

**THE
STRUGGLE
OF
FREEMEN**

BY ANTHONY HLYNKA



Published by the
UKRAINIAN CULTURAL SOCIETY
Detroit, Mich.

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Member of the Canadian House of Commons,
Ottawa, Ont.



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— 1942 —



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11646 **PREFACE**

The chief aim of this pamphlet is to stress the vital importance of not only winning this war, but also to make certain that we shall win the peace.

It is also vitally important that the four great human freedoms proclaimed, by the president of the United States of America, be maintained i. e. — freedom of speech and expression, freedom of every person to worship God in his own way, freedom from want and freedom from fear. Furthermore may I quote that "No lasting peace can be bought at the expense of other peoples' freedom."

(President Roosevelt's address
of January 6, 1941)

The Ukrainian case for freedom and independence is clearly explained in the following speech of Mr. Anthony Hlynka, a Member of the Dominion Parliament of Canada, who is of Ukrainian descent and is perfectly acquainted with the struggle of Ukrainians for Independence.

With utmost confidence and respect to Mr. Hlynka, the author of the delivered speech in the House of Commons of the Dominion of Canada on Monday, February 2, 1942, I

faithfully recommend a carefull consideration of this pamphlet to all serious minded statesmen.

The Ukrainian cause is of an acute importance in the struggle of freemen against tyranny and oppression.

Joseph Bilovus

HOUSE OF COMMONS DEBATES

Monday, February 2, 1942

AFTER RECESS

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

MR. ANTHONY HLYNKA (Vegreville):
Mr. Speaker, during the past two sessions of the present parliament our task has been directed toward a solution of the problems which confront us in our national life, particularly those which arise in the prosecution of the war. Considerable progress has been made in this initial period, but no effort could have been too great while the destiny of free peoples was at stake. From now on, and until a decisive victory is ultimately won, both on the battlefields and at the peace conferences, not only must we further mobilize, equip and maintain our armed forces as our chief contribution to the cause of freedom, but we must of necessity go beyond this primary requisite.

We must not only win the war, but we must also make certain that we shall win the peace. To achieve less would be to fail in the trust bestowed upon us, the sacred privilege of delivering to future generations the hard-

won liberties of our forefathers. It is our duty, therefore, to study and prevent the weakness and recurring dangers of past adjustments — or, shall I say, the lack of proper adjustments — of world problems which gave rise to the present world conflagration. This should be one of our many immediate concerns.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that hon. members will agree with me when I say that we are faced to-day with problems of first magnitude. Many of these problems have arisen with the present conflict, but multitudes of them find root in the past. We cannot, therefore, shirk responsibility in the solution of this chaotic state of affairs. World problems are our problems; for they have either a direct or an indirect bearing upon our national life — yes, even upon our individual lives.

We must necessarily realize that it is not the war alone that we are fighting to-day; we find ourselves also in the grip of two of the greatest revolutions of all time. Nationally we are fighting a war; internally and internationally we are engaged in two prodigious revolutions—one economic, one political. We are therefore endeavoring to survive one of the most critical and dangerous of transitional periods.

Let us, then, examine the role that we Canadians are playing in this struggle, and let us envision the role that Canada is destined to play in the future.

We are now in the third year of war. To what extent have we crystalized our views on Canada's foreign policy? What plans are we prepared to advance or adopt as the basis for post-war reorganization and reconstruction of the world? How many hours have we devoted in this chamber to the discussion of this problem during the last two years? If none, why not? Can we afford to be caught unprepared in this respect? For, as we know, this war will also end sooner or later as all other wars are supposed to have ended.

Now, when we consider the position that Canada occupies among the nations of the world at this time, it does seem that we have underestimated her importance. As a matter of fact, until recently Canada's position was unique in that it was second only to that of Great Britain; indeed in many respects, even with the entry of the United States into the conflict, Canada still remains a number one ally of Great Britain. I say that with all due respect and consideration to the material aid given to Great Britain by our good neighbour directly to the south of us, and with all due

respect and consideration to the entry of the Soviet Union into this conflict on our side.

To amplify my statement: Canada's strategic position makes her the logical mediator between Great Britain and the United States. Her geographical location makes her an ideal arsenal for the turning out of tools of war for the allies. She is admirably situated for the training fields of the empire forces, and especially the empire air training plan. And lastly, because of her limitless potential natural resources and her vast, rich wheat fields, she will undoubtedly be the key to post-war reconstruction of Britain. It is only fitting, therefore, that Canada's foreign policy should be commensurate with her important position.

It is gratifying indeed to find that the broad principles which are intended as the basis for post-war reorganization of the world have been enunciated. I refer, of course, to the now historic Atlantic charter, proclaimed by two of the world's men of destiny—the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Mr. Churchill, and the President of the United States, Mr. Roosevelt. I am more than pleased, Mr. Speaker, to hear reference made to the Atlantic charter in the speech from the throne.

Then again, there are the four great human freedoms proclaimed by the president of the

United States—freedom of speech and expression, freedom of every person to worship God in his own way, freedom from want and freedom from fear.

These declarations deserve all the acclaim they have already received from all parts of the world, particularly for their universality and noble purpose. We, of course, welcome and accept these principles just as we had accepted the fourteen points of President Wilson after the last war. We may be proud at least of the fact that the democratic world recognizes that world stability and enduring peace can be achieved only on the basis of freedom of all peoples capable of shaping and directing their own destinies.

Further, in his address of January 6, 1941, President Roosevelt had this to say on the subject:

No lasting peace can be bought at the expense of other peoples' freedom.

Again, in his speech delivered at the annual dinner of the White House Correspondents' Association, he said:

Humanity will never permanently accept a system imposed by conquest and based on slavery.

To my mind, Mr. Speaker, not only are these statements true, but they are expressions

of foresight and vision. We can no longer tolerate a short-sighted plan or settlement. There must be built a new world citadel of freedom and civilization. If we ever hope to have stability and enduring peace, the principles of freedom must constantly be kept in mind and incorporated into the post-war settlement. If this basis is ignored, let us then not expect a peaceful world in the immediate future; the lives spent in this and the last war will then have been given in vain.

Let us look a step further. Should not the democracies, of imperative necessity, formulate a more definite and detailed set of proposals which will give the needed promise of release to all peoples under the domination of the aggressor nations? Should not our proposals be more positive, more dynamic, so that they may add more inspiration to the explosive force of the temporarily subdued peoples? I venture to suggest that in this manner we would change the whole course of the war very much more in our favor. I make this observation because it can be well assumed that the axis powers are bound to offer some enticing formula to subdued nations for the express purpose of giving themselves a breathing moment before they begin tightening the reins on those unfortunate countries. Germany is

already trying desperately to consolidate her position in the overrun regions. She is organizing these areas into zones which are to operate in complete subordination to her, and she is totally ignoring all racial and ethnographic lines. It is a sort of forced federal union. It would mean an eventual and permanent enslavement of millions of people. It would become a new and horrible prison of nations.

In view of this increasingly dangerous threat, the allies should, therefore, take it upon themselves to become the guardians of sovereign ideals and sovereign nations. Can we not promise all of them their national sovereignty which would be in accordance with the spirit of the Atlantic charter, and which would make a revolutionary rebellion on their part worth while? It would be an inspiration and a challenge to them. For, as we know, there is no stronger force and incentive than that manifest in the defence of personal and national existence. I cannot, therefore, emphasize too strongly the immediate need on the part of democracies to make known their foreign policy in as complete and definite form as time and conditions permit. The issues at stake are too important for us not to make use of the incentive of confidence in the future—instead of vague and wishful thinking.

Allow me now to draw your attention to the three items relevant to national sovereignty as outlined in the Atlantic charter. They are points 2, 3 and 6. Here is what they say:

Second, they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned.

Third, they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign right and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them.

Sixth, after the final destruction of the nazi tyranny, they hope to see established a peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and which will afford assurance that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want.

These three points deal generally with the phase of the problem which I am discussing. They read well, but I found numerous interpretations of them. One outstanding United States publication interprets the Atlantic charter as being opposed to the setting up of any new organisms. Of course, much depends on how the word "new" is interpreted. But are we to understand that nations who were not fortunate enough to liberate themselves during

the last war shall remain in bondage? More clarification of this point is definitely needed. Then, again, the charter was interpreted as favouring the federal union proposals. Personally, I fail to find in the document any trace of expression of these views. As a matter of fact I find that the charter upholds the sovereignty of all peoples in accordance with their expressed will, which is definitely contrary to ideas propounded by federal unionists.

From what I have said thus far, it is evident that the question of foreign relations policy is an extremely broad one in scope. I wish, therefore, to confine my following remarks specifically to the discussion of a Ukrainian independent state and its importance to the British commonwealth of nations.

The question may arise in the minds of some hon. members as to why should we Canadians be interested in an independent Ukrainian state in Europe. Is it because Ukrainian-Canadians constitute a large group of our citizens, and we owe them that courtesy? Is it because they are so generously enlisting in great numbers in the Canadian armed forces and are ready to give their lives for Canada? Is it because of the heroic contribution of Ukrainians on the battlefields of the Ukraine against Germany? Or, is it because it is in

the very blood of the English-speaking people always to stand up for the rights of others as well as their own? Yes, but there is a much more important reason than those I have already given.

Above all, a Ukrainian independent state in eastern Europe would be important to the British commonwealth of nations and the United States as a balance of power. I venture to suggest that in the not distant future the British people and the principles for which they stand will be more closely associated with the Ukrainians than they have ever been before.

Furthermore, Ukraine is important because of the extent of its territory, the richness of its natural resources, the size of its population, and its strategic position with reference to the Black sea, the Dardanelles, Iran, Iraq, the Persian gulf and India. Professor G. W. Simpson, of Saskatchewan university, has this to say in his "Atlas of History and Geography of the Ukraine":

Thus the Ukraine constitutes a wide assembling place which could be used either by ambitious dictators as the starting point for sweeping military conquest, or by wise statesmen as a strong wedge-like area of defence which would stabilize all these regions tributary to

the Black sea.

Consequently, it is definitely contrary to the interests of Britain to permit Germany to take and hold the Ukraine and exploit its people and its resources for aggrandizement and greater power. Again, it would not be in the best interests of Britain to see any other power enslave the Ukrainian people and, with the use of their territory and natural resources, become a dominant power holding this strategic position in eastern Europe.

Finally, a division of the territory after the fashion of the division made after the last war would only complicate the problems of Europe, and the dangerous situation would remain unchanged. Hence the problem of a Ukrainian independent state in eastern Europe is of extreme importance to the British commonwealth of nations and to the stability of the world.

I have before me a handbook prepared under the authority of the historic section of the British foreign office, entitled "The Ukraine", the topic which I propose to discuss briefly. This booklet is numbered 52 of the series of such authoritative information prepared and collected for the sole purpose of having this information available for those who were to participate in the peace confer-

ences. It may be observed from the series number that there must have been at least fifty-one other of the kind, dealing with various important problems. This booklet contains information having to do with physical geography, political history, social political conditions, and much other useful material. One cannot help but admire the British for their thoroughness in dealing with important matters such as these; on the other hand, the total lack of similar preparation on our part in Canada stands out in striking contrast.

True, many Canadians show a keen interest in the Ukrainian problem. Many of them seek information on the subject, but it is essential that they obtain their information from authoritative and unbiased sources. All those interested in the subject must remember that there is a great deal of distorted information emanating from people who are not totally disinterested in the possession and the control of the Ukraine. This information is usually disseminated with the purpose of obliterating the authenticity of the ethnological and ethnographical existence of the Ukrainian people. For example, any aspiration manifested by Ukrainians looking to freedom and independence in their own native land is immediately given the interpretation of being instigated by an enemy of

the British. This method of propaganda is by no means new, but unless one guards against such sources of information he may be hopelessly misled.

For the benefit of those who may be interested in the subject I wish to place on record just a few authoritative sources of information. "Ukraine, an Atlas of its History and Geography", by G. W. Simpson, professor of European history, University of Saskatchewan, published in 1941; "History of the Ukraine," by D. Doroshenko, professor of Prague and Warsaw universities, which was edited by Professor Simpson, and published in 1939. The third and perhaps the most comprehensive study is "A History of Ukraine," by Michael Hrushevsky, one of the world's outstanding historians. This book was edited by O. J. Frederiksen, professor of history at Miami university, and published by Yale university press in 1941.

May I now give this house, so far as my humble ability will permit, the fundamental facts concerning Ukraine and the Ukrainian people? First let me deal with the land they inhabit and claim.

Ukraine is a vast rich territory lying in the southeastern corner of Europe on the threshold of Asia, immediately north of the Black sea,

It is the second largest ethnographic territory in Europe and fourteenth largest in the world. This territory comprises 362,200 square miles.

Immediately prior to the last world war the whole Ukraine was held by Russia and Austro-Hungary.

By 1923 the Ukraine was dismembered and divided among the four neighbouring nations. The largest portion, comprising 298,610 square miles and containing 35,026,000 Ukrainians, called the Great Ukraine, was assigned to Russia, and was incorporated as one of the republics of the Soviet Union. The western Ukraine, comprising 51,042 square miles and containing 7,500,000 Ukrainians was made a Polish "protectorate". The provinces of Bessarabia and Bukovina, comprising 6,705 square miles and containing 1,500,000 Ukrainians, was placed under Roumanian rule, while Carpatho-Ukraine, comprising 5,753 square miles and containing 600,000 Ukrainians, was assigned to Czechoslovakia.

At the moment almost the entire territory has become the battlefield of the German and the Soviet Union forces. It has been for many months and still is being torn by destructive forces of war, and the Ukrainian people are undergoing the most cruel ordeal of their history. In addition in this tragic fate that

befell the Ukrainian people, the scorched earth policy of the Soviet government was mainly applied to the Ukraine. The land which is capable of providing freedom and life to its people has brought nothing but extreme tragedy, with slavery and death.

To one who has not the facts about the Ukraine it may seem confusing why so many nations are forever determined to grab a piece of this land for themselves. The answer is that it is one of the richest regions in the entire world. Ukraine is often referred to as the granary of Europe. It is more than that. Her mineral deposits are the envy of all her good neighbours. The 1932 Encyclopedia Americana points out that in 1928-29 Ukraine supplied the Soviet Union with 80 per cent of its coal, 60 per cent of its iron, 95 per cent of its manganese, 80 per cent of its sugar, the bulk of its wheat, vast quantities of mercury, copper and gold. The striking fact is that its rightful owners share little in this wealth.

There are now in the neighbourhood of 50 million Ukrainians in the world. Numerically they are the third largest group in Europe and ninth largest in the world. They first appeared in history in the fourth century. My time will not permit me to deal with the anthropology and the general characteristics of the people

at this time; suffice it to say that C. S. Coon, professor of anthropology at Harvard university, states in his book, "Races of Europe," that Ukrainians are a distinct and separate people.

Perhaps the greatest contribution made by Ukrainians to the world was that of staving off the Asiatic hordes for many centuries from invading Europe. That is what Lord Tweedsmuir meant when he said on September 21, 1936, at Fraserwood, Manitoba, "for it was your race which for centuries held the south-eastern gate of Europe against the attacks from the east." Again, it was through Kiev, the capital of the Ukraine, that Christianity was introduced into eastern Europe in 988. Let me mention one or two other contributions in art, music, and literature. Alexander Archipenko, one of the world's foremost contemporary sculptors, now living in the United States, is a Ukrainian. The immortal Tschai-kowsky, in the field of music, was of Ukrainian origin. Taras Shevchenko, the Robert Burns of the Slavic races, was a Ukrainian. These are but a few indications of Ukrainian contributions to the world.

When national states were established after the last world war it was held that the basis accepted was not some remote appeal to hi-

storic claims, but rather a clear and unmistakable determination of the people to rule themselves. With regard to the historic claims of many peoples, some, like Finland, had not known complete political independence for many centuries; some, like Esthonia, had never known political independence in the modern sense of the word.

The Ukraine, however, has had a continuous historic tradition extending back for over a thousand years, and three times, at least, this tradition incorporated itself in terms of political independence. First, there was the Kievan state, existing from the ninth to the middle of the fourteenth century; then the Cossak state, established in 1648, which lasted to the middle of the eighteenth century, and lastly, the United Ukrainian Republic of 1918-23.

At the time when Alfred the Great of England was attempting to maintain his Saxon state against the Danes, the ancestors of the Ukrainian people were establishing a large and flourishing kingdom with its centre at Kiev. This Kievan state, with its Slav-Byzantine culture was the outstanding political state in eastern Europe. It is the fountainhead of the Ukrainian historical tradition. When it disintegrated into principalities and suffered the

dévastating blow of the Tartar invasion its traditions lived on in the southern principalities, particularly in the western Ukraine. Although the western Ukraine fell to Poland and the other principalities to Lithuania, which was later joined to Poland, the ancient Ukrainian laws, customs and language persisted and developed.

Again when Oliver Cromwell in England, in the seventeenth century, was striking a mighty blow for that liberty which we are to-day defending, Bohdan Khmelnitsky created on the basis of Ukrainian tradition a free and independent Cossack state. Unfortunately Khmelnitsky had not the advantage of a sea wall, which Cromwell enjoyed, and the state which he had erected was torn between Poland and the rising state of Muscovy which was then becoming the modern empire of Russia. So firmly entrenched, however, were the institutions of self-government in the Ukraine, that it was more than a hundred years after the death of Khmelnitsky, in the latter half of the eighteenth century, before the imperialist regime could root out the last remnants of these institutions of self-government.

But the love of freedom which is an undying part of the human spirit was again awakened in the nineteenth century among the

Ukrainian people as well as among the Czechs, the Poles and others who had been suppressed.

Finally, in the first world war, when the Russian empire fell, then from its ruins, for the third time in the history of the Ukrainian people, there emerged a Ukrainian independent state, proclaimed on January 22, 1918. Nine months later the Austro-Hungarian empire fell, and from its remnants there was created the Western Ukrainian National Republic, proclaimed on the first day of November, 1918, ten days before the armistice. These two Ukrainian areas were proclaimed united on January 22, 1919, forming a United Ukrainian Republic.

The Ukrainian patriots fought desperately to defend this state so that they might live as free people among other nations of the world. They lost this freedom, and one element in their misfortune was the fact that their cause was so gravely misunderstood and misrepresented. By 1923 the Ukrainians found themselves divided among four states, as I have already pointed out.

It seemed that it was the original intention of the Paris peace conference to give the Ukrainians the right of self-determination in the western Ukraine. In 1923, however, the Council of Ambassadors granted to Poland

the title to this area, on the distinct understanding that she would eventually grant autonomy to this part of the Ukraine under the stipulated clauses of the Minorities treaty of 1919. Finally, in 1934, Poland formally repudiated this obligation.

The results of these minorities treaties present many interesting angles. It may be granted that it was not easy to divide the territory in question into national states, since there were many conflicting claims; but, allowing even for that, all were not treated with equal consideration. For instance, in the territorial revision after the last war some eleven states were created that were not on the map in 1914. Some of these were: Poland, with some 20 millions of people; Yugoslavia, with about 15 millions; Finland, with 3,600,000; Lithuania, with 2,500,000; Latvia, with 2,000,000, and Esthonia, with 1,100,000. I strongly uphold the granting of sovereign rights to all these nations, because I am a firm believer in the sovereign rights of all peoples in accordance with their will. It does seem inconsistent, however, that Ukrainians, with over 40 millions at that time, came out of the struggle empty-handed, in spite of the fact that they had been an historic unit in the past. Were not the Ukrainians entitled to the same privilege as

others? If not, why not?

Another error in the settlement arose out of the fact that minorities created by the division constituted a dangerously high percentage. According to Mr. C. A. Macartney, a recognised authority on European affairs, in Czechoslovakia thirty-three per cent were other than Czechs or Slovaks; in Poland over twenty-five per cent were non-Polish; in Roumania over twenty-five per cent were other than Roumanians. The important question is, can we afford to ignore racial lines in the future?

The present collapse of the state structure in Europe has again involved the Ukrainian people, along with other peoples, in utmost misery and desolation at the hands of the aggressor nations. The Ukrainians have again joined hands with other liberty-loving peoples in a fight for freedom. In Carpatho-Ukraine they fought against the axis partner, Hungary, in 1938. In western Ukraine and in Poland they fought against Germany in 1939, and they are now fighting against Germany with the Soviet Union forces.

Ukrainians fought for their freedom throughout their long and tragic history. They fight for it now, and they will continue to fight for it until they are free. Ukrainians believe

that they are just as much entitled to their sovereign rights as any other people are; they wish to contribute their maximum share to culture and civilization of the world. This will be possible only through the restoration of their own independence. A nation can give its best only when free from bondage. These are the tenets of the Atlantic charter; these are the tenets of Christian civilization.

It may be pointed out by some that there appear to be two obstacles in the way of realization of Ukrainian sovereignty. In the first place it may be suggested that after this war there will be no sovereign states; that some sort of federal union will take their place. Personally I do not believe that the British people would favour any plan that would require the forfeiture of their sovereignty. If they did, they would not be fighting this war.

The second obstacle which may be suggested is one with reference to the Soviet Union. It may be said that, since the Soviet Union is our ally in this war, any suggestion of an independent Ukraine might endanger our relations with the Soviet Union. Let me remind hon. members that, according to press reports, the Soviet government favours the proposals embodied in the Atlantic charter.

That this is so, was indicated by the British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Eden, after his recent return from Moscow. In addition to that, article 17 of the Soviet Union constitution (1936) says that "Each union republic is reserved the right freely to secede from the U. S. S. R." This should be sufficient assurance that the Soviet Union would be inclined to favour a recognition of the principle of the sovereignty of nations.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, may I be permitted to leave with the house the following suggestion. In view of the fact that all the subdued countries that had been sovereign nations prior to this war are now privileged to form their provisional governments in exile in order that they may carry on the work in the interests of their respective peoples, and in view of the fact that Ukrainians, who for a larger group than any of those, have not now that privilege simply because they were not an independent nation immediately prior to this war, I humbly submit that steps should be taken by the allied governments to make it possible for the Ukrainians to be represented at the various conferences now being held from time to time. In Great Britain, the United States and Canada, there are in existence United Ukrainian committees, whose primary ob-

ject is to assist the governments in Britain, the United States and Canada in the successful prosecution of the war. I do suggest, if I may, sir, that since all the allied nations are fighting for a common cause of freedom, the Ukrainian committees to which I have referred be also invited to delegate their representative or representatives to express the view of 50 million Ukrainian people at conferences held by the allied nations.

I believe I have sufficiently pointed out that the stability of Europe and of the world can be achieved only on the basis of universal justice. The European madhouse will remain a madhouse until Europe is reconstructed with freedom written into every word of its constitution. When that is done we may expect a lasting peace.

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