illegal crossings were made before the operation was uncovered by Rumanian counter-intelligence. In March, 1915 Ryzhyi was arrested and deported to Austria where he continued to work for the SVU.³¹

SVU activity in Russian Ukraine was limited to organizing a pro-independence network in revolutionary circles, to agitation aimed at the general population, and to some propaganda directed at troops stationed at the

²⁹. Zhuk Collection, SVU report, Vol. 15, File 25. p. 9.

³⁰. Ibid... p. 9.

³¹. Ibid... p. 10.

front. In this area the SVU enjoyed only limited success. The agents for the SVU missions to Ukraine were recruited from among the Ukrainians in the prisoner-of-war camps. On December 8, 1914, a contingent of infiltrators left the POW camp at Freistadt for Istanbul from where they were sent to the crossing areas. They consisted of: Borys Torhovets', nom de guerre Lisovyk whose mission was to establish contacts with revolutionary circles in Kiev; Isaak Aleshin from the Don, code-named Iunak, who was to go to Odessa, Katerynoslav and then the Don region; Oleksa Nakonechnyi from Podilia, code-named Pochatok. Dmytro Musienko, also known as Koval, a worker from Katerynoslav, was sent later as were the agents Bolshevik and Hudyma. Other POW infiltrators went across the front lines in Galicia. Among them were the agents code-named Orlenko and Kostenko. All of these agents were given the names and addresses of Ukrainian patriots and RUP activists who they were to contact and recruit for an SVU network in Ukraine. For the most part, they did not succeed in their missions. Some, like Lisovyk were arrested as deserters and were sent back to the front; others disappeared without a trace. Some managed to reach their targets, but communications between the SVU in Vienna and the agents in Ukraine were difficult and only a few clandestine messages were exchanged.³² The SVU did manage,

³². The Zhuk collection does contain a Kiev newspaper with coded invisible ink communications on it. Vol. 8, File 21 also contains postcards and letters apparently from SVU agents in

however, to establish contact with a group of former RUP activists in Kiev which proved to be its most substantive connection to the revolutionary movement in Ukraine.

There is no record of SVU agents being used for espionage or sabotage on behalf of the Central Powers. To the contrary, the SVU repeatedly cautioned the Central Powers that its agents could not be used for assignments other than those approved by the Union, and the Union strongly opposed any moves to involve the POWs in guerilla activity. In a letter to the Austro-Hungarian General Staff requesting permission to use Freistadt POWs for infiltration, the SVU cautioned that the missions on which these agents were being sent did not involve fostering rebellion and repeated that the SVU would not undertake such activity and demanded again that the Austro-Hungarian government issue a proclamation guaranteeing the Ukrainian people national liberation, land and freedom. The private assurances of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were deemed insufficient.³³ Later the SVU lobbied the Austro-Hungarian military authorities to permit Ukrainian prisoners of war to be attached to the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen Corps for agitational work in Ukrainian territories occupied by the Central Powers. Austro-Hungarian obstructionism was

Ukraine with coded information in invisible ink on them.

³³. Zhuk Collection, Letter to the General Staff, Vol. 8, File 21.

forcefully countered in letter to the General Staff which also cautioned that the POWs should not be used by Austro-Hungarian intelligence for any subversive purposes:

You have to take into account this fact. Individuals will sooner volunteer for risky and heroic action only when that action supports an idea and when it is carried out in the name of an [Ukrainian] organization. Among the POWs we have many people who would do anything in the name of liberation for Ukraine but only if they are accepted into the Sich Riflemen or if they are assigned the mission by the SVU.³⁴

The use of POWs to get Russian soldiers to surrender had to be approved by the SVU and would be tolerated only after a public proclamation regarding Ukrainian independence was issued by the Austro-Hungarian government. The Austro-Hungarians did send some POW infiltrators across the lines without the consent of the SVU. One prisoner pretended to have escaped Austrian captivity rejoined his unit, and convinced his whole company to defect.³⁵ But because of the strong compact between the SVU and the majority of the Ukrainian POWs, the Central Powers did not find many volunteers for missions that the SVU did not approve. Another area of cross border activity was the dropping of propaganda leaflets from aeroplanes. In November, 1914, the SVU drafted propaganda leaflets which were air dropped over Russian lines. The leaflets encouraged the soldiers of the

³⁴. Zhuk Collection, SVU letter to General Staff, Vol. 8, File 22.

³⁵. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 8, File 22.

Russian army to defect to the Central Powers.³⁶

The result of SVU efforts to establish contacts with revolutionary circles in Ukraine culminated in a series of meetings with Ievhen Holnitsyns'kyi, also known as Hryts' Petrenko. Holnitsyns'kyi was delegated by a group of former RUP members in Kiev to meet with SVU representatives abroad. The Kiev group consisted of Holnitsyns'kyi, P. Tkachenko, P. Kanivets', P. Poniatenko and D. Antonovych. In the spring of 1915, the group started meeting secretly at Antonovych's home.³⁷ Holnitsyns'kyi was delegated to go abroad to meet with the SVU after the Union had managed to communicate a request for a meeting to their former RUP colleagues in Kiev. In the end, Holnitsyns'kyi travelled abroad three times to meet with SVU representatives: once in May 1915, later that year in October, and subsequently on a procurement mission to get paper for the underground revolutionary press. The purpose in dispatching Holnitsyns'kyi at first was, according to Antonovych, "to douse the SVU with some cold water," that is to give SVU a true picture of political conditions in Ukraine and to convey the poor prospects for an independence movement.

Holnitsyns'kyi, travelling under the assumed identity of Hryts' Petrenko, crossed into Rumania where he contacted

³⁶. Batchinsky Collection, C.D., November, 1914.

³⁷. Zhuk Collection, Letters from Antonovych to Zhuk August 14, 1942 and November 27, 1942, Vol. 15, File 13.

Hankevych. Hankevych then brought the Kiev emissary to an SVU safe house at Plovdiv in Bulgaria. Here he met with Zhuk and Melenevs'kyi. Holnitsyns'kyi quickly identified the obstacles to the SVU's independence campaign inside Russian-ruled Ukraine. He related the fear felt by the Ukrainian intelligentsia remaining in Russia. In the months following the start of the war there had been a crackdown on any manifestations of Ukrainian distinctiveness. People such as Hrushevsky had been arrested and exiled outside of Ukraine, and newspapers had been closed. The repression had since relented and there was some room for Ukrainian activists to manoeuvre. The Society of Ukrainian Progressives (Tovarystvo Ukrains'kykh Progresystiv, TUP), a semi-secret political organization had been set up, that quietly and not very forcefully agitated for constitutional government and autonomy for Ukraine. But nonetheless there existed in Ukrainian society and among the intelligentsia an overwhelming belief that the Russian Empire would emerge from the war victorious and then there would be a period of retribution against those who had acted against the state during the war. Even those who believed in the victory of German arms were fearful that in the peace settlement to follow, not all of Ukraine would be separated from Russia, that Kiev and most of Eastern Ukraine would remain part of the Tsarist realm and that in these areas, the Russians would seek retribution against separatists. Holnitsyns'kyi

explained that this was why most of the Ukrainian intelligentsia had adopted a wait and see attitude. The SVU encountered similar fears of Russian retribution among the prisoners of war who initially were wary of cooperating with the Union lest they eventually be returned to a Russian state and face accusations of treason. Holnitsyns'kyi also pointed out that the denunciations of the SVU as a bourgeois group of paid German agents by Iurkevych in his new newspaper Borot'ba was turning people in Ukraine against the Union.³⁸

In spite of this discouraging news, the SVU decided to plan with Holnitsyns'kyi an SVU network in Ukraine. Holnitsyns'kyi was mandated to recruit three people who shared the beliefs of the SVU and who possessed good credentials in the Ukrainian revolutionary movement to form the Central Committee of the SVU in Ukraine.³⁹ The SVU abroad was to form an External Committee. It was resolved that in the event of the occupation of Ukraine by the Central Powers, the Central and External Committees of the SVU would constitute the Provisional Government of Ukraine. The record of these negotiations with Holnitsyns'kyi represent the only evidence that the SVU had any pretensions

³⁸. Zhuk Collection, Notes on the meeting of SVU with Petrenko from Kiev, Vol. 8, File 12.

³⁹. Zhuk Collection, "Protocols of the meeting with Petrenko of Kiev," Vol. 8, File 10.

to forming a Ukrainian government. SVU policy called for a national congress which would decide upon a Ukrainian constitution and a provisional government.

The SVU's meetings with Holnitsyns'kyi were also used by the SVU to demonstrate to the governments of the Central Powers the existence of an SVU network in Ukraine. During his second trip in October 1915, the emissary from Kiev was paraded around the capitals of the Central Powers where he met with high ranking officials such as the German Ambassador Tschirschky.⁴⁰ According to letters written to Zhuk by Antonovych, the Kiev group did not pretend to represent the SVU.⁴¹ They tried to recruit people on behalf of the Union, but had only limited success. The group kept the TUP abreast as best they could of SVU activity. In the letters, Antonovych attributes the failure of the SVU to gain more support in Ukrainian revolutionary circles to the positions of people like Petliura and Dmytro Doroshenko who called on Ukrainians to maintain war-time loyalty to the Russian state and to the influence of young Social-Democrats like Iurkevych and Vynnychenko who were committed federalists who "did not want to hear anything about independence."⁴² Although the SVU did not abandon hope of

⁴⁰. Zhuk Collection, Notes on the October trip of Petrenko of Kiev, Vol.8, File 13.

⁴¹. Zhuk Collection, Antonovych letters, Vol. 15, File 13.

⁴². Ibid.

organizing in Ukraine, in the aftermath of the Holnitsyns'kyi meetings, the Union concentrated its energy on its work in the POW camps, and on lobbying the Central Powers.

After the Balkans, the SVU's international public relations campaign focused on Italy, Sweden, and Switzerland. The SVU emissary to Italy was Oleksander Semenov. Semenov left for Italy on September 15, 1914, before Italy had entered the war on the side of the Entente. Although Italy had been a member of the Triple Alliance, Semenov realized that his mission to elicit support for Ukrainian independence would not be easy. In a report to the SVU Presidium he wrote: "I already knew before leaving for Italy that it would be difficult to find sympathy among the Italians...The Italians are unaware of us...and the Italian press is all bought-off by the French and the Russians. This is not a smear, it is a statement of fact."⁴³ It appears that bribery was indeed rampant in journalistic circles at the time. Not only do SVU documents report on journalists and editors that had been bought-off by the Entente, but there are also clear indications that for "the establishment and maintenance of good press contacts" the SVU spent

⁴³. Zhuk Collection "Short Report of Oleksander Semenov, SVU Delegate on work in Italy, September 15, 1914 to May 12, 1915", Vol. 15, File 11.

considerable sums itself.⁴⁴ Another factor that worked against the SVU in Italy was the presence of large and influential Polish and Russian emigre communities that were hostile to Ukrainian independence. In spite of adverse conditions, Semenov managed to place several articles about the Ukrainian question in the Italian press, and he established some contacts of his own with journalists and diplomats. Semenov was disappointed that one newspaper did not run his articles. The SVU representative reported:

I had the most hope that the socialist newspaper Avanti would publish my article and, they had promised to publish it, but the editor, the exceptional Mussolini who was already openly pro-French gave me this response: "It is presently inappropriate to place this platform in Avanti."⁴⁵

Semenov's meetings with Benito Mussolini are mentioned in several letters to the SVU Presidium. It is evident that the latter was personally sympathetic to the SVU platform, but with Italy about to enter the war against Austria-Hungary, open support for the SVU was not possible.⁴⁶ Routinely, Semenov's correspondence with the SVU in Vienna was intercepted by Italian authorities, and once Italy entered the war on May 24, 1915 the SVU's activity there became

⁴⁴. An SVU financial report lists expenses for press bribes. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 4.

⁴⁵. Zhuk Collection, Correspondence from Semenov to SVU Presidium, Vol. 15, File 11.

⁴⁶. Zhuk Collection, Semenov correspondence, Vol. 22, File 1.

impossible.⁴⁷

Several SVU emissaries were dispatched to Sweden during the war. Sweden, like the Balkan countries, served as a conduit through which correspondence and information travelled to and from the Russian Empire. O. Nazaruk and O. Reviuk were both SVU representatives in Sweden. They managed to place many articles in the Swedish press on the Ukrainian question and they published SVU brochures in Swedish. Both of these emissaries went on to the United States after their assignments in Scandinavia to promote the SVU cause among the large Ukrainian immigrant populations in North America.⁴⁸ From the outset of the war, the SVU believed that "the USA will play a great role in the resolution of the international military conflict," and it tried to influence US policy by sending its emissaries there.⁴⁹ They had little success, but the attempt is indicative of the SVU's understanding of international politics. The importance of American influence on the peace settlement was perceived long before the US entered the war. In 1917, after the February Revolution and the establishment in Kiev of the Central Rada, the SVU pressured the Central Powers for a

⁴⁷. Ibid.

⁴⁸. SVU activity never became very widespread in North America. Some subscribers were found for the SVU press and contacts were established with Ukrainian organizations. The SVU Presidium discussed lobbying in the USA and Canada, but did not get very far with these plans. See Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 8 and File 14.

⁴⁹. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 14.

favourable resolution of the Ukrainian question by invoking President Wilson's theories about the rights of nations to self-determination in its position papers and its press.

On his way to the USA, Nazaruk travelled through London where he was to reestablish contact with the Ukrainian Committee headed by George Raffalovich. Raffalovich was a publicist who went by the nom de plume Bedwin Sands. He was a successful lecturer and writer who specialized in Eastern Europe and the Orient. In 1911 he had met with the Ukrainian Information Committee in Lviv. In London Raffalovich popularized the Ukrainian question through lectures and numerous articles in publications such as Vanity Fair, Outlook, The Commentator, and The Asiatic Review.⁵⁰ He succeeded in getting several British Members of Parliament and Lords to join the Ukrainian Committee.⁵¹ During the war the SVU sent several agents to contact Raffalovich, including Nazaruk and Sherebko. Evhen Batchinsky, an SVU representative in Switzerland corresponded with him, and acted as a conduit for SVU funds to Raffalovich. According to SVU documents, Raffalovich had an especially receptive audience among the Irish. On November 5, 1916, the Austrian Press Bureau reported that a British member of Parliament had been fined for violating British security legislation by providing Raffalovich with classified military information

⁵⁰. Zhuk Collection, Vol, 7, File 2.

⁵¹. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 16, File 13.

and that The Times had reported that Raffalovich had compromising relations with the Irish Sinn Fein.⁵² Raffalovich was expelled from Britain following the Irish Easter Uprising and ended up in the United States. The Zhuk archives contain no concrete evidence that Raffalovich ran an Irish espionage network for the Austrians, but given the evidence of connections between Raffalovich and Irish nationalists and the SVU, and of Central Power support for the Easter Uprising, the issue merits further investigation. The linkage of the SVU to national liberation and revolutionary movements such as the Sinn Fein, certain national movements of the Russian Empire, and the Bolsheviks is an intriguing aspect of First World War history. Not only did these groups share common sponsors in the Central Powers, but it appears that they also maintained direct contacts to a greater or lesser extent. The contacts between these movements served as sources of human and material resources as funds were channelled from one group to another in pursuit of common goals. This was the case in SVU cooperation with Social-Democrats such as Parvus-Helphand, the Georgian Tria and the Estonian Keskula and in Zalizniak's contacts with the Indian Revolutionary Committee.⁵³ In the nether world of espionage, states also used such contacts to expand their intelligence gathering

⁵². Ibid.

⁵³. According to Ivan Kedryn, Zalizniak established close ties with the Indian Revolutionary Committee and Khristo Rakovsky in Stockholm in 1917., Ivan Kedryn, ed., Beresteiskyi myr: z nahody 10tykh rokovyn, (Lviv, 1928), p. 57 and 66.

capacities. No evidence has been found to indicate that the SVU was involved in espionage activities on behalf of the Central Powers in exchange for material support. The Union accepted Central Power subvention as a necessary means to achieve its own goals. It would be both interesting and illuminating to investigate the precise nature of the contacts between the various revolutionary groups during the First World War and to establish the nature of great power involvement with the East European revolutionaries.

Of all the SVU connections with other revolutionary groups, it is the Union's relationship to the Bolsheviks that has attracted the most attention. In the summer of 1917 accusations were rampant in Petrograd that Lenin was a German agent. These accusations stemmed in part from allegations that Lenin was connected to the SVU. The Bolshevik leader denied these allegations.⁵⁴ The Zhuk Collection contains material that shows that Lenin was connected with the SVU to a greater extent than Lenin's refutations suggest and that in the autumn of 1914, the Bolsheviks were in receipt of German funds through the SVU and possibly through Parvus-Helphand as well. As Z.A.B. Zeman notes in his introduction to the collection of German documents pertaining to the subversive projects of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1915-1918, few records were made of these activities and contacts between the

⁵⁴. Lenin, Vol. 34, pp.6-7 and 30-32.

German officials and the demi-monde of the revolutionary exiles.⁵⁵ Nonetheless, it is possible to establish that Lenin did have ties to the SVU.

Lenin wrote to the periodical Rabochii on September 12, 1917 denying accusations against him that he was a German agent:⁵⁶

One member of the Union for the Liberation for Ukraine, Basok [Melenevs'kyi] has been known to me since 1906, and in the fall of 1914 or at the beginning of 1915, when I was living in Berne, the well-known Caucasian Menshevik Tria came from Constantinople to visit me at my apartment. Tria told me about Basok's participation in the Union For the Liberation of Ukraine and about the connection between the Union and the German government. Tria handed me a letter from Basok in which Basok expressed sympathy for me and hopes for the rapprochement of our views. I was so angered that immediately, in Tria's presence, I wrote a response to Basok which I gave to Tria to deliver because Tria was getting ready to go again to Constantinople.

In the letter to Basok, I declared that once he entered into relations with one of the imperialists that categorically our paths diverged and we had nothing in common.

This was limit of my "relations" with the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine.

Tria did indeed deliver a letter from Melenevs'kyi to Lenin which explored the possibilities for cooperation between the SVU and the Bolsheviks, and Lenin had responded as indicated in his letter in Rabochii. This is corroborated both by Lenin's Polnoe sobranie sochinenii and by the Zhuk

⁵⁵ Z. A. B. Zeman, ed., Germany and the Revolution in Russia: 1915-1918. (London, 1958), p. ix.

⁵⁶ Lenin, Vol. 34, p. 118.

Collection.⁵⁷ But this was not the limit of Lenin's relations with the SVU. On October 29, 1914, Dr. Liubars'kyi-Pysmennyi, one of the SVU members in Switzerland, attended a lecture given by Lenin at the Eintracht Society in Zürich on the European war and social democracy. Lenin noted the media attention given to Belgium and decried the fact that the fate of Ukraine which was suffering even more under Russian occupation. According to Liubars'kyi-Pysmennyi, Lenin attributed this oversight to the fact that Belgium had a bourgeoisie which controlled the press whereas Ukraine did not have such an influential bourgeoisie and therefore no press coverage. According to the same record of the lecture, Lenin stated that the Russians mercilessly oppressed other nations and that an independent Ukraine was needed for democracy.⁵⁸ So impressed was Liubars'kyi-Pysmennyi with Lenin's pro-Ukrainian lecture that he decided to meet with the Bolshevik leader. On October 31, he took the same train on which Lenin was travelling to Berne. On board he talked with Lenin and gave him some SVU literature.⁵⁹ Liubars'kyi-Pysmennyi asked Lenin if he there were many Russian social democrats who

⁵⁷. See Lenin, Vol. 49, p. 50 and the Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 22. For a copy of Melenevs'kyi's letter to Lenin, see Vol. 21, File 30.

⁵⁸. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 13.

⁵⁹. According to Liubars'kyi-Pysmennyi the meeting was witnessed by Zvezdich and became known to other social democrats. Zhuk Collection, Vol 8, File 24.

shared his views on the Ukrainian question. Lenin said that he was the only one who held such a position. Lenin asked Liubars'kyi-Pysmennyi about the members of Spilka and was surprised that many of them were working in the SVU. Liubars'kyi-Pysmennyi showed Lenin Professor Rudnyts'kyi's Heohrafia Ukrainy (Geography of Ukraine) and Lenin was astonished to see that the Donbas was included as part of Ukraine as he regarded it as Russian and stated that this would be point of friction but that it could be resolved by a referendum.⁶⁰ Liubars'kyi-Pysmennyi was surprised at Lenin's sudden metamorphosis on the Ukrainian question and newfound sympathy for Ukraine which was in stark contrast to his inimical refusal to allow Spilka the right to separate from the Russian Party.⁶¹

Aside from the contacts between Liubars'kyi-Pysmennyi and Lenin and Basok and Lenin in the early months of the war, the SVU also funded the Bolsheviks and provided technical assistance to Bolsheviks illegally crossing the Russian border in the Balkans. An SVU financial report for the period September to December 1914 states that:

to date [December 1914] the SVU has had the occasion to provide individual members of this group of Russian Social-Democrats [Bolsheviks] important assistance of a

⁶⁰. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 13.

⁶¹. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 8, File 24. Lenin's lecture in Zurich was reported in the SVU newspaper Vistnyk SVU, Zhuk Collection, Vistnyk SVU, Nos. 3-4, pp 2 and 15-16, (November 30, 1914), Vol. 15, File 13.

financial and technical character. The leader of Russian Social Democracy Lenin is not hostile to the Ukrainian question as is known from his lecture in Switzerland which was written about in Ukrainische Nachrichten [the German-language SVU organ].

In the same entry the report mentions help provided to some Georgian Social Democrats and other organizations, for which the SVU spent a total of thirty thousand Austrian Crowns.⁶²

In a post-war denial of SVU funding of Lenin, Zhuk acknowledged that the SVU did run a few Bolshevik couriers across the border and acknowledged that some petty funds were used for this purpose but claimed that most of the thirty thousand Crowns (US \$ 6000) had been spent on Parvus and other social democrats and in no way went to Lenin in Switzerland. He also denied rumours that Central Power funds were channelled through the SVU to Lenin and were then used by the Bolshevik leader to publish the newspaper Sotsial-demokrat.⁶³ Zhuk's denial is made less credible by his assertion that the SVU could not have provided funds to start up the publication of Sotsial-demokrat because this newspaper had been coming out since 1908. Sotsial-demokrat did in fact resume publication on November 1, 1914 after a hiatus of one year.⁶⁴ During the autumn of 1914 it is

⁶². Zhuk Collection, SVU financial report, Vol. 15, File 4, p. 20.

⁶³. Zhuk Collection, A. Zhuk, notes, Vol. 15, File 13.

⁶⁴. Weber, Gerda and Herma, Lenin: Life and Works, (London, 1980), p. 106.

generally assumed that Lenin and his entourage in Switzerland were suffering a period of privation. Determining the sources of funding for Sotsial-demokrat would be useful for answering the question of whether Lenin was receiving German funds at this time. Given that Liubars'kyi-Pysmennyi only met Lenin the day before Sotsial-demokrat reappeared and that this appears to have been the first SVU-Lenin contact, it is unlikely that funding for Sotsial-demokrat came from the SVU.

Another SVU document, indicates that at least one Bolshevik, who the SVU helped to cross the border by providing him with a forged Bulgarian passport in exchange for the promise to carry out an SVU assignment, was acting as a courier "from the Bolshevik centre in Switzerland to Russia."⁶⁵ In all likelihood, this courier was dispatched by Lenin or one of his entourage, and it is likely that the Bolshevik leadership was aware of the means of illegal border crossings of its couriers. In the autumn of 1914, the SVU enlisted the help of Dr. Alexander Helphand even before he came into direct contact with the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Melenevs'kyi had engaged Parvus in Istanbul, and the SVU Presidium was providing Parvus with a substantial subvention.⁶⁶ During the war, Parvus wrote

⁶⁵. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 8, File 21.

⁶⁶. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 7, File 2. and Vol. 15, File 14. p. 20.

brochures under his own name that were published by the SVU. He was considered to be a very important social democratic ally of the SVU, and indeed he had very impressive social democratic credentials having co-written with Trotsky the Theory of Permanent Revolution.⁶⁷ At the time of the 1905 Revolution Parvus had been a leading Social Democrat, but by 1914 his reputation had been severely tarnished in the RSDLP by a scandal in which he was accused by Maxim Gorki of having embezzelled party funds.⁶⁸ Nonetheless, Parvus retained considerable influence among POWs with social democratic leanings who were unaware of this scandal. In February, 1915 the SVU held a meeting with the Estonian revolutionary Keskula. The purpose of this meeting was to create a program of joint action for all the revolutionary movements of Russia. They also talked about creating a structured organization and publications. Among the people who could be engaged in this initiative, Parvus and Lenin were discussed as people "from whom such an action can elicit sympathy and support."⁶⁹ Parvus was in receipt of SVU funds and Lenin is described in the same way as Parvus in this document, suggesting that he too might have been in

⁶⁷. Adam Ulam, The Bolsheviks, (New York, 1965), p. 326.

⁶⁸. See Z. A. B. Zeman and W. B. Scharlau, The Merchant of Revolution, The life of Alexander Israel Helphand (Parvus) 1867-1924, London, 1965.

⁶⁹. Zhuk Collection, Record of a conference with Keskula February 5, 1915, Vol. 15, File 8.

receipt of SVU funds.

In all probability, the extent of SVU-Bolshevik ties ends with the meeting of Liubars'kyi-Pysmennyi and Lenin, the Melenevs'kyi-Lenin correspondence and the running of a few incidental Bolshevik agents across the border as was claimed by Zhuk. SVU documents show that Lenin had some limited contact with the Union in 1914 and that funds passed through the SVU to the Bolsheviks. Whether these funds went directly to Lenin or were merely incidental petty sums used in helping a few couriers cross the border is still open to question as is the relationship between Parvus and Lenin and the SVU.

Less mysterious are the relationships between the SVU and Parvus-Helphand, Keskula, Tria and others. From the outset, the Union sought out allies in its fight against Tsarism, and found them among the national revolutionaries with programs of national liberation and social reform. Parvus was engaged by the SVU to write pamphlets, and he remained an ally throughout the war. His writings in SVU publications proved to be very influential among the POWs with social democratic tendencies who were at first sceptical of the SVU's program. Tria, the Georgian leader, worked closely with the SVU as did Keskula. They conducted campaigns among the Estonian and Georgian prisoners of war that were similar to the SVU's campaign but on a smaller scale. In the end, however, no structures to coordinate

their efforts ever came into being and the cooperation between these individuals who represented different revolutionary movements remained on a personal and incidental level.

An other area of SVU activity which flourished in the period September 1914 to January 1915 was publishing. There were two official organs of the SVU: Vistnyk SVU (SVU Herald) and Ukrainische Nachrichten (Ukrainian News). Vistnyk SVU was a weekly with a press run of five thousand.⁷⁰ It was directed at Ukrainians in exile, in Galicia and in Russian-ruled Ukraine. Aside from editorials and polemical tracts that advanced the cause of independence, Vistnyk also provided reviews and analyses of the military situation on various fronts. It enjoyed widespread readership and served as the principal source of news for the Ukrainian prisoners of war held by the Central Powers. Ukrainische Nachrichten was a weekly with a press run of three thousand.⁷¹ It was directed at Austrian and German opinion makers. Both newspapers also carried literary works of Ukrainian writers such as Shevchenko and Franko and of up-and-coming writers from the ranks of the prisoners of war and the Sich Riflemen.⁷² In fact several important

⁷⁰. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 4, p. 4.

⁷¹. Ibid., p. 2.

⁷². Franko contributed to the SVU publications himself. See Zhuk Collection, Vol. 27, File 7.

Ukrainian writers had their literary debut on the pages of SVU press, including A. Babiak, R. Kupchynskyi, L. Lepkyi, L. Myshyla, Iu. Shkrumeliak and O. Kobets'.⁷³ In addition to these official organs, the SVU published in Switzerland La Revue Ukrainienne which was directed at public opinion in Switzerland, France and Britain.

The SVU also published dozens of books and pamphlets in twelve languages: English, Bulgarian, Italian, German, Rumanian, Turkish, French, Croat, Czech, Swedish, Russian, Ukrainian.⁷⁴ These publications included Hrushevsky's history of Ukraine, Rudnyts'kyi's geography of Ukraine, Korduba's history of Northwestern Ukraine, Vonarovs'kyi's book on Polish-Ukrainian relations and other seminal studies. The SVU undertook the translation of these and other works and their distribution. The books were printed in Lviv, Vienna, Berlin and in Istanbul and some publications were printed in the Balkans and Scandinavia. The publications were used to back up the lobbying and public relations campaigns of the SVU in different countries, and they were used as educational tools in the prisoner-of-war camps. The SVU devoted a substantial portion of its financial and human resources to its publications. Up

⁷³. On the SVU press see V. Doroshenko, "SVU," Svoboda, No. 3, 153 (II VIII), (1954).

⁷⁴. V. Doroshenko, "SVU," Svoboda, No. 3, (7 VIII), (1954).

to fifty-thousand copies of some books were printed.⁷⁵ In addition to publications that appeared under the SVU name, the Union also published several books in the name of the Vidrodzhennia publishing house. These were printed in Lviv during the war, but were dated 1913 and the place of publication was listed as Kiev. The purpose of this deception was to deflect attention from the place of publication and the SVU's connections to the Central Powers so that readers, especially prisoners of war, would focus on the content and not regard them as polemical works or propaganda.⁷⁶ In addition to these publications, the SVU was also responsible for publications of the Ukrainian prisoner-of-war camps. Each camp published its own newspaper and pamphlets. All the SVU publications were subject to the strict censorship of the authorities. On numerous occasions the publications would be rejected and the Presidium would appeal the censor's decision to higher authorities. In 1915, as the SVU's relations with the Central Powers deteriorated, the restrictions of the censors increasingly appeared to be harassment of the SVU.

⁷⁵. Zhuk Collection, Vol.8, File 8.

⁷⁶. V. Doroshenko, "SVU," Svoboda, No. 7, 155 (13 VIII), (1954).

CHAPTER 4 -- STALEMATE, JANUARY 1915-MARCH 1917

From the beginning of 1915 until the February Revolution, the SVU experienced several major set-backs. At the beginning of January, 1915 the Central Powers announced to the Union a policy of desinterestment. Soon after that, the SVU became the target of stinging attacks by prominent members of the Ukrainian and Russian revolutionary movements. And then the SVU was forced to react to the Central Powers' deference to Polish nationalism in the Ukrainian-populated territories occupied by the German and the Austrians. The only area in which the SVU enjoyed any success was in its work among the prisoners of war, but this work too was threatened for a while by the growing discontent of the Austro-Hungarian government with the SVU.

In January 1915 Berchtold was replaced as the Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs by Stephan Burian von Rajecz. Quite unexpectedly in early January 1915, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs drastically changed its policy with respect to the Ukrainian question. The Austro-Hungarian interest in the Ukrainians was the result of German pressure to utilize revolutionaries principally as a military expedient. With the military situation stagnated, the Austro-Hungarians were now eager to dissociate themselves

from the SVU.¹ The Germans were notified of the change in policy with the argument that "At the outbreak of the war there was the expectation that military operations would in part be carried into Russian Ukraine."² Now the situation did not hold out this prospect and the Austro-Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs deemed that "every attempt to evoke from a distance... an insurgency movement in Ukraine must remain a fruitless endeavour." For this reason the government in Vienna wanted "the loosening of contacts" with the Ukrainians.³ Another factor in the new Austro-Hungarian attitude was renewed fears of Ukrainian irredentism. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs learned that as a result of the SVU's activities an alarming number of the Empire's Ukrainian subjects were coming to favour union with an independent Ukraine.⁴ On January 10, 1915, members of the SVU Presidium were summoned for an audience at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Ballhausplatz. The SVU was ordered to cease all its activities on Austro-Hungarian territory, to sever all relations with the Ukrainians of the Empire, and to transfer the organization abroad to Sophia, Istanbul or

¹. Hoffman, p. 63.

². Tschirschky to Foreign Office, January 1, 1915, as cited in Hoffman, p. 64.

³. Ibid., p. 64.

⁴. Ibid., pp. 64-65.

Switzerland.⁵ But the Austro-Hungarians did not want a complete break. They offered to pay sixty-three thousand crowns to cover the expenses of the move and both the German and Austro-Hungarian governments offered one-hundred thousand crowns to the SVU. They wanted the SVU to harmonize its activities with the position of the Austro-Hungarian and German governments and to put itself at the complete disposition of the German and Austro-Hungarian General Staffs in Ukrainian POW camps. The SVU was also encouraged to continue expanding its contacts with Russian Ukrainians and to continue publishing.⁶ The Union's Presidium protested against this new position and absolutely refused to subordinate itself either to the General Staff or to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For the next three months there ensued a protracted exchange of proposals and counterproposals with the Ballhausplatz. In the meantime the SVU established direct contact with Berlin, dispatching Skoropys-Ioltukhovs'kyi to head the SVU Zentralstelle. At times in the negotiations with the Ballhausplatz, the SVU seemed to exasperate the Austro-Hungarian officials as "every conciliatory act" was met with "new wishes" from the Union.⁷ At one point the director of Austro-Hungarian

⁵. Ibid., p. 65.

⁶. Zhuk Collection, A. Zhuk, Draft article Vol. 15, File 22, p. 29.

⁷. Tschirschky to Foreign office Feb. 24, 1915, as cited in Hoffman, p. 68.

counter-intelligence, Richard Oppenhiemer von Marnhold, advised the Foreign Ministry to break relations with the SVU entirely.⁸ The Germans were more inclined than the Austro-Hungarians to use the Ukrainians for subversive purposes, but they nonetheless coordinated their policies with their ally.

In February the SVU prepared to leave Austria-Hungary, but before they were forced to leave, a compromise was reached. The SVU promised not to carry on political work directed at Austria-Hungary's Ukrainians so as not to introduce disturbances in the Monarchy's internal affairs, and the Union agreed to adhere to the requests of the Austro-Hungarian General Staff in the POW camps.⁹ But by April relations had soured. On April 10, 1915, officials of the Austro-Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced to Skoropys and Melenevs'kyi that the Ministry would discontinue until further notice all relations with, and support of the SVU.¹⁰ Once again, this announcement did not represent a complete break in relations, but rather a major downgrading of the SVU's standing with the Austro-Hungarian government. The SVU was permitted to remain in Vienna and to continue its work among the POWs. In the POW camps, the

⁸. Hoffman, p. 68.

⁹. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 7, File 20.

¹⁰. Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry memorandum, April 12, 1915, as cited in Hoffman, p. 77.

Union was to work through the Ministry of War rather than be subordinated to the General Staff. Both the German and Austro-Hungarian governments gave the SVU one-hundred thousand Crowns and reserved the right to resume contact later.

In fact, contacts between the Union and the Austro-Hungarian and German Ministries of Foreign Affairs were maintained for the duration of the SVU's existence, but after April 1915, relations between the Union and the Central Powers were poor.¹¹ The SVU Presidium managed to retain access to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Vienna, but its ideas and representations were no longer given the same consideration. Writing after the war, Zhuk noted that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was always very proper in its relations with the SVU, that it did not try to use the SVU's dependence on Central Power funding and its tenuous legal status in Austria to exert pressure on the Union to subordinate itself. Because of this, the SVU was able to maintain its independence according to Zhuk.¹² These developments coincided with the German move toward emphasizing social revolution over national revolution and deference to Polish aspirations. In early February a major German offensive in the area of the Masurian Lakes was

¹¹. Zhuk Collection, A. Zhuk, Draft article, Vol. 15, File 22, p. 30.

¹². Ibid.

defeated by the Russian army. The Central Powers now sought greater accommodation with Polish nationalists. Because Eastern Galicia, Podlachia, Volyn' and Kholm were claimed by both the Poles and the Ukrainians, this move on the part of the Central Powers alienated the Ukrainians. The SVU's problems at this time were not limited to deteriorating relations with the Central Powers.

At the beginning of 1915 the SVU came under attack from several quarters. In December 1914 the influential Bukovynian Baron Vasyl'ko and his protege Mykola Zalizniak began an anti-SVU campaign in Vienna. Vasyl'ko and Zalizniak blamed the SVU for the failure of their insurrectionary schemes in the autumn. Vasyl'ko denounced the Union to important Austro-Hungarian officials and in the Austrian Parliament for meddling in Galician affairs, insinuating that the SVU was composed of suspicious characters because they had previously belonged to socialist parties and claiming that the Union's efforts in the POW camps were damaging to Central Power interests.¹³ These denunciations no doubt played a large part in the Foreign Ministry's decision to expel the SVU from Austro-Hungarian territory and to distance itself from the organization. The SVU appealed to the Ukrainian members of the Austrian Parliament and the Supreme Ukrainian Council to make representations on its behalf to counter Vasyl'ko's denunciations. This they

¹³. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 7, File 2 and Vol. 27, File 35.

did.

In spite of the good references from other western Ukrainian politicians, the SVU's reputation was tarnished by the accusations of Vasyl'ko and Zalizniak. They were motivated by several factors. Firstly, they saw the SVU as an obstacle to their personal standing with the Austro-Hungarian government. Unlike the Union, they were willing to undertake subversive and insurrectionary assignments. The SVU's stand against covert activities, and its insistence on above board activities no doubt deflated Zalizniak's standing with the Austro-Hungarians and consumed scarce Central Power funds that otherwise might have gone to Zalizniak. In addition, Vasyl'ko believed that the SVU was the source of a smear campaign against him in the Austrian capital. The recriminations were very bitter, and Zalizniak even threatened to kill Melenevs'kyi.¹⁴ Later the fortunes of Zalizniak and Vasyl'ko improved when Czernin, a personal friend of Vasyl'ko's became the Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs. As a result of this connection, Vasyl'ko and Zalizniak were at Brest-Litovsk while the SVU was excluded from the peace negotiations.¹⁵ While Vasyl'ko and

¹⁴. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 27, File 35.

¹⁵. By May of 1915 Vasyl'ko had developed a more tolerant attitude toward the Union after he had discovered that the source of the smear campaign against him was not the SVU but Volodymyr Stepankivs'kyi, another figure from the demi-monde of Ukrainian revolutionary circles. On Stepankivs'kyi's wartime activities see Jerry H. Hoffman, "V. Stepankovsky, Ukrainian nationalist and German Agent," The Slavonic and East European Review, Vol. L, No.

Zalizniak were responsible for damaging the SVU's standing with the Austro-Hungarian government, Lev Iurkevych, once the Social-Democratic colleague of several SVU members, severely tarnished the Union's reputation in social democratic circles.

At the outbreak of the war, Iurkevych found himself in Lviv, from where he made his way to Vienna. He was extremely critical of the SVU and Austro-Hungarian Ukrainian policy. Nonetheless, he reached an agreement with the SVU. In exchange for the Union's help in getting him to Switzerland, he would refrain from criticizing the SVU and would concentrate his criticism on the Austro-Hungarian government which would provide the Union with some leverage in its dealings with the Central Powers.¹⁶ Together with the SVU's office manager Petro Diatliv, Iurkevych planned to publish a new social democratic newspaper in Switzerland. After having settled in Geneva, Iurkevych published the first issue of Borot'ba, "organ of the External organization of the USDLP" in February 1915.¹⁷ In it he placed an article entitled "Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy," in which he discussed a letter that Lev Trotsky had written to the Paris paper Golos. Trotsky had charged that the SVU was a creation of the Austrian General Staff and that the individual members of

121, (October 1972), pp. 594-602.

¹⁶. D. Doroshenko, p. 47.

¹⁷. Ibid., p. 47.

the Union were Austrian police agents. Iurkevych agreed with these claims but chastised Trotsky for having "poked around in Ukrainian wounds."¹⁸ Iurkevych described the SVU as the "Ukrainian bourgeois expression of Austro-imperialist efforts: an independent monarchial Ukraine." He claimed that the Union did not represent eastern Ukrainians but that it was the creation of the Galician Supreme Ukrainian Council and that it was the servant of the Austrian government. In other articles in the same issue Iurkevych denounced Melenevs'kyi, Zhuk and Dontsov for calling themselves Ukrainian social-democrats and attacked Zalizniak for being in the service of the Austrian General Staff. Iurkevych's denunciations caused the SVU considerable harm. Borot'ba found its way to Kiev, and as Holnitsyns'kyi testified to the SVU, it caused many people in the revolutionary movement in Ukraine to be suspicious of the Union. In addition to the damage caused to the SVU's reputation in Ukraine, the Iurkevych denunciation was picked up by Russian opponents of Ukrainian independence. The first major Russian attack on the SVU was written by Grigori Alexinsky.¹⁹

Alexinsky had been a Bolshevik deputy to the Second Duma in 1907 where he gained a reputation as a very good speaker and became quite popular. In exile he was, for a

¹⁸. Ibid., p. 50.

¹⁹. On the anti-SVU articles by Iurkevych and Alexinsky, see Zhuk Collection, Vol. 16, File 7 and Vol. 15, File 17.

long time, a follower of Lenin, but with the outbreak of the war, he became one of the social patriots who supported their country's war effort. In 1917 he returned to Russia. It was Alexinsky who denounced Lenin as a German agent and contributed to the Bolsheviki going underground in July 1917. With the Bolshevik seizure of power he left Russia and continued his opposition to Bolshevik rule as an emigre. In 1914-1915 Alexinsky was corresponding with Iurkevych. In the third issue of the Petrograd monthly Sovremennyi mir, Alexinsky's article "O provokatsii" appeared. In it he accused the members of the SVU of being nothing more than the paid agents of the Austrian General Staff, accusations which he based on Iurkevych's article.²⁰ The Alexinsky revelations drew a lot of attention. Most of the Russian press carried the story of the SVU as told by Alexinsky. The story prompted others that suggested that the entire Ukrainian movement was a foreign intrigue that existed on Austrian crowns and German marks. Alexinsky in the sixth issue of Sovremennyi mir defended the Ukrainian movement as being genuine but again harshly attacked the SVU. Subsequent issues of Iurkevych's Borot'ba also contained anti-SVU material.²¹

At first, the SVU Presidium did not respond to the Iurkevych and Alexinsky articles. The SVU believed that a

²⁰. D. Doroshenko, p. 53.

²¹. Ibid., p. 55.

response would only attract further attention to the denunciations and to the SVU's relationship to the Central Powers. Zhuk wrote to Batchinsky in Switzerland that the SVU did not want to "wallow in that mud."²² The SVU received much support from Galician society especially after the summer of 1915 when the Central Powers reoccupied much of the territory it had lost to the Russians, and many prominent western Ukrainian figures wrote articles and letters in defense of the SVU.²³ Many prisoners of war also wrote in praise of the SVU's educational and cultural work. Even Diatliv, whose views approximated those of Iurkevych, wrote to Borot'ba criticizing the anti-SVU articles for having given ammunition to Russian chauvinists.²⁴ Iurkevych found allies in his attacks on the SVU in Lev Trotsky with whom he corresponded on this subject.²⁵ Few Ukrainians approved of Iurkevych's attack on the SVU. Volodymyr Levins'kyi, a person close to Lenin's circle and a long-time ally of Iurkevych, broke with Iurkevych over this issue.²⁶ Another source of social democratic attack on the SVU was the pen of Dmytro Manuils'kyi, a future leader of the Soviet

²². Zhuk Collection, Zhuk to Batchinsky June 1, 1915, Vol. 21, File 3.

²³. D. Doroshenko, p. 59.

²⁴. Ibid., p. 61.

²⁵. See Trotsky's letters reprinted in Doroshenko, pp. 77-81.

²⁶. D. Doroshenko, p. 62.

Ukrainian government writing in 1915 for the newspaper Nashe Slovo.²⁷ In private correspondence, Volodymyr Vynnychenko also demonstrated that he supported Iurkevych, but by the end of 1915, Vynnychenko adopted an increasingly nationalist stand and broke with Iurkevych.

On the other side of the Ukrainian political spectrum, Dmytro Dontsov came out with his own attack on the SVU. From his Ukrainian Press Bureau in Berlin, he issued a pamphlet entitled "Do moikh odnodumtsiv z pryvodu tak zvanoho SVU" (To My Adherents in Connection with the So-Called SVU.)²⁸ Dontsov's pamphlet raised suspicions about financial improprieties within the SVU and attacked the character of the SVU members especially those with Spilka backgrounds and alleged that they were Russophiles. After this pamphlet appeared, the Supreme Ukrainian Council publicly rejected the claims made by Dontsov and backed the SVU. According to Zhuk, Dontsov's attack was the result of personal enmity for Melenevs'kyi and Skoropys, and the charges of financial impropriety were groundless. Dontsov was instigated, wrote Zhuk, by his associate Stepankivs'kyi and Vasyl'ko who at the time was funding Dontsov.²⁹ Dontsov's insinuations about the SVU's Russophilism attracted the attention of

²⁷. Ibid., p. 68.

²⁸. Zhuk Collection, Dmytro Dontsov, Do moikh odnodumtsiv z pryvodu tak zvanoho SVU, (Berlin, 1915), Vol. 15, file 17.

²⁹. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 27, File 35.

Austrian counter-intelligence which pressed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to expel the Union. According to V. Doroshenko, only the vigorous defence of the SVU by prominent Austrian Galicians such as Evhen Petrushevych and the SVU's allies in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs saved the Union from being forced to disband.³⁰

The Iurkevych, Alexinsky, and Dontsov attacks caused the SVU much harm and had the effect of delineating Ukrainian politics in the exile community. Iurkevych had few supporters among the exiled Ukrainians, and the damage his articles caused the SVU was mostly in that they demonstrated to Russians of various political leanings that the Ukrainian movement was not united and provided them with ammunition with which to attack the Union. These articles also undermined the SVU's position in Ukraine. Alexinsky's article and other Russian attacks emanating from within the Russian Empire were predictable responses of people committed to opposing the Central Powers in the war and opposed to Ukrainian separatism. Dontsov's attack furthered the purposes of Vasyl'ko and Zalizniak and further jeopardized the SVU's position with respect to the Austro-Hungarian government. The response of the SVU was not dramatic. The Union had never made its support for the Central Powers in the war against Russia a secret. Although the SVU did not publicize the source of its funding, it did

³⁰. V. Doroshenko, "SVU," Svoboda, No. 3, 157 (7 VIII), (1954).

not hide or deny the widely known fact that it was in receipt of funds from Central Powers. The Union ignored the accusations and continued its work among the POWs, and its public relations and lobbying campaigns.

In the spring and summer of 1915 there were several major developments in the course of the war and the history of the SVU. In April the Entente landed a major force in the Dardenelles, and in May Italy entered the war against Austria-Hungary. During the summer of that year, the Central Powers inflicted huge defeats on the Russian army and recaptured all of Bukovyna and Eastern Galicia except for a strip of land between the Seret and Zbruch rivers and advanced for the first time onto the territory of the Russian Empire taking part of Volyn', Kholm, Podlachia, most of Poland, Lithuania and Kurland. In May 1915 the Supreme Ukrainian Council was reorganized with the SVU's participation into the General Ukrainian Council and declared its goal to be independence for Russian-ruled Ukraine and broad autonomy for Eastern Galicia. The SVU had three representatives on the General Ukrainian Council, and supported the Council while continuing to advance its own platform. These were difficult times for both the Council and the SVU as the Austro-Hungarian government began to look favourably upon Polish demands for the unification of Congress Poland and Galicia in a new Polish Kingdom in an expanded tripartite Habsburg realm. In the zero-sum game of

Polish-Ukrainian claims, this development did not bode well for the Ukrainians. German policy was also changing.

In June 1915, a memorandum by a scholar named Jenny was circulated at the Foreign Ministry in Berlin. The memorandum ridiculed the idea of an independent Ukrainian state and classified Ukrainians as incapable of achieving nationhood. The Jenny position paper received a favourable response from several high-ranking German officials including Ludwig von Bruck who had taken over responsibility for Ukrainians affairs after Zimmermann and Diego Bergen became absorbed in inciting social revolution rather than promoting national liberation movements.³¹ Bruck circulated the memorandum to all German diplomatic missions and persons involved with the issue along with a note stating that "all previous memoranda with the exception of Rechenberg's are of Ukrainian origin and speak pro domo." While this note testified to the widespread readership that the SVU's position papers enjoyed in the German Foreign Ministry, it signified a new attitude to the Ukrainian lobbyists such as the Union. Rechenberg had written a paper in September that advanced the idea of Ukrainian statehood as a buffer state. He now defended his views and noted that a Ukrainian state could be built along the lines of Bulgaria or Serbia and that Ukrainian society had all the prerequisites for nationhood. With the military situation vastly changed and the Central Powers now

³¹. Hoffman, p. 86.

occupying Polish and Ukrainian inhabited areas of the Austrian and Russian Empires, the question was no longer academic.

In May, 1915, with the prospects of further Central Power advance into Ukraine, the SVU redoubled its efforts to get guarantees for Ukrainian independence from the Central Powers. Melenevs'kyi visited the German and Austro-Hungarian ambassadors in Istanbul to push for a military offensive into Ukraine in light of the successes of the Central Power armies on the Eastern Front. He pointed out that the establishment of a Ukrainian provisional government on Ukrainian territories now occupied by the German and Austro-Hungarians would be of inestimable value to the Ukrainian national movement.³² He argued that by entrusting the civil administration of those lands to Ukrainians and recognizing the legitimacy of Ukrainian administration, the provisional government could eventually gain control over the rest of the land.³³ The Ballhausplatz reacted by declaring that it was not interested in resuming relations with the Union.³⁴ The German Foreign Ministry also rebuffed Melenevs'kyi. After the Central Powers had recaptured Bukovyna, almost all of Eastern Galicia as well as Kholm and Volyn', the SVU and

³². Wangenheim to Foreign Office May 10, 1915, as cited by Hoffman, p. 90.

³³. Ibid., p. 90.

³⁴. Ibid., p. 90.

the General Ukrainian Council joined forces to try to influence German policy. Represented by Melenevs'kyi and Skoropys, the two organizations presented to Zimmermann the SVU suggestions that Melenevs'kyi had made to the Central Power ambassadors in Istanbul. Zimmermann granted them a personal interview at which he declared that everything was contingent on developments of the military situation and internal conditions in Russia. He discouraged the idea of Ukrainians taking on an active role in the administration of the occupied areas.³⁵ According to Hoffman, Zimmermann thus betrayed his unwillingness to revive what he considered a defunct scheme of promoting Ukrainian independence.³⁶ The situation now became acute for the Ukrainians. Russian Poland had been conquered and Galicia was now back in Austrian hands, and the Austro-Hungarians resumed their pre-war policies of granting Poles dominance over local administration in Eastern Galicia even where the Ukrainian population predominated numerically. In fact, no concessions were made to the Austrian Ukrainians. Not even their long-sought after demand for a Ukrainian university at Lviv was satisfied. This infuriated both the Austro-Hungarian Ukrainians and the exiles. Passions flared over the territories seized from the Russian Empire as well. In September 1915, the Austro-Hungarian government was

³⁵. See Zhuk Collection, Vol 15, File 8, and Hoffman, p. 91.

³⁶. Hoffman, p. 91.

considering including what had been the Gubernia of Kholm into the Austrian military district of Poland. Kholm had been separated from Congress Poland in 1912 and at the outbreak of the war had been an integral part of the Russian Empire. The Austrian Foreign Minister Burian von Rajcez was under pressure from the Austrian Poles who considered Kholm to be Polish territory. Increasingly, he was moving toward accommodating Polish demands and came to view the suggestions of the Ukrainians for a Ukrainian administration in Kholm to be "very unpolitic."³⁷ From the autumn of 1915 to November 1916, the Austro-Hungarian government was actively considering the creation of a Polish Kingdom within the Habsburg realm to the exclusion of Ukrainian considerations.

The SVU was critically affected by the situation in Eastern Galicia, Bukovyna and the occupied territories. Firstly, Central Power policy and behaviour in these areas had become a test case of their Power intentions vis-à-vis the whole of the Ukrainian ethnographic land mass. If the Central Powers were unwilling to grant the Ukrainians any concessions in the post-war settlement in Eastern Galicia and were willing to deal exclusively with the Poles, might not the peace settlement with Russia leave the Ukrainians of the Russian Empire stateless as well? In November 1916 the

³⁷. Marginal comment on Memoranda of the General Ukrainian Council, as cited in Hoffman, p. 94.

General Ukrainian Council resigned in protest over the Austrian imperial rescript of November 4, 1916 which granted the Poles sovereignty over Congress Poland and Kholm, Volyn' and Podlachia and greater powers in Eastern Galicia.³⁸ An SVU report shows how the Union viewed the situation:

We [SVU] understand and cannot hide from the representatives of the Central Powers that our actions in Ukraine are complicated by the situation of the Ukrainian people in Austria-Hungary. Hitherto, beyond civil liberties and constitutional guarantees of national individuality, the Austro-Hungarian Ukrainian population has been repressed in all spheres of national life and now during the war, thousands of the best of the Ukrainian intelligentsia and many of the unfortunate peasantry have fallen victim to the oppression and provocation of the Polish administration and society in Galicia. Blame for this obviously rests with the Austrians, and from the viewpoint of society in Russia, blame for this falls on the German element in Austria. The Russian press is filled with stories of the oppression of the Ukrainians [rus'kykh] in Galicia. Because of Russian anti-Central Power propaganda to which the Ukrainian population is susceptible, it is necessary to have proclamations from the governments of the Central Powers and neutral countries showing that they will decidedly grant Ukraine independence after Russia is defeated. Such proclamations will be known in Russia...this is the best remedy against Austrophobic and Germanophobic agitation among the Ukrainians and the best support for SVU slogans.³⁹

In the occupied territories themselves, the situation for the population was extremely bad. The areas of Kholm and

³⁸. I. L. Rudnytsky, The Fourth Universal and Its Ideological Antecedents," Essays in Modern Ukrainian History, P. L. Rudnytsky, ed., (Edmonton, 1987), p. 413.

³⁹. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 4.

Volyn' and Podlachia were major theatres of military operations, and the front had passed through there more than once. Because of extremely high levels of civilian casualties and a massive exodus of refugees both into Russia and into Austria, these areas had become largely depopulated by 1916. For the remaining Ukrainian population conditions did not improve with the arrival of the Central Power armies. Polish Legions were sent into the occupied territories and local Poles were being recruited into them. There were major conflicts with the local Ukrainian population. The SVU became involved by lobbying the military authorities to withdraw the Polish units and to permit the Ukrainians to form units of the Sich Riflemen to act in self-defense.⁴⁰ To make the formation of Ukrainian Sich Riflemen units in the occupied territories more enticing to the German General Staff, the possibility of the SVU encouraging the vast numbers of prisoners of war in segregated Ukrainian POW camps to join the new Ukrainian legions was dangled before the General Staff. The SVU also implored the German General Staff to urge the Austro-Hungarian government to stop interfering with the formation of Sich Riflemen units in the territories occupied by Austro-Hungarians.⁴¹ Repeated protests of the SVU demanded

⁴⁰. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 9, File 1.

⁴¹. Zhuk Collection, SVU to the German General Staff, September 1, 1915, Vol. 9, File 28.

proclamations on Ukrainian independence, a Ukrainian administration in the occupied territories, and autonomy for the Ukrainians in Galicia.⁴² As the situation continued to deteriorate for the Ukrainians and conversely improve for the Poles through 1916, the SVU became increasingly blunt in its memoranda to the Central Powers. In January 1916 the SVU wrote: "It is important for the Ukrainian people to know that having been liberated from the Muscovite yoke they are not falling under the Polish yoke, that is to say that occupied Ukrainian lands will not be annexed to the projected Polish entity."⁴³

As a result of the downgrading of the SVU's standing with the German and Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministries and the latter's increasingly pro-Polish policies, the Union redirected its attention from the governments in Vienna and Berlin to the governments of the Balkan countries and to the German people. In 1916, the SVU mounted a second major effort to influence the governments of the Ottoman Empire, Bulgaria and Rumania and through them the policies of Vienna and Berlin. In similar memoranda to all three governments, the SVU pointed out that geographically the creation of a Polish buffer state might suit Germany and Austria-Hungary,

⁴². Zhuk Collection, Vol. 9, File 28.

⁴³. Zhuk Collection, Letter dated January 24, 1916, signed by Melenevs'kyi and V. Doroshenko, Vol. 8, File 22.

but would be entirely pointless for the Balkan states.⁴⁴ The Union argued that only an independent Ukraine would sufficiently weaken Russia. As a Black Sea country Ukraine could form an alliance with Turkey, Rumania and Bulgaria and permanently remove the threat of Russian expansion in the area. The memoranda noted the policies of the Germans and Austrians in the occupied territories and asked the Balkan states to intervene in Vienna and Berlin on behalf of the Ukrainians arguing that although Ukrainians viewed the Russians with disdain, they would be driven back into the arms of Russia in preference to an aggressive and chauvinistic Poland.⁴⁵ The SVU pointed out the failure of recent German offensives in the Baltic area, but warned that if Russia loses access to the Baltic because of the separation of borderlands there, she will be more determined than ever to gain complete control over the Black Sea and the Dardenelles. That is why, the SVU argued, Ukrainian independence is of greater interest to Bulgaria, Turkey and Rumania than to Germany or Austria-Hungary, and why the Black Sea states should do everything within their power to support Ukrainian independence.⁴⁶ The memoranda to these governments asserted that Ukraine would be a viable state

⁴⁴. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 8, File 11.

⁴⁵. Zhuk Collection, Memorial to the Turkish Government, Vol.8, File 14.

⁴⁶. Zhuk Collection, Memorial to the Turkish Government, Vol.8, File 11.

that would prove to be a useful ally to the Balkan-Black Sea states. The memoranda, although advancing similar arguments, were directed to the particular interests of each state. Thus the Bulgarians were enticed with prospects of a Ukrainian-Bulgarian alliance to counter threats to Bulgaria from Russia, Rumania and Greece. Similarly, the specific security threats to Rumania and Turkey were addressed in the memoranda delivered by the SVU to these states.

In Germany the SVU targeted newspapers, academics, and industrialists to bring pressure on German military and political authorities to support Ukrainian statehood. In 1916, the SVU started to publish a much greater volume of material in German.⁴⁷ The Union's German-language press argued that only the separation of Ukraine with its immense resource base would permanently weaken Russia while the separation of the Baltic region and Poland would not. The SVU's public relations effort in Germany generated a major debate in the German press where the articles of German publicists such as Rohrbach, Kohler, Aschupp and Haller received much attention. The SVU helped to organize numerous German societies that supported Ukrainian independence. The most important of these was Die Freie Ukraine (Free Ukraine) which counted among its members many generals, and prominent lawyers.⁴⁸

⁴⁷. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 13.

⁴⁸. Ibid.

The SVU found most of its supporters in the German academic world. Among the German political parties the SVU's success varied. The German Social-Democrats were very anti-Ukrainian. Karl Kautsky even questioned the existence of a Ukrainian nationality in his Die Vereinigte Staaten Mitteleuropas.⁴⁹ The Catholic party favoured its Polish co-religionists to the detriment of the Ukrainians. The Pan-German League was perhaps the most pro-Ukrainian, but this was not especially pleasing to the SVU. The Pan-German League had explicit plans for colonizing Eastern Europe, and the long-range dangers for Ukraine of this aggressive German movement were not lost on the SVU. The Union realized that if Pan-German goals were realized foreign domination of Ukraine would pass from Russia to Germany without any improvement in the plight of Ukrainians.⁵⁰ In spite of the discussion that the SVU generated in Germany, it did not succeed in influencing the decision-makers. At the end of 1916, official German Randstaatentheorie involved Poland, Latvia, Kurland, but not Ukraine.

From January 1915 to the spring of 1917, the SVU faced one set-back after another. The period began with the Austro-Hungarian government threatening to expel the Union from its territory. The meetings with Holnitsyns'kyi led the

⁴⁹. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 22.

⁵⁰. Zhuk Collection, A. Zhuk, draft article, Vol. 15, File 22, pp. 39-41.

SVU to believe that there was little prospect for an independence movement to develop behind the lines. The occupation by the Central Powers of large areas of territory populated by Ukrainians held out much promise for the Ukrainians, but the decision of the Austrians and Germans to pursue policies favouring Polish sovereignty in those areas was a major blow for the SVU. To counter these developments, the SVU focused attention on the Balkan-Black Sea states and the German public opinion.

During this period in the SVU's existence, there were two areas in which the Union enjoyed some success. The SVU's work among the prisoners of war was proceeding beyond all expectations. Although the SVU did not succeed in getting any significant concessions from the Central Powers in the occupied territories, the Union initiated several projects on these territories which turned out to be noteworthy accomplishments.

In Volyn' and Kholm, but principally in Volyn', the SVU, together with units of the Sich Riflemen, set about organizing Ukrainian-language schools. For this purpose the SVU organized and funded the Buro Kulturnoi Pomochi (Bureau of Cultural Help). The Bureau operated autonomously but reported to the SVU. Initially the Bureau was headed by the historian Ivan Krypiakevych and subsequently by Volodymyr Doroshenko. It paid teachers' salaries, and supplied textbooks and other educational material. In the years 1916-

1917 several thousand students attended the forty Ukrainian schools in Volyn'.⁵¹ Of the forty schools, fifteen were supported by the Bureau of Cultural Help.⁵²

In the town of Bila in Podlachia, the SVU organized the Ukrains'ka Hromada (Ukrainian Community). The Germans who were occupying Podlachia were far more tolerant of Ukrainian organizational efforts than the Austrians who were occupying Volyn and Kholm. In 1917, the German occupation authorities permitted a Ukrainian military unit to organize the Hromada, to set-up Ukrainian schools and to publish a newspaper called Ridne slovo. The unit was part of the Bluecoat Division organized in the Ukrainian POW camps in Germany. In Bila the Bluecoats were led by Mykola Shapoval. This was just one of the results of the enormous effort that the SVU had put into organizing and educating the thousands of Ukrainians in German and Austro-Hungarian prisoner-of-war camps.

⁵¹. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 143, File 39.

⁵². V. Doroshenko, "SVU," Svoboda, No. 7, 155 (13 VIII), (1954).

CHAPTER 5 -- PRISONERS OF WAR

By October 1915 two million soldiers of the Russian army had been killed, wounded or taken prisoner. At Tannenburg, the Masurian Lakes, and in many of the great battles on the eastern front, the numerically superior but poorly trained and poorly armed Russian army suffered extraordinarily high casualty rates even by the horrible standards of the western front. Among the soldiers of the Russian army captured by the Central Powers were hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians. One of the underlying reasons for the high number of Ukrainians among the prisoners was the unwillingness of many Ukrainians to fight against their co-nationals in the Austro-Hungarian armed forces. Significant numbers surrendered rather than commit what they considered to be fratricide. Many had been told that they would be fighting German aggressors, but when they were sent to Galicia and discovered that the local population was Ukrainian as were many of the opposing troops, they gladly surrendered.¹ The prisoners were interned in hundreds of camps across Austria, Hungary, Germany and Turkey according to their Russian army units. There were separate camps for officers; otherwise, they were not segregated in any other

¹. Zhuk Collection, Statements of Ukrainian prisoners of war at Shamori in Hungary October 12, 1914 as reported in SVU Report, Vol. 12, File 1.

way.

When the SVU was founded at the beginning of the war, its members did not have any plans concerning prisoners taken by the Central Powers. However, by September 1914 the Union realized that the thousands of prisoners from Ukraine presented a unique opportunity to recruit and train political, military and civic leaders for an independent Ukrainian state. The SVU approached the opportunity to work among the prisoners as a great socio-cultural experiment. The Union believed that through education, literacy programs and cultural activity, the masses of prisoners, who were for the most part peasants and workers, could be trained to a level that would allow them to assume leadership roles in Ukrainian society. The first tasks for the SVU were to establish how many of the POWs were from Ukraine, where they were interned, and to group them so that the SVU could work among them systematically.

The SVU gave its POW project top priority. Seven people were delegated to visit the widely scattered prisoner-of-war camps where they were to collect data on the prisoners and to take any measures they could to group the prisoners from Ukraine together. At the same time, the SVU Presidium made representations to the governments and military staves of the Central Powers asking for permission to have the prisoners from Ukraine transferred to separate camps where the SVU would have access to them. For 120 days the SVU

delegates visited the POW camps and the Presidium lobbied for the transfer of prisoners.²

Petro Benzia, a prominent social democrat working for the SVU, visited several camps in Turkey in the autumn of 1914. He discovered many Ukrainian sailors of the Russian navy and merchant marine in the Turkish camps. Benzia could not gain access to all the camps because of outbreaks of typhus among the POWs. But the major setback for the SVU in Turkey came from Turkish military bureaucracy which refused to allow the transfer of prisoners from Ukraine to separate camps. One Turkish officer confessed to Benzia that there was widespread concern in the Turkish military of the consequences of segregating the prisoners of the Russian army by nationality should Russia win the war.³ The Potemkin mutineer Ryzhyi visited the POW camp at Izmid in Turkey. He reported that of the several hundred sailors interned there, some fifty percent were from the Dnieper and Black Sea regions of Ukraine. As was the case in virtually every camp, the SVU representatives were viewed very suspiciously by the prisoners, including the Ukrainian POWs. Ryzhyi reported that at best some sailors were reserved, but most were openly hostile to him. They believed that he was either a Turkish spy or even perhaps a Russian spy. Ryzhyi,

². Zhuk Collection, A. Zhuk, draft article, Vol. 15, File 4, p. 22.

³. Zhuk Collection, Report by Petro Benzia on the POW's in Turkey, Vol. 7, File 14.

however, managed to gain their confidence by intervening with the Turkish camp administration to allow the prisoners to run their own kitchen. Apparently the sailors could not stomach the Turkish cuisine and wanted leave to cook their own borshch. Ryzhyi's success in fulfilling their request changed their attitude toward him.⁴

At the POW camp at Shamori in Hungary the SVU discovered eleven thousand prisoners of whom five thousand were Ukrainians: mostly infantry reservists from Poltava of peasant background but including also a few workers and members of the intelligentsia.⁵ All the prisoners were being held in very poor conditions by the Hungarians. One-third were living in earth hovels that they had scraped out for themselves. Their provisions were very poor. They were not provided with clothing and were malnourished. In addition, the Hungarian camp guards were imbued with a hatred toward all things Russian and brutalized the prisoners. This type of behaviour only tended to influence the prisoners against the Austro-Hungarian state. The experience of the prisoners in this camp was very disillusioning since many of the Ukrainians reported having surrendered to Ukrainians in the Austro-Hungarian army. They had been transported to the camp by German units that

⁴. Zhuk Collection, Report by Ryzhyi on POW camps in Turkey, Vol. 7, File 14.

⁵. Zhuk Collection, Report from the Shamori POW camp, Vol. 12, File 1.

treated them very well and now they were in a very unenviable situation. The Hungarian camp administration also treated the SVU representatives very badly regarding them suspiciously and believing that even if they were not spies their goals were useless as the POWs were too stupid to educate or influence.⁶ As in Turkey, the Hungarian military authorities refused to transfer POWs from Ukraine to separate camps insisting that they be held according to their military units. In spite of the problems encountered by the SVU representative at Shamori, he reported that the "POWs are ideal for political propaganda. There are many politically conscious POWs. All of them want the war to end soon and to go home."⁷

At another camp, the SVU noted that the prisoners perceived Austria-Hungary to be ethnically stratified with the Germans, Hungarians, Poles, Czechs and Jews ruling over other nationalities such as the Ukrainians. The report from this camp placed great emphasis on the need to change this perception among prisoners to make them more amenable to a Ukrainian alliance with the Central Powers.⁸ At the POW camp at Dunaserdateli, Hungary, ten thousand POWs very interned in relatively good conditions. Here the SVU

⁶. Zhuk Collection, Report form Shamori. Vol. 12, File 1.

⁷. Ibid.

⁸. Zhuk Collection, Report on POW camp at Somoria, Vol. 9, File 2.

conducted a survey to determine the attitudes and national affiliation of the prisoners. The study found that the POWs from Ukraine had differentiated levels of national consciousness which corresponded to their place of birth. The POWs from Katerynoslav, Poltava and Podillia regions had the highest levels of national consciousness. Those from Kiev, Kherson, Chernihiv, and the Kuban fell into the next category having a fairly strong degree of national consciousness, while those from Volyn and Kholm had the lowest level of national consciousness. The POWs from Volyn and Kholm identified themselves by religious affiliation as Orthodox and Catholic or as Russian in spite of their Ukrainian mother tongue and inability to speak Russian. The SVU was surprised to discover many POWs from the Don region with Russian names and no Ukrainian-language ability identified themselves as Ukrainian.⁹

In the SVU preparatory work in the POW camps much valuable data was collected. The POWs provided an extraordinary group from which scientific data could be extracted. Conscious of this, the SVU made efforts to conduct sociological surveys of the prisoner population. Professor Simovych, who became the leading SVU instructor at the Freistadt camp, was a linguist who collected sociolinguistic data from the POWs and used it in later

⁹. Zhuk Collection, Report on the POW camp at Dunaserdateli, Hungary, Vol. 9, File 3.

linguistic studies. The prisoners' attitudes toward the war were also questioned. Some questionnaires used in surveys survive as do some conclusions based on the data collected in the camps which itself has not been located.¹⁰ In spite of the lack of complete records, the SVU sociological research among the prisoners of war would make for an interesting study about the national consciousness of Ukrainian peasants.

Having collected as much information as possible about the POWs, the SVU now set about developing a detailed plan of action. The Union envisaged several ways in which the POWs could help achieve Ukrainian statehood. Firstly, the POWs could be organized into Ukrainian military formations which could be used to fight for statehood, administer Ukrainian territory captured by the Central Powers, and eventually to serve as a core around which the armed forces of an independent Ukrainian state could be built. In this regard, however, the SVU was extremely cautious. It did not support the precipitous organization of Ukrainian legions among the POWs. The SVU conditioned any military use of the POWs by the Central Powers on firm guarantees of Ukrainian independence from the Central Powers that would have to come

¹⁰. For an SVU questionnaire for POWs, see Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 4. The survey included questions on the soldiers' backgrounds: religion, education, place of birth, etc.; their attitudes to the war and Galicia; and questions on the status of military units which were probably posed to obtain military intelligence.

in the form of official proclamations.¹¹ The Union combatted any attempts to form units among the POWs lest they be used by the Central Powers for purposes not in the interests of Ukrainian independence. Thus it was only after the Central Rada in Kiev had achieved sovereignty over Ukrainian territory in 1917 independently of any involvement of any foreign power, that the SVU organized the Blue and Grey Divisions and lobbied the Central Powers to have them transferred to the control of the Ukrainian government. In 1914, 1915 and 1916, instead of organizing the POWs militarily, the SVU concentrated its efforts on promoting literacy, education, cultural awareness and civic-mindedness.

The SVU believed that sooner or later the POWs would return to Ukraine whether Ukraine achieved statehood or even if it remained part of a Russian state. In either case, the Union wanted to make certain that the POWs returned home bearing the ideas of national liberation and social improvement that they could then pass on to their compatriots.¹² To achieve the goal of popularizing the ideas of Ukrainian statehood and social reform, the Union planned a massive educational campaign among the prisoners. By teaching literacy, foreign languages, history, geography,

¹¹. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 22.

¹². Zhuk Collection, "Proekt roboty SVU sered polonenykh zhovnriv z rossiskoi ukrainy" (SVU Work Plan among the Prisoners of War from Russian Ukraine), Vol. 12, File 10.

economics, and a wide-range of other subjects as well as promoting cultural awareness, the SVU hoped to instill in the POWs a sense of Ukrainian patriotism which would make them effective agitators for Ukrainian independence as well as better leaders. To carry out such a large-scale educational program the SVU planned to engage its own human resources as well as those of the Bukovynian and Galician intelligentsia and the intelligentsia found among the POWs.¹³ In addition to creating entire cadres of nationally and socially conscious Ukrainians, the SVU hoped that the education of the POWs would make them sympathetic to the Central Powers. Upon release, the prisoners would then carry this attitude to the Ukrainian population. Thus a popular basis for a pro-Central Power orientation of the Ukrainian state could be achieved.¹⁴

Central to the SVU plans for the POWs was the need to transfer the POWs from Ukraine to separate camps so that the educational campaign could be undertaken systematically. It is important to note that the SVU did not have a racially or ethnically based world view. The SVU wanted all POWs from Ukraine included in their separate camps regardless of ethnic or religious affiliation, and by extension, the SVU believed that Russians and Jews and others should be

¹³. Ibid.

¹⁴. Ibid.

included in leadership roles in the Ukrainian state.¹⁵ In addition, the SVU approached the education of the POWs rationally, that is, it rejected irrational nationalistic myth-making. Its plan to approach the POWs was to avoid offending anyone, to start initially by emphasizing literacy, recreation, music and then to move on progressively to political and economic subjects.¹⁶ This approach reflected the world view of the SVU as an organization. Furthermore, a decidedly human approach would help the SVU gain the confidence of the POWs as would humanitarian relief work.¹⁷ Because of the hostility of the prisoners encountered by the SVU representatives in their initial trips to the camps, the Union wanted to make certain their efforts were not undermined by POWs hostile to the idea of Ukrainian independence. Along with enabling the Union to work systematically, this was the principal reason for wanting the camps to be segregated. To weed out people who could potentially agitate the prisoners against the goals of the SVU, the Union wanted to interview all the prisoners from Ukraine, regardless of ethnic or religious affiliation, and Ukrainian POWs from Russian provinces prior to overseeing transfers to the separate camps.

¹⁵. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 9, File 10.

¹⁶. Pavlo Dubrivnyi, "Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy v 1914-1918 rr.," Naukovi Zapysky, XV (XVIII), (Munich, 1968), p. 79.

¹⁷. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 22, File 9.

In Turkey and Hungary, the SVU had encountered strong resistance to the proposal to segregate POWs from Ukraine in separate camps. In Austria and Germany, the SVU plans were received more favourably. The SVU Presidium convinced the Austro-Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the POWs could be brought around not only to support Ukrainian independence, but also to view the Central Powers favourably.¹⁸ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was so impressed with the Union's plans, that it appropriated them as its own and made recommendations to the Ministry of War to organize a separate camp near Vienna. By the middle of November 1914, the first eighteen hundred POWs selected and screened by the SVU poured into Camp Freistadt.¹⁹ By the end of December the number had risen to thirty-seven hundred and by the spring the number was eighteen-thousand.²⁰

Early in 1915, the Union approached officials in Berlin with suggestions for creating separate POW camps for prisoners from Ukraine in Germany. In line with the new emphasis on promoting social revolution over national revolution, the Germans were interested in subverting all the Russian prisoners by spreading social revolutionary as opposed to national revolutionary ideas among them. Bolshevik agitators were given limited access to prisoner-

¹⁸. Hoffman, p. 96.

¹⁹. Ibid., p. 97.

²⁰. Ibid., p. 97.

of-war camps and Bolshevik literature was allowed into the camps. Until the SVU camp at Freistadt showed results, the SVU was encouraged to supply literature to the already existing camps, but were not encouraged to do anything more. This soon changed. The president of the Prussian military district Frankfurt/Oder, Friedrich von Schwerin, became a leading advocate of separating all the prisoners of the Russian army by nationality for purposes of conducting a propaganda campaign among them. He soon convinced the officials of the Prussian Ministry of War of the merits of such segregation and eventually the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well.²¹ Two German officers, Colonel Friedrich and Captain Lubbers, were assigned to oversee the whole endeavour. They turned to the SVU for assistance, and the POW project in Germany got underway. POWs were selected by the SVU as in Austria, and the first camp with a capacity for ten thousand prisoners was opened at Rastatt. This camp was soon filled to overflowing, and two other camps were opened.²² By November 1915, there were forty thousand POWs from Ukraine in the segregated camps in Germany.²³ In total the SVU succeeded in organizing four separate POW camps for the prisoners from Ukraine: Freistadt in Austria, and Rastatt, Wetzlar and Salzwedel in Germany. In all, fifty

²¹. Ibid., pp. 101-102.

²². Ibid., p. 104.

²³. Ibid., p. 104.

thousand prisoners from Ukraine were transferred to the three camps in Germany while thirty thousand were assembled at Freistadt.²⁴ Although this was a very large number, it did not include all prisoners from Ukraine held by the Central Powers. Having managed to establish these camps, the SVU expeditiously recruited academics from within its own ranks and Galician and Bukovynian society to instruct the POWs. Entire private libraries were purchased for the prisoners, and the SVU started publishing texts especially for them.

The SVU's work was made easier by Ukrainians in the Austro-Hungarian POW administration and by spontaneous organization among the prisoners. At the camp at Knittelfeld, Dr. Roman Dombchevs'kyi was serving as a translator in the Austro-Hungarian army and took it upon himself to start organizing the prisoners.²⁵ In the Austro-Hungarian censor's office another Galician, Hryts' Mykytei, drew the attention of the SVU to POWs in isolated camps.²⁶ In the non-segregated camps, the SVU started distributing its newspapers and books which were greatly appreciated by the prisoners. Among other works the SVU published for the

²⁴. Zhuk Collection, A. Zhuk, draft article, Vol. 15, File 22, p. 43.

²⁵. R. Dombchevs'kyi, "Materialy i dokumenty z natsional'no-osvidomchoi pratsi SVU v tabori Knittelfeld sered polonenykh ukraintsiv," Souiz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, (New York, 1979), p. 62.

²⁶. Ibid., p. 61.

prisoners were 21 000 copies of Shevchenko's Kobzar.²⁷ The SVU sent out representatives to ensure that the books would be distributed properly, to help organize the prisoners, and to start lecturing. Gradually more and more prisoners began to attend SVU lectures in the camps, and at some such as Knittelfeld, the prisoners started to organize SVU cells.²⁸ Eventually the POWs from Ukraine at Knittelfeld were transferred to Freistadt. It was only in the segregated camps that the SVU was able to organize lectures and programs on a large scale. In the non-segregated camps, the SVU held lectures on topics such as history, geography and literature, and choirs, and theatres and libraries were organized, but the Union's efforts in these camps were constantly impeded by suspicion and obstruction from the POWs themselves as well as the administrations. Even at the segregated camp at Freistadt the SVU encountered many problems in the early months of its activity.

The histories of the camps at Freistadt, Salzwedel, Rastatt and Wetzlar parallel one another closely. It was at Freistadt in Austria that the SVU developed its programs first. This camp served as a model for the others, and thus its organization and activities had equivalents in the other three camps. An overview of the history of Freistadt reflects the experiences of the SVU and the POWs in the

²⁷. Ibid., p. 62.

²⁸. Ibid., p. 63.

German camps. In the initial period of SVU activity at Freistadt, many of the prisoners were suspicious of SVU intentions. This was particularly true of the non-Ukrainian POWs, but even some of the Ukrainians accused the SVU being paid Austrian agents. According to Vasyl' Simovych, the chief SVU organizer at Freistadt, it would take several months of discussions and questioning by the POWs before the SVU gained the trust of the prisoners.²⁹ Initially, the SVU representatives had to endure many complaints from the prisoners about Austria-Hungary and many POWs with low levels of national consciousness from the northwestern regions of Ukraine even viewed the terms "Ukraine" and "Ukrainian" as strange. During this start-up period, the Austrian camp administration restricted the SVU's activities to the morning hours. But by far the greatest obstacle to the SVU agenda was the Ukrainophobia of Russian POWs and their intimidation of the Ukrainians.

The end of 1914 was the period of heightened tension between the Russian and Ukrainian POWs at Freistadt.³⁰ Led by non-commissioned officers, the Russians at Freistadt

²⁹. Vasyl Simovych, "Pochatky natsional'no-prosvitn'oi pratsi sered polonenykh ukraintsev u tabori Freistadt," (Freistadt, 1915), reprinted in Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, (New York, 1979), p. 84.

³⁰. Havrylko, M., "Pochatky natsional'no-kulturnoi pratsi sered polonenykh u tabori u Freistadt," (Freistadt, April 1915), reprinted in Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, (New York, 1979), pp. 7-8.

mounted a violent anti-SVU campaign.³¹ This also occurred in the segregated camps being organized in Germany at Rastatt, Salzwedel and Wetzlar. The anti-Ukrainian campaign was based on scare tactics. SVU lecturers were often stoned and heckled by the Russian POWs. As a result of these attacks, attendance dropped-off dramatically at SVU activities. The SVU "professors," as they were called, received little protection from the Austro-Hungarian guards, many of whom were Czechs that sympathized with the Russians.³² Fist fights were common between the Ukrainian and Russian POWs as a result of Russian hostility to the SVU. This led to extreme enmity between the prisoners with the violence reaching life-threatening proportions.³³ The Russians let it be known that those Ukrainians who dared to support Ukrainian independence would be blacklisted, and upon their return to the Russian Empire they would be executed for treason.³⁴

³¹. V. Doroshenko, "SVU," Svoboda, No. 6, 154 (12 VIII), (1954).

³². M. Havrylko, "Pochatky Natsional'no-kulturnoi pratsi sered polonenykh u tabori Freistadt," (April 1915), reprinted in Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, (New York, 1979), pp. 7-8.

³³. Iosef Mandzenko, "Sirozhupannyky," Za derzhavnist': materialy do istroii viiska ukrainskoho, Vol., XI, Ukrainian War Historical Institute, (Toronto, 1966), p. 6.

³⁴. M. Havrylko, "Pochatky Natsional'no-kulturnoi pratsi sered polonenykh u tabori Freistadt," (Freistadt, April 1915), reprinted in Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, (New York, 1979), pp. 7-8.

Zhuk wrote after the war that the SVU work in the POW camps was complicated by several factors: the prisoners' fear that there would be a settling of accounts after the war; the prisoners' conviction of Russia's invincibility; and Ukrainian Russophilism and resentment of Germany.³⁵ There were, according to Zhuk, three types of prisoners: nationally conscious Ukrainians, nationally indifferent prisoners, and lastly prisoners hostile to the idea of a Ukrainian nation.³⁶ Initially the nationally indifferent were the most numerous while those hostile to the idea of a Ukrainian nation were most troublesome. By the spring of 1915, the nationally conscious came to predominate as more and more of them entered the camp, and the SVU's efforts took effect. As a result of the strengthening of the nationally conscious element of the prisoner population and the organization of Ukrainian self-defense units, the Russian intimidation subsided.³⁷ None of the groups, however, disappeared.

It was not only the growth of the nationally conscious contingent at Freistadt that inhibited opposition to the SVU and to the idea of Ukrainian independence. Several other

³⁵. Zhuk Collection, A. Zhuk, draft article, Vol. 15, File 22, p. 44.

³⁶. Ibid., p. 44.

³⁷. V. Simovych, "Pochatky natsional'no-prosvitn'oi pratsi sered polonenykh ukraintsiv u tabori Freistadt," (Freistadt, May 1915), reprinted in Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, (New York, 1979), p. 92.

factors also contributed to this. By far the most important was the well organized educational program and cultural work initiated by the SVU. The prisoners recognized that these activities had merit beyond their political purposes, and the activities were appreciated. Major Russian defeats at the front in 1915 undermined the prisoners' belief in the victory of Russia and the Ukrainians' fear of post-war retribution. Another factor that helped to silence Russian and Jewish social democratic critics of the SVU among the POWs was the appearance of pamphlets written by Parvis-Helphand that supported the Union.³⁸ By the summer of 1915, the SVU had gained the confidence of the Ukrainians interned at Freistadt and of many of the prisoners of other nationalities as well. By this time, the Union's educational and cultural programs had reached impressive levels in their diversity and influence on the prisoners.

After the initial period of mistrust and hostility toward the SVU, the prisoners at Freistadt started to participate in SVU activities in great numbers. The Union organized graduated courses in many subjects. Choirs, theatre groups, newspapers, political discussion groups and recreational organizations attracted prisoners by the thousands. The SVU's goals were achieved and surpassed by the prisoners. Until the end of 1917, the prisoners remained prisoners because of the SVU's unwillingness to put them at

³⁸. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 12, File 12.

the disposal of the Central Powers without any guarantees for Ukrainian independence, but within the camps the POWs became so imbued with patriotism and civic-mindedness, that the Ukrainian prisoner-of-war camps in Austria and Germany came to be regarded as self-governing Ukrainian "republics."

Throughout the almost four years of SVU activity in the prisoner-of-war camps some of the most respected Ukrainian academics were engaged as instructors in the POW camps. At Freistadt Dr. V. Simovych led a team of a dozen outside instructors and prisoners involved in educational work. The outside instructors abided by the principle of self-reliance: teaching the prisoners pedagogy and imparting skills to them so that they themselves could lead and instruct others.³⁹ The SVU team set for themselves the goals of raising the prisoners' national consciousness, promoting the idea of Ukrainian statehood and increasing their level of education. This was to be accomplished through promoting literacy, giving language lessons, offering instruction in a wide-range of subjects, and teaching music and theatre and holding public readings.⁴⁰ The courses offered at Freistadt had their equivalents in the camps in Germany. Attendance at courses was voluntary. The following table of the courses offered at Freistadt gives an indication of the breadth of the SVU educational

³⁹. Zhuk Collection, Report on POW camps, Vol. 15, File 4.

⁴⁰. Ibid.

program.

Table 1: SVU POW Educational Program at Freistadt⁴¹

<u>Course</u>	<u># Levels</u>	<u># Students</u>	<u># Lectures</u>	<u># Instructors</u>
1.Literacy	6	759	446	7
2.Ukrainian Language	5	834	642	17
3.German Language	8	792	739	5
4.Ukrainian Literature	5	>1000	249	6
5.History of Ukraine	6	1800	416	23
6.Public Speaking	2	60	82	2
7.Physics	3	417	94	1
8.Mathematics	6	781	935	8
9.Astronomy	2	40	225	1
10.Geography	2	400	33	1
11.Cooperatives	6	212	605	3
12.Agriculture & Animal Husbandry	2	140	247	3
13.Orchards	2	58	247	3
14.Sociology	2	31	170	1
15.Political Economy	3	350	103	1
16.Law	1	150	38	1
17.Drawing & Painting	2	40	478	2
TOTAL	63	7864	5753	85

The organizers and lecturers of the various courses were grouped together in the M. Drahomanov Prosvita (Enlightenment) Society. Aside from the courses listed in the table, a nine-month training course for teachers was also held at Freistadt. To assist in the teaching of the other courses, a special photography and photo development course complete with dark rooms and instruction in the production of slides was sponsored by the SVU. Other courses that helped to support camp activities included book-binding

⁴¹. Pavlo Dubrivnyi, "Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy v 1914-1918 rr.," Naukovi zapysky, XV (XVIII) (Munich, 1968), p. 81.

and library science. In addition to the courses listed in the table, the SVU held public readings and lectures which attracted thousands of prisoners per session. Over one hundred extracurricular public lectures were held on topics including Ukrainian history, socio-economics, politics, and science. A weekly review of the international political and military situation was given by Dr. Osyp Okhrymovych. Discussions followed all of the public readings and lectures.⁴² The public readings were almost exclusively excerpts from Ukrainian belles lettres, and included such authors as Franko, Shevchenko, Kvitka, Vovchok, Vynnychenko. These not only exposed the prisoners to the classics of Ukrainian literature, but also provided a much-needed distraction from the rigours and loneliness of prison camp life.⁴³

The SVU organized a choir and a theatre troupe at the POW camp at Freistadt. These were meant to give the prisoners a sense of Ukrainian identity through the learning of folk and classical Ukrainian theatre and song. The Reverend O. Turula from Bukovyna directed the choir and conducted the camp orchestra. He also composed several works while at the camp. Under his direction the Freistadt

⁴². Danylenko, "Freistadts'kyi tabir," Svoboda, No. 2, 185, (25 IX), (1954).

⁴³. Mykola Holubets', "Usvidomlennia polonenykh u tabori Freistadt tvoramy Ukrainskykh pysmennykiv," (Freistadt, May 1915), reprinted in Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, (New York, 1979), p. 11.

Mykhailo Verbytskyi Choral Music Society achieved a high level of musical proficiency and success.⁴⁴ In April 1916 the choir of 170 members was permitted to tour Vienna, Berlin, Leipzig, Dresden and Munich where very popular concerts were given in front of German audiences. Preceding each concert a speech was given by Simovych or Skoropys. The concert tour was, according to SVU accounts, extremely successful in sensitizing German society to Ukrainian aspirations.⁴⁵ The choir also participated weekly at the camp church services and at funerals. By the end of the war, the choir was performing many of the prisoners' own compositions some of which became very popular and are sung to this day.

The Freistadt theatre was named the Ivan Kotliarevsky Drama Society.⁴⁶ A leader of the theatre troupe was Dmytro Shcherbyna who before the war had been a bandurist with the Sadovsky Theatre in Kiev, the country's premier theatre company. The theatre was organized at the initiative of the SVU, but it soon was led by the prisoners themselves. A stage was built in one of the camp barracks and elaborate costumes and stage designs were created for each production.

⁴⁴. Zhuk Collection, Report on the POW camp at Freistadt, Vol. 15, File 4, p. 5.

⁴⁵. P. Dubrivnyi, "Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy v 1914-1918rr., Naukovi zapysky, XV (XVIII), (Munich, 1968), p. 80.

⁴⁶. See Kost' Danylenko, "Dramatychne tovarystvo im. Ivana Kotliarevskoho u tabori Freistadt," Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, (New York, 1979), pp. 175-193.

In all, the Drama Society staged forty-six different plays, including comedies and dramas, totalling 134 shows.⁴⁷ Among the plays staged were many Ukrainian classics and plays written by the prisoners including, Oleksa Kobets' "U Tarasovu Nich" which has become a Ukrainian classic in its own right.⁴⁸ Some of the theatre performances were fundraisers at which tickets were sold and the proceeds were sent to help Ukrainian schools in the occupied territories or were donated to the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen Hospital in Lviv. The money came from earnings the POWs received for the forced labour they were obliged to perform by their captors at a rate of two crowns per day. These theatre performances were tremendously important in raising the spirits of the prisoners.

Several other societies were organized by the SVU at Freistadt. They included the Ivan Franko Publishing Society, the V. Hnatiuk Ethnographic Society, the Sich Physical Exercise Society, the Vlasna Pomich (Self-Help) Cooperative Society and the Svitlo (Light) Photographic Society.

The Ivan Franko Publishing Society served as a training ground for journalists and printers. It was responsible for producing the newspaper Rozvaha, which came out weekly in

⁴⁷. P. Dubrivnyi, "Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy v 1914-1918 rr.," Naukovi zapysky, XV (XVIII), (Munich, 1968), pp. 84-85.

⁴⁸. Kobets' account of life at Freistadt is one of the few monographs on the Ukrainian POW's in the First World War. Oleksa Kobets, Zapysky polonenoho, (Kharkiv, 1931).

two-thousand copies with each issue approximately six to eight pages in length.⁴⁹ Rozvaha was published without interruption from June 5, 1915 to July 27, 1918. About half of its content was devoted to cultural matters such as belles lettres and historical articles while the other half was devoted to articles and editorials advancing the SVU platform. The publishing society was first headed by Vasyl Simovych and later by a prisoner, Fedir Shevchenko, the nephew of the Ukrainian Bard. The newspaper was passed around among the prisoners at Freistadt, and it was distributed to the Ukrainian POW camps in Germany. Similarly, the newspapers produced in the German camps -- Rozsvit at Rastatt, Prosvitnyi lystok, (later changed to Hromads'ka dumka) at Wetzlar, and Vilne slova at Salzwedel -- reached Freistadt.⁵⁰ Aside from publishing Rozvaha, the Ivan Franko Society published numerous brochures and posters. A high-point in the publishing history of the Freistadt Camp was the production in 1917 of an impressive almanac 340 pages in length which serves as an excellent source of information on Freistadt and the SVU.⁵¹ Classics

⁴⁹. See K. Danylenko, "Vydavnyche tovarystvo im. Ivana Franka," Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, (New York, 1979), pp. 157-174 & Zhuk Collection, Report on the POW Camp at Freistadt, Vol. 15, File 4.

⁵⁰. The POW newspapers are preserved in both the Zhuk and Batchinsky Collections.

⁵¹. See Zhuk Collection, Rozvaha, kalendar polonenykh ukraintsiv na roky 1916 i 1917, (Freistadt, 1917), Vol. 144, File 41.

of Ukrainian literature, such as works by Shevchenko, and scholarly books such as Simovych's Praktychna hramatyka ukrainskoi movy (A Practical Grammar of the Ukrainian Language), and texts such as Nemova's Iak vesty zbory (How to Conduct Meetings), were printed and published by the prisoners in the four Ukrainian POW camps in Austria and Germany.⁵² These camp publications were very popular among the prisoners, but their significance goes beyond that. As is the case with the SVU's own publishing houses, the number and quality of the prisoner publications and the wide-range of subjects covered make the Ukrainian POW publishing societies among the most important Ukrainian publishers of this century.

Founded in December 1915, the Vlasna Pomich Cooperative Society played an especially important role in camp life at Freistadt. The society offered courses in cooperative theory and management. From January 20, 1916 to July 1, 1918, this group ran the camp Cooperative Store. Prior to the establishment of the store, the prisoners were forced to patronize one located in the camp which was run by a private Austrian concern. Lacking any competition, the original store charged the prisoners excessively high prices. The SVU succeeded in persuading the camp administration to permit the prisoners, with SVU assistance, to organize the

⁵². T. Shevchenko, Try poemy, (Freistadt, 1918); V. Simovych, Praktychna hramatyka ukrainskoi movy, (Rastatt, 1918); K. Nemova, Iak vesty zbory, (Salzwedel, 1919).

Consumers' Cooperative store. The Cooperative adopted a democratic statute, and decisions on how to distribute proceeds were decided upon democratically. In the course of its existence, the Cooperative made 44,129 crowns of which 24,699 went to finance the courses in the camp, and 956 crowns went to help finance schools in the occupied territories.⁵³ In addition to these recipients, cooperative funds were given to the Fund to Improve POW Nutrition, the Fund to Construct Monuments for Deceased Prisoners and to the camp theatre and the newspaper Rozvaha.⁵⁴ An additional 1158 crowns went to help finance the Jewish Prosvitnyi Hurtok (Enlightenment Group) in the camp. According to an agreement between the Jewish Prosvitnyi Hurtok and the Vlasna Pomich Cooperative, the Jewish group was to receive seven percent of that part of net profits designated by the coop for cultural and educational purposes. The seven percent figure was arrived at in accordance with the proportion of Jewish members of the cooperative. By tradition, Jewish prisoners were accorded one seat on the Cooperative Executive and two seats on the Oversight

⁵³. P. Dubrivnyi, "Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy v 1914-1918 rr.," Naukovi zapysky, XV (XVIII), (Munich, 1968), p. 86.

⁵⁴. Osyp, Okhrymovych, "Ekonomichna baza isnuvannia 'Freistadtskoi Respubliky' (Kooperatyva 'Vlasna Pomich')," Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, (New York, 1979), p. 43.

Committee.⁵⁵ The management bodies of the Cooperative experienced a complete personnel change every two months so as to maximize the number of prisoners who would get cooperative management experience. The camps in Germany also had their consumers' cooperatives run by and for the prisoners. The Rastatt Cooperative Ednist' (Unity) even published its own consumer catalogue.⁵⁶

Other POW organizations included the Hetman Petro Doroshenko Sich Society. Modelled after the Galician Sich sporting societies founded by Kyrylo Trylowsky, the Sich organization at Freistadt was ostensibly a group devoted to promoting the physical well-being of its members through exercise. It also served, however, to train its members militarily. Aside from providing an organized forum for physical recreation, the goals of the Sich were to educate its members to be nationally conscious citizens of Ukraine, to instill in them a spirit of altruism and a sense of solidarity and discipline.⁵⁷ To achieve these goals the

⁵⁵. The agreement between the Jewish Prosvitnyi Hurtok and the Vlasna Pomich Cooperative remained in effect after all the camp organizations at Freistadt were joined in Holovna Ukrain's'ka Rada (Supreme Ukrainian Council), a form of prisoner government at Freistadt. The agreement was abrogated after the February Revolution when the Ukrainian prisoners began to actively organize in support of Ukrainian independence and the Jewish and Russian prisoners at Freistadt voiced their opposition to Ukrainian separatism.

⁵⁶. Batchinsky Collection, SVU 10.1.

⁵⁷. Pavlo Dubrivnyi, "Tovarystvo `Sich im. Het'mana Petra Doroshenka u tabori Freistadt," Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, (New York, 1979), pp. 73-79.

society organized courses and lectures, concerts, hikes and parades within the camp, and sports and gymnastics demonstrations. Significantly, the orders for the exercise and military drills performed by this organization were given in the Ukrainian language. Lectures, organized by the Sich, focused on military history, military tactics and military engineering. The Ukrainian drill and the lectures helped to develop a distinctly Ukrainian military tradition among the troops in the POW camps. Eventually it was the Sich organizations of the POW camps in Germany and Austria that served as the source for many of the soldiers recruited into the Blue and Grey Divisions.

Other features of camp life at Freistadt which are noteworthy include the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Holy Protectress built by the prisoners in the Ukrainian baroque style. The artist and SVU member Mykola Holubets' painted the icons and iconostasis for the church.⁵⁸ Another important institution in the camps were the libraries and reading rooms. Freistadt had three libraries. The SVU organized book drives outside the camps and purchased private libraries wherever it could. While focusing on obtaining Ukrainian titles, the SVU also collected titles in Russian and other languages. The camps had courses in

⁵⁸. For photographs of Holubets' icons see M. Holubets' "Usvidomlennia polonenykh u tabori Freistadt tvoramy ukrainskykh pys'mennukiv," (Freistadt, 1915) reprinted in Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, (New York, 1979), pp. 10-11.

library science and the libraries were administered by the prisoners.⁵⁹ Reading rooms were organized in the barracks. Here prisoners sought diversion through private reading and at times public readings from works of Ukrainian literature and history. The most popular historians were Kovalenko and Arkas.⁶⁰ Other institutions in the POW camps included a counselling service for distressed prisoners run by the SVU and the Information Bureaus which served as liaisons between the individual prisoners and prisoner organizations and the Austrian and German camp administrations.⁶¹

In the summer of 1916 the SVU tried to reach a greater number of POWs. From April 15 to June 1, 1916, in a covert action countenanced by the Austro-Hungarian government, POW agitators from Freistadt were infiltrated into seventeen non-segregated POW camps. Their mission was to spread the ideas of the SVU among the prisoners from Ukraine who had not been transferred to the segregated camps.⁶²

In total tens of thousands of prisoners received a remarkably good education; thousands of newspaper editions.

⁵⁹. Zhuk Collection, Report of the POW Camp at Freistadt, Vol.15, File 4, p. 3.

⁵⁰. O. Holubets', "Usvidomlennia polonenykh u tabori Freistadt tvoramy ukrainiskyykh pysmennykiv," (Freistadt, 1915), reprinted in Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, (New York, 1979), p. 10.

⁶¹. Zhuk Collection, Report on the POW Camp at Freistadt, Vol. 15, File 4, p. 6.

⁶². P. Dubrivnyi, "Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy v 1914-1918 rr.," Naukovi zapysky, XV (XVIII), (Munich, 1968), p. 80.

brochures and books were published; hundreds of plays and choral concerts were staged, and thousands of prisoners received practical experience in fields such as cooperative management, teaching, publishing, and photography in the SVU-organized POW camps at Freistadt, Salzwedel, Wetzlar and Rastatt. Perhaps most importantly, many thousands of prisoners acquired a sense of self worth, an altruistic and civic-minded spirit, and a sense of community and patriotism. Vasyl Simovych wrote that at worst the SVU's efforts at Freistadt succeeded in making the most backward peasants nationally conscious and the most ardent Ukrainophobes accept the existence of Ukraine and Ukrainians.⁶³ The accomplishments of the SVU among the POWs are quite remarkable in their own right, but even more impressive when the obstacles overcome by the Union are considered.

In addition to the initial problem of intimidation of the Ukrainian prisoners by the Russians POWs, there was the major impediment to the development of Ukrainian leaders among the POWs by virtue of the prohibition of SVU activity among the officers interned in officer camps until 1917. There also were the usual organizational difficulties faced by the SVU and the prisoners that were characteristic of

⁶³. Simovych, V., "Pochaky natsional'no-prosvitn'oi pratsi sered polonenykh ukraintsiv u tabori Freistadt," (Freistadt, May 1915), reprinted in Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, (New York, 1979), p. 93.

First World War prisoner-of-war camps. The prisoners had to endure malnutrition, sickness and forced labour. In May 1915, when at the insistence of the SVU, 1270 anti-Ukrainian POWs were to be transferred from Freistadt, a typhus outbreak ravaged the camp preventing the expulsion of those hostile to the SVU and its program. Another major impediment to the SVU efforts was the fact that the prisoners, including those in the segregated camps, were conscripted to work by the Central Powers on farms, in industries, and in the building of roads. In his memoir of life at Freistadt, Oleksa Kobets' wrote of the deep gratitude to the SVU of the tens of thousands of prisoners who toiled "in Tyrolian mines, in Austro-Hungarian factories where dangerous products were produced, on the Grafs' estates...for up to eighteen hours a day."⁶⁴ In October 1915, the widening use of prisoner-of-war labour outside POW camps across Austria-Hungary interfered greatly with SVU programs in the segregated camps, it but disseminated SVU ideas to other POWs from Ukraine as the prisoners moved around.⁶⁵ On the ideological level the SVU advanced ideas of radical agrarian reform which found great resonance among the POWs.⁶⁶

⁶⁴. O. Kobets', Zapysky polonenoho, (Kharkiv, 1931), p. 352.

⁶⁵. Zhuk Collection, Article about Ukrainian propaganda among POW's in Austria-Hungary. Vol. 15, File 4, p. 1.

⁶⁶. Zhuk Collection, A. Zhuk. draft article, Vol. 15, File 22, p. 4.

The greatest problem for the SVU's work among the POWs was, however, the attitude and actions of the authorities. This ranged from the Russophilism and Ukrainophobia of Czech guards at Freistadt to the opposition of important factions within the German and Austro-Hungarian Ministries of Foreign Affairs which feared that SVU activity and the segregation of prisoners would impede the possibility of concluding a separate peace with Russia.⁶⁷ The SVU constantly had to lobby against these factions. Vasyl Simovych blamed the anti-SVU group in the Austrian government for the appointment of a censor with Russophile tendencies to screen SVU publications coming into the camps.⁶⁸ In Germany, special German army officers were assigned to act as liaison officers with the SVU. These officers often tried to usurp control over the educational and cultural activities from the SVU.⁶⁹ Even those factions within the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Ministries of War which supported the SVU did not like the cultural-educational direction of the SVU activities in the POW camps. Typical of this attitude were the complaints of the Austro-Hungarian diplomats in Switzerland to the SVU representative there. These diplomats were enraged that instead of blowing up bridges, the

⁶⁷. Zhuk Collection, A. Zhuk, draft article, Vol. 15, File 22, p. 42.

⁶⁸. Zhuk Collection, V. Simovych, article on the SVU on its anniversary, Vol. 15, File 13, p. 3.

⁶⁹. Ibid., p. 4.

Ukrainian prisoners of war were reading literature.⁷⁰ There was constant tensions between the Central Powers and the SVU, with the former pressing for the POWs to engage in subversive activities and military action and the SVU resisting this pressure and countering with demands for guarantees of Ukrainian independence. At Rastatt in 1918, the German liaison officer tried without the knowledge of the SVU or the prisoner organizations to recruit prisoners for a covert mission. The recruits were to be infiltrated along the Black Sea coast by submarine where they were to carry out assignments for the German military. Once the SVU uncovered the attempt, it protested the unauthorized action and the mission was abandoned.⁷¹

The SVU's overall relations with the Central Power governments were reflected in its work in the POW camps. When the Austro-Hungarian and German governments moved to distance themselves from the SVU early in 1915, an important aspect of the negotiations between the Union and the two governments was the fate of the SVU's activity in the POW camps. By the end of the summer of 1915, the SVU received assurances that the Union would be permitted to continue its work in the camps with considerable latitude. In exchange for this the SVU promised not to carry out anti-Austrian or

⁷⁰. Zhuk Collection, Letter from Fedorchuk to SVU Presidium, January 15, 1915, Vol.7, File 2.

⁷¹. Zhuk Collection, V. Simovych, article on the SVU on its twenty-fifth anniversary, Vol. 15, File 13, p. 4.

anti-German agitation in the camps or more importantly in Galicia and Bukovyna. The Union also held out the prospect of future military cooperation between the POWs from Ukraine and the Central Powers. In December 1916, the German authorities permitted a unit of Ukrainian POWs under Mykola Shapoval to undertake educational activities in the occupied territories. This mission was initiated by the SVU, and the Union represented by Skoropys, negotiated the release of these prisoners very carefully to ensure that they act only in accordance with their SVU instructions.⁷²

Why Austro-Hungary and Germany gave the SVU and others, such as Bolshevik agitators, access to their prisoners is an interesting question. It is almost unprecedented in the history of warfare that outside agents should be allowed to intervene with a belligerents' prisoners. One possible reason that the Central Powers gave the SVU access is that they viewed the Ukrainian prisoners as a potential military resource. With the SVU's help, the POWs could be converted into several allied divisions. After rejecting the SVU's political and diplomatic demands, it would have followed that the Austrians and Germans would have tried to curtail the Union's activities in the POW camps. This did not happen. Even after the SVU's standing with Vienna and Berlin was downgraded in January 1915, the Union was given

⁷². For a transcript of the negotiations see Zhuk Collection, Vol. 22, File 31.

virtually free reign in the POW camps. This can be explained by considering Austria-Hungary's motivation for distancing itself from the SVU. The Austro-Hungarian decision to expel the SVU from Austro-Hungarian territory was motivated by the fear of SVU agitation of the Austrian Ukrainian population and Ukrainian irredentism in general. The Austro-German decision to allow the Union to continue its work among the POWs can be explained by the fact that ultimately, the POWs were prisoners who while they were in the POW camps posed no threat to the Danubian Monarchy. After their release home, they would be a far greater threat to the stability of Russia than they would be to Austria-Hungary or Germany. The same can be said of the POWs that were subjected to Bolshevik agitation. Thus Austria-Hungary and Germany hoped that in the short-term, their Ukrainian prisoners could be converted into military allies, and in the post-war period, Russia would be dismembered and internally destabilized because of the return of the POWs who had been subjected to nationalist and Bolshevik agitation.

The SVU and the Bolsheviks had their own reasons for agitating the POWs, and their cooperation with the Central Powers in this area does not stem from a congruity of interests nor does it make them dupes or collaborators. The SVU sought to create an independent Ukrainian state while the Bolsheviks were trying to promote social revolution, and both saw a use for the POWs in their plans. The acceptance

of assistance from the Central Powers by the SVU and the Bolsheviks is in keeping with the teleological philosophy of both organizations. Nonetheless, the question of who was exploiting whom is a valid one. The SVU and the Bolsheviks gained much from their agitational work among the POWs, while the Central Powers did succeed in destabilizing Russia through their promotion of nationalist and Bolshevik revolutionaries and managed to extract a favourable peace settlement on the Eastern Front. But the Austro-German victory in the East was short-lived, and the nationalists and Bolsheviks appear to have been the ones to benefit more from their cooperation with the Central Powers.

By the end of 1916 the various organizations and societies in the POW camps at Freistadt, Salzwedel, Rastatt and Wetzlar adopted constitutions which made the camps self-governing in their internal activities. For the first year and a half, the organizations such as the publishing societies and the cooperatives reported to the SVU Presidium. Some of these reports survive in the Zhuk Collection. It is noteworthy that they are typed, detailed and well-written. They have the appearance of professional reports.⁷² As the prisoners came to run their organizations themselves, the SVU sought to make them completely self-governing and thereby give the POWs practical experience in the democratic process and in the management of community

⁷². Zhuk Collection, Vol. 12, File 13.

organizations.

In all four camps, elaborate yet functional structures were developed in POW government. Wetzlar, for instance, adopted a Constitution on November 7, 1916 which delineated the jurisdiction of the General Staff (that is the supreme POW governing body), defined the relationship of the SVU to the camp organizations, and the status of the camp organizations themselves.⁷⁴ In February 1917 the Wetzlar Camp reorganized itself into the Ukrain's'ka Hromada (Ukrainian Community) with its own parliament, the Narodna Rada (Peoples or National Council), which possessed legislative powers over prisoners' affairs.⁷⁵ At Freistadt the Viche (Common Council) became the supreme prisoner authority, a sort of all-prisoner congress. At the meetings of the Viche, a Central Camp Council was elected. This body served as a camp government. A Control Commission was also elected by the Viche as was the Camp Court. Seven prisoners sat on the Central Camp Council along with three candidate members and the members of the Control Commission and the Camp Court. The Head of the Council was elected directly by the Viche for a term of two months. The short terms reflected the desire of the SVU and the prisoners themselves to maximize the number of people who would gain experience in the democratic process by standing for election and

⁷⁴. Zhuk Collection, Constitution of Wetzlar, Vol. 12, File 23.

⁷⁵. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 9, File 23.

governing the camp.⁷⁶ Each of the members of the Council was considered a minister responsible for a different portfolio dealing with certain aspects of prisoner affairs.⁷⁷ A series of inter-camp meetings also took place but no inter-camp structures were ever developed between Freistadt, Salzwedel, Rastatt and Wetzlar.⁷⁸ The SVU's efforts in the POW camps culminated in each of the camps regarding itself as a "Vil'na Kozatska Respublika," (Free Cossack Republic),⁷⁹ at least in so far as their internal affairs were concerned.

At the time of the February Revolution, the prisoners of war from Ukraine segregated in special camps remained prisoners of war incarcerated in camps only to be let out in forced labour parties. As was the experience of the SVU itself, the POWs did not get political concessions from the Central Powers, and by 1917 the prisoners too were completely frustrated by the unwillingness of the Central Powers to give the idea of Ukrainian statehood full and open support. In the final two years of the existence of the special camps, the SVU and the prisoner organizations acted in close cooperation as they watched the revolution in Ukraine develop and waited for their chance to participate in it.

⁷⁶. K. Danylenko, "Freistadts'kyi Tabir," Svoboda, No. 1, 185 (25 IX), (1954).

⁷⁷. Ibid.

⁷⁸. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 12, File 23.

⁷⁹. K. Danylenko, Svoboda, No. 2, 185 (25 IX), (1954).

CHAPTER 6 -- REVOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE

At the beginning of 1917, relations between the SVU and the Central Powers were at a low point from which they would never recover. Austria-Hungary and Germany had in the previous year made commitments to Polish statehood that precluded the creation of a Ukrainian state in the occupied territories. The Poles were given the power to establish the local administration in these territories, while the SVU managed to help set-up only a small Ukrainian school system. Increasingly, it appeared as though the SVU's alignment with the Central Powers would not bring any major political concessions to the Ukrainians either in Eastern Galicia or in Russian-ruled Ukraine. Based on the limited information reaching the SVU from Ukraine, there was little prospect for an independence movement to arise spontaneously on the Russian side of the front. The most likely prospect for a resolution to the war on the eastern front seemed to be a peace settlement between the Central Powers and Russia giving rise to a Polish state.

The February Revolution and the overthrow of Tsarism caught the SVU completely by surprise. Both the Union members and workers and the POWs were elated at the news. At Freistadt and the other camps, there was great excitement.

and anticipation that the political changes in Russia would bring about the end of the war and the release of all POWs. The political upheaval in Russia brought about a complete reorientation of the Union. The SVU now took an entirely new approach to the Central Powers. The Union, which had previously supported the war against Russia, now declared that in view of the Revolution and the fact that neither side had any legitimate claims or war aims, the war was now pointless. The SVU adopted a neutral orientation and sought to bring an end to the fighting.¹ The Union, however, vowed to continue to sensitize European society to Ukrainian affairs and to continue to attempts at establishing Ukrainian sovereignty in the occupied territories. The SVU also wanted to continue its work among the POWs and to establish contacts with revolutionary elements in Ukraine.²

The entry of the United States into the war in April 1917 also caused the SVU to change its policies. Having had their realpolitik arguments on the advantages of Ukrainian statehood to the national security interests of the Central Power states apparently rejected, the SVU now tried to pressure the Central Powers by invoking the theories of President Wilson on national self-determination. The Union presented position papers to the Austro-Hungarian Ministry

¹. O. Skoropys, "Moi zlochynny," p. 235. Zhuk Collection, A. Zhuk, draft article, Vol. 15, File 44, p. 44.

². Zhuk Collection, A. Zhuk, draft article, Vol. 15, file 22, p. 44.

of Foreign Affairs noting President Wilson's theory of national self-determination and the attraction of Ukrainians to it.³ Such an audacious reference to the Central Powers' new enemy could not have done more harm to the SVU's hopes for Ukrainian independence and its position with the Central Powers because at this time its relations with the Central Powers were already poor and Austro-Hungarian and German policy was already clearly favouring Polish over Ukrainian aspirations.

In the wake of the Russian Revolution, peace seemed imminent in the East; both Austria-Hungary and Germany were faced with domestic pressure to end the war with the Austro-Hungarians pressuring the Germans to abandon their expansionist plans. In April, the German governmental and military leadership met at Kreuznach where they deliberated over the goals of Germany in a future peace settlement. In the East, the idea of a series of buffer states under German influence still held sway. Congress Poland was to be given national autonomy but would remain under German military, political and economic dominance. Kurland, Lithuania, and parts of the other Baltic provinces would be wrested from Russia.⁴ No longer was Ukraine mentioned as a buffer. In fact, the Germans now hoped to get Russian consent to these

³. Zhuk Collection, "Rosiiski ukraintsi v spravi myrovykh plianiv Vilsona", Memoranda from the SVU to the Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs Graf Czernin, Vol. 10, File 16.

⁴. Hoffman, p. 129.

changes by offering Russia Eastern Galicia which Austria-Hungary would have to cede in exchange for western portions of Rumanian Wallachia.⁵ Even as the Central Rada gained more legitimacy and power in Kiev during the course of 1917, the Central Powers did not change their position on Ukraine, leaving it out of any peace considerations until the end of that year.

At the end of March 1917, the SVU Presidium tried to redirect the German Foreign Ministry's attention to Ukraine once again. Skoropys presented a desiderata to the Ministry. Lamenting the treatment of the SVU and the occupied territories by the Central Powers, Skoropys noted that Ukrainians on the other side of the front could reasonably expect more from revolutionary Russia than they could from Berlin or Vienna. To counter this, Skoropys suggested that a public declaration on Ukrainian independence be made by the German government, and that the SVU be permitted to collect signatures among the POWs for a petition to the Provisional Government in Petrograd demanding Ukrainian autonomy. The Provisional Government could be expected to reject the petition for autonomy.⁶ This would undermine the federalist-autonomist position of the Central Rada in Kiev, and push it and Ukrainians everywhere to a separatist position. Zimmermann, who by now was the German Secretary of

⁵. Hoffman, p. 129.

⁶. Ibid., p. 139.

State for Foreign Affairs, initially agreed to the plan to petition the Provisional Government. But when Skoropys later spoke of his intention to negotiate the status of Ukraine with the Provisional Government, Zimmermann withdrew German support for the initiative.

Due to a lack of coherence in the German government and military administration, the German liaison officers in the camps at Salzwedel, Rastatt and Wetzlar continued to give the SVU a relatively free hand in its activities among the POWs. So Skoropys pressed on with his initiative and collected eighteen thousand signatures on a petition that called for the repeal of the 1654 Treaty of Pereiaslav between the Ukrainian Hetmanate and Muscovy which led to the abrogation of Ukrainian sovereignty. The petition also called for the entrenchment of civil rights and the signing of peace treaties.⁷ In May, the SVU despatched V. Temnyts'kyi to the socialist peace conference in Stockholm to ensure that Ukrainian interests were represented in any peace plans. In early June 1917, evading travel restrictions placed on them by the German government, Skoropys and Melenevs'kyi made their way to Sweden. From there they intended to go to Petrograd with the petition which the SVU considered as a mandate to negotiate the status of Ukraine with the Provisional Government. The two SVU members intended to make their way to Kiev and establish contact

⁷. For the petition see Batchinsky Collection, 10.2.

with the Central Rada. The Provisional Government, however, consistently denied them entry into Russia, and thus it was not until after the Bolshevik coup in October that they entered Russia on their way to Ukraine.⁸

From April onward, the SVU was preoccupied with events in Petrograd and Kiev. Aside from sending Skoropys and Melenevs'kyi to negotiate with the Provisional Government and the Central Rada, the Union also tried to send seventeen POW agitators to Kiev covertly. Released as inv. aids, the prisoner group, which included the writer Kobets', was to travel through Scandinavia and Russia. At the Russian border, however, they were arrested by Russian counter-intelligence and imprisoned. They were only released after their captors were implicated in the Kornilov Uprising. From Petrograd they made their way to Ukraine, but by this time their mission had become anachronistic.⁹

After the February Revolution, the SVU and the POWs started to organize militarily. The experimental release of the POW unit under Shapoval to undertake administrative work in the occupied territories had given the SVU some confidence that the POWs would not be exploited for military purposes which were not in accordance with the interests of the Union. Now the revolutionary situation in Russia and

⁸. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 27, File 35.

⁹. See O. Kobets', p. 392 & K. Danylenko "Freistadts'kyi tabir," Svoboda, No. 4, 187 (29 IX), (1954).

Ukraine provided the stimulus for the SVU to organize large formations from among the POWs which might be able to assume a role in the formation of a Ukrainian state in spite of the German Foreign Ministry's apparent abandonment of the idea of Ukrainian statehood. This was made possible by the growing power of the German Supreme Command which ignored Foreign Ministry reservations about the Union and Ukrainian statehood, and saw a role for Ukrainian POW units. The German Supreme Command began to develop its own interest in Ukraine. It saw Ukraine as a potential source for the Central Powers for food and raw materials needed to sustain the war effort.¹⁰ In May 1917 the Commander-in-Chief (East) requested for duty in the occupied territories around the Buh River, the first of several large groups of POWs from Rastatt, Salzwedel and Wetzlar. The Germans supplied the POWs with blue Cossack uniforms, hence the name Syn'ozhupannyky or Syn'a Dyvisia (Bluecoats or Blue Division). By August over two-hundred Bluecoats were deployed in the occupied territories where they engaged in setting-up Ukrainian schools, and pro-independence agitation.¹¹

At Freistadt, in Austria, there were similar developments. During 1917, all four camps established Boevi Upravny (military staves) run by prisoners themselves, and

¹⁰. Hoffman, p. 144.

¹¹. Ibid., p. 144.

the SVU was finally given access to officer camps to recruit a Ukrainian officer corps for the units being formed. By the summer of 1917, military training, including rifle drills, commenced in the all the camps.¹² The SVU succeeded in attracting many high-ranking Ukrainians from among the Russian army officers. Among them were several generals, including Victor Zelins'kyi, Knight of St. George, a lieutenant-general and former Russian brigade commander. He would later command the Blue Division.¹³ The officers recruited in Germany were transferred to a POW camp at Han-Munden. Here they remained until early 1918 while the SVU lobbied the military authorities to allow the unrestricted formation of Ukrainian units in the camps, to change the status of the POW units from that of prisoners of war to allied soldiers, and to transfer them to staging areas in the occupied territories. In Austria, the SVU was given access to Ukrainian officer POWs as well. The POW camp at Josephstadt became the concentration point for the Ukrainian officers. As was the case in Germany, the Austro-Hungarian military authorities prevented the officers from joining the POW units until early 1918. Among the officers recruited in Austria-Hungary was General Ivan Perklyk, Knight of St. George and former commander of the Kishinev Regiment. Later he would command the Grey Division formed by the Ukrainian

¹². Zhuk Collection, Vol. 32, File 26.

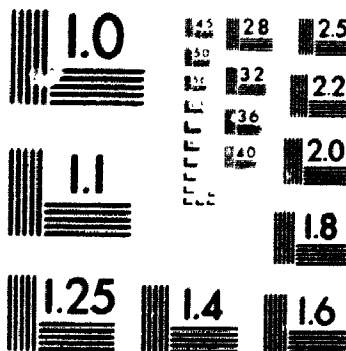
¹³. V. Zelinskyi, Syn'ozhupannyky, (Berlin, 1938).

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POWs in Austria.¹⁴ The Sirozhupannyky or Sira Dyvisiia (Greycoats or Grey Division) derived their name from the grey colour of the uniforms supplied to them by the Austro-Hungarian military. At both Han-Munden and Josephstadt, the Ukrainian officers were given Ukrainian language, history and culture courses akin to those offered the rank-and-file at the other camps. Although the Ukrainian officers at Han-Munden and Josephstadt numbered only a few hundred, they too organized choirs and theatre groups and published their own newspapers.¹⁵

By the end of 1917, the attention of the SVU and the POWs was focused on developments in Ukraine. The POWs at Freistadt, Salzwedel, Wetzlar and Rastatt were equipped and trained while at Han-Munden and Josephstadt there was an officer corps ready to assume command of the troops. The main objective of the SVU now was to have the officers join the troops and have the Blue and Grey Divisions transferred to Ukraine and to the authority of the General Secretariat of the Central Rada in Kiev which was now in effect the government of Ukraine. For this to be possible, the Central Powers would first have to conclude a peace with the new regimes in the East.

¹⁴. I. Mandzenko, "Sirozhupannyky," p. 7.

¹⁵. Vasyl Prokhoda, "Vplyv 'Freistadtskoi Respubliky' i SVU na ukraïnsku chynnist' u starshyns'kykh taborakh u Terezini ta Josefovi," Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, (New York, 1979), pp. 51-56.

The SVU had only a minor role at Brest-Litovsk. Some of the other former clients of the Central Powers had considerably greater parts in the negotiations, among them Zalizniak and Karl Radek. Zalizniak gained access to the peace negotiators at Brest-Litovsk by virtue of the personal friendship between his mentor Vasyl'ko and the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister Czernin. The anti-SVU attitude of Vasyl'ko and Zalizniak and their influence on Czernin precluded the presence of the SVU at Brest-Litovsk as far as the Austro-Hungarians were concerned. As far as the Germans were concerned, the SVU managed to continue its work among the POWs and helped to influence the German Supreme Command to allow for the organization of military units, but after Skoropys' initiative to negotiate with the Provisional Government, the SVU retained no influence with the German Foreign Ministry nor did it develop any contacts in the German army.

By mid-December 1918 armistice agreements had been reached, and hostilities were officially suspended. The Central Rada had sent its representatives to Brest-Litovsk, but they arrived after the armistice was a fait accompli. When the peace negotiations started the following month, the Central Rada's representatives had secured for Ukraine a seat at the negotiating table. The Central Powers had anticipated concluding a separate peace with the Bolsheviks very quickly, but with the arrival of the Ukrainian

delegation, they saw a possibility to gain greater advantage in the peace settlement. The sudden renewed interest on the part of the Central Powers in Ukraine also resulted from Trotsky's delaying tactics in the negotiations. The Germans, particularly Ludendorff, came to realize that they could not reasonably extract more territory from the Bolsheviks than the Central Powers already occupied. The Central Rada, on the other hand, was more or less in control of Ukraine with its vast agricultural resources and raw materials which could be of great strategic use to the Central Powers.

In late December the Bolsheviks recognized the Ukrainian National Republic, accused the Central Rada of abetting Kaledin and launched an offensive against Ukraine. The Central Powers sought to exploit this conflict between the Rada and the Bolsheviks to their advantage. In separate negotiations, the Ukrainians surprisingly were able to extract important concessions from the Central Powers. The Central Rada managed to obtain in the negotiations the entire district of Kholm, and the pledge for the creation of an autonomous Ukrainian province in Austria in exchange for agricultural products. With food riots in Vienna pressuring the Austro-Hungarian delegation, Czernin reluctantly agreed to the Ukrainian demands. On February 1, 1918, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey complied with a request of the Ukrainian Central Rada and granted unqualified recognition of full Ukrainian sovereignty. On February 9,

1918 a separate peace was concluded between the Central Powers and Ukraine. The settlement was generally favourable to Ukraine, giving Ukraine sovereignty over Kholm. The Central Powers, however, were granted favourable trade concessions. In a secret clause, the Austro-Hungarian government pledged itself to create an autonomous Ukrainian crownland by no later than July 31, 1918.

By the time of the peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk, Skoropys-Ioltukhovs'kyi had arrived in Kiev. Here he made attempts to establish relations between the SVU and the Central Rada. By the January 1918, the positions of the Central Rada and the SVU were approaching one another, yet the General Secretariat of the Central Rada and the Rada itself were not at all inclined to have anything to do with the Union or the prisoners of war that the SVU had mobilized in support of Ukrainian independence. Both the SVU and the Rada were asserting Ukrainian sovereignty over the occupied territories and both sought a quick peace settlement. One would assume that with the SVU's vast experience and personal familiarity with the Central Powers, including the Central Power negotiators at Brest-Litovsk, and the Union's influence over the tens of thousands of combat-ready Ukrainian POWs, the Ukrainian government would have in some way engaged the Union in the peace negotiations. Instead, the Central Rada maintained its distance from the SVU. With the establishment of the Ukrainian National Republic by the

declaration of the Third Universal of the Central Rada in December, 1917, the Rada led by Vynnychenko and Hrushevsky still maintained a federalist-autonomist position and rejected the SVU's position of complete independence. This was case even after the Bolshevik coup had made any prospects of Ukrainian autonomy within a federated Russia impossible. The SVU's position in Kiev was further undermined by the lasting damage done to its reputation by the Iurkevych and Alexinsky revelations in 1915. The two leading figures in the Central Rada both viewed the SVU suspiciously. Vynnychenko had been in close correspondence with Iurkevych. He too shared the view of the SVU as an organization of the bourgeoisie in the pay of German imperialists. Hrushevsky, who had been rescued by the SVU in 1914, had throughout the war been sceptical about the Union's Central Powers orientation. Having come to power strictly on the basis of internal developments, the two leaders of the Central Rada saw no use in the SVU and its foreign connections. The General Secretariat of the Rada had no use for the POWs either. Swept up in the general revolutionary fervour, and exhibiting populist tendencies for disestablishmentarianism, Vynnychenko, Hrushevsky and the other Rada leaders rejected the creation of state structures such as an army and a bureaucracy as contrary to the interests of the revolution and the Ukrainian people. Thus they rejected the approaches of General Skoropads'kyi.

the future Hetman who would overthrow the Rada, to deliver to the General Secretariat forty-thousand well-disciplined Ukrainian troops under his command from the front.¹⁶ It was only when the Bolsheviks forces were in the suburbs of Kiev that the Central Rada issued its Fourth Universal declaring Ukrainian independence. Now the Central Rada's position merged entirely with that of the SVU and the Kiev government sought the assistance of the Union and the Ukrainian prisoners of war.

Skoropys was given a mandate by the Central Rada to go to Brest-Litovsk to secure the return of the Ukrainian prisoners of war, including the Blue and Grey Divisions to Ukraine to help counter the Bolshevik offensive.¹⁷ Skoropys fulfilled his mandate. The Blue and Grey Divisions would be transferred to Ukraine to help combat the Bolsheviks. But with the Bolsheviks overrunning Ukraine, the Central Rada appealed for direct German and Austro-Hungarian military assistance since the POW units could not be transferred in time to stop the Bolshevik offensive. On February 18, 1918 a combined Ukrainian-German-Austro-Hungarian offensive against the Bolshevik forces was launched.

¹⁶. After the summer of 1917, the general breakup of the Russian army had been aggravated by the creation of national units. Of the 4 million Ukrainian soldiers in the Russian army, some 1.5 million were "Ukrainized," that is, transferred to national units and detached from the Russian army, some spontaneously and some officially with the agreement of the Russian commander General Brusilov.

¹⁷. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 22.

Meanwhile at Rastatt, Salzwedel, and Wetzlar the transfer of the Blue Division was under way. The officers from Han-Munden were attached to the troops. The Germans had agreed to the formation and equipment of an initial unit of six thousand rank- and-file from Salzwedel, Rastatt and Wetzlar and three hundred officers from Han-Munden.¹⁸ Eventually, two divisions were formed in the German camps. Given the size of the Ukrainian and Bolsheviks forces engaged in fighting before the February 18 offensive, this was a large force. In Austria a similar force was being transferred from Freistadt to Volodymyr-Volynskyi in the occupied territories where they were to meet the officers from Josephstadt. On March 17, 1918, the first unit of Bluecoats left Germany for Kiev.¹⁹ By the time they arrived, the Bolsheviks had been repulsed and the situation for the Ukrainian Republic and the Blue and Grey Division was about to change dramatically.

On April 28, 1918, while the Central Rada was formulating the constitution of the Ukrainian Republic, a German unit marched into the parliament and disbanded the assembly. The military assistance of the Central Powers now turned into a military occupation. Prior to the German-sponsored coup d'etat that brought in the Hetmanate of General Skoropads'kyi, the German and Austro-Hungarian armed

¹⁸. Zelinskyi, p. 22.

¹⁹. Zhuk Collection, Vol. 15, File 4.

forces ensured that the Blue and Grey Divisions were disarmed.

The Skoropads'kyi regime approached the type of government envisaged by Lypyns'kyi and the monarchical regime proposed in the SVU platform. In spite of this similarity, the SVU and the POWs they had organized and the Ukrainian State under Skoropads'kyi did not find common cause. The Blue and Grey Divisions were viewed by Skoropads'kyi as unreliable because of their social radicalism. The Greycrats therefore were ordered to occupy an unstable area near Chernihiv well away from Kiev. While stationed there, they aligned with the anti-Hetman Directory led by Simon Petliura and Vynnychenko. They played an instrumental role in the overthrow of the Hetman and the restoration of the Ukrainian National Republic in November 1918.

As for the SVU itself, since the establishment of a Ukrainian state in December 1917, it viewed its mandate to represent the interests of Ukrainians as having been exhausted.²⁰ From the end of 1917 the SVU concerned itself with seeing to the needs of the POWs, the projects in the occupied territories, and the organization of the Blue and Grey Divisions. Once the divisions were formed and transferred to Ukraine and the other prisoners were being released, the SVU started to wind down its activities. On

²⁰. V. Doroshenko, "Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy," Svoboda, No. 8, 156 (14 VIII). (1954).

July 1, 1918 the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine formally disbanded.

On July 1, 1918, the SVU and all Ukrainian prisoner of war organizations at Freistadt, Salzwedel, Rastatt and Wetzlar officially ceased to exist. The assets of these organizations were turned over to the Ukrainian State.

The principal protagonists of the SVU continued to play important roles in the Ukrainian exile community. In 1918, Andry Zhuk was appointed special commissar in the Ukrainian diplomatic mission under Viacheslav Lypyns'kyi in Vienna. Under the Directory, Zhuk continued serving in the Ukrainian diplomatic mission in Vienna. In the 1920s he worked with the exile centre of the Western Ukrainian National Republic, and contributed to the Ukrainian exile press. At this time, Zhuk became a sympathizer of the Ukrainian Agrarian-Democrats. In the 1930s, Zhuk returned to Lviv where he was an important figure in the cooperative movement. He managed to escape the Soviets in 1939 and returned to Vienna where he spent the war. After the war he wrote articles for Ukrainian newspapers and journals. He died in 1968. During the 1920s Zhuk had considered returning to Ukraine. Although he was opposed to the Bolshevik regime there, he was attracted, like so many other Ukrainian exiles, by its Ukrainization policies. A Soviet diplomat in Vienna advised him against returning. Fortunately, he followed this advice.

Marian Melenevs'kyi was not so fortunate. After the Revolution, he worked for Bolshevik organizations in Vienna, before returning to Ukraine in the 1920s. There he disappeared. Petro Diatliv also worked for a Bolshevik publishing house in Vienna before returning to Ukraine in 1925. He was arrested in the 1930s and perished in prison.

Oleksander Skoropys-Ioltukhovs'kyi served as the Ukrainian Commissar for Kholm under the Hetman and the Directory. He was subsequently interned by the Polish government before once again going into exile. In the 1920s and 1930s, Skoropys was a leading activist of the Ukrainian Hetmanite movement and one of the principal ideologues of Ukrainian monarchism. During the Second World War, Skoropys was in Berlin. In 1945, he was captured by the Soviets and disappeared.

Volodymyr Doroshenko returned to work at the library of the Shevchenko Scientific Society in Lviv eventually becoming director in 1937. After the Second World War, Doroshenko emigrated to the United States. He was a leading literary scholar, bibliographer and contributor to the Ukrainian press. He died in Philadelphia in 1963.

Both the Greycoats and the Bluecoats went on to play important parts in the Ukrainian armed forces for the duration of the armed conflict that consumed Ukraine from 1918 to 1921. Other POWs from the SVU camps were released and returned to their homes carrying the ideas of the SVU

with them. Some were to join the Ukrainian army others the various partisan detachments. Although it is impossible to gauge the influence of these men on the Ukrainian renaissance of the 1917-1932, it must have been considerable. Thousands of well-trained agitators imbued with a sense of Ukrainian patriotism and a commitment to promoting Ukrainian cultural awareness and independence were bound to have an effect on their countrymen and the remarkable rise of Ukrainian national consciousness during the 1920s.

CONCLUSIONS

The Union for the Liberation of Ukraine played a pivotal role in Ukrainian history in the twentieth century. The organization was the first to articulate unequivocally the demand for Ukrainian statehood. The Union reunited some of the most prominent activists of the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party which had split into Spilka and the USDLP. The SVU believed that through the defeat of Russia, Ukraine could achieve statehood, and that the citizens of this state would then be free to solve the social problems of the country on their own. The Union adopted a realpolitik approach to Ukraine's place in the international system, and believed that a Ukrainian state would promote a balance of power in the international system. In keeping with its political realism, the SVU had a teleological philosophy, and this made possible its alliance with the Central Powers. The history of this organization provides insight into the transitions in Ukrainian political thought from demands for cultural autonomy in the nineteenth century through social democracy at the beginning of this century to the elitist, corporatist, and statist thought of the Ukrainian Right in the 1920s and 1930s. The SVU Platform incorporated both the traditions of Ukrainian revolutionary democrats such as

Drahomanov and the ideas of Ukrainian Right represented by Lypyns'kyi. An important contribution to Ukrainian political thought was the SVU's use of international systemic analysis in arguing for Ukrainian statehood. The Union argued cogently that a Ukrainian buffer state was in the interests of the Balkan-Black Sea states imperilled by Russian expansionism.

The history of the SVU reflects the changes and vacillations of the Central Powers' war aims. In the opening months of the war, the SVU enjoyed very good relations with the Central Powers, as these states were then very much interested in the dismemberment of the Russian Empire. Through most of 1915-1917, the Central Powers backed away from promoting Ukrainian independence, and the relations between the Union and the Central Powers suffered consequently. As Germany and Austria-Hungary opted to accommodate Polish aspirations, relations between the SVU and the Central Powers deteriorated even more. Nonetheless, the SVU succeeded in keeping the Ukrainian question on the political agenda even though German and Austro-Hungarian policy in 1917 did not include the separation of Ukraine from Russia. Constant SVU lobbying and media interest generated by the SVU in Germany helped make it possible for the Ukrainian Central Rada to gain a place at the table at Brest-Litovsk, and indirectly helped Ukraine achieve diplomatic recognition from the Central Powers.

Although the SVU's ideas had little resonance in Ukraine, the Union found thousands of adherents among the Ukrainian prisoners of war. The organization of the camps at Freistadt, Rastatt, Salzwedel and Wetzlar resulted in the conversion of tens of thousands of young men to the cause of Ukrainian independence. Through them, the SVU had a great effect on the Ukrainian Revolution and Civil War.

As an example, the SVU provides insight on the demimonde of First World War national liberation and revolutionary movements. The Union has been linked to the Irish Sinn Fein, the Estonian and Georgian national movements, and to the Bolsheviks. All of them received subventions and assistance from the Central Powers. The SVU provided some logistical and financial support to the Bolsheviks at the beginning of the war.

A detailed examination of the activities of the SVU shows that although the Union was discredited in the eyes of people such as Iurkevych by its acceptance of Central Powers funds, the funding provided by the Central Powers to the SVU did not greatly constrain the Union's decision-makers. Other than agreeing to desist from conducting propaganda work among Austrian Ukrainians, the SVU did not alter its platform or activities in spite of great pressure from the Central Powers to do so. The Union's program was independently devised, and one of the organizations principal areas of activity was lobbying the Central Powers

to support Ukrainian statehood openly and fully. Often in conflict with the governments of Germany and Austria-Hungary, the SVU never hesitated to voice its disapproval of Central Power policy and behaviour. Even after Austria-Hungary and Germany decided to expel the SVU, the Union maintained its platform and continued its activities much as before. After the Revolution of 1917 had changed the political situation, the SVU changed its orientation and adopted an anti-war position. Given these facts, the characterization of the members of the SVU as merely paid German agents is misleading.

As was the case with the Bolsheviks, the SVU used any means, including the assistance of the Central Powers, to pursue its own ends. If one accepts this teleological approach, then their ends and not their means should be the basis for evaluating the SVU and the Bolsheviks. If, however, a deontological standard is upheld, then both the SVU and the Bolsheviks stand indicted of unethical behaviour by accepting the assistance of the Central Powers.

Several conclusions can be drawn from the history of the SVU. The Union was the instrument that reunited some of the most important figures of the USDLP and Spilka, and the political ideas of the Union occupy a transitional place in the evolution of Ukrainian political philosophy between the social democratic ideas of the pre-war period and the Rightist ideas of the 1920s and 1930s. If ever a synthesis

of Ukrainian political philosophy in the twentieth century is to be written, the history and ideas of the SVU will have to be addressed.

Given that the relations between national liberation and revolutionary movements and the Central Powers in the First World War were often conspiratorial, it might be impossible to fully clarify the nature of these relationships. On the other hand, there is reason to believe that these movements and the Central Powers were interconnected to a far greater extent than previously known, and with opening of Soviet archives, perhaps the precise nature of these relationships can be illuminated.

The most pertinent aspect of the history of the SVU to current events is the insight that it provides on the role of Ukraine in the historical Balkan-Black Sea international sub-system during the First World War. In the post-Cold War era, the international system is changing rapidly. In the Balkan-Black Sea area there are major international conflicts in Croatia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Macedonia, Moldova, as well as territorial disputes over the Crimea and areas bordering Rumania and Ukraine. The international regime governing the Black Sea has also changed. Ukraine has interests in all of these disputes and changes. With the continuation of these conflicts, and major realignments of states, any historical information on the international sub-system in this area could provide direction to foreign

policy decision-makers. With the partial withdrawal of Russia from south-eastern Europe and Ukraine's entry onto the world stage, the foreign policies of the states bordering Ukraine have changed dramatically. The SVU's position papers on the interests of Bulgaria, Rumania and Turkey in Ukraine are among the few historical documents that give some indication of what those interests might be today and conversely what Ukraine's interests are in the Balkan-Black Sea region.

The Union for the Liberation of Ukraine was ignored by historians during the Soviet period. With the fall of the Russian Empire, the rise of a Ukrainian state, and a changing international system, the search for historical antecedents to explain these developments has begun. If history had the capacity to record ideas and events of the vanquished, the need for revisionism would not be so great.

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