



NEWS FROM UKRAINE

Information About the Current Struggle For National Independence and Human Rights

Vol. 2, No. 2

WINTER 1973

Strikes, Riots in Ukraine

RIOTS IN DNIPRODZERZHINSK. On June 25, over 10,000 people rioted for two days in Dniprodzerzhinsk, a city in East central Ukraine with a population of over 270,000. According to reports reaching the West, the rioters, many of whom consisted of women and children, stormed the KGB (State Security) and MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs) buildings and inflicted great damage upon them. All political documents, passport registrations, and private files of citizens were destroyed by the rioting populace. Several rooms in the building were burned, windows were broken, doors were ripped off their hinges, and portraits of Brezhnev, Lenin and other party functionaries were torn down and mutilated. The rioters then proceeded to another building which housed Party and Komsomol (Youth League) offices and destroyed many documents. KGB and militia units were called to the scene and opened fire on the populace. Estimates of the dead and injured range from 7 dead and 80 injured to scores dead and injured. At least 10 Ukrainians were later said to have died in the rioting. One Ukrainian died in the fire in the KGB building. Several KGB agents and militia men were reportedly killed, and over 50 were injured.

According to one report, the riot was sparked by the arrest of several youths who were taunting a militia man. Another report states that the riot began after police arrested two drunkards and a third man who was trying to take them home. One of the arrested apparently discarded a match and accidentally touched off a fire. This is the "official" explanation. As is usual with incidents of this sort, the Soviet press carried no explanation or report of the event. First news of the event reached Vienna at the beginning of September. Some Washington radio stations gave short accounts of the incident. The September 20 issue of the Washington Post carried a more detailed version, closing with the statement: "The army and police finally restored order in the city after many were killed and injured."

UKRAINIAN POLITICAL PRISONERS ORGANIZE HUNGER STRIKES. In January, Ukrainian newspapers abroad carried information received in the West from dissident sources in Moscow about a wave of hunger strikes staged by political prisoners in several Soviet labor camps. The strikes, which occurred in the early part of December, lasted five days and were supposed to have ended on December 10, the International Day of Human Rights.

Participants in the hunger strikes were said to have been "Ukrainian nationalists, advocates of religious freedom, and Baltic separatists, as well as other persons sentenced for anti-Soviet propaganda." One of the organizers of the hunger strike was Mykola Bondar, a 33-year-old Ukrainian and former university lecturer in philosophy. This was not the first time that Bondar has been involved in prison protests. Sentenced in 1971 to 7-years of strict regime for "anti-Soviet propaganda and agitation," Bondar has carried out several hunger strikes in the Dubrovlag compound

Unrest In Ukraine

June: Riots break out on June 25 in Dniprodzerzhinsk in east central Ukraine after KGB arrests several youths. Thousands of persons participate, KGB headquarters are demolished, 10 people are killed, scores arrested.

September: Workers go on strike in Dnipropetrovsk, demand better living standards. 5 persons are reported killed, many wounded. At the end of September strikes, riots and demonstrations break out in several cities in Ukraine, sparked by demands for better working conditions and living standards. Several persons are reportedly killed by KGB troops.

October: Workers riot again in Dnipropetrovsk. Demand food products, better living conditions, and the right to choose jobs instead of being assigned to them. Riots break out again in Dniprodzerzhinsk. 8 rioters are reported killed, many wounded, scores arrested.

in Mordovia to protest his conviction as well as the terrible conditions in the camps. He has also, along with other political prisoners, sent an open letter to the UN Commission of Human Rights in protest over the political and social lawlessness existing in the USSR (See News From Ukraine, May 1972). The recent wave of hunger strikes were begun by the prisoners to protest the inhuman conditions existing in the camps and brutal treatment of prisoners at the hands of their jailers. Several prisoners have reportedly died because of beatings and tortures (See, for example, the recent incident concerning Valentyn Moroz on page 3).

At the same time that the prisoners began their strike, three activists from Western Europe—an Italian, a Frenchman, and a Norwegian—conducted a demonstration in Moscow's Red Square in defense of the political prisoners of the USSR. The demonstration lasted only several minutes before police and KGB agents seized the three men. Almost at the same time, rallies in many cities of Western Europe were held as a show of solidarity with the political prisoners of the Soviet Union. There are several organizations now existing in Western Europe for this purpose.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS NOTICE

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News From Ukraine
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The Repressions Continue . . .

Shukhevych Sentenced To 10 Years

On September 12, 1972, a Soviet court sentenced 39-year-old Yuriy Shukhevych to 10-years of hard labor and 5-years of exile. Shukhevych, the son of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) General Taras Chuprynka, has been in Soviet concentration camps on and off for a period of 20-years ever since he was first arrested in 1948 at the age of 15 apparently for no other reason than the fact that he was the son of the UPA Commander. Shukhevych was arrested last March in Nalchik in the Caucasus where he had been living in exile with his wife and two small children. The charges against him were those invariably levelled against Ukrainian intellectuals who protest Moscow's russification policies and violations of human rights in Ukraine: "anti-Soviet propaganda" and "nationalist" activities. While in prison Shukhevych had written several letters to Soviet authorities, protesting his arrest and unjust sentence. In 1968 he was finally released, but was not permitted to return to his native Ukraine. In 1970 his signature was one of those appearing on a petition sent to the Council of Ministers and the First Secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party in protest of the arrest of Valentyn Moroz (See News From Ukraine, first two issues). Many of those who signed the petition were subsequently arrested in the wave of repressions that swept through Ukraine in January 1972. Shukhevych's arrest followed that of Nina Strokata, wife of famous Ukrainian dissident intellectual, Sviatoslav Karavansky. Following her husband's arrest, Mrs. Strokata had moved from Odessa to Nalchik and had settled Shukhevych and his family in her house (his family still lives there). It is rumored that Shukhevych's memoirs of his 21-year imprisonment were confiscated by the KGB at the time of his arrest.

Scientist Declared Insane

On January 30, 1972, a Kiev court pronounced 33-year-old Ukrainian mathematician Leonid Plyushch to be mentally ill and sentenced him to an indefinite confinement at an institution for the insane. Plyushch, a member of the Cybernetics Institute of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, was arrested last January and accused of "anti-Soviet activity." A panel of psychiatrists from the notorious Serbsky Institute in Moscow stated that Plyushch was suffering from schizophrenia and "ideas of reform" (The Serbsky Institute is well known in dissident circles for co-operating with the KGB in sending political protesters to psychiatric hospitals and insane asylums). Dissident sources state that Plyushch was probably arrested by the KGB in an attempt to crack down on the Russian underground journal, *Chronicle of Current Events*. Plyushch was also a co-founder of a Soviet human rights committee and had signed letters of protest to the UN concerning the persecution of cultural workers in the USSR. In 1968 he wrote an article for a Party paper in which he attacked the lies and distortions in the official press. Plyushch's trial, as has become customary in such cases, was closed and illegal. He was not allowed to appear at the trial and "testimony" against him rested on witnesses specially selected by the KGB. His wife and sister were not allowed to see him.

Arrests and Trials

A second wave of arrests, begun in mid-August, is still sweeping Ukraine. These arrests are linked to the dissemination of Ukrainian underground publications, especially the *Ukrainian Herald* (See page 4). In the meantime, many Ukrainian intellectuals arrested in January 1972, have already been tried and sentenced, and a brief list follows. All trials were conducted in secret; in most cases not even the closest relatives of the accused were admitted to court.

IHOR KALYNETS. 34-year-old poet from Western Ukraine. Has written poetry dedicated to Valentyn Moroz. Accused of "spreading false rumors discrediting the Soviet government." Arrested in August in Lviv and sentenced to 9-years imprisonment and 3-years of exile.

IRYNA STASIV-KALYNETS. 32-year-old poetess, wife of Ihor Kalynets. Has written protests on behalf of Valentyn Moroz. Sentenced to 6-years imprisonment, 3-years exile. During her trial her young daughter Dzvinika tried to present her with a bouquet of flowers which were taken from her by a guard and thrown to the ground.

IVAN HEL. Welder and student at Lviv University. Sentenced to 3-years at hard labor in 1966 for "anti-Soviet propaganda." Has taken active part in the Ukrainian national movement. Sentenced to 10-years imprisonment and 5-years of exile.

MYKHAILO OSADCHY. Poet and former lecturer at Lviv University. In 1968 returned from a prison sentence in Mordovia. Has had collection of his poetry destroyed immediately after publication for "ideological" reasons. Author of an underground literary sketch describing his experiences in labor camp. Tried for poems of an "anti-Soviet character." 7-years imprisonment, 3-years of exile.

IVAN KOVALENKO. 54-year-old teacher arrested for possession of underground dissident literature and for publicly expressing his opposition to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. Sentenced to 5-years of severe regime.

ZINOVIIY ANTONIUK. Accused of possessing underground literature and circulating copies of the *Ukrainian Herald* (See page 4). Sentenced to 7-years of severe regime and 3-years of exile.

VOLODYMYR RAKETSKY. 25-year-old student at Kiev University accused of "nationalistic attitudes" and possessing "anti-Soviet" works. Worked on a newspaper staff. Sentenced to 5-years of severe regime.

OLEKSANDER SERHIYENKO. 40-year-old drafting teacher who delivered a short speech at the funeral of Alla Horska (Ukrainian dissident reputedly murdered by the KGB) in December 1970. Accused of the usual "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda." Sentenced to 7-years of severe regime and 3-years of exile.

VASYL STUS. 35-year-old poet and literary critic, active in protesting the violation of national and human rights in Ukraine. Arrested last January, sentenced in September to 5-years imprisonment and 3-years' exile for "anti-Soviet propaganda and agitation." Underground sources state that Stus is at present being confined to a mental hospital in Kiev.

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Moroz Knifed in Prison

As reported by UPI, Valentyn Moroz, the 36-year-old Ukrainian historian sentenced by a Soviet court in 1970 to 9-years at hard labor and 5-years of exile, was assaulted last July by four inmates at the Vladimir prison, where he is confined, and stabbed four times in the Stomach. Unconscious and bleeding profusely, he was taken to the prison infirmary and treated for his wounds. At the beginning of October, Moroz was transferred from Vladimir prison to Kiev where he was confined to a prison hospital.

Imprisoned in Vladimir prison since 1970, Moroz has suffered from chronic anemia and ulcers of the stomach. Lack of appropriate medical treatment in prison and the recent knife wounds have so undermined Moroz's health that his life continues to be in danger. According to rumors in Kiev, the assassination attempt on Moroz by four criminals confined with him in the same cell was deliberately planned by the KGB. There have been numerous incidents where authorities in Soviet labor camps have resorted to such methods to rid themselves of undesirable political prisoners. There were reports two years ago that Moroz was suffering from a liver ailment possibly caused by deliberate poisoning of his food. It should be recalled that three years ago, three Ukrainian intellectuals—Lev Lukianenko, Mykhailo Horyn and Ivan Kandyba—appealed to the UN in a letter smuggled to the West to investigate the poisoning of prisoners' food (See first issue of News From Ukraine).

Commits Suicide in Protest

Ukrainian sources reported last November about the protest-suicide of a Ukrainian engineer by the name of Katala who had stabbed himself fatally while being interrogated by the KGB last May in Lviv in Western Ukraine. According to the report, the 30-year-old Ukrainian had been a personal friend of Stefania Shabatura, the tapestry designer sentenced to 5-years of prison (See last issue of News From Ukraine), and his death was directly connected with her arrest last year. Katala had repeatedly been summoned by the KGB and pressured into testifying against Miss Shabatura. On May 28 he was again interrogated by the KGB and this time was taken to see Miss Shabatura in the women's ward. At one point in the interrogation Katala apparently rushed out of the ward into the prison hallway and, shouting out protests against the persecutions and repressions in Ukraine, stabbed himself with a pair of scissors. By the time security men reached him, he was dead. Fearing that news of the suicide might stir up the populace just at the time of President Nixon's visit to Kiev, the KGB took special measures: The guard was doubled at the prison, and all visits by friends and relatives of the inmates were temporarily suspended. Katala is said to have been buried by the KGB at an unknown place during the night of May 28. His family was not informed of the place of burial.

The sixth issue of the Ukrainian Herald (See page 4) reports another suicide linked to the current political situation in Ukraine. In November 1971, a sugar refinery worker by the name of Labinsky in the town of Chodoriv in Western Ukraine apparently refused to carry a Party placard during a parade. The Party secretary of the refinery is then reported to have threatened Labinsky, calling him an "enemy of the people" who would rather "carry a blue and yellow flag" (traditional Ukrainian national colors, banned in Soviet Ukraine). After the incident Labinsky told some friends that he was afraid of subsequent harassment by the KGB and of losing his job for the few remaining years left him until his retirement. That evening Labinsky committed suicide at the refinery.

Letter of Protest

The 25th issue of the underground *A Chronicle of Current Events* carries parts of a letter sent to the Committee of Human Rights (headed by Academician A. D. Sakharov in Moscow) and written by a group of Ukrainians from Soviet Ukraine. The letter was sent to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the UkSSR, and copies to *Izvestia* and *Literary Ukraine*. Referring to the recent arrests of Ukrainian intellectuals and cultural workers, the authors of the letter wrote:

"The decades of Stalinist lawlessness, which were later euphemistically called 'the cult of personality,' are a phenomenon that is still not understood. It is much more complex than the cult of any one individual, and when its results are considered then we must compare it to a disaster such as that visited upon the USSR in World War II. It was a terrible social pestilence which gave birth to terror, suspicion, spying, and innumerable concentration camps for innocent people. It brought the people into a deep moral crisis, to a psychological shock as agonizing as that of a serious illness. In the thirties this illness began with the excessive growth of the role of the national security organs, their abuse of their powers, and their escape from the control of the government. The NKVD became a 'state within a state,' creating a whole machinery of murder which could malign and destroy any individual in the country . . . The change in the climate of social life in the USSR in this direction is a disturbing symptom. Such events as the invasion of Czechoslovakia by Soviet troops, the secret vetoing of works which expose Stalinist lawlessness and even of the materials of the 20th Congress of the CPSU, the persecution of Alexander Solzhenitsyn, the endless harping on the renewal of the ideological struggle—all this arouses a deep feeling of uneasiness about the possibility of a new 1937 . . . The strangling of national consciousness, countless arrests of outstanding representatives of Ukrainian intelligentsia, threats, harassments, repressions and ceaseless mass searches—all this is a terrible reminder that 1937 began in 1933, that it began with repressions of workers of national cultures. This ends our warning . . ."

The Ukrainians end their letter with the following:

"We wish to state our reasons for revealing our names only to the Committee of Human Rights . . . We alone are responsible concerning the accuracy of the information contained in this letter. We dislike anonymity. But the situation is such that any show of public concern is treated by the KGB with immediate repressions. And at the present moment we do not think it fitting to have anything to do with the faceless and irresponsible Committee of State Security, which is gradually becoming a real danger to society. We would be ready to give our names and to take part in a public discussion about the content of our letter, if there were the slightest hope that the letter would be published in its entirety."

The letter is dated, May 1972, Ukraine, and signed "A Group of Soviet Citizens."

UKRAINIAN HERALD

Underground Journal From Ukraine

Fourth Issue

Contains details of the trial of Valentyn Moroz and the murder of Alla Horska. Also unpublished poems by Vasyl Symonenko and news of repressions of Ukrainian intellectuals.

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Shevchenko Day in Ukraine

The 26th issue of the underground *A Chronicle of Current Events* carries the following report about the May 21 Shevchenko anniversaries in Kiev (text slightly abridged):

For many years now the Ukrainian public has commemorated the date of the bearing of Taras Shevchenko's ashes from St. Petersburg to Ukraine by laying wreaths at the memorial to the poet in Kiev, and by singing and dancing around the statue. In recent years the authorities have attempted to give the entire day's proceedings in Shevchenko Park an official character: a platform has been erected around the memorial, teams of professional performers have been sent, and concerts organized. However, along with the official presentations there have also been some amateur folk festivities. This year the authorities resolved to put a stop to any attempts to honor the poet's memory. The Shevchenko Park was surrounded by cordons of police and plainclothesmen. The police chased away people who stopped on the streets bordering on the park. Without any explanation, the police seized persons trying to approach the Shevchenko memorial, those trying to sing Ukrainian songs, and even those dressed in Ukrainian embroidered shirts or wearing Shevchenko emblems on their chests. More than fifty people were detained, and some of them were sentenced next day to 15-days of imprisonment for "resistance to authority."

Underground Publication Reaches West

The sixth issue of the underground *Ukrainian Herald* has reached the West and has been published by Ukrainians abroad. The issue, which has been circulating in Ukraine since last March, contains information about the wave of repressions in the beginning of last year, items connected with the case of Valentyn Moroz, and further documentation about the russification process in Ukraine. It should be noted that this appearance of the *Herald* is especially significant in light of the fact that one of the reasons for the mass arrests in January 1972 was the attempt of the KGB to stop any further publication of the *Herald*. In this the KGB were, apparently, unsuccessful. The *Herald* began to circulate in Ukraine in 1970. An English translation of the fourth issue can be obtained from the ABN office in Munich (See page 3).

Arrest Pupils

The sixth issue of the underground *Ukrainian Herald* (See above) reports that a trial of three seventh and eighth grade pupils took place in Snyatyni in Western Ukraine in June 1970. The three boys were supposed to have cut up portraits of party and government leaders and had wanted to set fire to flags put out in commemoration of the Day of Victory. The pupils were detained for three days, then released and allowed to finish the school year. At the trial, one of the pupils, Marderovych by name, stated that he had acted to protest against chauvinism. He said that Ukraine was being russified and that the Ukrainian language and culture were being suppressed. He went on to add that Russians had come to Snyatyni and had taken all the good jobs and that the local inhabitants had to look for work elsewhere. His father, Marderovych said, had not been able to find work in Snyatyni because of this and had to commute everyday to a neighboring village. The principal of the school complained that the pupils had dishonored the school, and he demanded that they be sentenced to terms in special prisons. The lawyer objected to this, however, saying that the "criminals" were merely children and had to be "rehabilitated" in school. The court reprimanded the students verbally. Some time later Marderovych's father was fired from his job and has remained without work.

Repression, Resistance . . .

In Zhytomyr in west central Ukraine the house of an elderly pensioner was searched and his whole library confiscated because some of the books contained an ex libris motto taken from the traditional Ukrainian national anthem (banned in Soviet Ukraine) . . . In Kosmach in southwestern Ukraine a local publication was ordered to change its format of colors because the colors, blue and yellow, were the same as those of the traditional Ukrainian national colors (banned in Soviet Ukraine). A church in Kosmach, which had recently been painted yellow, was also ordered to be repainted in white otherwise, as one official said, "You'll paint the windows blue and put a trident (traditional Ukrainian symbol) on top!" . . . Last May in Lviv in Western Ukraine there began to appear Ukrainian tridents carved or scratched on the walls of several public buildings. The tridents were carved so deeply that the KGB had to assign special workers to remove the emblems from the walls. At the same time it was reported that similar carvings had appeared in several towns of Western Ukraine . . .



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