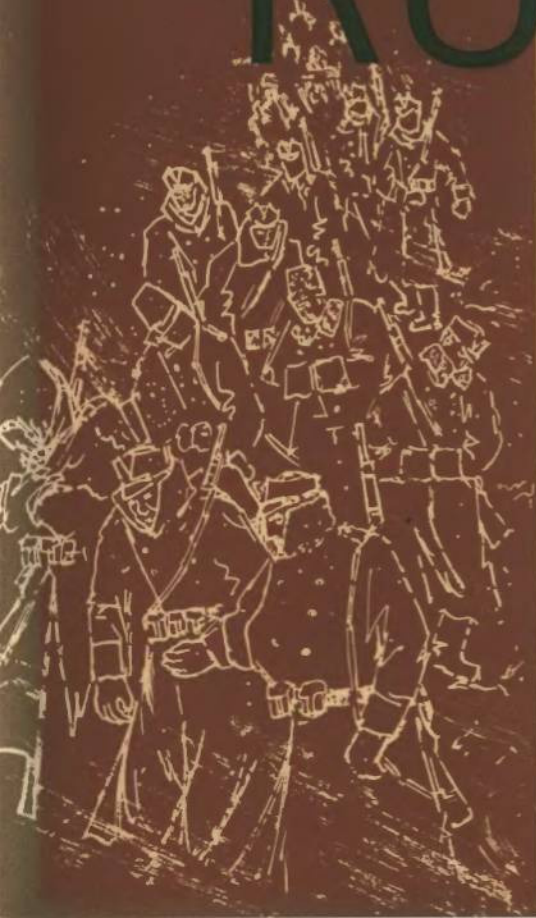


UKRAINE and RUSSIA

AN OUTLINE OF HISTORY
OF POLITICAL AND MILITARY
RELATIONS
(DECEMBER 1917-APRIL 1918)

BY
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**On the Occasion of the Semicentennial of the Great Ukrainian
National Revolution and the Rebirth of Ukrainian
Sovereign Statehood**

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**AN OUTLINE OF HISTORY OF POLITICAL
AND MILITARY RELATIONS
(DECEMBER 1917—APRIL 1918)**

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P R E F A C E

This volume, Ukraine and Russia (December 1917—April 1918) by Dr. Matthew Stachiw, a distinguished Ukrainian journalist, statesman and historian, now resident in the United States, is extremely valuable for it discusses the first Russian Communist aggression against Ukraine in the period between December, 1917 and April, 1918. It also of necessity brings in the Treaty of Brest Litovsk between the Central Powers, Ukraine and the Russian Communists, a treaty which was almost completely misunderstood by the statesmen of the Triple Entente and which has fared little better in the studies of historians trained in the traditional belief in the national unity of all sections of the population of "Russia."

The key to the curious history of this period lies in the contradictions and dilemmas in the Russian thinking about Ukraine and the Ukrainians. There was never any dispute that Prince Yuri Dolgoruky of Suzdal, who sacked Kiev in 1169 and tried to transfer the seat of rule to Suzdal and later Moscow, was a member of one branch of the Rurikovichy, the ruling house of the old Kievan Rus state. Yet with the downfall of that state under the Mongol attacks, Kiev passed first into the Grand Principality of Lithuania and later the Polish Republic and continued its Western affiliations. Moscow, becoming a part of the Golden Horde and with its princes marrying in the East, drifted away from Europe and the tradition of a dynastic tie was shattered by the obvious divergences in culture, mode of thinking and way of life. When the old dynasty died out with Czar Feodor Ioannovich and was replaced by the Romanovs in the person of Czar Michael, the breach was almost absolute and scarcely healed by the introduction into Muscovy of Ukrainian scholars and other educated men. The alliance of Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky in 1654 with Czar Alexis against Poland was used by Moscow to put forward a claim to complete domination of Ukraine and aroused wide hostility. Then after the failure of Hetman Ivan Mazepa through his alliance with Charles XII of Sweden to win independence, a curious situation developed.

The Czars and the majority of the thinking Russians of the Empire believed and tried to show that there was no such people as the

Ukrainians. They were only "Little Russians," "South Russians" or what you will. Therefore they should receive no special consideration and should be forced into the general Russian mold. On the other hand, the Czars and many of the higher officials likewise firmly believed that there was in Ukraine grave danger of a revolt against St. Petersburg for the restoration of the old independent Hetman state of Ukraine or the Zaporozhian Sich which had freed itself in large part from Poland. In other words the unity of the Russian Empire was menaced by a non-existent people. As the Ukrainian cultural movement continued to flourish, the only possible explanation was to ascribe it to German and Austro-Hungarian propaganda against Holy Russia. It was this explanation that was exported to the West for the benefit of those persons (and they were very few) in France, Great Britain and the United States who were at all interested in Eastern Europe.

With the downfall of the monarchy and the February Revolution, a new period began. The Russian Empire was a member of the Triple Entente. In 1917 the United States was just entering the war and all hoped and believed that if the Russian people had shown their bravery under the Czarist regime which was honeycombed with German agents, they would fight even better under a free and presumably democratic Russian regime.

Events developed very differently as the Provisional Government showed itself unable to control the situation and after one offensive, a wave of war-weariness spread and the old Russian army began to disintegrate and there was no armed force able to replace it. By autumn, 1917, the St. Petersburg regime was a mere shadow. With the Dardanelles closed by a hostile Turkey and the Baltic Sea interdicted to Allied shipping, supplies could be sent in only through Murmansk and Archangelsk in the North and Vladivostok in the Far East.

The first of the non-Russian nations to stir and agitate for at least autonomous rights of self-government were the Ukrainians who had launched their movement within days of the downfall of the monarchy, although many of their leaders were undecided as to the full extent of the claims that they should put forth. This period is briefly sketched in the book of Dr. Stachiw and in view of the space limits, he had little to say of the efforts of the Western nations to support the democratic aspects of the Provisional Government or the rising movements of the old Czarist military officers based in the Caucasus and Siberia.

Into this confusion burst Lenin and Trotsky with their elaborate theories of a Communist regime. They proclaimed full self-determination of peoples, the end of war and of colonialism and in fact they even recognized the independence of the Ukrainian Central Rada.

But did they mean it? Was it a device to spread discord consciously or had they not realized the full import of what they were doing, when they seized the power and were forced to endeavor to ride the hurricane that they had blown up? The answer to that question, perhaps put somewhat differently, is the main theme of Dr. Stachiw's book on this first Bolshevik attempt to abolish all that existed and create a new world.

The Western leaders had no sound knowledge of the situation and in isolated countries as Ukraine no way of applying practical influence. The Central Powers were in worse condition, especially in regard to food, than anyone realized. The Ukrainians, fighting for their independence almost without weapons or trained officers, were in a pitiable condition. The Communists, seeking only food and the death of their opponents, still could not accept the theoretical appeals of Lenin on the virtues of self-determination, if it did not involve the domination of Moscow and the Russians.

The Russian Communist attack on Ukraine during the winter of 1917 thus had many unique characteristics for it occurred while the Bolsheviks were attempting to formulate and carry into practice the bombastic theories of their leaders. Those leaders found that they were engaged in an almost impossible task to support Russian unity and satisfy a dissident population. In 1918 the situation changed but after the scope of this book. The German and Austrian armies were broken. The Baltic Sea and the Dardanelles were reopened and Western supplies could be sent to those parties which the West favored, but unfortunately the Western leaders did not appreciate the change and stereotyped their thinking on what they believed to have existed in 1917. The result was the creation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, another name for the old Russian prison of nations and now a menace to the peace of the world.

It is an interesting and often pitiable and savage story that Dr. Stachiw has to tell. It is a very different tale from that of those historians who still think in terms of the old Russia and who treat the events of the Revolution of 1917 only from the vantage points of Petrograd and Moscow. It is a story that deserves to be told and considered by all those who are actively concerned with the creation of a new and better world constructed on the principle that all men are created equal and have an equal right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. We can only hope that the volume will be duly studied and appreciated.

CLARENCE A. MANNING

appropriately changed its policies and tactics, including those towards the then formally sovereign non-Russian republics, such as Ukraine, Byelorussia, Armenia and others. The outside world was totally indifferent to and oblivious of what Lenin himself and his chief lieutenants considered the actual value of the NEP policy. Had they actually listened to them they would have immediately recognized that the NEP was a political fraud, inasmuch as Lenin and all other communist leaders openly preached at home that the NEP was a "respite" (peredyshka), a breathing spell in the relentless drive of Communism for the conquest of the world. After that respite a global and open struggle of Bolshevism for the domination of the entire world was slated.

When in formalizing the new Soviet Russian empire the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was established by the decision of the Russian Communist Party of Bolsheviks (now the Communist Party of the Soviet Union), the global imperialistic aim of the Soviet authority was clearly marked on the official seal of this new state creation. This seal is defined in Article 143 of the constitution of the Soviet Union, which reads as follows:

"The state emblem of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics consists of a hammer and sickle on the background of the globe, embellished with the rays of the sun and with wheat and bearing the inscription in the languages of the Union republics: 'Proletarians of all countries, unite!' On top of the emblem is the five-pointed star."

(Also: A. P. Taranov: Konstytutsiya SRSR i URSR—The Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Ukrainian SSR, Kiev, 1959, published by Radyanska Shkola.)

Let us look closely at the Soviet emblem. The hammer and sickle are, of course, not important. Any state in the world can adopt any kind of emblem it wishes: an eagle, lion, bear, a cross, a star or a crescent. But when a state government uses its official emblem on the globe, it implies plainly that its political objective is to subordinate to its authority and rule the entire globe. It is even more indicative of this intent when a given state or government finds it necessary to underline this objective in its own constitution. And such is the case with the Soviet constitution, which expressly defines its state emblem as the seal of the future world government under the control of Communist Russia.

The Soviet emblem is used in all Soviet official institutions and also on the shields of Soviet embassies and consulates abroad. It is significant that up to now not a single state or government has made

any demarche against such juridical pretensions of the Soviet Union to dominate the globe. The United States of America made no reservation against this blatant pretension of Moscow when it recognized the USSR under President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Nor did we hear any public voice in protest raised by any American statesman or by responsible journalists or political commentators.

Yet, the language of the picture, or in our case, of the Soviet emblem, is quite clear and unmistakable. The significance of the picture is readily understood by everyone. One does not have to know the Russian language in order to understand its overall meaning. The emblem is so outlined on the globe that it represents the whole of Europe and Africa, and almost all of Asia; and shown in the West is the Atlantic Ocean and parts of the American continent.

On this complex of continents are superimposed the hammer and sickle in such a way that the pointed end of the sickle touches the borders of the State of New York! A Russian-language inscription on the emblem reads: "Proletarians of all countries, unite!" Such a slogan on the official seal of the Soviet Union signifies a direct appeal to the workers of the world to unite under the authority of the Soviet Union!

It goes without saying that such a seal encompassing the globe could properly be the symbol of only one organization, namely, the United Nations, as the latter organization purports to unite all the nations of the world for the preservation of peace. Regrettably, not a single member of the United Nations has dared to protest against the Soviet emblem as a symbol of the Russian attempt to conquer the world.

The emblem of the Soviet Union reveals to us the history of the Soviet Union itself and the so-called satellites on which the Soviet government imposed a dictatorship of the Communist Party by force of the armies. This emblem of the USSR reminds every Communist in the world of the overall objective of the communist movement, specifically, the imposition of the communist dictatorship upon the entire world.

On the other hand, the realistic policy of the communist center based upon the military strength of the Soviet Union required that the basic objective of Moscow be seen and understood only by communist adherents and sympathizers. For the non-Communist world Moscow has developed a series of deceitful and fraudulent tactics and maneuvers. This principle was well defined by Lenin, and it has subsequently been refined to perfection by his successors.

It is to be recalled that the acceptance of these mendacious tactics by Communists was voted at the executive session of the Communist International on September 2, 1935. The presiding chairman of

the Comintern told the delegates from the communist parties of the world that they should adopt the tactic of the "Trojan Horse" policy:

"Comrades! Do you recall the ancient tale about the conquest of Troy? Troy was inaccessible to the Greek armies which tried to take it, mainly because of its impregnable walls. The army which conquered Troy could not take it by force although it suffered heavy losses. It succeeded in conquering it only when it used the famed Trojan Horse, which enabled it to penetrate to the very center of the enemy camp . . ." (cf. The Trojan Horse in America, by Martin Dies).

Thus the tactics of the "Trojan Horse" were officially imposed on all the Communists in the world. Yet this tactic was widely used by Communist Russia with respect to the Central Powers headed by Germany, with which it signed a peace treaty in Brest Litovsk; the Brest Litovsk Peace Treaty was considered by the Bolshevik leaders as a mere "respite" (peredyshka). The tactic of the "Trojan Horse" also was used by Moscow with respect to Ukraine in 1918, when the Soviet government recognized the Ukrainian government and signed a peace treaty with it, while at the same time it was mounting a military aggression against Ukraine. This instance is extremely instructive and illuminating, inasmuch as Ukraine was the first victim of the military aggression of Communist Russia. Ukraine was also the first country which put up a gallant resistance against a foreign aggressor. The lesson of Ukraine should serve as a reminder to the free world of the insidious tactics of the Russian totalitarians who today threaten the whole world.

MATTHEW STACHIW

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between Soviet Russia and Ukraine is of interest to the free world because here more than anywhere else the aggressive imperialism of Bolshevik Moscow and its deceitful methods are proved by irrefutable facts and documents. While Soviet Russian aggression against Ukraine began surreptitiously, it later became an open aggression, clear in every detail.

The military aggression is also worthy of study because here Soviet Russia formally declared war against Ukraine, while its aggressions against other countries (Byelorussia, the Caucasus, the Baltic States) were conducted without any formal declaration of war; Moscow simply announced either a "civil war" or that this or that country had "voluntarily" requested to be included in a "federation" with Russia. Finally, this military aggression establishes beyond any doubt, on the basis of documents, the true purposes of Soviet Russia: the colonial exploitation of conquered countries and the acquisition of a cheap supply of raw materials for its imperial growth.

In order to comprehend properly the relations between Soviet Russia and Ukraine it is imperative to examine the policies of Czarist Russia in the last years of its existence, especially during World War I, as well as the attitude of the democratic government of Russia which was established after the collapse of Czardom.

It is to be recalled that the policy of Czarist Russia toward Ukraine was eloquently expressed by its prohibition in 1876 of the use of the Ukrainian language not only in the courts and administrative offices, but also in print, the schools, the theater, and even in religious sermons. All Ukrainian organizations were proscribed, as well as Ukrainian research in history, literature or political development. The purpose of these Draconian measures was to erase the Ukrainian nationality from the face of the earth. True, during the revolution of 1905, the Ukrainians won some concessions, such as permission to use the Ukrainian language in the theater, in the press, and the like, but it was still barred in government offices, schools, and churches. These concessions were swiftly abolished during the so-called reactionary reign of Premier Stolypin, when the use of the Ukrainian language again was curtailed

drastically. Political Ukrainian organizations could function only precariously after the revolution of 1905.

With the outbreak of war in 1914 the Czarist government suspended the publication of all Ukrainian newspapers and banned all Ukrainian organizations.

Only after the fall of Czarism in March, 1917, was political freedom established in the whole former Czarist empire. The Ukrainians were the first nation to act, reestablishing their national press and their political, social-economic and cultural organizations as well. Immediately after the overthrow of Czarism, on March 17, 1917, the Ukrainian Central *Rada**) was established, consisting of representatives of various Ukrainian parties and organizations, as an interim representation of a free Ukraine. It called for the convocation on April 19, 1917 of an All-Ukrainian National Congress, which reelected the members of the Ukrainian Central *Rada*, as a legal parliamentary organ of the Ukrainian people. It also elected the presidium of the *Rada*, and empowered the new organ not only to represent the Ukrainian people, but also to pursue the realization of self-determination.

Initially, the Ukrainian Central *Rada* endeavored to come to an agreement with the Provisional Government of revolutionary Russia regarding Ukrainian autonomy and the representation of the Ukrainian people at the forthcoming peace conference. But in the second half of May, 1917, the delegation of the Ukrainian Central *Rada* could not wrest even a promise from the Provisional Government of Russia in Petrograd to solve this problem positively. As a consequence, the Ukrainian Central *Rada*, in its first basic law (*Universal*) of June 23, 1917, declared that henceforth it would act in the name of the Ukrainian people and coordinate the life of Ukraine without awaiting the consent of the Provisional Government of Russia.

When, after the promulgation of the First *Universal*, the *Rada* began to administer the affairs of Ukraine through its Executive Organ, known as the Secretariat General, and the Provisional Government of Russia saw that the *Rada* had behind it a solid majority of the people and of the soldiers of Ukrainian descent who had been mobilized in the Russian army, and when it became evident to all that the Ukrainian Central *Rada* was *de facto* governing the country — only then did the Provisional Government of Russia decide to negotiate with the *Rada* in Kiev.

On July 13, 1917, a delegation of the Provisional Government made an agreement with the Central *Rada* and its Secretariat General providing for the recognition by the Provisional Government of the

*) The word **rada** means "Council" in Ukrainian.

Central *Rada* and the Secretariat General as representative organs of Ukraine, and for a future plan of the political system of Ukraine through an understanding to be reached with the Provisional Government of Russia. This agreement was ratified by the Provisional Government under Alexander F. Kerensky on July 16, 1917. The agreement was also recognized and ratified by the Ukrainian Central *Rada* in its Second *Universal*, July 16, 1917.

But this agreement was not kept by the Provisional Government. Relying on its military strength it curtailed the autonomous rights of Ukraine which it had previously recognized. Although the *Rada* contained a proportionate representation of the national minorities — Jews, Russians and Poles — the Provisional Government refused to recognize the *Rada's* legislative and administrative powers and tried to administer Ukraine by going over the head of the *Rada*. The government of Kerensky refused even to discuss a federation on the territory of the former Czarist empire. When the *Rada* continued to function as a legitimate government of Ukraine in accordance with the agreement of July 16, the Provisional Government, at the end of October 19, began to put into effect its plans for the dissolution of the *Rada* and the arrest of its members. This plan of Kerensky could not be realized because of the Bolshevik *coup* on November 7, 1917, which overthrew the Kerensky government and established a dictatorship of the Bolshevik party under the leadership of Lenin.

The Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) endeavored also to establish the communist regime in Ukraine at the time of its November *coup* in Petrograd. But this design failed completely, inasmuch as the *Rada*, through its Secretariat General, assumed full powers within the borders of Ukraine. This came about after a series of bloody encounters not only in Kiev, but in other cities of Ukraine as well (November 7-12, 1917). The army, that is, the Ukrainian soldiers, stood for the Central *Rada*, and overpowered at first those Russian troops which were loyal to the Provisional Government and subsequently the Bolshevik bands as well. By November 12, the Secretariat General actually held all governmental powers on the territory of autonomous Ukraine, and on November 13, by a special ordinance, expanded its jurisdiction to the 9 original *gubernias* (provinces) of Ukraine. This *de facto* state was legalized on November 20, 1917, by a new law of the Ukrainian Central *Rada*; then it proclaimed the Third *Universal*, which established the Ukrainian National Republic. This law provided that a permanent government and Constitution of the Ukrainian National Republic were to be decided upon by a Ukrainian Constituent Assembly. Elections to this Assembly were scheduled for January 9, 1918, en-

trailing a general, equal and proportionate vote for all citizens of Ukraine without regard to their descent or religion. At the same time the law provided that on January 22, 1918 the Ukrainian Constituent Assembly was to convene in Kiev.

The Third *Universal* did not in fact reject the possibility of a federation with Russia and other national republics, but the Ukrainian view was that any federation would have to be preceded by an agreement subject to ratification by the Ukrainian Constituent Assembly. This law of the *Rada*, as well as its executive organ, stood firmly on democratic positions and the principle of national freedom, and was one of the reasons why, immediately after the establishment of the Ukrainian National Republic in Ukraine, the government of Soviet Russia decided to destroy the Ukrainian National Republic with its democratic system of government. Being incapable in November of staging a Bolshevik *coup* in Ukraine and of destroying the Ukrainian National Republic, the Soviet government was compelled to act openly as an aggressor against Ukraine. But before embarking on this road, the Soviet government tried once again to subvert the free Ukrainian government and, at the same time, to secure a truce with Germany and Austria-Hungary.

CHAPTER ONE

PREPARATION OF SOVIET RUSSIA FOR MILITARY AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE

Kerensky Prepares a Coup Against Ukrainian Central 'Rada'

Under the leadership of Alexander F. Kerensky, the Russian Provisional Government failed to keep its agreement with the Ukrainian Central *Rada*. It did everything in its power to prevent the Ukrainians from establishing a real autonomous system in Ukraine. It limited the autonomous territory to only 5 provinces, while maintaining under its authority four other provinces where the Ukrainian population was in the majority, a course of action wholly contrary to the terms of the agreement. The *Rada* and its Secretariat General avoided a bloody conflict with the Provisional Government because they had the illusion that the responsible Russian leaders, like the Ukrainians, also desired a peaceful settlement of relations between the Ukrainian and Russian peoples. The Ukrainians believed that these vital questions would be resolved when the Ukrainian Constituent Assembly finally met, that is when the Russian Provisional Government would hear the authoritative will of Ukraine with regard to the establishment of coexistence and co-operation between Ukraine and Russia.

The very fact that as early as October, 1917, the Ukrainian Central *Rada* was considering the convocation of a Ukrainian Constituent Assembly was the reason why the Provisional Government decided to disperse the *Rada* and to arrest the members of the Secretariat General and put them on trial. The negative attitude of Russian democratic circles toward Ukraine was due to the fact that these circles continued the old Czarist imperialist policy, especially toward Ukraine. They were prepared to make some concessions in the field of language and the schools, and even in administrative self-government in limited form, but they were strongly opposed to the establishment of Ukrainian military forces and the economic self-government of Ukraine. True, on occasion they spoke loftily of the right of all peoples to self-determination; but they were prompt to pre-determine the fate of the Ukrainian people in the sense that they chose to leave

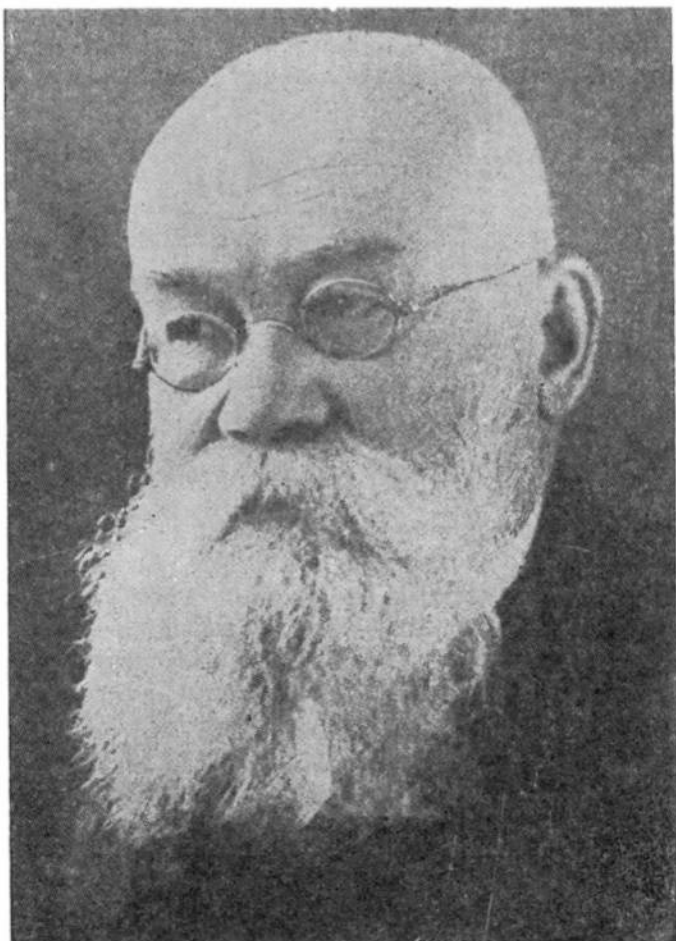
the final solution up to the Russian Constituent Assembly, which was to be composed of deputies from the entire former Russian empire with the exception of Poland (and later Finland). In such an assembly Ukraine would have been in a minority, and its future would have been determined by the Russians. Such a course, therefore, was not acceptable to the Ukrainians; they demanded the convocation of a separate Ukrainian Constituent Assembly which could, through its leaders, negotiate with the Russian Constituent Assembly.

Russian Bolsheviks Planned Ahead Military Uprising in Ukraine

The Russian Bolsheviks in theory also recognized the principle of the right of the non-Russian nations to self-determination ("including separation from Russia"). In fact, however, the Russian Communist Party of Bolsheviks (RCPb) recognized this right only for Poland. As far as other non-Russian peoples were concerned the leadership of the RCPb stood firmly for a centralized Russian state with a theoretical granting to these peoples of some vague status of federation. This notion of federation had no basis whatsoever, for we need only recall that the RCPb spread propaganda for a program of "proletarian dictatorship" through the "Soviet," which in practice meant the dictatorship of the Russian Communist Party.

Having established their power in Russia through a military *coup*, the leadership of the RCPb was aware that for some time to come it had to conduct a "peaceful policy" toward Ukraine, a course then vital for the entrenchment of their power in Russia itself.

After solidifying its power in Russia, the RCPb planned a like internal *coup* directed against the Ukrainian National Republic. The Russian *Sovnarkom* (Soviet of People's Commissars) set up a two-pronged attack against Ukraine: military aggression in conjunction with a planned *putsch* in Kiev. The latter was to be initiated by the First All-Ukrainian Congress of the Councils of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, who were to deliver a vote of non-confidence in the *Rada*, thereby paving the way for proclamation of a "Soviet government" in Ukraine. Parallel with the marshalling of Soviet military formations on the borders of Ukraine, the Bolsheviks were busy "electing" their own delegates to the First All-Ukrainian Congress of Deputies in Kiev. Bolshevik agents as well as the Soviet government brought heavy pressure to bear in order to precipitate the congress. Eventually the congress was called by the Executive Committee of Workers' Councils of Kiev as well as by the local Bolsheviks on December 13, 1917.



Prof. Mykhailo Hrushevsky
First President of the Ukrainian National Republic

In connection with this a military *putsch* by communized Russian troops in Kiev was scheduled for a day earlier, December 12. This was to be an exact replica of the Bolshevik *coup* in Petrograd where the *coup* was engineered the day before the convocation of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. This plan, as we know, had met with complete success, because the Kerensky government had no reliable troops for its defense. The Soviets realized, however, that such a favorable situation was not to be found in Kiev, where the overwhelming majority of the population stood back of the Ukrainian National Republic.

Therefore, the Bolsheviks concentrated large contingents of troops around Kiev, composed mostly of former Czarist units. One of the organizers of the *putsch*, I. Puke,¹ reports in his memoirs that the uprising had been scheduled for November 30, 1917 (old calendar), and that the Bolshevik troops consisted of 8,400 soldiers of all service branches, 10 artillery batteries, armored cars and 6 war planes. The government of the Ukrainian National Republic, learning of these preparations, moved swiftly and ordered the disarmament of the Bolshevik forces.

After the failure of the internal uprising of Bolshevik units in Kiev on December 12, 1917, and being confident of a swift truce with the Central Powers, the Soviet government began to concentrate large contingents of troops on the northern borders of Ukraine. These troops came not only from the German-Austrian front, but also included newly organized "Red Guards" from Moscow, Petrograd and other major cities of Russia.

At the beginning of December, 1917, the Soviet government had appointed V. Antonov-Ovsienko, a prominent Bolshevik, commander-in-chief of all Bolshevik troops mobilized against Ukraine. In 1924 this commander published his memoirs on the Soviet aggression against Ukraine. According to his account, as far back as December 14, 1917, he had completed all his plans for the invasion of Ukraine and waited only for the order from his government in Petrograd to proceed. His plans were for two parallel drives: one directed against the industrial-mining area of Kharkiv, the other against Kiev, the capital of Ukraine. He openly records that he received Russian divisions which had been withdrawn from the anti-German front. Only when this operation of aggression was set into motion did the Soviet government issue an ultimatum to the government of the Ukrainian National Republic demanding unconditional surrender.

Bolshevik Attempt to Take Over Congress of Councils in Kiev

Meanwhile in Kiev the All-Ukrainian Congress of Councils of Deputies (Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers') had begun its sessions. The Congress convened with the full approval of the Ukrainian government, which had no doubt that the Congress would express its confidence

¹ I. Puke: **Voyenno-Rev. Komitet i Oktiabrskoye vosstanie (Military-Revolutionary Committee and the October Uprising).**

in the Ukrainian Central *Rada* and reject the Soviet proposal for establishing a Soviet government in Ukraine.

Here it is imperative to analyze briefly the "Soviets" or "Councils" which were organized by the Bolsheviks from among workers, peasants, soldiers and the like, in order to follow the course of events properly.

We must keep in mind that, at the beginning of the March 1917 revolution, in the whole former Russian empire there were established "Soviets" of soldiers, workers, peasants, teachers, and those of other professions. In the army these "Soviets" were ensconced in all lower units, while their delegates formed "councils of soldiers' deputies" at the brigade, division, corps and army levels. "Councils" or "Soviets" of peasant deputies were active in the *rayons*, districts and provinces, while "workers' deputies" made their appearance in the plants and factories. All these "Soviets" elected their own "executive committees," which conducted the affairs of the "Soviet" when the latter was not in session. Most active and important were the "Soviets" of soldiers' and workers' and peasants' deputies, inasmuch as they represented the most basic and the greatest part of the population. At the outset these "Soviets" were under the influence of the Russian Socialist Parties, but gradually the Russian Bolsheviks succeeded in pushing out the Russian Socialists and, together with the Left Russian Socialist Revolutionaries, secured a majority at the All-Russian Congress of Councils.*

In Ukraine, too, there existed "Councils" of deputies who had been freely elected and who in fact expressed the will of their voters. The Ukrainian Central *Rada* had as members such deputies, specifically, 212 from the All-Ukrainian Council of Peasant Deputies, 158 from the All-Ukrainian Council of Soldier Deputies and 158 other such deputies. Thus the *Rada* was a genuine cross-section of the social mosaic of Ukraine. Up to December, 1917, these "Councils" held their conventions and congresses, and on December 13, 1917, an All-Ukrainian Congress of all "Councils" was called, which for technical reasons did not meet until four days later (December 17, 1917).

Over 2,000 deputies attended the Congress. Of this number the Bolsheviks controlled only 60 deputies. The presidium of the Congress consisted of non-Bolshevik deputies, principally of Ukrainian Socialist Revolutionaries and Social Democrats. Prof. Michael Hrushevsky, the

***(Author's Note:** The Russian word for "council" is "Soviet," hence the name of the later Soviet state. In the Bolshevik sense the "Soviet" is the instrumentality of their dictatorship. Therefore, the term "Soviet" will be used with reference to the Bolshevik system, while the word "Council" will be used in describing the soldiers', peasants', or workers' councils.)

noted Ukrainian historian and President of the Ukrainian Central Rada, was elected honorary president of the Congress.²

The Soviet government simultaneously conducted psychological warfare against the Ukrainian National Republic. In its propaganda it represented the Ukrainian government as "counterrevolutionary" and as a partisan of the restoration of the old regime.

"War Ultimatum" of Soviet Government

But both the Soviet government and the Russian Communist Party outdid themselves, and revealed their total ignorance of the Ukrainian liberation spirit and the movement which had been so bitterly persecuted by Czarism. Stalin had been appointed commissar of nationalities within the Soviet government for the purpose of waging psychological warfare and open military aggression against Ukraine. But he misjudged the Ukrainians; the ultimatum to the Ukrainian government provoked a reaction among the deputies attending the All-Ukrainian Congress of Councils in Kiev quite opposite to what was expected in Petrograd. The Soviet government undoubtedly believed that the tone of the ultimatum would spread panic in the Ukrainian government and sway the Congress of deputies toward the Bolshevik side.

The Soviet ultimatum began:

Taking into consideration the interest of the unity and brotherly union of the working and exploited masses in the struggle for socialism, and taking into consideration the recognition of these principles by numerous decisions of the organs of revolutionary democracy of the Soviets, and above all, of the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets — the socialist government of Russia — the Soviet of People's Commissars — once more reaffirms the right to self-determination of all peoples, who were oppressed by Czardom and the Russian bourgeoisie, and the right of these peoples to separation

² The number of over 2,000 deputies is given by non-Bolshevik sources, such as P. Khrystiuk (II, p. 66), D. Doroshenko (I, p. 219), and others. Bolshevik authors, for obvious reasons, tried to decrease the number of deputies and augment that of the Bolshevik sympathizers and deputies. M. Skrypnyk, in his **Outline of the History of the Proletarian Revolution in Ukraine** (Chervony Shliakh, 1-4, 1923) gives the number of non-Bolshevik deputies as "over 1,000." **The History of Ukraine in Concise Outline** by Matviy Yavorsky gives, however, the true number of deputies: "The Congress was attended by 2,000 deputies from various parts of Ukraine..." (p. 319). Also, the latest party book on this period, published in 1954, gives the number of deputies as 2,000 (cf. A. V. Lykhovatsky: **Razgrom natsionalisticheskoi kontrrevolutsii na Ukrainie** p. [22]).



The Trident, the official state emblem of the
Ukrainian National Republic

from Russia. Therefore, we, the Soviet of People's Commissars, *do recognize the Ukrainian National Republic* and its right to complete separation from Russia or to conclude a treaty with the Russian Republic on a federative or similar relationship. All that concerns the national rights and the national independence of the Ukrainian people is recognized by the Soviet of People's Commissars immediately, without limitation and unconditionally . . .

But despite this recognition of the Ukrainian National Republic, "without limitation and unconditionally" the note of the Soviet government sought to fabricate some pretext for military aggression, which was long planned and prepared. The ultimatum of Soviet Russia read:

We accuse the (Ukrainian Central) *Rada* that under cover of national slogans it conducts a definite bourgeois policy, which for some time has not been recognized by the Russia of the Soviets and the Soviet authority in Ukraine. Among

other things the *Rada* has refused to call a congress of Ukrainian Soviets despite the demands of the Soviets of Ukraine.

This uncertain policy, which deprives us of the possibility of recognizing the *Rada* as a legitimate representation of the working and exploited masses of the Ukrainian Republic, led the *Rada* recently to take steps which obviate any possibility of understanding.

These steps were:

1. Disorganization of the front. By unilateral orders the *Rada* transfers and recalls Ukrainian units from the front against the Germans and Austrians, thus destroying a unified front and causing a division which could be avoided only through an organized understanding of the governments of both republics;

2. Disarming of Soviet troops stationed in Ukraine;

3. Support of the Cadet plot of Kaledin, General of the Don Cossacks and the uprising against the Soviet authority, referring wholly unjustly to the alleged autonomous rights of the Don and the Kuban.

Covering up Kaledin's counterrevolutionary actions, which are contrary to the interests and desires of the overwhelming majority of the toiling Cossacks; the (Ukrainian Central) *Rada* allows Kaledin passage of his troops through its territory. By choosing this path of unheard-of treason to the revolution, the path of supporting implacable enemies of national independence of the peoples of Russia and its Soviet authority and the enemies of the working and exploited class — the Cadets and partisans of Kaledin — the *Rada* would compel us to declare war unhesitatingly, even if it were a formally recognized and undisputed organ of the highest state authority of an independent bourgeois Ukraine.

Now, taking all the above into consideration, the Soviet of People's Commissars publicly and before the peoples of the Ukrainian and Russian Republics put to the *Rada* the following questions:

1. Does the Central *Rada* take upon itself the task of stopping the disorganization of the front?

2. Does the Central *Rada* agree not to let pass through

its territory any military formations going to the Don, the Ural or other areas without the consent of the Supreme Commander (then a Bolshevik)?

3. Does the Central *Rada* take upon itself the task of helping the revolutionary troops (Bolshevik) in the matter of the struggle against the counterrevolutionary uprising of Cadet Kaledin?

4. Does the Central *Rada* propose to stop its disarming of Soviet regiments and workers' Red Guards (Bolshevik) in Ukraine and to restore arms to those already deprived of them?

If within 48 hours there is no satisfactory reply, the Soviet of People's Commissars will consider the Central *Rada* in a state of war with the Soviet authority in Russia and in Ukraine.*

Signed: *Soviet of People's Commissars*:

Chairman of Soviet of People's Commissars
V. ULIANOV (Lenin)

People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs
L. TROTSKY

Demagoguery and clearly untruthful statements, as well as demands impossible of acceptance by a government of any free people — all this constituted the ultimatum of the Soviet Russian government to the Ukrainians. The essence of these demands was surrender to Soviet Russia, inasmuch as it called for: 1) recognition in Ukraine of the dictatorship of the "Soviets"; 2) permission for the Soviet troops in Ukraine to remain armed; 3) rearming of those Soviet units which had been disarmed previously and which were preparing for an armed uprising against the government of the Ukrainian National Republic and which had remained in Ukraine, although they had been given permission to leave for Russia; 4) finally, the demand that the Ukrainian government had to agree to help to destroy the national governments in the Don, the Urals, Kuban, and Siberia. It is plain that the Ukrainian government could not but reject this ultimatum; capitulation meant the acceptance of the dictatorship of the Soviet of People's Commissars of Russia.

* (Words in parenthesis are added — M. S.)

When the ultimatum was read at the All-Ukrainian Congress of Councils and it was seen that the Ukrainian government had been backed against the wall, the deputies attending the Congress became indignant and irate. The tone as well as the content of the ultimatum deeply offended the national feeling of the majority of the deputies. The Bolshevik deputies tried to mitigate the effect of the ultimatum, claiming that it stemmed from some "misunderstanding" and that a clarification was in order. For tactical purposes and in order to sway the non-Bolshevik deputies to their side, they professed not to be in agreement with the ultimatum. The addresses of the Bolshevik deputy V. Zatonsky and the Ukrainian Communist V. Shakhrai, who supported the Bolsheviks, met with catcalls and boos.

The Congress was also attended by Volodymyr Vynnychenko, head of the Secretariat General of the Ukrainian National Republic, who gave an appropriate exposition of the views of the Ukrainian government. All the non-Bolshevik speakers promptly rejected the demands of the Soviet government and the Russian Communist Party. Professor Hrushevsky, President of the Central *Rada* and honorary president of the Congress, read a special declaration of the *Rada* stating that it would resign if the Congress did not accord it a vote of confidence, a statement which was received with a unanimous ovation for him and the *Rada*.

After a thoroughgoing debate, on the third day the Congress of Councils dealt with the resolutions. The Bolshevik faction, seeing that it was impossible to sway the Congress to the Bolshevik side, swiftly left the Congress.

On December 19, 1917, the All-Ukrainian Congress of Councils voted a resolution, with two deputies voting against and 19 abstaining, of the following content:

"Considering the ultimatum of the Soviet of People's Commissars a *coup* against the Ukrainian National Republic and believing that the demands stipulated in it violate the right of the Ukrainian people to self-determination and to a free building of the structure of their statehood, the All-Ukrainian Congress of Peasants', Workers', and Soldiers' Councils states that the centralist designs of the present Muscovite (Great Russian) government, by contributing to a war between Russia and Ukraine, threaten to completely disrupt federative ties, toward which Ukrainian democracy is directed.

"At a time when the democracy of the entire world, led by first-rank



Simon Petlura

Secretary General of Defense in 1917 and Head of the Directorate
of the Ukrainian National Republic in 1919

adherents of international socialism, is struggling for the attainment of general peace, which alone can give the peasant and proletarian masses the possibility of effectively struggling for the interests of the working people, the threat of a new war as enunciated by the Soviet of People's Commissars against Ukraine is undermining the brotherhood of the working classes of all peoples, instigating manifestations of national hostility and lowering the class consciousness of the masses.

"Recognizing that the reply of the Secretariat General of December 17 is an adequate answer to the *coup* of the People's Commissars against the rights of Ukrainian peasants, workers and soldiers, the All-Ukrainian Congress of Peasants', Workers' and Soldiers' Councils deems it necessary to undertake all measures required to prevent the spilling

of brotherly blood and directs an ardent appeal to the people of Russia to forestall by every means the possibility of a new and horrible war."

Ukrainian Government's Answer to Soviet "War Ultimatum"

The government of the Ukrainian National Republic replied to the ultimatum of Soviet Russia in a special note rejecting the demand to surrender to the People's Commissars, but tried to avoid war by suggesting new negotiations with the government of Soviet Russia on the basis of the strict non-interference of Soviet Russia in the internal affairs of Ukraine. The note was dispatched to Petrograd on December 18, 1917. In it the government of the Ukrainian National Republic explained the baselessness of the accusations leveled by the Soviet of People's Commissars against the *Rada* and the Ukrainian government. The note, among other things, stated:

"Ukrainian troops disarmed Russian soldiers who were conspiring against the government of the Ukrainian people and threatening to bring into Ukraine a bloody fratricidal war . . . These soldiers were given an opportunity to return to their own country unharmed . . .

"The unity of the front (against Germany and Austria) is also recognized by the government of the Ukrainian National Republic . . . But . . . the Soviet of People's Commissars of Great Russia wrecked this front by disorganizing it completely . . . Bolshevik units are deserting their positions and quitting the front . . ."

In addition, the Ukrainian government rejected the thesis of the Soviet ultimatum to the effect that the Soviet government has a right to impose the Soviet system upon other republics and concluded that the Ukrainian government considers a state of war between the two states to constitute a mortal blow to the working people of both countries:

"But if the People's Commissars of Great Russia assume the responsibility for all the consequences of that evil — a fratricidal war — and compel the Secretariat General to accept their challenge, the Secretariat General is certain that Ukrainian soldiers, workers and peasants, by defending their rights and their own country, will deliver an adequate response to the People's Commissars, who are compelling Great Russian soldiers to raise their hands against their brother Ukrainians."

This note, which before being sent to the Soviet of People's Commissars in Petrograd, was read at the All-Ukrainian Congress by Volodymyr Vynnychenko, head of the government of the Ukrainian National Republic, met with the overwhelming approval of the Ukrain-

ian people throughout Ukraine. The Congress also passed an appeal to the "peoples of Russia" which sought to neutralize the effect of the Bolshevik propaganda. The appeal stated:

"The Soviet of People's Commissars theoretically recognizes the right of nations to self-determination, including full separation. But these are only words. In reality the government of the Commissars callously interferes with the activities of the Ukrainian government,



Volodymyr Vynnychenko

Head of the First Secretariat General of Ukraine

which is fulfilling the will of the legislative organ — the Ukrainian Central *Rada*. What sort of self-determination is this? The Commissars are allowing self-determination only to their party. Like the Czarist government, they are trying to keep all other groups and peoples under their domination by force of arms. But the Ukrainian people did not throw off the Czarist yoke just to go under a new yoke of the Commissars. And the peoples of Russia do not desire a truce at the front in order to begin even a more horrible, fratricidal war in the ranks of democracy itself.

"Brothers and comrades — workers, soldiers and peasants! Was it you who declared war against the revolutionary democracy of Ukraine? Do you consider us to be a more dangerous enemy than the regiments of Hindenburg? No, we cannot believe it! Think about it! Tell those who lead the Soviet of People's Commissars, that they have

begun a criminal action. Tell them that you will not disrupt the brotherly peace between Ukraine and other peoples of Russia, which is being attacked by the Commissars of Petrograd.”³

Thus the First All-Ukrainian Congress of Councils, attended as it was by genuine deputies from peasants’, workers’, and soldiers’ councils from the whole of Ukraine, and because of the anti-state opposition of the Russian Bolsheviks, proved to be an all-out success for the government of the Ukrainian National Republic and, correspondingly, a full moral defeat for the Bolshevik designs. The First All-Ukrainian Congress expressed its full confidence in the government of the Ukrainian National Republic and its revolutionary parliament — the Ukrainian Central *Rada* — and rejected decisively all Bolshevik provocations to change the constitutional system of Ukraine to a Soviet one.

Foreign Origin of Bolshevism in Ukraine

The Ukrainian Central *Rada* and the All-Ukrainian Congress of Councils represented the most ardent and patriotic social and political element, an expression of the will of the entire Ukraine. This was acknowledged, after Ukraine had been subdued, by Bolshevik writers who had taken an active part in the war against the Ukrainian National Republic. In his historical work, Trotsky stated clearly:

“During the first years of the Soviet regime, Bolshevism was weak in Ukraine.”⁴

³ The authors of the note of the Ukrainian government as well as those who penned the appeal of the All-Ukrainian Congress of Councils manifested a keen diplomatic talent and knowledge of the mood of the popular masses. We must not forget that the **Sovnarkom** not only in its ultimatum, but through its agents, in its press and propaganda endeavored to misrepresent the actual state of affairs and to censure the Ukrainian National Republic for its allegedly aggressive designs against Soviet Russia. Therefore, both Ukrainian documents emphasized that the Ukrainian National Republic desired nothing but a peaceful relationship with Russia and even some sort of a federation with the other peoples of former Russia on a basis of equality for all national republics. This, of course, carried great propaganda value inasmuch as the war was going on and the broad masses were bent on an **immediate** peace. Had these Ukrainian documents been flavored with an intransigent tone, the Ukrainian masses, especially the soldiers, could easily have believed what the Commissars said, rather than the **Rada**. The fact that the overwhelming masses of the Ukrainian people believed the **Rada** and the government of the Ukrainian National Republic was due largely to the straightforward approach of the Ukrainian government and its strict reliance on **facts** as they existed, and not on propaganda, as was the case with the spurious arguments presented by the Soviet of People’s Commissars.

⁴ Trotsky, Leon: **Stalin, Biographical Sketch of Man and His Influence**, New York, 1946, p. 246 and following. He also points out that at the beginning of November, 1917, Stalin directed all the war operations against Ukraine, upon instruction of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party.

When an outstanding leader of Bolshevism, such as Trotsky, defines Bolshevism as having been "weak" in Ukraine, we must read it to mean that it was extremely weak. He actually meant that Bolshevism was weak in Ukraine, not only during the first months of its establishment there. Trotsky goes on to give the reason for this weakness of the Bolshevik movement in Ukraine: it had an "exotic" or "alien" character. It is evident that if Bolshevism were "weak" and "alien" in Ukraine, it meant that the Central *Rada* had behind it the solid support of the Ukrainian people. This, understandably enough, Trotsky does not say explicitly; it would have been tantamount to an avowal that the war in Ukraine was not a war against the "bourgeois" Ukrainian National Republic, but against the entire Ukrainian people.

Again, Mykola Skrypnyk, who from the very beginnings of the Bolshevik party was one of its most active leaders and took a leading part in the aggression of Soviet Russia against the Ukrainian National Republic, conceded the same fact as had Trotsky, namely, that the overwhelming majority of the Ukrainian population supported the *Rada*, and not the Russian Bolsheviks. In his *Outline of the History of the Proletarian Revolution in Ukraine*, Skrypnyk admitted reluctantly many facts which contradict the Soviet theory to the effect that the *coup* in Ukraine was "organic," and that there was no conquest by Communist Russia. He wrote his history in 1923, a time of increased anti-Soviet activities on the part of Ukrainian forces in Ukraine and in the emigration, which development undoubtedly had a heavy impact upon the Ukrainian Communists, members of the Russian Communist Party. Skrypnyk labored to prove that the Soviet regime in Ukraine had been established by local Bolshevik forces and that the "Peasant-Worker Government," proclaimed in Kharkiv, had conquered Kiev and the greater part of Ukraine by itself and had succeeded in pushing out the government of the Ukrainian National Republic from Kiev to Zhytomyr without the help of the Russian Bolsheviks. But in writing his account, Skrypnyk was compelled to bring out some facts which hit at the very essence of the Bolshevik theory on the Ukrainian origin of Bolshevism in Ukraine. On page 91 of his book, Skrypnyk makes the following statement which plainly recognizes the significance of the Ukrainian Central *Rada* and those Ukrainian social and political organizations which supported it:

"In general, the intelligentsia, especially the petit peasant intelligentsia, and also the peasantry, city dwellers and quite large segments of workers — this majority of the local population of Ukraine from the very beginning of the revolution was under the increasing influence of the various parties of

social patriotism of a Ukrainian hue . . . National oppression by the cruel policy of Czarism . . . induced a development whereby the class struggle in Ukraine from the very beginning was clad in the garb of the national question, accepted slogans of national culture, national autonomy and even national independence. The previous and stubborn work of partisans of the Ukrainian national movement which had lasted many years created a rather important and strong number of representatives of this movement and succeeded in interesting quite a large strata of the population in the national question" (author's italics).

In another chapter of his book Skrypnyk confirms the same in connection with the Ukrainian Central *Rada*:

"The Council of Peasant Deputies elected at the All-Ukrainian Peasant Congress entered the Ukrainian Central *Rada*. The Ukrainian nationalist spirit found sufficient firm and strong ground for its existence and further struggle."⁵

Skrypnyk's statement that the majority of the local Ukrainian population supported the organizations which made up the *Rada* clearly signifies that the overwhelming majority of the people stood for the *Rada*. When he admits that the *Rada* had "sufficient firm and strong ground" we should understand that it was most broadly based and on the strongest ground. Let us not forget the explicit underscoring of Skrypnyk, namely, that it was the *local* population of Ukraine. He also admits, albeit very cautiously, that the Bolsheviks were an alien and imported element in Ukraine, not counting a few individuals who, like himself, were of Ukrainian nationality.

The inevitable conclusion from the statements of these two historians and participants of the Bolshevik war against Ukraine can be only one for an impartial student: the overwhelming majority of all the Ukrainian people in all their classes and strata — peasants, workers, intelligentsia and city dwellers — had expressed their confidence in the Ukrainian Central *Rada*. Even the working class, in whose name the Bolsheviks spoke and still speak, supported the *Rada* and the government of the Ukrainian National Republic, and not the Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks in Ukraine formed an extremely weak group. As such,

⁵ Cf. the cited article in **Chervony Shliakh**, No. 1, p. 91, 1923. In Skrypnyk's interpretation of "social-patriotic" parties were grouped all four Ukrainian Socialist parties: a) Social-Democrats; b) Social-Revolutionaries; c) Social-Independents and d) Social-Federalists. He labeled all Ukrainian non-communist parties "nationalist."

they could not accomplish a revolutionary *coup*. It was managed only with the assistance of the armed forces of Soviet Russia in Kharkiv; with the help of these armed forces they "imposed Soviet power in Ukraine," marching from Kharkiv, and conquering Kiev on February 9, 1918.

It is a historical fact that the First All-Ukrainian Congress of Peasants', Workers', and Soldiers' Deputies rejected the proposal of the Bolsheviks to establish a Soviet government in Ukraine patterned after that in Petrograd. The attempt to create an internal *putsch* in Kiev, and especially the endeavor to get the Soviet ultimatum approved by the government of the Ukrainian National Republic, failed utterly. Thus the Bolsheviks could not possibly claim that their power in Ukraine originated with the First All-Ukrainian Congress of Councils, which they had wanted and had helped to convoke. Hence they were forced to resort to drastic measures in order to fulfill the basic directive of their center in Petrograd.

After their humiliating rout at the First All-Ukrainian Congress of Councils in Kiev, the Bolshevik deputies refused to take part in the last day's deliberations of the Congress. Their group, numbering 47 men, quit the Congress and held a separate caucus. In a telephone communication with Stalin in Petrograd, who under the direct supervision of Lenin had directed all the aggressive movements of the Bolsheviks against Ukraine since November, 1917, and who kept a special agent, Sergey Bakinsky, in Kiev, the Bolshevik deputies received detailed instructions as to their further moves.

Stalin informed them (December 18 or 19, 1917) that a strong Bolshevik army was approaching the borders of Ukraine and that its first objectives were Kharkiv and the Donetsk Basin. Second, apparently with the full approval of Lenin, he ordered through his agent Bakinsky, that the Bolshevik deputies hasten with all possible speed to Kharkiv, where they were to organize a "Soviet government of Ukraine" and to declare war against the legitimate government of the Ukrainian National Republic. Trotsky reports definitely that from November, 1917 on, Stalin was in close contact with the Kiev Bolsheviks and in agreement with Lenin, issued all directives to his agents in Kiev.⁶ In any event, it would be difficult to imagine that second-rate Bolshevik leaders, as the Kiev and Kharkiv Bolsheviks were, (not one of them was a candidate for full membership in the Central Committee of the party) would dare to undertake on their own such an important action as

⁶ Trotsky, *op. cit.*, p. 246 and following.

the setting-up of a Soviet government and the declaration of war against the Ukrainian National Republic.

The Bolshevik group had gathered around itself a few Sovietophile elements which took part in the All-Ukrainian Congress in Kiev, but which did not belong to the Communist Party and therefore did not quit the Congress. These were the two deputies who voted against the resolution of the Congress, and the 19 who abstained. Thus, altogether there were about 70 Bolshevik deputies and their puppets out of a total of 2,000 delegates at the Kiev Congress, or about 3 per cent. This infinitesimal number — even in the eyes of the Bolsheviks, who in principle held that a minority should rule over the majority — was nonetheless “too small” to be entrusted with the installation of a “legal” Soviet government in Ukraine. Therefore, Skrypnyk, Piatakov, Bosch and other Bolshevik authors devised a new line of propaganda: to decrease the actual number of deputies at the All-Ukrainian Congress of Councils in Kiev and, concomitantly, to increase the number in the Bolshevik minority. Thus, Skrypnyk, for instance, in his history decreases the number of deputies at the All-Ukrainian Congress by 1,000, while he increases the number of Bolshevik delegates to 160. Moreover, he belittles the majority of deputies at the All-Ukrainian Congress in Kiev by referring to them as “monks or *kurkuls* from Farmers’ Unions.” He angrily noted the fact that the All-Ukrainian Congress began with “the singing not of the *Internationale* nor the *Marseillais*”, but to the accompaniment of the national hymn, *Shche ne vmerla Ukraina*. He frequently refers to the majority of legal delegates as a “satanized crew of nationalists and of people confused by them.” “It was an element of *kurkul* nationalism, instigated by the chieftains of the Ukrainian Central Rada,” Skrypnyk wrote.⁷

But such understating of the number of delegates by Skrypnyk is not convincing at all, inasmuch as he himself admitted previously that most of the peasantry supported the Central Rada, although among the Ukrainian peasantry there was no “*kurkul*” majority, but, on the contrary, the laboring and small holder peasantry constituted a solid majority. The so-called *kurkuls*,* who were not numerous, could not be placed on a par even with the poorest farmer in the United States or Canada. The Ukrainian *kurkul* could only engender respect as a constructive social element, inasmuch as he worked his land alone, without hiring extra hands.

The Bolshevik group of seventy which seceded from the All-Ukrainian Congress in Kiev gathered in Kharkiv and on December 26,

* **Kurkul** in Ukrainian (or **kulak** in Russian) denotes a wealthy farmer.

⁷ Skrypnyk, *op. cit.* p. 80 & ff.

1917, declared itself the "First All-Ukrainian Congress of Workers', Peasants', and Soldiers' Councils of Deputies"⁸ This was purely a propaganda move to provide a cover for the Soviet Russian aggression which was in full swing in Ukraine. Kharkiv was already occupied by Soviet troops, and under their protection the "All-Ukrainian" congress could deliberate unhindered. On the same day (December 26) the spurious "All-Ukrainian Congress of Councils" elected its own "All-Ukrainian Central *Rada* of Deputies," which subsequently was renamed the "Central Executive Committee of Ukraine," just like the one in Russia. It goes without saying that, with the exception of a few native Ukrainians, both the "All-Ukrainian" congress and the "Central Executive Committee of Ukraine" consisted almost exclusively of Russians or Russified elements. All deliberations, therefore, were conducted in the Russian language, and even the executive organ elected at the "congress" bore a purely Russian name: *Tsentralnyi Ispolnitelnyi Komitet Sovietov Ukrainy*. Only for external propaganda use and agitation among the Ukrainians did this organ use the Ukrainian form.

This spurious "First All-Ukrainian Congress of Councils" decided to "disband" the Ukrainian Central *Rada* and to take over the authority of Ukraine from the government of the Ukrainian National Republic by force of arms.

Furthermore, this puppet creation of Moscow established a "People's Secretariat," which promptly declared a federation with Soviet Russia and declared war against the Ukrainian National Republic and the Central *Rada*. Thus, in this back door fashion, Moscow tried to achieve a semblance of legality for its aggression against Ukraine, which it had begun on December 17, 1917.

At the head of the *Tsentralnyi Ispolnitelnyi Komitet Sovietov Ukrainy* (Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Ukraine) Moscow placed a native Ukrainian Communist, E. Medvedev, a wholly Russified worker, while the presidency of the "People's Secretariat"

⁸ The date of proclamation of the "Soviet government in Ukraine" is given as December 26, 1917, the same day which saw the gathering of the spurious "First All-Ukrainian Congress in Kharkiv." But the day of proclamation did not have especial significance for Soviet historians, inasmuch as the event itself meant little for them. For instance, Skrypnyk fails to give an exact date for the proclamation of the "Soviet government" in Kharkiv; the same is true of M. Yavorsky. The official Soviet textbook, **History of the Soviet State and Law**, ed. Prof. A. M. Denisov (Moscow, 1949) gives December 26, 1917 (p. 167). Another official historian, A. V. Likholat (**Razgrom natsionalisticheskoi kontrrevolutsii na Ukrainie**, Moscow, 1954) writes that the proclamation took place on December 25, 1917 (p. 66). **Sovietskoye Gosudarstvennoye Pravo** of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR completely ignores that date. We accept the date of December 26, 1917, after Ukrainian sources (Khrystiuk, Doroshenko).

was given to Mykola Skrypnyk, long a Ukrainian Bolshevik. Most of the members of the puppet government were Russians who were known to be extremely hostile to Ukrainian independence even in a Soviet form: Eugenia Bosch, Georgi Piatakov, Sergiev, and others. All of them not only denied the right of the Ukrainian people to independence, but denied even the existence of a Ukrainian nationality. Among them was another native Ukrainian, Volodymyr Zatonsky, who knew the Ukrainian language. Like Skrypnyk, he was used for the window-dressing purpose of giving the "Soviet government of Ukraine" a Ukrainian look. In point of fact, Zatonsky was an enemy of Ukrainian independence. According to Volodymyr Vynnychenko, an outstanding Ukrainian leader who knew him personally, Zatonsky only occasionally declared himself to be a Ukrainian, while most of the time he passed for a Russian.

The composition of the "Soviet government of Ukraine" underwent frequent changes. For some time one of its members was Vasyl Shakhrai, who was even appointed "Secretary for Military Affairs," but was never given a single military unit to command.

Later on, the "People's Secretariat" proclaimed the Ukrainian *Radyanska* (Soviet) Republic. Its official name was not formally established. It was known as the "Ukrainian *Radyanska* Republic," or the "*Radyanska* (Soviet) Republic of Ukraine," or the "Ukrainian Republic of Soviets (Councils)."

As far as the territory of this republic was concerned, here, too, there was no exact delineation of frontiers, for the Soviet government created a few other "Soviet republics" on the territory of Ukraine, also occupied by the troops of Soviet Russia.

CHAPTER TWO

RUSSIAN MILITARY OPERATIONS AGAINST UKRAINE

Defense of Ukraine in Jeopardy

The Secretariat General (government) of the Ukrainian National Republic understandably did not want to engage in war with Soviet Russia. The young Ukrainian state could not dispose of or marshal sufficient armed forces for the defense of its borders. Therefore, in its reply to the government of Soviet Russia the Ukrainian government suggested new negotiations to attain a peaceful solution of the matters outlined in the ultimatum of the Soviet Russian government of December 17, 1917. But this attempt met with no success. The government of Soviet Russia, without deigning to give a diplomatic reply, commenced its military operations against Ukraine. It must be remembered that the government of Soviet Russia had had ample opportunity to prepare its forces against Ukraine for several weeks by pulling out the necessary army contingents from the front against Germany and Austro-Hungary, with which the Soviet government had entered into truce negotiations on December 2, 1917. The Bolsheviks thus were safe from any major German-Austrian operations against the Russian front.

Following its preconceived plan of dislodging and demoralizing the enemy, the Soviet government unleashed its sinister propaganda, an art of the Bolsheviks, which subsequently proved to be one of the most outstanding features of their policy of aggression and subversion. Upon instruction from Lenin, Joseph Dzugashvili-Stalin, as People's Commissar for Nationalities (thus a member of the Soviet government), published a "letter to the Ukrainians of the Western front," which was distributed by Bolshevik agents among the population of the entire Ukraine. In it Stalin wrote that the Soviet of People's Commissars of Russia wished nothing more than "that all power in Ukraine should belong to the Ukrainian people, that is, Ukrainian workers, soldiers, peasants, and sailors." In the name of Soviet Russia he gave the assurance that Russia had nothing against the desire of the Ukrainian people to separate from Russia and create a free and independent state. It only wanted, Stalin wrote, that "reaction should not raise its head

again with the separation of Ukraine.” Nothing was said by Stalin about the Soviet military aggression which was already going on against Ukraine.⁹

Stalin’s letter was made public on December 25, 1917, at a time when Soviet Russian troops were already approaching the industrial center of Ukraine, Kharkiv.

It is not our purpose here to describe this war from the viewpoint of operations and strategy. What we intend is to review the influence of these operations upon the development of the political events in Ukraine, both on its government circles as well as on the circles of the Bolshevik occupation administration which was under Soviet control. From this viewpoint it is also interesting to examine the methods of the Soviet military aggression against Ukraine.

Let us review the front of the Soviet Russian army as it was developed against the still weak and nascent armed forces of the Ukrainian National Republic. We must remember that to the very last day of its existence the Russian Provisional Government had tried to prevent by every means the creation, of *new, purely Ukrainian* military formations; those that were organized had been so formed against the express interdiction of the Russian government. Only at the beginning, November 7, 1917, was it possible to organize new Ukrainian military formations, but now the time was extremely short before the outbreak of Russian Bolshevik aggression against Ukraine. A mere five weeks was all that the government of the Ukrainian National Republic had in which to organize its armed forces. True, the Secretariat General of Ukraine had previously endeavored to “Ukrainize” former Russian military formations, that is, to reorganize the existing army units consisting of Ukrainian soldiers into Ukrainian contingents. But this “Ukrainization” was hampered by the Russian military command in every way it could until the collapse of the Russian Provisional Government. The same tactics were employed by the newly-established Soviet government, which from its very inception envisioned the conquest of Ukraine and opposed the transfer of army units with a majority of Ukrainians from the northwestern and western fronts to the southwestern front, which ran through such Ukrainian provinces as Polissia, Volhynia, Podilia and Bessarabia to the Black Sea. As a result, there were still numerous purely Russian units on these territories at the time the Bolshevik government attacked Ukraine. Needless to say, these Russian units were wholly Bolshevized and staffed by communist officers. Moreover, when the Ukrainian National Republic was estab-

⁹ 1917 god na Kievshchinie (The Year 1917 in the Kiev Province), p. 541.

able to acquire military and staff schooling in the General Staff School. Only with the emergency of war had the Czarist government been compelled to relax its restrictions and an impressive number of Ukrainians had been allowed to take reserve officers training. These, however, were of the lowest officer rank. Thus when the time came to organize Ukrainian army units, the Ukrainian government was confronted with a scarcity of staff officers;

2) The masses of soldiers mobilized by the Czarist government were unprepared for the new type of war brought on by the circumstances of a revolution which involved the whole empire. The soldiers as a rule were exhausted by the long war and wished only to return to their homes as soon as possible. Only a strong and highly disciplined government machinery was able to keep the army under control and supervision. Since the Ukrainian state administration was in the process of creation, it was extremely difficult for it to maintain strict discipline and order in these "Ukrainized formations." The Ukrainian soldiers were mostly peasants, with but a small number of village intelligentsia (teachers and employees of cooperatives) and few Ukrainian cadre officers. The majority, therefore, was preoccupied with the thought of returning home, and it took unusual skill and determination on the part of the Ukrainian government to convince them of the necessity of their going to the front — either against the Germans or the Bolsheviks;

3) New formations were created with extreme difficulty because of the lack of manpower. Most villagers had already been mobilized, while the industrial workers who had been exempted from military service because of their indispensability in industry, for the most part, were Russians or Russified Ukrainians and other nationals, and as such were averse to going into the military service of the new Ukrainian government.

The Russian military aspect of this period was on the whole quite the opposite and to the advantage of the newly-established Soviet regime:

1) The command cadres of the former Russian Czarist army, which were overwhelmingly Russian, went into the service of the new Bolshevik regime. Among them were ardent communist sympathizers and adherents;

2) War weariness, however, also was in evidence among the soldiers of the Russian nationality. They, too, yearned for home, and deserted in large blocs from the front. In their writings both V. Antonov-Ovsienko and L. Trotsky recalled the rapid disintegration of the Russian Czarist army as well as that of the Bolsheviks. Entire regiments and divisions simply disappeared, except where there were strong units of



The Soviet State Emblem: A Symbol of Communist Russia's Design to Conquer the World

the "Red Guards" to curb desertions and restore discipline through threat of wholesale and summary reprisals. This method of "keeping up the fighting spirit" in both regular Russian and Bolshevik units is amply described in the book of Antonov-Ovsienko, especially in the report of Col. Muraviev therein on the battle for Kiev at the end of January, 1918. Also Trotsky, in his book, *Stalin* (p. 276 and ff.), explains why he, as People's War Commissar, in 1918 had to reorganize the army by ordering a "demobilization" of the old army, demoralized by the long war;

3) New formations of Bolshevik "Red Guards" were quite numerous and enjoyed a numerical superiority over the army of the Ukrainian National Republic and the volunteer detachments — the *Sichovi Striltsi*, the *Haidamaks* and the *Zaporozhians*. The Bolshevik numerical superiority arose from the great number of Russian industrial workers of the great cities (Petrograd, Moscow, Nizhny Novgorod, as well as Kharkiv, Katerinoslav and Odessa), who had been exempted from

front service by the Czarist government. Now this fresh element, well propagandized by the Bolsheviks, was swiftly mobilized in the "Red Guards" for the struggle against the "enemy of Russia," which in their eyes was the Ukrainian National Republic.

Thus the *Sovnarkom* of Communist Russia had two types of military formations at its disposal:

a) Old Russian Czarist military formations, which it had inherited from the Czarist government and the Russian Provisional Government;

b) New formations, known as "Red Guards," created by the Soviet government and usually bearing the name of the city in which they originated.

The regular army formations numbered several million soldiers, stationed on the front against the Central Powers as well as in many posts in Russia and Ukraine. They retained the old officer commands, most of which were communized and rendered loyal service to the Soviet regime. Such officers numbered in the tens of thousands. Significantly, there was no anti-Bolshevik movement among the Russian officers at that time. Only a few Russian officers refused to serve the Bolsheviks, but they also abstained from forming an active resistance against the Bolsheviks; they remained "neutral" in their own formations, or deserted to the hinterland, to such cities as Kiev, Odessa, Kharkiv, Katerinoslav and other cities of Ukraine, where the Bolshevik regime did not hold sway. Although these Russian officers did not support the new Bolshevik regime, they refused to support the Ukrainian National Republic, and when the Soviet troops invaded Ukraine, they sympathized quite openly with this invasion. True, the regular Russian army on the average was not disposed to wage war afresh, inasmuch as it was tired by the long war and demoralized by the agitation of the Bolsheviks, who, in the struggle against the Russian Provisional Government, employed that most demagogical slogan: "Immediate peace and return to your homes." Nonetheless, the war weariness and Bolshevik agitation did not cause as much damage to Soviet Russia as it did to Ukraine.

At the time of the Bolshevik *coup* in Russia the Russian Communist Party numbered about 250,000 well disciplined adult members, organized along military lines.¹⁰

From that group the Russian Communist Party was able to organize "Red Guards" in the various industrial centers, who in turn were

¹⁰ Cf. *Yezhegodnik Kominterna* (The Diary of the Comintern), Moscow, 1923, p. 414. The number of members of the Communist Party is given as 200,000, as of August, 1917, that is three and a half months before the Bolshevik *coup*; thereafter the membership of the party grew rapidly, and it is a conservative estimate that by Dec., 1917, it numbered at least 250,000.

able to attract masses of ill-organized and illiterate Russian workers and sympathizers for the Bolshevik movement. They provided the bulk of the Soviet armies which were thrown by the *Sovnarkom* against Ukraine.

The "Red Guards" infrequently had to "stimulate" the regular Russian army from behind, especially in those sectors where the fierce resistance of the Ukrainian army impeded the swift advance of the Russian troops. Thus the *Sovnarkom* could more easily deal with the aversion to war and the general weariness of the regular Russian army



Vladimir Ulianov Lenin

than could the Secretariat General of the Ukrainian National Republic with the "Ukrainized" units of the army, which had emerged from the previous Russian mobilization during the war. In addition, as mentioned before, the Soviet government had the services of the great mass of Russian officers, who loyally served the new regime, while Ukraine had a very limited number of officers, the consequence of the long period of Russification and national oppression of Ukraine by Russia. Able to maintain iron discipline in the old Czarist army, these Russian officers thus provided great help and assistance to the Soviet government in the development and building of its war machine in general and its war against Ukraine in particular. It was the second "ace in the hole" of Soviet Russia in its war against Ukraine. All this enabled the *Sovnarkom* of Russia to throw against Ukraine two great armies from

the north and the northeast: one in the direction of Kharkiv and the Donets Basin, and the other against Kiev, the capital of Ukraine.

Some military writers give the strength of the Soviet invading army as 40,000 soldiers,¹¹ an estimate which seems to be much too low. This number included the nucleus of the Soviet Russian army which invaded Ukraine under the command of Antonov and came from Central Russia. To it were added all Russian cadre units stationed in Ukraine; these units at the very beginning of the Soviet aggression began diversionary activities inside Ukraine, that is, in the rear of the defensive front of the Ukrainian army, established on the northern and northeastern borders of Ukraine. Every large city of Ukraine had a powerful military garrison, consisting largely of Russians, while army units with a preponderant Ukrainian membership had been conveniently left in Central Russia or elsewhere. In the center of Ukraine alone, in 1917, in the city of Kremenchuh on the Dnieper there were 15,000 troops, and a like number in Poltava.¹²

In Pavlohrad there were about 12,000 soldiers, not mentioning such cities as Kharkiv, Kiev and Odessa.¹³ Numerous Ukrainian troops had to be utilized to combat Bolshevik groups in the Ukrainian cities where they were endeavoring to take over the city administrations or were committing pillage and rape. Therefore, both the Secretariat General and the Ukrainian Central Rada should be commended for their stand in refusing to submit to the *Sovnarkom* of Russia, preferring instead to accept the challenge and the risk of war.

In the meantime the Ukrainian government succeeded in ridding the central territory of Ukraine of communist forces by disarming and dispersing large Bolshevik armed units in various cities of Ukraine, frequently after fierce battles and skirmishes. This action occurred simultaneously with the invasion of the Soviet Russian forces from the north and northeast.

Ukraine was menaced from four Soviet fronts:

1. The northern front in the direction of Bakhmach-Kiev;
2. The northeastern front in the direction of Kharkiv and the Donets Basin;
3. The northwestern and southwestern fronts, stretching from Polissia through Bessarabia to the Black Sea.

¹¹ General Alexander Udovychenko: **Ukraina u viyni za derzhavnist (Ukraine in the War for Statehood)**, Winnipeg, 1954, p. 17.

¹² H. Lapchynsky: **Zarodzennia radyanskoï vlady ta pershi kroky v odnomu z mist ukrainskykh** (The Birth of Soviet Power and First Steps in One of the Ukrainian Cities), **Chervony Shliakh**, Nos. 1-2, 1925, p. 112.

¹³ Cf. Reports on the Ukrainian-Russian war on the basis of official communiques in the Kiev press and the Vienna **Visnyk polityky, literatury i zhyttia** (Herald of Politics, Literature and Life), No. 73 and others, for 1918.

4. The southwestern front on the shore of the Black Sea consisting of the sailors of the Black Sea Fleet.

Although we shall not dwell in detail upon the course of the operations on these four fronts, we shall underscore the political objectives of particular operations of the Russian armies as well as analyze certain moments of this war which heretofore have not been adequately covered by historians. For a general review of the Russian operations of that time the interested reader can consult the works of military specialists dealing with the period.

The common political objective of all these operations was to throttle the government of the Ukrainian Central *Rada* and to establish



Leon Trotsky

a regime of the Russian Communist Party, that is, to destroy the Ukrainian independent state. This objective was to be accomplished by stages in order not to inflict too strong a psychological blow upon the Ukrainian masses. These planned stages were as follows:

1. To occupy immediately the Donets and Kryvy Rih basins, proclaim their detachment from Ukraine and their incorporation into the Russian communist state. This plan evolved from the ardent desire of the *Sovnarkom* and the Communist Party of Russia to maintain under their control the great mining resources — coal and iron ore — and at the same time to keep a free access to the Caucasian oil, which Moscow tried to maintain under its control and exploitation at all costs;

2. To conquer Kiev, the capital of Ukraine, to destroy all Ukrainian organs of government, especially the Ukrainian Central *Rada* and its executive arm — the Secretariat General (which on January 22,

1918, according to the Fourth *Universal*, was transformed into a Council of Ministers); and for the purpose of confusing the Ukrainian national masses the Soviet authority was to be proclaimed only on the remainder of the territory of the Ukrainian National Republic, and the Ukrainian state ostensibly was to be retained albeit in a Soviet form and on a reduced territory;

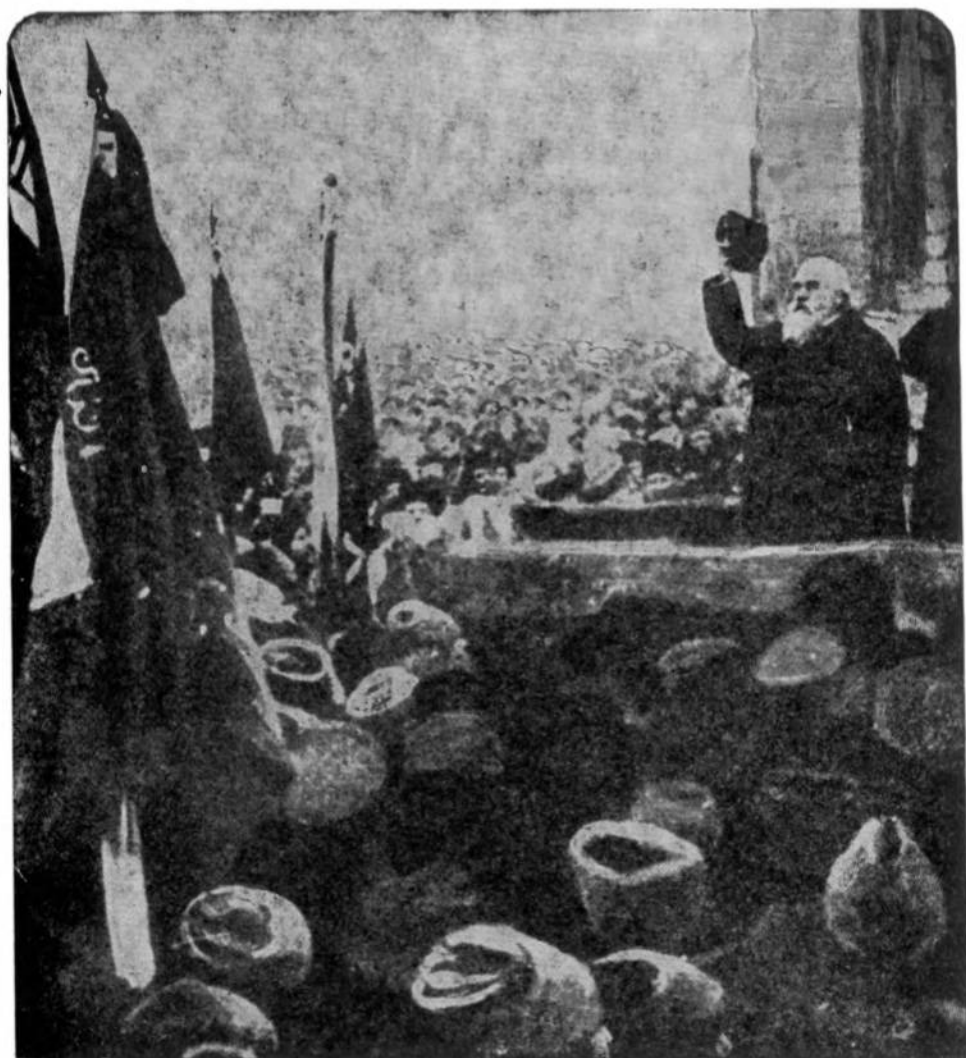
3. After the attainment of the second objective the areas of the Black Sea coast (Tavria and the Odessa province, including the city of Mykolaiv) were to be organized into special "Soviet republics," which would "voluntarily" unite with the Russian communist state;

4. Such a Ukraine reduced in territory, deprived of its natural resources and seaports, was to retain its official status as a Ukrainian state for propaganda to the effect that the Russian Communist Party supported the principle of national self-determination, although this state would be given a fully Russian character with a typical intolerance of the Ukrainian national element.¹⁴

With the progress of the military operations these objectives were gradually accomplished. But as a result of the Soviet signing of the Brest Litovsk Treaty with the Central Powers and the recognition of the Ukrainian National Republic by these Central Powers, the Russian Communist Party of necessity had to alter its tactics as far as the fourth objective of the *Sovnarkom* was concerned and to proclaim in the middle of March, 1918, the independence of a reduced "Soviet Worker-Peasant Ukrainian National Republic." This will be treated in more detail in further chapters of this work.

But despite the numerical and technical superiority of Soviet Russia over Ukraine as well as the tactical position of the Soviet Russian troops on the various fronts, the drive of the Soviet armies did not proceed as rapidly as was planned. Unexpectedly for the Soviet government, the government of the Ukrainian National Republic succeeded in disarming all Russian regular troops stationed in the great centers of Ukraine, such as Kiev, Kharkiv, Katerinoslav and others. Thus, contrary to the expectations of the *Sovnarkom*, these Russian army units were rendered useless and the Soviet aggression against Ukraine had to be a purely *external* aggression. The loss of the fifth columns of

¹⁴ The various proposed Soviet republics on the territory of Ukraine and their relations with Soviet Russia are extensively discussed in V. Antonov-Ovsienko's book, *Zapiski o grazhdanskoy voyne*, especially Vol. I, pp. 172, 190 and 296 and Vol. II, pp. 22, 23, 25, 43, 47, 78, 85, 92, 250, 251, 264 and 293. The "Ukrainian Soviet Republic" was to be known as "Ukrainian" only for propaganda purposes, while in the daily orders of Soviet army commanders it was referred to as the "South of Russia," the "Republic of South Russia," and the like (Antonov-Ovsienko, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 23, 25, 47, 85 and 247).



Prof. M. Hrushevsky, first President of the Ukrainian National Republic, addresses Ukrainian troops in January, 1918 in Kiev, capital of Ukraine

Russian Bolsheviks in Ukraine meant in turn the loss of the character of an "internal uprising," inasmuch as their activities were confined to sporadic acts of sabotage or to agitation among the Ukrainian population and Ukrainian army units.

Nonetheless, the Secretariat General of the *Rada* had to exert every effort and to hold its forces inside the country instead of dispatch-

ing them to meet the invading Soviet troops on the borders of Ukraine. Thus the fifth column activities of the *Sovnarkom* in Ukraine had a certain significance. But, on the other hand, the disarming of the units of the regular Russian troops by the Ukrainian government had another salutary effect: the Russian fifth columns in Ukraine lost their confidence in the immediate success of the Russian military aggression and believed that such an aggression should be postponed until the *Sovnarkom* was adequately prepared.

It is worthwhile to mention that this first and decisive failure of the Russian fifth columns in Ukraine evoked a rather peculiar repercussion in later Bolshevik history. In the middle 30's, when the Politburo under the direction of Stalin was engaged in the destruction of the various oppositions within the Communist Party (Trotsky, Bukharin and others), a charge was levelled against the opposition groups to the effect that the leaders of the Bolshevik fifth columns in Ukraine in 1917-1918 (Piatakov, Kossior and even the commander of all Soviet troops in the war against Ukraine, V. Antonov-Ovsienko) were traitors to the party and had acted to its detriment. It goes without saying that this was a pure fabrication; these Bolshevik leaders had done their utmost to impose Bolshevism upon the Ukrainian people. If they failed at the beginning it was not their fault. Rather, credit is to be given to the Ukrainian government and the overwhelming majority of the Ukrainian people who followed their national government in Kiev.¹⁵

Of great importance for the course of the Russian aggression was the drive of the regular Russian army units from the west, that is, from the German-Austrian front. The transfer of Russian troops from this front to the northern front and their replacement by Ukrainian troops from the north could not be effectuated because such a move was impeded by the Russian government and the supreme command of the Russian army. It is to be noted that numerous regular Russian army units which were at the Western front were thoroughly dominated by Bolshevik agitators and inflamed into fighting against the Ukrainian National Republic. Among these units were such important army groups as the Second Guard Corps (20,000 men) and the Second Cavalry Division. Some of these were ordered to drive through Volhynia, the others were sent through Podilia against Kiev (along the railroads Sheptivka-Koziatyn and Zhmerynka-Koziatyn), in order to cut off all westward avenues of retreat for the Ukrainian National Republic's government. On this front there were long and drawn-out

¹⁵ The theory of the "treason" of Piatakov, Kossior, Antonov and Rakovsky is widely discussed in the book of A. V. Licholat, *Razgrom natsionalisticheskoy kontrrevolutsii na Ukrainie 1917-1922*, published in Moscow.

operations in which the Ukrainian troops resisted the invading forces of Communist Russia. These prevented the Soviet troops from advancing rapidly and gave ample opportunity for the government of the Ukrainian National Republic to move from Kiev to Zhytomyr. Soviet operations from the West, the North, and the Southeast against the center of Ukraine were retarded precisely because of the fierce resis-



A member of the Ukrainian
cavalry unit in 1918

tance of the Ukrainian armies, and it was only on February 9, 1918, that the Soviet troops finally succeeded in taking Kiev, that is, almost two months after the start of the Soviet invasion.¹⁶

In order to describe this struggle on the Western front we shall cite a few episodes as presented in the official communiques of the Ukrainian government.

¹⁶ In comparison with the time taken by the Germans in overrunning Poland, Belgium, Holland, Norway and France during World War II, the defensive war of the Ukrainian armies was long and exhausting.

On December 17, 1917, the Second Guard Corps began its operations against the Ukrainian National Republic. In his telegram to the Russian High Command (which was intercepted by Ukrainian army intelligence) Bolshevik Commissar Lykov reported:

"The Second Guard Bolshevik Corps is under my command. I am disarming the Ukrainians, but the soldiers are refusing to give up their arms . . . I tried to disarm two echelons of Ukrainian *Haidamaks*, but did not succeed because of their resistance. One Bolshevik echelon was disarmed and dispersed by the Cossacks. Other (Russian) echelons refused to help their comrades . . . In order to cope successfully with the Ukrainians, we must segregate all Ukrainians and send them to the front (against the Central Powers). We must throw the remaining troops (Russian) against Kiev."

The same Commissar Lykov of the Second Russian Guard Corps ordered an attack upon Ukrainian railroad workers at the station of Zhmerynka. Only by dint of great effort on the part of the Ukrainian troops was order restored in that city. The fighting for the railroad junction of Zhmerynka was fierce and long in December, 1917. Russian Bolshevik Commissars sent into action a regular army Volhynian regiment, which was half Russian and half Ukrainian. The Ukrainians refused to obey the orders of the Russian Commissars; some 1,500 of them joined the Ukrainian *Haidamaks* and helped them to disarm the Russian soldiers of the Volhynian regiment and to clear Zhmerynka of Bolsheviks. The battle for Zhmerynka, which lasted two days, was ended by the resounding victory of the Ukrainian troops.

An armed uprising of Bolshevik troops in the city of Bila Tserkva was also suppressed by Ukrainian troops in the middle of December. Long and drawn-out battles were waged in Volhynia, where the Russian Bolshevik troops endeavored to occupy such principal cities as Lutsk, Rivne and Starokonstantinov. Ukrainian units succeeded in disarming them in the middle of December, 1917.

In these circumstances the Russian supreme commander on the German-Russian front, Nikolai Krylenko, demanded fresh reinforcements to send against the Ukrainian troops defending Kiev. In a telegram, intercepted by the Ukrainian General Staff on December 27, 1917, Krylenko ordered the members of the "Military Revolutionary Committee" in Volhynia (in the city of Sarny) to disregard the presence of large German troops at the front and to send all available contingents against Kiev:

"You know that a truce has been concluded for a month and therefore we can take out the whole army — and then we shall see what happens to such gentlemen as Petlura..."¹⁷

In the area of Zdolbuniv and Shepetivka a fierce encounter took place between Bolshevik troops and Ukrainian units, with the Bolsheviks employing not only infantry units but over 100 artillery pieces. The battle ended with the crushing of the Bolshevik troops by the Ukrainian forces, which captured 100 artillery pieces, 500 machine



Joseph V. Stalin (Dzugashvili)
in 1917

guns and over 11,000 rifles. One of the difficulties besetting the Ukrainian government was dispatching the disarmed Russian troops to Russia. Since it was impossible to keep them as prisoners of war, the Ukrainian government hoped that once they found themselves in Russia, they would be unwilling to go into the army again, and thus present the Soviet government with the difficult task of mobilizing them again.

The area of Koziatyn also saw a major encounter, in which 3 Russian regiments were disarmed. Yet another battle took place near Proskuriv, in which some 20,000 Russian troops were concentrated.

¹⁷ **Robitnycha Hazeta**, Kiev, December 27, 1917.

An identical situation prevailed on the Rumanian front. The Bolsheviks pulled their troops out of the lines opposing the Germans in that area and tried to use them in occupying Podilia and the area of Kherson (Odessa and Mykolaiv). In the vicinity of Brailov major skirmishes took place.

In Mykolaiv on December 29, 1917, local Bolshevik cadre units began armed attacks against the Ukrainian government in the city; by January 1, 1918, the Bolsheviks succeeded in taking over the city. But two days later (January 3) the Ukrainian *Haidamaks*, a Ukrainian army unit, succeeded in recapturing the city.

A similar situation existed in the hinterland in the East and in the Southeast of Ukraine. Before Kharkiv fell into the hands of the Russian Red army of Antonov, Russian troops stationed in the city had tried on two occasions to capture the city, but failed both times. Poltava, held for a few days by the Bolsheviks, was recaptured by the Bohdan Khmelnytsky regiment (among the casualties of the battle to recapture Poltava were the commander of the regiment, Capt. Vlastychenko, his aide Revutsky and the chairman of the city military committee, Mospan, all of whom were killed on December 30, 1917).

It is clear that under such circumstances the external front along the frontiers of Ukraine was much weaker than it would have been, had there been no Russian troops in Ukraine that fell into the hands of Bolshevik agitators.¹⁸

The Simultaneous Psychological War

The defensive war of Ukraine against the first Russian military aggression would have been even more arduous in November and December of 1917 had the Ukrainian counteraction not succeeded in weakening the fighting spirit of the units of the regular Russian army, which was dominated by Bolshevik Commissars. The Ukrainian government had to wage a propaganda war against both the regular units of the Russian army and the *Sovnarkom* of Russia. The latter and its agitators in the regular Russian army units instigated Russian soldiers against the Ukrainian National Republic by using such propaganda as that the Ukrainian Central *Rada* wanted to starve the cities of Central Russia by refusing to sell wheat and meat to Russia proper. The Ukrainian Central *Rada*, they went on, was trying to disarm Russian army units in Ukraine only in order to destroy them; the *Rada* in general was planning to eradicate them simply because they were Russians.

¹⁸ A report on these battles was printed in the Kiev press and re-printed in *Visnyk* in Vienna in 1918.



A fragment of the Ukrainian national manifestation, held in April, 1917
in Kiev, capital of Ukraine

These two false allegations were designed to inflame nationalist feelings among the Russian officers and intelligentsia (and thus to sway them to the Bolshevik side) and to terrorize the Russian soldiers and thus prevent them from surrendering to the Ukrainians for fear of being executed by the latter. Those Russian soldiers who had already had early Bolshevik indoctrination dating back to the Russian Provisional Government were told by *Sovnarkom* agitators that the Ukrainian Central *Rada* was "bourgeois" and that it consisted only of great landowners, industrialists, bankers, officer-Mazepists who allegedly were trying to restore the Czarist regime in Ukraine and Russia, and that in general it was against Russia. The *Sovnarkom* accused the Secretariat General of being composed of generals exclusively, and that it had to combat these "generals." It implied that "true defenders of the poor people, the people's secretariats," had been organized in Kharkiv.

The spurious Bolshevik propaganda was successfully combatted by the Secretariat General of the Ukrainian National Republic which distributed thousands of leaflets and newspapers explaining the purposes of the Ukrainian National Republic. Specifically, it said that in disarming Russian troops it had no other purpose than to send them

back to Russia where they could take up their peaceful life and occupations again. In support of the truth of this statement the Ukrainian government pointed to the steady troop movement of disarmed Russians being sent back to Russia by the Ukrainian government. The Ukrainian counter-propaganda laid its principal stress on the fact that the war had been advocated by the authority of the People's Commissars of Russia, and that the Secretariat General of the Ukrainian National Republic wanted nothing more than to enjoy peaceful relations with the Russian people on the sole condition that the Russian government would not interfere in the internal affairs of Ukraine. Furthermore, the Ukrainian government contended that it did not support the restoration of the old regime, that all lands, through due process of law, would be handed over to the peasantry, that industry would be placed under state control, and that all workers would be represented by organized factory councils.

The counter-propaganda of the Ukrainian government was successful in that the majority of the regular Russian army units brought into Ukraine from the German front refused to take part in the campaign against Ukraine, and for the most part willingly laid down their arms. This could not be said of the Red Guards, which consisted exclusively of Russian Bolsheviks or Russian workers who were under the total control of the *Sovnarkom*. These Red Guards also terrorized the regular units of the Russian army into fighting against Ukraine.

These successes of the Ukrainian counter-propaganda are acknowledged in a report of the Soviet commander Ter-Arutinian that was sent to Antonov-Ovsienko, supreme Soviet commander in Ukraine, who quoted Ter-Arutinian as follows:

"In a report of January 5 Ter-Arutinian states that 'the majority of the arriving soldiers are refusing to fight against the Ukrainian Central *Rada*, and therefore it has been necessary to suspend the movement of certain regiments and to organize revolutionary detachments. Out of 9 regiments which arrived, only 3 were considered reliable . . .'"¹⁹

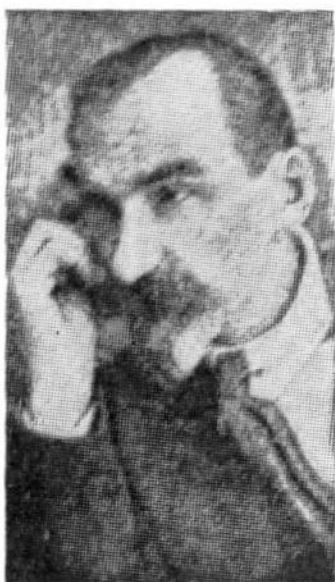
Physical Terror as a Weapon of Psychological War

In addition to these means of psychological warfare the Bolshevik army and its "civilian administration" resorted to mass physical terror in order to break the resistance of the Ukrainian army at the front and of the Ukrainian civilian administration in the hinterland.

¹⁹ Antonov-Ovsienko, Vol. I, p. 131.

Mykola Skrypnyk, a nominal representative of the Soviet authority in the areas of Ukraine occupied by the Bolshevik troops, writes openly in his memoirs that the Bolsheviks conducted the war in a "cruel" manner. Speaking of the march of the Soviet Russian armies on the Ukrainian capital of Kiev, Skrypnyk states the following historical fact:

"Finally, after several battles, the proletarian Red Guards approached Kiev. The beautiful capital of Ukraine and other cities where the counter-revolutionaries of all hues and shades concentrated their forces were conquered only after fierce and bloody battles, and after 10-day artillery barrages . . ." ²⁰



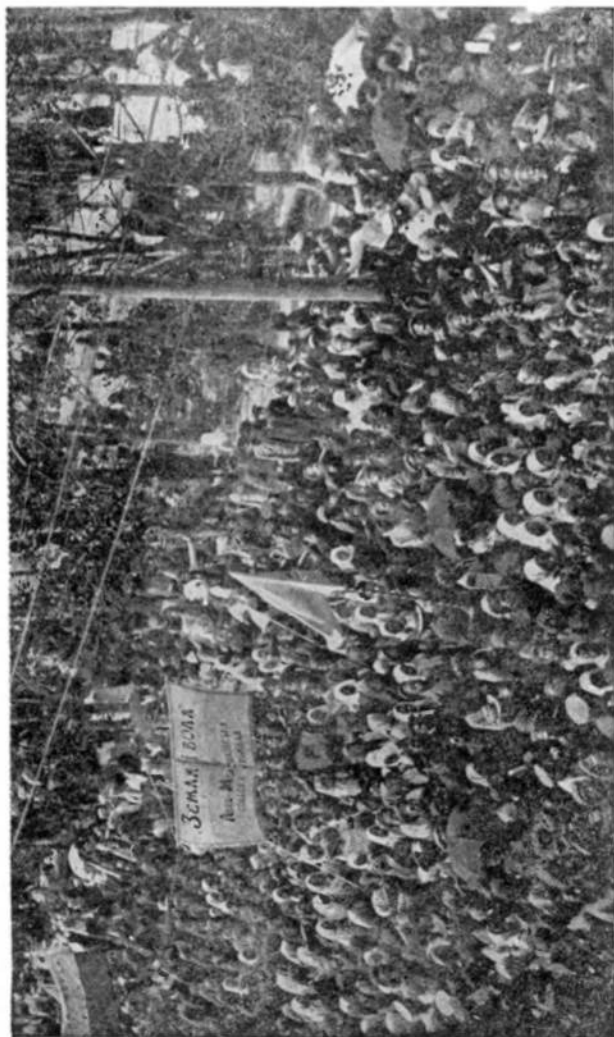
Mykola Skrypnyk

In other places in the work of Skrypnyk there is definite confirmation of the practice of the Russian Bolsheviks to intimidate and terrorize the Ukrainian population. He writes:

"As far as terror is concerned, after the cruel and bloody struggle which the Central *Rada* in Kiev waged against us, it is understandable that the Soviet authority should have

²⁰ M. Skrypnyk: **Nacherk istorii proletarskoi revoliutsii na Ukraini**, (An Outline of History of the Proletarian Revolution in Ukraine), **Chervony Shliakh**, No. 2, 1923.

been compelled to make use of all necessary means against nests of the Black Hundreds and other enemies who remained in Kiev. And they could be counted in Kiev in the hundreds and the thousands. And it is not important to write



A manifestation during the Ukrainian Peasants' Congress, held in 1918 in Kiev

that a few dozen officers, colonels and members of the Black Hundreds organizations had to be executed. What is important is why such a step proved necessary."²¹

²¹ Skrypnyk, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

Skrypnyk would not have been a Bolshevik had he not tried to palliate the crimes committed by the Bolsheviks in the numerous Ukrainian cities, especially in Kiev. The fact is that in Kiev alone during the three weeks of the first Soviet Russian occupation (from February 9 to the end of February, 1918) 5,000 persons, most of them Ukrainian intelligentsia, workers, city dwellers and war prisoners, were executed. Skrypnyk admits that some *pogroms* were conducted by the Red Guards, but endeavors to reduce the great number of the executed to some "few dozens."

The truth of the matter, however, was something altogether different, as is attested to by Bolshevik leaders themselves, especially those who witnessed and participated in the Kiev massacres. For instance, let us recall the eyewitness reports of Hryhory Lapchynsky, a member of the then Soviet occupation government in Ukraine. He describes the "liberation" of Ukraine from the "bourgeois" Ukrainian Central *Rada* as follows:

"I recall an incident which occurred in Poltava, when the chief of Muraviev's staff, Lopynsky ('Khlор'), came to arrest Leonard Bochkovsky, leader of the Ukrainian Social Revolutionaries in the Poltava province. When Bochkovsky spoke in the Ukrainian language, Khlор shouted at him: 'I order you to talk with me in the international language.'

"'I can speak the English, German, French, Polish, and Russian languages,' Bochkovsky replied, 'but I don't know which of them you consider to be international.'

"After a few days such a 'naive internationalist' executed Comrade Bochkovsky in Kiev only because the latter had a red card of membership in the Central *Rada* written in the Ukrainian language."²²

This testimony of a member of the first Soviet "government" of Ukraine, H. Lapchynsky, bears out the fact that a Ukrainian Socialist was executed by the Bolsheviks only because among his documents there was a membership card in the Ukrainian language.

Furthermore, we also have an official order of Colonel Muraviev, commander-in-chief of the Soviet troops invading Ukraine, which is extremely blunt and specific:

²² H. Lapchynsky: "The Battle for Kiev, January, 1918." *Litopys Revolutsii*, 1929, Vol. 4, p. 188.

"I hereby order the two armies, commanded by Yegorov and Berzin to mercilessly *destroy* in Kiev all officers, Cadets, *Haidamaks*, Monarchists, and *all enemies of the revolution*."²³

In his report on the battle of Poltava, to Anthony-Ovsienko, the Soviet commander-in-chief, Col. Muraviev stated:

"Send us dynamite and as many bombs as you can, because I would rather raze the city (Poltava) to the last building than retreat. I order to be killed all the defenders of the local bourgeoisie."²⁴

In addition, it must be remembered that Antonov-Ovsienko, Skrypnyk and other Bolshevik authors who wrote on the war of Soviet Russia against the Ukrainian National Republic, endeavored later to hide from their readers the historical "Order No. 14," which Muraviev issued to his Russian troops after the conquest of Kiev:

". . . this power (Soviet) we are bringing from the far North on the blades of our bayonets and wherever we impose it, we support it by all means by the force of our bayonets."

This document speaks the fact more eloquently than many books that the Soviet power was brought into Ukraine from *the north*, that is, Russia, and only through the force of the Russian *bayonets*, that is, through *terror*, has it succeeded in surviving to this day.

This "Order No. 14" was published in the Kiev newspapers after the conquest of the city by the Russian army under Muraviev, and subsequently it was reproduced in the book of Pavlo Khrystiuk (*Zamitky i materialy do istorii ukrainskoi revolutsii 1917-1920 rr.*, Vol. II, Vienna, 1921). The same order is also reproduced in an early official Soviet Russian book, namely, M. Rafes' *Dva goda revolutsii na Ukrainie, Raskol "Bunda."* Gosudarstvennoye Izdatelstvo, Moskva, 1920. In the beginning the Russian Bolsheviks falsified history only half-way. Later on, however, they resorted to wholesale falsifications of historical events.

In the above-mentioned historical book of Mr. Rafes, a former leader of the Jewish party "Bund" who at that time had joined the Bolsheviks and who personally witnessed the first military invasion of Ukraine by Russia in the years 1917-18, we read the following on pages 81-82:

²³ Antonov-Ovsienko: **Zapiski**, Vol. I, p. 154, where Muraviev's Order No. 9 is reproduced **in toto**.

²⁴ Antonov-Ovsienko, **op. cit.** pp. 135-136.



Simon Petlura

Commander of the **Haidamak** Regiment. (1917 Photo).

"The ideology of the military leaders of the first Soviet authority in Ukraine could not attract the sympathies even of the local adherents of the Soviet power. 'Order No. 14' of Muraviev which spoke of the freedom he brought from the 'far north *on the blades of bayonets*,' gave sufficient grounds for talk of an 'occupation socialism.' The violent *struggle against the entire Ukrainian people* behind whom the Ukrainian Central Rada was seen, the excesses of the first days, the lack of respect for the local authority — the councils of workers' deputies — all this contributed to substantial criticism. After that followed the withdrawal from circulation of Ukrainian currency which created confusion among the

workers. These were the steps which did not speak well of the plans of the leaders . . ." (Italics added).

The important thing is that these brutalities are confirmed in the official Bolshevik publication.

The order of Muraviev leaves no doubt as to what happened in Kiev and Poltava once these cities were conquered by the Russian troops. Every soldier of the Ukrainian army (called a "*Haidamaka*," regardless of whether he belonged to a special *Haidamak* unit or not) was executed on the spot. Moreover, the order was to execute every "enemy of the Bolshevik revolution," which was what the Bolsheviks considered every educated Ukrainian citizen to be. This is attested to by another Bolshevik leader, Volodymyr Zatonsky, who later became head of the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine and whose testimony leaves no doubt that the Russian occupation army in the years 1917-18 destroyed everyone considered to be an enlightened Ukrainian leader. In an official lecture which he delivered later (1926), V. Zatonsky said:

"I myself was already before *an execution squad*. I was saved by *sheer accident*. In my pocket was a mandate signed by Lenin, which saved me. Skrypnyk was recognized by someone and this saved him, too. It was a lucky accident, because when I was stopped on the street by a sentry, I had on my person the Ukrainian mandate issued by the 'All-Ukrainian Central *Rada* of Deputies of Workers, Peasants and Soldiers' in Kharkiv. Through this 'Ukrainization' I almost lost my life. There (in Kiev) I was with Skrypnyk (after Muraviev took the city). We entered the city: corpses, corpses, corpses, everywhere . . . Anyone who had any relation to the Central *Rada* was executed on the street. I barely escaped with my life..."²⁵

One is struck by the brutality and savagery of the Russian Bolshevik occupation in Ukraine when even their agents, such as Skrypnyk, "head of the government," and Zatonsky, "head of the state," were marked for execution for the sole reason that their personal documents were written in the Ukrainian language. Can one imagine a more barbarous regime than that imposed on Ukraine by the Russian Bolsheviks?

Official and reliable Ukrainian testimonies give even more detailed accounts of these *pogroms*, inflicted upon the Ukrainians by the Soviet troops. The Ukrainian Red Cross, for instance, after the expulsion of

²⁵ V. Zatonsky: *Natsionalna problema na Ukraini*, 1926, p. 38.

the Bolshevik troops from Kiev, beginning March 1, 1918, gathered a mass of material on the Bolshevik bestialities in Kiev. On the basis of its report it was estimated that in Kiev the Russian Bolsheviks executed over 5,000 persons during the three-week occupation of the city. Among those executed were a great number of outstanding citizens, including Metropolitan Volodymyr of Kiev, Minister Zarudny of the Ukrainian National Republic and Leonard Bohkovsky, member of the Ukrainian Central *Rada*, whose bodies were mutilated and stripped naked. 168 students of a high school who had volunteered for the Ukrainian army but could not retreat with the



Georgy Piatakov
one of the principal Russian Bolshevik
leaders in Ukraine in 1917-1919

Ukrainian army units met the same fate. Slaughtered also were 215 sailors of the Ukrainian maritime corps who had proclaimed their "neutrality" and refused to withdraw with the Ukrainian army. Their bodies were savagely mutilated.²⁶

Large-scale executions, similar to those in Kiev, were held in other cities of Ukraine which had fallen under the occupation of the Soviet troops, who also frequently pillaged the homes of the inhabitants,

²⁶ *Kievskaja Mysl*, March 3, 1918, cited by *Visnyk* in Vienna for 1918, p. 196.

especially those Ukrainian families known to be supporters of the Central Rada. This pillaging and looting was reported by the Ukrainian newspaper *Nova Rada* of Kiev, dealing primarily with Bolshevik crimes committed in Kiev. Another newspaper, *Borotba*, organ of the UPSR, gave detailed descriptions of the Bolshevik terror in the city of Romny and throughout the Ukrainian countryside. In Romny the population was systematically terrorized by the Red Guards and by bands of robbers, and executions became every-day occurrences. All persons who had anything to do with the Ukrainian national movement were shot without investigation and trial. Even a typical Ukrainian name sufficed to put its bearer against the wall and have him shot, as in fact happened to a Ukrainian teacher whose only "crime" was that his name was "Haidamaka." In describing the Bolshevik excesses in the city of Katerynoslav (now Dniepropetrovsk), the *Robitnycha Hazeta* of Kiev wrote:

"What happened in the city is impossible to describe . . . It was a nightmare . . . Rifle fire, the bursts of machine guns and cannons, and the explosions of bombs were continuous. All buildings were plastered with proclamations which threatened the population with executions . . . Searches and requisitions were made systematically, during which all worthwhile possessions were appropriated by the Bolsheviks . . ."

Terrorism and robbery, the instruments of the policies of the Russian Bolshevik occupation forces in Ukraine, called forth indignation even among the local Russian Communist Party members (those who did not come from Russia). This is attested to by Antonov-Ovsienko, commander-in-chief of the Russian army in Ukraine, who wrote:

"Our Kharkiv comrades expressed indignation at the excesses of our (Russian) units and against their arbitrary searches, arrests and requisitions . . ."²⁷

In issuing his order of the day Antonov-Ovsienko never failed to underscore that the struggle against Ukraine must be merciless and ruthless, as he openly admits in his *Zapiski*:

"The struggle must be *merciless* . . ."²⁸ (*Italics added*).

Antonov-Ovsienko was recalled to Moscow to report to the Supreme Council on the progress of the war in Ukraine.

²⁷ Antonov-Ovsienko, *op. cit.* I, pp. 170-174.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, II, p. 27.

Accordingly, on March 18 the Russian *Sovnarkom* summoned Antonov-Ovsienko to a session of the "Supreme War Council" of Soviet Russia for the purpose of determining how to conduct the war in Ukraine against Ukraine — a war that was to be waged in the name of Ukraine. He arrived in Moscow on March 19, 1918, and immediately was called to the meeting of the Supreme War Soviet, presided over by L. Trotsky. Trotsky ordered Antonov-Ovsienko to report on the situation of his armies in Ukraine.

It is interesting to note that in his report Antonov-Ovsienko admitted that "*many small (Soviet) bands by their indiscriminate requi-*



Nikolai Krylenko
Commander-in-chief of all Soviet
troops in 1917-1918

sitions are setting the population against us." Antonov-Ovsienko also admitted that the uprisings of the Ukrainian population in the rear of the Soviet invasion forces possessed a *mass* character and that he needed a superior regular army to put them down. He said:

"Considerable (Soviet) forces must be thrown in for suppression of uprisings in the rear and for improvement of the transport facilities, which suffer owing to the sabotage of the railroad workers" (Italics added).

Antonov-Ovsienko concluded his report with a proposal that Soviet Russia give aid to his pseudo-"Ukrainian" army in the war

against the Ukrainian National Republic. Although the *Sovnarkom* had already signed a treaty with the Germans in Brest Litovsk whereby it obligated itself to withdraw its armies from Ukraine and to suspend its war operations against the Ukrainian National Republic, Trotsky accepted the proposal of Antonov-Ovsienko. He then ordered the following course:

1. The mounting of a new military offensive of the Russian army based in the Briansk area against Kharkiv; 2. Providing it with a large supply of arms and ammunition. (Antonov, *op. cit.*, II, 92-93).

During the meeting Trotsky informed Antonov-Ovsienko that the French military mission in Soviet Russia was interested in the war in Ukraine and had declared its readiness to help Soviet Russia (*ibid.*, II, p. 94).

The Battle for Kiev, Ukraine's Capital

The inhuman mass executions and the pillage of the Ukrainian countryside by the Red Guards showed that the supreme command of the invading Soviet Russian armies did not mean to forget to destroy those Ukrainian centers that it knew as housing the Ukrainian national and cultural institutions. It suffices to cite the example of Kiev, which contained priceless treasures and relics of historical and artistic value. For this reason alone Kiev was earmarked for a bombardment of several days duration by heavy artillery while preparing for the attack of the army group under the command of Muraviev. The destruction of Kiev was entrusted to the "elite" of the Soviet army, consisting exclusively of fanatical Red Guards and Russian Bolsheviks, recruited from all the major cities of Russia. That this had been planned far in advance is attested to by Muraviev himself in his order of the day, which was subsequently reported in the historical work of Antonov-Ovsienko, commander-in-chief of the Soviet armies:

"The battle for Kruty lasted the whole day and was ended with the defeat of the troops of the (Ukrainian Central) *Rada*.

"About this battle Muraviev reported to me and the *Sovnarkom*: 'After the two-day battle the first revolutionary army of Yegorov, supported by the second army of Berzin, destroyed the counter-revolutionary troops of the *Rada* under the command of Petlura himself near the railroad station of Kruty. The Petrograd Red Guards and those of Vilborg and

Moscow carried the battle on their shoulders almost exclusively . . . ' "29

This statement of Muraviev is important for us inasmuch as it is the testimony of the Soviet commander at the Kiev front, and supported by the commander-in-chief Antonov-Ovsienko, that the attack on Kiev was implemented entirely by Soviet Russian units from *Moscow, Petrograd and Viborg*.

In the same account Antonov-Ovsienko quotes the order of the day that was issued by Muraviev as his troops attacked Kiev:



Col. V. Muraviev

[Photo of 1916, when he was a colonel in the Czarist Guard Regiment]

"Order to Army Commander Yegorov: Today the artillery fire must be strengthened with the purpose of *destroying the city without mercy*, especially the Lukianivka section beside the railroad station . . . Should soldiers of the 11th Regiment show any cowardice, tell Stetsenko to speed them up from behind with his shrapnels . . . "30

²⁹ Antonov-Ovsienko, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 146. However, Muraviev errs in stating Simon Petlura commanded the battle for Kruty. Petlura had been recalled from the front by the government of the Ukrainian National Republic to suppress a rebellion of the red "fifth column" in Kiev at that time.

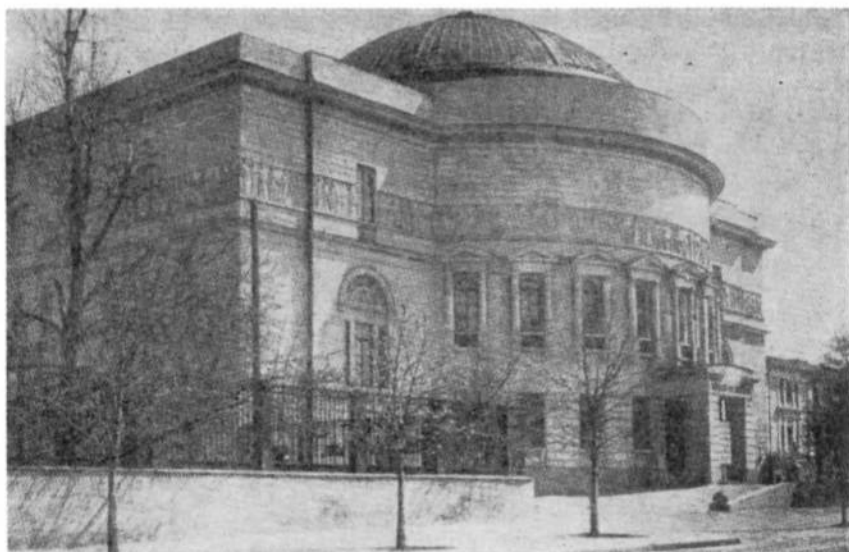
³⁰ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 146.

This order of the day confirms beyond any doubt the reports presented by Ukrainian sources to the effect that the Soviet Russian government purposely ordered the bombardment and destruction of the Ukrainian open cities, especially those containing valuable and important historical monuments and repositories of culture.

Moreover, the order of Muraviev also confirms that the soldiers of the Russian armies, conscripted into service by the Czarist government, had no desire to fight Ukraine, a circumstance which did not unduly perturb Muraviev. He merely ordered his artillery commanders to fire upon his own troops so as to "encourage" them to attack the Ukrainian defensive positions. Only through ruthless and merciless bombardment of the Ukrainian capital and through inhuman treatment of his own troops did Muraviev succeed in capturing Kiev after a long siege and bombardment. Had the government of the Ukrainian National Republic disregarded the fate of the Ukrainian historical monuments gathered in Kiev, it would have been possible for the Ukrainian troops to hold Kiev until the signing of the treaty in Brest Litovsk on February 9, 1918, and later to have thrown the Bolsheviks out of the besieged capital. Anxious to preserve the historical monuments of Kiev, however, the Ukrainian government ordered its troops to retreat from Kiev in the direction of Volhynia in order to envelop its front from the west.³¹

We must underscore here that the long defense of the Ukrainian capital at the end of January and at the beginning of February, 1918, belongs to the most illustrious pages of history not only of Ukraine but of the whole world as well. The Soviet Russian attackers on Kiev enjoyed a numerical superiority over the Ukrainians of at least 10 to 1,

³¹ The organ of the leading party in the government of the Ukrainian National Republic, *Narodna Volya*, in its Feb. 17, 1918 (old style) issue described Kiev during the bombardment of Muraviev as follows: "The fresh troops of Muraviev arrived in armored trains and accompanied by artillery. On February 6 the artillery began its bombardment of the entire city. The worst place, with the possible exception of Lypky and Pecherska Streets, was Stare Misto, at the inner section of Volodymyrsky and Pidvalna Streets, where heavy shells fell constantly, sowing death and destruction, and throwing the people into such panic that they knew not where to turn to save their lives, some going out of their minds with terror. The bombardment lasted throughout the whole day of February 7 and on through the night until 7 o'clock the next morning; the entire city was blanketed with an unceasing barrage. At night the sky above the burning city was fiery red. The people lost their heads, and sought concealment and shelter in the cellars. The tragedy and misery suffered by the population defy any pen. Those who saw action at the front say that not even at the front lines had they known such a hell." The problem was not how to defend Kiev, but rather how to save it from complete destruction. For the sake of the city's survival it was necessary to retreat, and on the night of February 8 the Ukrainian troops withdrew from Kiev in the direction of Sviatoshyn.



Capitol building of the Ukrainian National Republic in Kiev, 1917-1918,
and the seat of the Ukrainian Central *Rada*

and possessed at least four times as much armament, especially heavy artillery.

Despite these overwhelming military advantages of the enemy, the Ukrainian army proved to be an implacable opponent. It held its positions on the battlefield, and the Bolsheviks could not take the city, although the Soviet command ordered several frontal attacks against the Ukrainian capital. The Ukrainian army withdrew from Kiev according to an orderly plan on the night of February 8. Only on the day of February 9 did the enemy notice that the Ukrainian army had retreated, and only then did the Bolsheviks "take" the city and begin the systematic looting and indiscriminate slaying of the Ukrainian populace.

We cannot but mention the great military and civil courage of the leaders of the Ukrainian Central *Rada* under the presidency of Prof. Michael Hrushevsky, and of its new government headed by Vsevolod Holubovych. They managed to maintain their positions in the shelled and flaming city until the very last day and left with the army, not before.

The government of Vsevolod Holubovych was created by a coalition of the Ukrainian Socialist Revolutionary Party and the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party, a coalition which was under the leadership of the central group of the Socialist Revolutionary Party and which uncom-

promisingly combatted Bolshevism and advocated an all-out resistance to the Soviet Russian military aggression against Ukraine.

Mention should be made of the fact that on January 22, 1918, the Ukrainian Central *Rada* issued its new basic law, the Fourth *Universal*, by which the full juridical sovereignty of the Ukrainian National Republic was declared. At the end of 1917 the proclamation of the full legal independence of Ukraine was relegated by the Ukrainian Central *Rada* to the Ukrainian Constituent Assembly.

The elections to the Ukrainian Constituent Assembly took place on January 9, 1918. But the elections took place as Soviet Russia pressed her military aggression against Ukraine, at a time when substantial sections of Ukraine on the left bank of the Dnieper River were already under Bolshevik occupation. Hence on January 22, the day on which the Ukrainian Constituent Assembly was to convene, not all the elected deputies had been able to reach Kiev in time. This is the reason that the *Rada* issued and proclaimed the act of legal sovereignty of the Ukrainian National Republic, although *de facto* this republic had been independent since the day of its legal proclamation — November 20, 1917.

In connection with the proclamation of this formal act of independence the name of the government of the Ukrainian National Republic was changed from that of Secretariat General to Council of People's Ministers. On January 25, 1918, a new Ukrainian government was formed.

As mentioned above, the central Ukrainian government institutions — the Ukrainian Central *Rada*, the Council of People's Ministers of the Ukrainian National Republic and other government departments — all retreated from Kiev on the night of February 8, 1918, in the direction of the city of Zhytomyr in Volhynia. Here the Ukrainian army reorganized its front and in pitched battles stopped the advance of the Soviet Russian armies.

Colonial Character of Russian Military Objectives in Ukraine

On the basis of Soviet Russian documents we can deduce that the character of the military objectives of Moscow in Ukraine was not only political, but colonial as well. In its explanation of the war ultimatum of December 17, 1917, the Soviet *Sovnarkom* advanced the following:

1. The refusal of the government of the Ukrainian National Republic to allow the convening of the First All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets in Kiev;

2. The disarmament of Soviet Russian military units which had been stationed in Ukraine since the time of the Czarist and then of the Provisional Government;

3. The permission granted by the Ukrainian government to the Don Cossack troops to pass through Ukraine to the Don area, which at that time proclaimed the restoration of the independence of the Don Cossacks. The *Sovnarkom* had also demanded of the Ukrainian Central *Rada* that it declare war against the Don Cossacks and that it actively help Moscow to suppress the independence movement among the Don Cossacks.

The first argument of the *Sovnarkom* was an obvious twisting of the facts. The Don Cossack units had been reorganized and were returning home from Ukraine. The government of the Ukrainian National Republic had no reason to attack these troops; it was patently to the benefit of Ukraine not to have any armed units of non-Ukrainians on its territory, as such units might conceivably have turned against Ukraine with a change of the political situation. On the other hand, the demand of the *Sovnarkom* that Ukraine war upon the Don Cossacks was not only a violation of the sovereignty of Ukraine, but also was against the interests of Ukraine, which aspired to live in peace and enjoy good neighborly relations with the Don Cossacks. It was evident that behind all these unreasonable demands and the strong pressure of the Russian *Sovnarkom* lurked not only Russian political imperialism, but Russian colonialism as well.

After the military victory over Ukraine in November, 1920, the Soviet government published a series of reports which frankly revealed the objective of the second Soviet military aggression against Ukraine. This objective was to conquer Ukraine for the purpose of colonial exploitation of its natural resources and the labor of its population. Of many proofs, the following are most striking:

The supreme commander of the Russian Soviet armies that executed the aggression against Ukraine in 1917-1918, Antonov-Ovsienko, writes as follows in his work *Zapiski*: "The task of requisitioning the wheat had especial significance for us . . . Immediately after the establishment of the Soviet authority in the Katerynoslav area (the conquered province of Ukraine — author), Comrade Sergo was sent down from Petrograd . . . Food operations were given a great impetus . . . For maximum effort special workers were brought from Moscow and Petrograd. Also, special guard detachments for escorting the food caravans were requested" (Vol. I, p. 183).

In a telegram to the above-mentioned Sergo, Antonov-Ovsienko said:

"You must immediately designate representatives for the Kharkiv and Poltava *gubernias* (parts of conquered Ukraine) who shall take wheat from the province according to plan . . . and who shall be supported by armed detachments, especially selected from the front and from Petrograd and Moscow" (Vol. I, p. 184).

In another telegram to Moscow, Antonov-Ovsienko reported:

"We are doing very well with food provisions . . . We can dispatch 500 freight cars (daily), but the railroad line between Kursk and Moscow can accommodate only 144 freight cars over a twenty-four hour period . . . We need special detachments for the villages for the confiscation of wheat . . . We must have such detachments from Petrograd, Moscow, and from the front as well . . . Send us food commissars . . ." (Vol. I, p. 185).

The classic colonial character of the military aggression against Ukraine by Communist Russia was admitted by Antonov-Ovsienko himself:

"It is clear that in case we allow the counter-revolutionary movement (in the Don area) to grow, under favorable conditions in the Cossack *oblasts* it could cut us off from the Caucasus and the oil in Baku and also deprive the Soviet center of the coal of the Donets Basin (in Ukraine) and the iron ore of Kryvy Rih (Ukraine) and the wheat of Ukraine."³²

It is understandable that the government of the Ukrainian National Republic should not have wanted to isolate Ukraine by an economic barrier from relations with Soviet Russia. On the contrary, in all its public and official declarations, it proposed to the Soviet government the setting up of normal trade relations and either the selling of Ukrainian products for cash or their barter for those raw materials required by Ukraine. But the Soviet government did not want such relations, for it had earmarked Ukraine for colonial exploitation to the same extent that the Russian czars had subjected it. Precisely because Ukraine was not willing to submit itself to Russian communist slavery, the Council of Soviet People's Commissars chose the road of military aggression.

³² Antonov-Ovsienko, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 23.

This same objective of Communist Russia toward Ukraine can be confirmed by consulting other Soviet sources, many of which are incorporated in the book of the same Antonov-Ovsienko, the Soviet commander-in-chief of the Russian communist troops which invaded Ukraine. Therein (p. 123, Vol. I) Antonov-Ovsienko writes indignantly about a note received from the Ukrainian National Republic in the matter of Ukrainian food exports to Soviet Russia (in November 1917):

"The government of the Ukrainian National Republic notifies the *Sovnarkom* of Russia that 'because of financial



Christian Rakovsky

difficulties (of the Ukrainian National Republic), in the future no foodstuffs will be sent from Ukraine unless the Secretariat General (of Ukraine) receives in full two-thirds of the payment for the products in legal tender and one-third in gold."

Antonov-Ovsienko defined this decision of the Ukrainian government as a "blockade of Soviet Russia by agricultural Ukraine."

The position of the Ukrainian government was easy enough to understand: it was only beginning to organize its finances, and it was only natural that the new government should decide it could not afford to export its wheat on credit. It was war-time; all countries traded in

the same manner. Even Soviet Russia itself traded with the Scandinavian countries by paying cash for any imported goods. Yet from Ukraine Moscow saw fit to demand its wheat without limit and without payment in cash.

Moreover, the Soviet supreme commander in Ukraine also admitted that Soviet Russia would not have paid for Ukrainian wheat. As commander-in-chief of the invading Soviet armies in Ukraine, Antonov-Ovsienko — from December, 1917 to April, 1918 — confiscated Ukrainian wheat on a scale unprecedented in history. In his orders of the day he insisted that no effort be spared in the over-all policy of requisitioning wheat in Ukraine (see his book, Vol. I, p. 184).

Here was the principal objective of Communist Russia in its aggression against the Ukrainian National Republic. Pillage and looting were the guiding motivations of Moscow. Ukrainian wheat was not the only commodity seized by the Russians; the same happened with Ukrainian sugar, cattle, and natural resources of every description.

The same over-all objective underlay the second Soviet invasion of Ukraine a year later (December 1918 to August, 1919). Then, too, the rape of Ukrainian natural resources by brutal colonial methods was the principal goal of the Soviet government.

None other than A. Schlichter, People's Commissar in Moscow, gave a very instructive picture of what the invasion of Ukraine by the Soviet armies meant for Russia.

Reporting on these exploits, Comrade Schlichter stated:

"And now let me dwell on this part of the report which has the greatest significance for Moscow . . . It remains for me to say something about these prospects which we have before us and on which we can count . . . The rich Ukraine, the Ukraine full of bread, is ours . . . According to the most conservative estimates Ukraine now has 278 million surplus *poods* of wheat . . . Our task is to take 100 million *poods* of wheat and distribute them by enforced measures throughout the *gubernias* and districts of Ukraine . . ." ³³

³³ This report of A. Schlichter of 1919 was subsequently printed in the review, *Litopys Revolutsii*, No. 2, 1928, under the title, "Borba za khleb na Ukrainie v 1919 g."

CHAPTER THREE

THE SYSTEM OF SOVIET AUTHORITY DURING THE FIRST RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE

Partition of Occupied Provinces of Ukraine into Numerous Soviet Republics

At the outset of this section of this work we must underscore the fact that the fictitious "First All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets" that convened in Kharkiv on December 26, 1917, was split at its very inception. The *Sovnarkom* of Russia maintained direct contact with all Bolshevik organizations in the various *gubernias* and districts of Ukraine. There was no Bolshevik center in Ukraine, inasmuch as the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party and the *Sovnarkom* of Russia did not wish in any way to acknowledge the necessity of a separate Ukrainian state even in a Soviet form. Thus the *Sovnarkom* of Russia did not want any party center for all Ukraine, even if such a center were completely subordinated to the Russian Communist Party. Therefore, at the congress in Kharkiv only two *oblasts* of Ukraine were represented: a Bolshevik group from the Kiev province and another from the Donets Basin.³⁴ The Donets group was even more opposed to the creation of a separate Bolshevik center for Ukraine than the Kiev group, led by Eugenia Bosch, Piatakov and Bubnov. The former group initially was in favor of the creation of a "Soviet Republic of the Donets," which would have included the areas of Kharkiv and Kryvy Rih and would have been part of the Russian Soviet Republic. Only with much difficulty did the Kiev Bolsheviks succeed in convincing this group that because of the necessity of combatting the Ukrainian national and democratic government, which represented a powerful force and was a *place d'armes* of the counter-revolution,

³⁴ We must keep in mind that the "Territory of the Don Cossacks," which was then outside the territory of Ukraine, had its own government against which the *Sovnarkom* of Russia also waged war, while the Donets Basin was a geographical and industrial name. From the viewpoint of administration it belonged partially to the Kharkiv and partially to the Katerynoslav *gubernias*. The latter territory was, of course, ethnographically and politically a part of Ukraine.

what was needed was a common "All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets," which would constitute a sort of common manifestation.

The area of Odessa was not represented at the congress. As far as the areas of the Donets and Kryvy Rih were concerned, the Bolsheviks representing these areas agreed only to an *interim* alliance with other areas of Ukraine led by Kiev. Absent were representatives from such areas as the Crimea and the Ukrainian portions of the Don territory, where the Bolsheviks had decided to create separate Soviet republics which would be in direct contact with Soviet Russia.

Nonetheless, as Skrypnyk wrote, "the alliance which was made at the First Congress of Soviets" between the Bolshevik groups from Kiev and from Kryvy Rih did not last long. As soon as the Soviet troops approached Kiev and began their bombardment of the capital, the Kryvy Rih group decided to withdraw from the alliance and form its own "Donets Soviet Republic." This group called a new congress of "the Soviets from Kryvy Rih and the Donets Basin," at which it was decided to break away formally from the "Soviet government" of Ukraine. At the same time they proclaimed the "Soviet Republic of the Donets Basin." This "Soviet Republic of the Donets Basin" formally existed on Ukrainian territory until the liquidation of the Soviet occupation in the middle of April, 1918.

The same phenomenon was to be observed in the Odessa area, where under the protection of the Russian communist troops a "Soviet Republic" was created in February, 1918. Here the principal leader was Colonel Muraviev, the commander of the Soviet troops, who after the capture of Kiev in the middle of February had been sent to Odessa by the *Sovnarkom* of Russia.

Skrypnyk admits that within the "Soviet Republic of Kryvy Rih and the Donets Basin" there existed smaller "Soviet republics" — in Luhansk, Katerynoslav and other districts — and that in reality the "government" of the "Soviet Republic of Kryvy Rih and the Donets Basin" was a mere skeleton.³⁵

Thus from January to April of 1918 four larger "Soviet Republics" existed formally in Ukraine:

1. The "Ukrainian Soviet Republic," headed by the People's Secretariat, with its capital in Kharkiv (moving successively after the middle of February to Kiev, Poltava, Katerynoslav, and finally Tahan-rih, where the "Republic" was terminated);

2. "The Soviet Republic of Kryvy Rih and the Donets Basin," created formally in February, 1918. Its capital was in Kharkiv. The government was known, after the Russian pattern, as the "Soviet of

³⁵ M. Skrypnyk, *Chervony Shliakh*, No. 3, p. 78 and following.

People's Commissars." On the territory of this large republic existed a few smaller "republics," with centers in Katerynoslav, Luhansk, and other localities;

3. "The Soviet Republic of Odessa," with its own *Sovnarkom*;

4. The Soviet Republic of Tauria" (Crimea).

A separate Soviet republic that contained a significant part of the Ukrainian ethnic territory was the "Soviet Republic of the Don."

Skrypnyk, one of the organizers of the Soviet occupation regime in Ukraine during this period, wrote subsequently that this "split" among



Gen. Vsevolod Petriv
outstanding commander of a Ukrainian army unit
in the war against Soviet Russia

the leading members of the Russian Communist Party in Ukraine was the result of a lack of coordination and discipline among the Bolsheviks in Ukraine. On the other hand, Zatonsky, in his writings, blamed it on the fact that there was no "all-Ukrainian Bolshevik organizational center." But we know from the writings of Trotsky that beginning in November, 1917 Stalin was charged by the *Sovnarkom* with the direction of all Bolshevik activities in Ukraine and was made directly responsible to the *Sovnarkom*. All the directives of the Communist Party were to be

obeyed implicitly and without reservation. Thus it is unlikely that the "split" in the Bolshevik ranks in Ukraine is to be blamed on a "lack of discipline." We would rather be inclined to believe that the Russian communist center was reluctant to allow the existence of any kind of Ukrainian republic. The shield of an "All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets" was simply used to sway the Ukrainian masses in the struggle against the Ukrainian National Republic. In Moscow's plans, Ukraine was to be divided into five different "Soviet republics," thereby denying in effect the existence of the Ukrainian nation.

Internal Constitutional System of "Soviet Republics" in Ukraine

Let us now return to the nature of the internal constitutional system of these "Soviet republics" in Ukraine, which existed under the protection of the Soviet Russian bayonets. When the Bolsheviks seized the power in Russia in November, 1917, they launched an alluring and seductive slogan: "All power in the cities and villages belongs to the *soviets* (councils)." This slogan was repeatedly used by the chiefs of the Bolshevik troops and occupation administration in Ukraine.

In theory the power of the local *soviet* was indivisible and all-embracing, including the prerogative of legislative, judicial and executive power. The Soviet republic was nothing but a conglomeration of village, county, district, and republican *soviets*. Theoretically, every local *soviet* could declare its full independence of other *soviets*. However, this right was strictly theoretical. There was also supposed to be the "dictatorship of the proletariat," ruled and dominated by its "advance guard" — the Communist Party.

The "dictatorship of the proletariat" in Ukraine (and in Byelorussia and other countries which formerly belonged to Czarist Russia) would not have been possible at all had there been free elections to these local *soviets*, and had these councils truly maintained all the "power in the cities and villages" as the Bolsheviks preached. When we take into consideration the fact that the overwhelming majority of Ukraine's population were peasants, it is only logical that they should have had a decisive voice as to the structure and personal composition of the central government of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. But, as we know, the great majority of the Ukrainian peasantry and even a majority of the Ukrainian workmen were under the leadership of those Ukrainian political and social organizations that supported the Ukrainian Central *Rada* and its government; therefore, the majority of the Ukrainian population was against Bolshevism. Thus the Bolsheviks,

had they really desired a "Soviet government" in Ukraine, would have had to countenance the fact that these "*soviets*" were decidedly on the side of the Ukrainian Central *Rada*. This was exactly what happened at the truly "First All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets" in Kiev on December 17-19, 1917. The Bolsheviks had no desire to hear the decision of the congress; what they wanted only was the "dictatorship of the Communist Party" in all the former lands of Czarist Russia. When they launched the slogan — "all power to the *soviets*" — they did so for the purpose of deceiving the masses. With this slogan the Russian Communist Party had succeeded in destroying the Provisional Government in Russia under Alexander Kerensky, and they sought to repeat their success with the government of the Ukrainian National Republic.

After the seizure of power in Russia the Bolsheviks succeeded in their aim of imposing a dictatorship without letting the *soviets* even dream of exercising any power. Thus the slogan of "all power to the *soviets*" clearly was designed as political dynamite aimed at the destruction of the Provisional Government in Russia and the Secretariat General of the Ukrainian National Republic in Ukraine.

Moreover, in Ukraine this "split" and the establishment of five large and a few smaller "republics" had its own special reasons. Here the second aim of the *Sovnarkom* of Russia came into play: to prevent, at all costs and despite its verbal declaration to the contrary, the creation of a unified Ukrainian state even in the Soviet form. Therefore, Moscow pursued a course of dividing Ukraine into several entities which would be dependent directly on the Russian center in Moscow. This establishment of separate "Soviet republics" in Ukraine was in accordance with a scheme hatched by Stalin, who in turn received his instructions from Lenin.³⁶

Structure of Soviet Authority in Ukraine

In order to understand fully the purpose of Soviet Russia's invasion of Ukraine we must examine the structure of the Soviet power in Ukraine. As mentioned above, all these "Soviet republics" in Ukraine were dependent in the final analysis on the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party and, indirectly, also on the All-Russian Congress of Soviets and its organs — the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and its Soviet of People's Commissars.

Formally and juridically all these "republics" belonged to Soviet

³⁶ References regarding the plan to divide Ukraine into several "republics" by Moscow is to be found on p. 76 of J. Lawrynenko's *Ukrainian Communism and the Soviet Russian Policy toward the Ukraine, 1917-1953*. New York, 1953.

Russia and recognized the authority of the state organs of Soviet Russia. Nothing was said as to the rights of these "republics" in the system of Soviet Russia, and these matters bothered no one, inasmuch as there was no constitution either in Soviet Russia or in its "Soviet republics" in Ukraine. Nonetheless some members of the People's Secretariat of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic were automatically members of the *Sovnarkom* of Russia (for instance, Zatonsky), which proves that there was no delineation of the state organs in the center and on local levels. This also held true in foreign policy; for instance, during the peace negotiations at Brest Litovsk, the delegation of the People's Secretariat stated at the outset that it was a component part of the delegation of Soviet Russia.

The remaining organs of these "republics" in Ukraine were exact replicas of the structures established in Soviet Russia. Let us begin with the Congress of Soviets of each of these five "republics," which theoretically was the highest organ after the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party. It accorded all credentials to the Central Executive Committee of a given "republic" elected at the Congress. In turn, the Central Executive Committee elected its own Soviet of People's Commissars (in the Ukrainian Soviet Republic it was called the "People's Secretariat"), which performed the functions of a council of ministers in a regular state and which also possessed legislative power. In general, however, there was no exact division of powers in this period. Theoretically, the Congress of Soviets could not only legislate, but could perform judicial and administrative acts as well. The same was true of the Central Executive Committee and the *Sovnarkom* of each "republic." In practice, the *Sovnarkom* exercised the main legislative power. Courts were not organized during this period, and the judicial power was vested in the "Extraordinary Commission" (the "Cheka"), which simultaneously was an investigating, prosecuting and executive organ. The "Cheka" was established in Soviet Russia by the *Sovnarkom* on December 20, 1917; branches were also set up in the various "Soviet republics" in Ukraine.

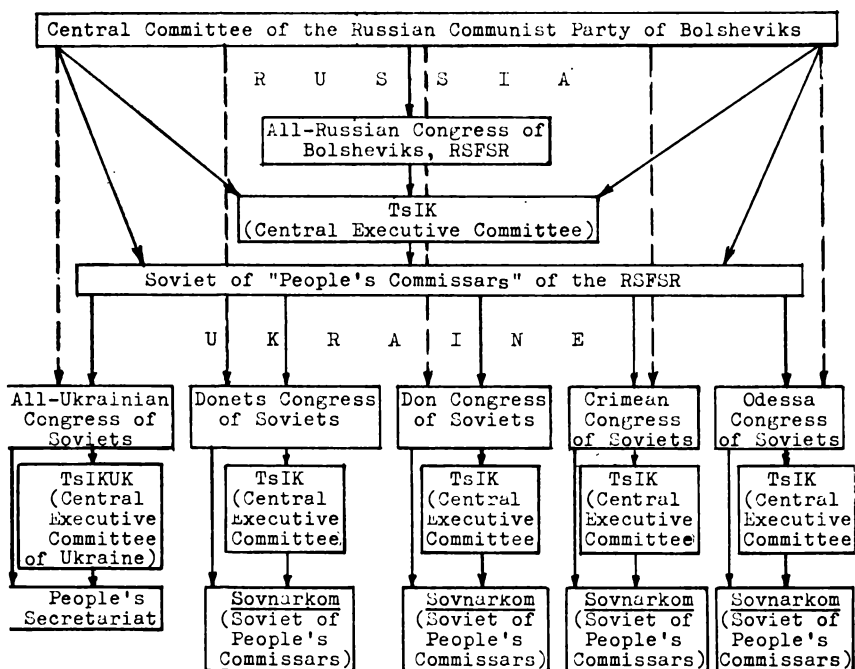
At the local level the same stratified edifice was maintained: In each *volost*, district and *gubernia* there was a congress of *soviets* of the area, which in turn elected its executive committee (that of the *volost*, district, province or *gubernia*).

But in this period of the Soviet occupation of Ukraine the structure of the government was in large measure only nominal. In reality, only the central organs of the government existed and functioned in a given republic. A congress of *soviets*, as a rule, would be riddled with Bolshevik agents, and there was no major possibility for opposition

to be formed by the genuine, non-Bolshevik *soviets* or councils, which were ruthlessly combatted by the central government and replaced with new "revolutionary committees" or "*revkoms*."³⁷

Four of these "republics" in Ukraine, namely, those in the Don area, the Kryvy Rih-Donets Basin, Odessa and Tauria, did not even bother to simulate the Ukrainian government; they considered themselves to be the organs of the Russian government and regarded Ukrainian culture and the Ukrainian language as "counter-revolutionary and as bourgeois inventions." Many Ukrainians were persecuted for speaking Ukrainian on city streets, or for reading the Ukrainian press or books.

The following chart presents the structure of the principal organs of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and of its five "Soviet republics," which existed in Ukraine from December 1917 to April 1918.



³⁷ At this time the Bolsheviks began introducing a new terminology for state organs, based on a contraction of several words, as for instance, the **Sovnarkom** — "Soviet People's Commissars;" "**revkom**" — revolutionary committee, and the like.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE BREST LITOVSK TREATY NEGOTIATIONS AND SOVIET RUSSIA'S STAND ON THE NATIONAL PROBLEMS OF EASTERN EUROPE

Soviet Russia Recognizes Independence of Ukrainian National Republic in Brest Litovsk

From the viewpoint of international law all the above-mentioned "Soviet republics" in Ukraine were parts of Soviet Russia, and formally and actually were subordinated to all the state organs of Russia, especially the *Sovnarkom*. In establishing these "republics," Soviet Russia was interested in two things: 1) to destroy the Ukrainian National Republic in general, and 2) to weaken the Ukrainian nation as such by dividing it into several administrative centers, each of which was directly subordinated to the *Sovnarkom* of Russia. Where the Soviet military aggression against Ukraine was designed to crush the Ukrainian National Republic militarily on the field of battle, the establishment of several "Soviet republics" within occupied Ukraine was intended to destroy Ukraine politically and economically.

There were no regular legal interrelations between Soviet Russia and these "republics," inasmuch as this matter was a sort of game in the hands of the *Sovnarkom*. Only the new situation created by the peace negotiations in Brest Litovsk impelled Soviet Russia to bring the Ukrainian problem out into the international forum.

As far back as December 2, 1917, the *Sovnarkom* began peace negotiations with the Central Powers, that is Germany, Austro-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey, in Brest Litovsk for the purpose of achieving a truce at the front and, eventually, a peace treaty. This step was taken by the *Sovnarkom* of Russia without consulting the Ukrainian National Republic, which was maintaining a long front at that time against Germany and Austro-Hungary. Under these circumstances the government of the Ukrainian National Republic was forced in its turn to initiate negotiations for a peace treaty in Brest Litovsk in order to prevent the *Sovnarkom* of Russia from using Ukraine and her interests

in its bargaining with Imperial Germany and Austro-Hungary. The Secretariat General of the UNR decided on negotiating rather late, specifically, on December 25, 1917; the *Sovnarkom* had been conducting negotiations with the Germans and Austrians for at least three weeks.³⁸

When the delegation of the Ukrainian National Republic appeared in Brest Litovsk, on January 10, 1918, it was met by Leon Trotsky, then People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs and head of the Soviet delegation. Trotsky did not dare to deny the Ukrainian delegation the right of representing the Ukrainian National Republic at the peace parleys. He acted with political calculation, since the Soviet armies had been able to occupy but a small part of Ukraine, specifically, the area near Kharkiv. In referring to the Ukrainian delegation, Trotsky declared:

"Taking into consideration the note of the Secretariat General of the Ukrainian National Republic, the Russian delegation states that in accordance with the principle of the right of self-determination for each nation, including a complete separation, it sees no obstacle to the participation of the Ukrainian delegation in the peace negotiations."

Furthermore, Trotsky clearly stated that his declaration meant that Russia recognized the full sovereignty of the Ukrainian delegation in the peace treaty negotiations.

How are we to explain the Russian delegation's toleration of the Ukrainian delegation as a fully independent and equal partner? Why did Trotsky, as head of the Russian delegation, fail to deny the right of the Ukrainian delegation to take part in the peace parleys with the Central Powers, while at the same time Soviet Russia was waging an aggressive war against the Ukrainian National Republic? The only possible explanation is that the Russian delegation was hoping to draw out the peace negotiations in Brest Litovsk for several months, and thereby give time to the Soviet armies in which to overrun Ukraine. Then the Ukrainian government would be compelled to flee abroad, and the *Sovnarkom* would bring forth its puppet "People's Secretariat of the Ukrainian National Republic" as a legal Ukrainian government. This possibility was envisioned by Trotsky when he made a carefully guarded diplomatic statement:

"I deem it unavoidable, as a point of information and also in order to forestall possible misunderstanding, to make

³⁸ Until the very last minute, that is, until the *Sovnarkom* decided to negotiate with the Germans and Austrians, the Secretariat General of the UNR endeavored to maintain its alliance with the *Entente*.

the following declaration: Those conflicts which erupted between the Russian government and the Secretariat General and their causes — known to everyone here — had and have no connection with the matter of the self-determination of the Ukrainian people. They erupted as a result of divergencies between the policy of the Soviet of the People's Commissars and the Secretariat General, divergencies which appeared both in and outside Ukraine . . . Regarding the self-determination of Ukraine, which is being implemented in the form of the National Republic, this matter cannot be the cause of conflict between the two brotherly republics. Because in Ukraine political life is developing freely, because in Ukraine there function councils of the workers', soldiers' and peasants' deputies, elected freely, and because in the elections to all organs of self-rule the principle of the general, equal, direct and secret vote has been observed — there is no doubt and there could not be any doubt that the process of self-determination of Ukraine, in its geographic limits and in its state forms which conform to the will of the Ukrainian people, will find its culmination."

Ukrainian Puppets Drawn into Anti-Ukrainian Work

Trotsky's praise of the democratic and free processes which were then taking place in Ukraine was a perfidious kiss of Judas on his part. His underscoring of "freely elected councils" and the "culmination of the process of self-determination" was a sort of diplomatic gate through which he later hoped to usher in the Communist puppets, elected in Kharkiv on December 26, 1917, as the legal representatives of Ukraine. The military campaign of the Soviet troops against Ukraine, however, proceeded slowly because of the determined resistance of the Ukrainian armies.

Trotsky, seeing that his maneuvers were not succeeding, proposed the suspension of negotiations to gain the opportunity of returning to Petrograd for further instructions from his government. He apparently believed that the Ukrainian delegation would suspend its negotiations as well. In this he was proved wrong. The Ukrainian delegation continued to confer with the Germans and Austrians independently and made steady progress in eliminating the most controversial points hampering the negotiations of Ukraine with the Central Powers.

The plenary negotiations of the entire conference were suspended from January 18 to January 28, 1918. When the Russian delegation

realized that the military push of the Soviet troops against Ukraine was going slowly and that the Ukrainian delegation was conducting negotiations on its own, it alerted the Soviet government in Petrograd, which in turn ordered the Kharkiv "People's Secretariat" to send its own delegation to Brest Litovsk in order to claim to be the representation of Ukraine. This task was entrusted to two Ukrainian Communists who had been recruited by Bolshevik propaganda for anti-Ukrainian work. They were Vasyl Shakhrai and Eugene Medvedev. (Medvedev was a Russified Ukrainian worker from Kharkiv. In the first days of the revolution Ukrainian national consciousness awakened in him, and he wavered between the Ukrainian national movement and the Russian Communist Party, to which he had belonged for a number of years. Because of his party affiliation and his Ukrainian origin he was appointed head of the "Central Executive Committee of Ukraine," thus becoming a kind of president of the republic). In order to undermine the genuine Ukrainian delegation, the *Sovnarkom* ordered the Russian delegation under the leadership of Adolph Joffe to announce the impending arrival of the delegation of "the government of Soviet Ukraine"; he did so on January 22, 1918. At the same time Joffe informed all the conferees that the Ukrainian Central *Rada* represented only the "bourgeois class" of Ukraine and that the Kharkiv "government" was the true government of Ukraine.

At the end of January Trotsky returned to Brest Litovsk from Petrograd, bringing with him the two delegates of the "Soviet government of Ukraine" — Medvedev and Shakhrai, the nominal minister of defense. (V. Zatonsky was also scheduled to be included in the delegation, but he remained "en route" in Petrograd as a member of the *Sovnarkom* of Russia). The task of this "Ukrainian Soviet" delegation, according to Skrypnyk, was as follows:

"To declare on behalf of the workers and peasants of Ukraine that the Ukrainian Central *Rada* is not recognized as a government and has no right either to act in their behalf or to accept any conditions. Our peace delegation should be included in the Russian delegation and should coordinate and adjust all its moves in full accord with it for the purpose of exploiting the peace negotiations as a means of agitation..."³⁹

These two servants of Russia performed this task against Ukraine with all their ability and knowledge, while the Russian delegation used the fictitious name of the "Soviet Ukrainian government" as that of an independent entity in international life. At a plenary session of

³⁹ Skrypnyk, *ibid.*, *Chervony Shlakh*, III, p. 84.

the peace conference on January 30, 1918, Trotsky made a statement to the effect that the Russian delegation now included two new members — “representatives of the Ukrainian National Republic — Medvedev and Shakhrai.”⁴⁰

Trotsky said that this development had great significance as an expression of the situation in Ukraine. Ukrainian *soviets* of workers', soldiers', and peasants' deputies, he stated, were waging a decisive struggle in Ukraine against the *Rada* of Kiev, and in many places this struggle had brought about a complete victory for the *soviets*, which cooperated wholeheartedly with the *Sovnarkom* in Petrograd. The whole coal basin of the Donets, the whole metallurgical area of Katerynoslav, and the Kharkiv and Poltava *gubernias* were in the hands of the Bolsheviks, Trotsky continued. Regardless of the further course of the war, it was evident that no one could conclude a peace treaty with the *Rada* of Kiev, since it would not be a treaty with the Ukrainian National Republic. Furthermore, Trotsky deemed it necessary to explain the reason for his statement, after recognizing the independence of the Ukrainian delegation in Brest Litovsk at the outset of the peace conference. Now, he pointed out, the Third Congress of All-Russian *Soviets* was taking place in Petrograd, a congress at which the Ukrainian *soviets* were represented and at which it had been decided to adopt a federative platform for the Russian republic. Thus the participation of delegates of the “People's Secretariat” in the Russian peace delegation was in accord with a change in conditions now taking place throughout the entire Russian republic. In conclusion, Trotsky made the following declaration:

“The delegation of Russia has not been against the delegation of the Ukrainian Central *Rada* and its participation in the peace negotiations, but any agreements regarding Ukraine will be valid only if they are ratified by the government of the Russian Federative Republic.”

Thus the Russian delegation declared formally that it had a right to speak on behalf of Ukraine and that only the Russian government could approve or reject all international agreements regarding Ukraine. In effect, this declaration negated the right of Ukraine to its independence and sovereignty.

⁴⁰ Moscow, through its delegates at Brest Litovsk, continued to call its puppets in Kharkiv “People's Secretariat of the Ukrainian National Republic,” although this name was used by the Russians in Ukraine only later.

Diplomatic Struggle of the Ukrainian Delegation

At this time only one member of the Ukrainian delegation, namely, M. Levytsky, participated in the peace conference on behalf of the Ukrainian National Republic, because most of the other members of the delegation, including its chairman, V. Holubovych (who after the proclamation of the Fourth *Universal*, that is, the full independence of Ukraine, became Chairman of the Council of Ministers) had returned to Kiev for consultations. In response to Trotsky, Levytsky stated that the Ukrainian delegation would make its own declaration as soon as its head returned from Kiev. Subsequently, a new Ukrainian delegation, headed by Alexander Seviuk, arrived from Kiev. At the plenary session of the conference on February 1, 1918, Seviuk retorted sharply to the Russian delegation, stating among other things:

The plenary session of the peace conference on January 10, 1918, had heard the reading of the Third *Universal* of the Ukrainian Central *Rada*, whereby on November 20, 1917, the Ukrainian National Republic was proclaimed; the international independence of Ukraine was also determined. The independent status of Ukraine in the peace negotiations and in the international relations of the Ukrainian National Republic in general was recognized then by the Council of People's Commissars of Russia as well as by the plenipotentiary representatives of the Central Powers. The recognition of the Ukrainian National Republic as an independent state by the government of Soviet Russia had been strongly implied by the declaration of Trotsky at the conference sessions on January 10 and 14.

When Seviuk had concluded, Dr. Kuehlmann, head of the German delegation, turned to Trotsky and asked whether he considered the Ukrainian delegation a part of the Russian delegation or an independent delegation of the Ukrainian state. Trotsky replied:

"Because the Ukrainian delegation appeared here as an independent delegation, we recognize its participation in the international negotiations; inasmuch as there has been no proposal to limit it in any way by anyone, and furthermore, because there has been no proposal to make the Ukrainian delegation a part of the Russian, it seems to me that this matter is hereby settled by itself."

Subsequently, Alexander Seviuk, head of the Ukrainian delegation, acted as representative of the Ukrainian National Republic.

But after a recess Trotsky made another declaration which denied the right of the Ukrainian delegation to represent Ukraine. He said that he had received an informative telegram from a "central commit-

tee," in Kharkiv, notifying him of "great changes" occurring in Ukraine. Whereupon the head of the Ukrainian delegation made the following declaration:

"We are of the same opinion as Mr. Trotsky that many changes have occurred in the life of Ukraine, but these changes are entirely different from those Mr. Trotsky reports. The sense of these changes relate to the Fourth *Universal* of the Ukrainian Central Rada of January 22, in which it is stated: 'From today on the Ukrainian National Republic is the independent, free and sovereign state of the Ukrainian people.' The government of the Ukrainian National Republic tried to establish a federative government composed of all those republics which had been created on the territory of the former Russian state. Despite all the efforts of the Ukrainian government, up to the issuance of the Fourth *Universal*, such a common federative government was not established, and, as to be seen from the present situation, such an organ cannot be created. Hence the Ukrainian National Republic was compelled to abandon the creation of a federative government and to declare Ukraine through the Fourth *Universal*, an independent and sovereign state. The Ukrainian Central Rada declared in the same *Universal* that it wishes to live with all neighboring states in peace and friendship, but that none of them has any right to interfere in the affairs of the independent Ukrainian Republic. Thus the Fourth *Universal* clearly defined the international and legal position of the Ukrainian National Republic and its policies in regard to its neighbors as well."

The head of the Ukrainian delegation proceeded to reject all the arguments and objections of Trotsky regarding the legal position of the Kharkiv "government" and fictions to the effect that the government of the Ukrainian National Republic had ceased to exist. He concluded:

"In order to forestall any false understanding on anyone's part and to avoid in the future similar declarations on the part of the Russian delegation which contradict one another, the Ukrainian delegation proposes to this conference the formal recognition of the Ukrainian National Republic as a sovereign and independent state, and the defining thereby of its international status and its rights as a peace delegation."

After this declaration of the head of the Ukrainian delegation, the

Russian delegation introduced Medvediev as a representative of the "Soviet delegation of Ukraine." Medvediev delivered himself of a standard Bolshevik propaganda oration in which he tried to demonstrate that the Ukrainian Central *Rada* was not a genuine representative of the Ukrainian people and in which he threatened that any treaty concluded with it would be rejected by the Ukrainian people.

Subsequently, in the name of the Russian delegation Trotsky once again tried, through diplomatic maneuver, to reserve an avenue through



Mykola Lubynsky
one of the Ukrainian delegates
at the Brest Litovsk Peace
negotiations

which to afford an eventual new approach of attack. He knew that the Soviet armies were far from Kiev and he did not know exactly when — and if — the Ukrainian capital would fall into Russian hands. Therefore, he played his typical game of procrastination. He stated that it was one matter to recognize a state as independent and another to recognize the government of the said state. He sought to demonstrate the internal instability of the government of the Ukrainian National Republic by alleging that the Ukrainian Central *Rada* refused to take part in the Russian Federative Republic, although at the Third All-Russian Congress of *Soviets* the representatives of the Ukrainian people (that is, representatives of the "Soviet government of Ukraine") had

recognized the Russian Federative Republic. Trotsky also recalled that he had made a statement regarding the instability of Ukraine's frontiers, and that as long as the frontiers were not firmly established, no reasonable understanding between the Ukrainian Central *Rada* and the Central Powers was possible. The internal developments in Ukraine, he went on, could have no international legal significance; therefore, all the events in Ukraine must be regarded from a purely matter-of-fact viewpoint. The Central Powers could not undertake the role of judge between Russia and Ukraine. In conclusion, Trotsky underscored once again the position of the Russian delegation: As long as the delegation of the Ukrainian Central *Rada* maintained its present mandate, the Russian delegation would not protest its participation in the peace negotiations. But because the representation of the Ukrainian Executive Committee in Kharkiv had now become part of the Russian delegation, it must repeat with redoubled energy that only such treaties with the Ukrainian Central *Rada* would be ratified that were also recognized by the Russian delegation.⁴¹ & ⁴²

The new approach of the Russian delegation in Brest Litovsk revealed the treacherous role that was being played by the so-called "Soviet Ukrainian government." This puppet regime was the main trump card in Trotsky's hand which would prevent the Ukrainian National Republic from signing a peace treaty with the Central Powers.

Furthermore, the assertion of the Russian delegation to the effect that the Ukrainian delegation viewed the Central Powers as a "judge" in the conflict between Russia and Ukraine was also baseless and void of any concrete substantiation. Up to this move the Ukrainian delegation had not by even so much as a word raised in Brest Litovsk the matter of the military aggression of Communist Russia against Ukraine. The overall objective of the Ukrainian delegation was to prevent the

⁴¹ "The instability of frontiers" of the Ukrainian National Republic as brought up by Trotsky could be ascribed to the fact that the Provisional Government of Russia under Kerensky recognized only a part of the Ukrainian ethnic territory and refused to recognize as parts of Ukraine the **gubernias** of Kharkiv, Katerynoslav and Kherson and parts of the **gubernias** of Tauria and a part of the Don **oblast**. When the Ukrainian Central *Rada* on Nov. 20, 1917, proclaimed the Ukrainian National Republic in the **Third Universal**, it included in the Ukrainian state the above-mentioned areas, which for centuries had been predominantly populated by the Ukrainian people. This was not acknowledged by the **Sovnarkom** of Russia, which protested the inclusion of these lands in the Ukrainian state by a special resolution of December 7, 1917 (the resolution was printed in **Pravda** on December 7, 1917). This move on the part of Ukraine was one of the causes of the military aggression of Communist Russia against Ukraine.

⁴² All speeches and statements are taken from Khrystiuk, Vol. II, p. 108 and following, and D. Doroshenko's **Illustrovana Istoria Ukrainy**, Vol. I, p. 308 and following.

Sovnarkom from utilizing the negotiations against the interests of Ukraine and from acting behind the back of the Ukrainian government. It was clear to all that the participation of the Ukrainian National Republic in the peace parleys was possible only when the conference recognized the legality of the Ukrainian delegation. This had taken place at the first plenary session of the peace conference with the explicit agreement of the Russian delegation. Moreover, at Brest Litovsk peaceful relations were to be established between the Central Powers and Ukraine and Russia. The relations between Ukraine and Russia themselves, on the other hand, were to be determined later.

In the maintenance of a *sang froid* attitude the tactics of the Ukrainian delegation at Brest Litovsk had been deliberately misleading. The delegation had not wished to reveal the military weakness of the Ukrainian National Republic in its war against Soviet Russia, and as a consequence it purposely had not brought up at the conference the fact of Russian aggression. In doing this the Ukrainian delegation was seeking to wrest from the Central Powers the best possible peace conditions, which could be realized only if the Central Powers were convinced that Ukraine was a strong and well-established state. This was why Trotsky harped on the instability of political conditions in Ukraine, using as his main device the puppet "Soviet Ukrainian delegation" from Kharkiv. When Trotsky persisted in denying the right of the Ukrainian delegation to speak in the name of Ukraine, the Ukrainian delegation then decided to give the Russians a thoroughgoing rebuttal. This task fell upon Mykola Lubytsky, deputy chairman of the Ukrainian delegation, who delivered an incisive address which deeply impressed all the members of the peace conference, including Trotsky himself. The basic passages of Lubytsky's address were as follows:

"At this peace conference with the Central Powers the Ukrainian delegation did not wish to bring up the problem of the relationship between Ukraine and Russia, but now it is compelled to do so because of the opinion of the peoples represented at the conference, which is more important than the views of Mr. Trotsky.

"In 1917 Russia—this state in which there live many peoples who have various political aspirations and who have grown in various historical circumstances and who are aspiring in this revolution to their national and social objectives—this Russia has become a republic. Since the beginning of the revolution this republic has had several different governments. This year began under the scepter of the czar and passed through the stages of the Cadet and the Cadet-Socialist gov-

ernment and ended with shooting on the streets of Petrograd for the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly, which was elected on the basis of democratic representation. Nonetheless, in one respect all these governments remained solidly chained in their centralistic aspirations and in their insatiable craving to suppress the reborn nations and to bring all of them under their powerful hand. The Bolshevik government, according to the ideals of the party, stands more and more distant from the federative principle. In the same manner as their predecessors on the throne, who were overthrown not only by social but also national revolutions, the Bolshevik government proclaimed the principle of self-determination of peoples only for a more decisive combatting of this principle in its practical application. The loud enunciations of the Bolsheviks about the complete freedom of the peoples of Russia are but vulgar demagogical expressions. The Bolshevik government, which dispersed the Constituent Assembly and which relies only on the bayonets of the hirelings of Red Guards, will never dare to apply the just principle of self-determination of peoples, for it is aware that not only the numerous republics—such as Ukraine, the Don, the Caucasus and others—have refused to recognize it as their government, but the Russian people themselves have refused the Bolsheviks this right. Only for fear of the development of the national revolutions have the Bolsheviks been compelled to espouse the principle of self-determination, with the aid of their inborn demagoguery both in Russia and here (the peace conference). In order to suppress the realization of this principle they are using not only bands of Red Guards, but are resorting to even worse methods: they arrest and execute political leaders, and by every means are endeavoring to undermine the authority of one or another new republic through the presentation of false issues . . . The government of the Bolsheviks has declared a 'holy war' against our republic . . . Thus the Bolshevik government, instead of applying the principle of self-determination, is applying the principle of anarchy and chaos, because it knows that the easiest thing to do is to wreck, and it is conducting itself according to an old adage: lie, lie and lie, for somebody will believe you in the end."

Subsequently, Lubytsky touched upon the fact that the Russian delegation had brought from Kharkiv servile minions intended solely

to undermine the prestige and authority of the Ukrainian delegation at the peace conference.

“In order to substantiate the validity of our delegation, we must look into the matter much more deeply. The Ukrainian people, united by common ideals and common aspirations, people who love the serene and well-ordered forms of state life, from the very first moment have devoted themselves to the building of their statehood. With the help of the intelligentsia which sprang up from their ranks, Ukrainian workers, peasants and soldiers have succeeded not only in organizing themselves but also in drawing into active work all groups of the non-Ukrainian population living on the territory of Ukraine . . . The Ukrainian Central *Rada*, consisting of representatives of Ukrainian peasants, soldiers and workers, through its *Universals* indicates the road ahead for the Ukrainian people. As early as June 1917, the Ukrainian Central *Rada* above all elected the Ukrainian government, namely, the Secretariat General . . . Thus, step by step, the Ukrainian people have proceeded to create their own state. The Petrograd government has no right to interfere, nor has it any cause to do so. But it so happens that into the territory of Ukraine and the adjacent fronts the Czarist government sent troops of non-Ukrainian origin, and during the revolution it has been impossible to clear Ukraine of these imported alien elements. These non-Ukrainian soldiers succeeded in establishing in a few cities of Ukraine their own *soviets*, which have no influence upon the life of the area in which they sojourn . . . Attempting on one or another pretext to interfere in the internal life of Ukraine, the Petrograd Bolsheviks began pressuring the Ukrainian government into agreeing that all power in Ukraine should be transferred into the hands of these soldiers’ *soviets*, although the Bolsheviks themselves demand at this conference that all foreign troops be withdrawn from the occupied areas. It is understandable that the Ukrainian government cannot comply with this demand. The second instance of meddling in the internal affairs of Ukraine was the demand of the Petrograd Bolsheviks that a new election to the Ukrainian Central *Rada* be held. Without considering the fact that such a demand violates the right of self-determination, it is totally needless, because the rules on the representation in the *Rada* provide the right to the electorate to recall their representatives at will.

"The elections of the Constituent Assembly of all former Russia, which were held at the end of November 1917, proved to be a brilliant victory for the Ukrainian Central *Rada* on the whole territory of Ukraine: over 75 percent of the total number of candidates elected were Ukrainians, while other parties represented in the Ukrainian Central *Rada* received only 15 percent, and the Bolsheviks less than 10 percent. For instance, in the Kiev *gubernia*, of a total of 22 candidates 20 Ukrainians were elected; Podilia, 18 Ukrainians out of 19 candidates; Volhynia, 9 out of 10 candidates; in Poltava, 14 out of 17 candidates, and so forth. I think this is sufficient. These are the masses on which the Ukrainian Central *Rada* is basing its authority. In their name we came here to negotiate.

"Then the Petrograd Bolshevik government decided to resort to a last method. On December 16 the Bolsheviks held in Kiev, with the tacit agreement of the Ukrainian Central *Rada*, the All-Ukrainian Congress of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. Some 2,000 delegates arrived. And contrary to the expectations of the organizers, the congress began with ovations in honor of the Ukrainian Central *Rada*. Subsequently, a small group of Bolsheviks, about 80 in all, quit the congress and went to Kharkiv, where they declared a new government of the Ukrainian National Republic. The People's Commissars of Russia sent out bands of Red Guards for the purpose of pillaging the Kharkiv area and to defend the Kharkiv government from the population of that province. Such is the origin of the Kharkiv 'government' and such are the forces it draws upon.

"Our future, our history, our posterity and the wide masses of the toiling people will decide alone who among us is right and who is wrong, who is a Socialist and who is a counter-revolutionary, who constructively builds and who ruins everything which has been erected."

After Lubynsky's exposition, Count Ottokar Czernin, Foreign Minister of Austro-Hungary, after a brief conference with the representatives of the Central Powers, made the following statement:

"In the name of the delegations of the four allied (central) powers, I have the honor to make the following declaration in response to the statement of the Ukrainian delegation:

"As we all know, the head of the Ukrainian delegation,

Secretary General Holubovych, declared at the plenary session on January 10, 1918, that the Ukrainian National Republic, relying on the Third *Universal* of the Ukrainian Central *Rada* of November 20, 1917, is beginning its new international existence and is establishing its international relations in this area. In this regard the government of the Ukrainian National Republic considers it appropriate to take an independent stand at the present peace negotiations. Regarding this, I made at the plenary session of January 12 and in the name of the four allied powers the following statement:

“We recognize the Ukrainian delegation as an independent delegation and the authorized representation of the independent Ukrainian National Republic. Because of the changed situation as described by the head of the Russian delegation at the plenary session on January 30 in this matter, namely, that only such treaties with Ukraine will be recognized and implemented which are formally endorsed by the government of the federative republic of Russia, the delegations of the four allied powers, in connection with the views expressed now by the delegation of the Council of National Ministers of Kiev, do make the following declaration:

“We have no reason to withdraw or to limit the recognition of the Ukrainian delegation as an independent delegation and as an authorized representation if the Ukrainian National Republic, which recognition was granted at the plenary session of January 12, 1918. Moreover, we further see the basis on which to recognize the Ukrainian National Republic immediately as an independent, free and sovereign state, which is capable of concluding international treaties independently.”

Brilliant Success of Ukrainian Diplomats

Thus the web of intrigues of the *Sovnarkom* of Russia which Leon Trotsky, with the assistance of his puppets from Kharkiv, Vasyl Shakhrai and Eugene Medvediev, tried to the utmost of his ability to weave to destroy the Ukrainian delegation in Brest Litovsk, failed totally. Trotsky and his hirelings endeavored in Brest Litovsk to deprive the delegation of the legitimate Ukrainian government of its independence and to make it a part of the Russian delegation, so as to give the right to Russia to conclude a peace treaty also in the name of

Ukraine. The superb tactics and diplomatic skill of the Ukrainian delegation brought all these machinations of the Russians to naught.

On the other hand, too, the delegations of the Central Powers had now succeeded in getting what they evidently had planned by granting Ukraine full recognition at Brest Litovsk. It was no secret to anyone that the Central Powers were endeavoring to gain from Ukraine the most favorable conditions of peace possible. The draft of the treaty which the Central Powers proposed to Ukraine at the beginning of February 1918, was very short and consisted of a few articles only. Briefly, the articles dealt with the termination of the status of war between the Ukrainian National Republic and the Central Powers after the signing of the treaty, the establishment of normal diplomatic and consular relations and the delivery of Ukrainian wheat and other foodstuffs by Ukraine to the Central Powers to the amount of one million metric tons. All other details of the relationship were to be worked out later in special treaties and conventions.

To be sure, the delegations of the Central Powers at Brest Litovsk already at that time had been supplied information by their intelligence services on the military aggression of the Soviet Russian government against Ukraine. Moreover, Bolshevik agents were disseminating provocative rumors to the effect that the government of the Ukrainian National Republic had fallen, that Kiev was already in the hands of the Soviet troops, and the like. Nevertheless, as we see from the memoirs of Count Ottokar Czernin, the delegations of the Central Powers did not know the situation in Ukraine exactly. Although they knew that the Ukrainian government was at war with Communist Russia, they did not appreciate the extent of the difficulties under which the Ukrainian National Republic was compelled to wage a defensive war. What the Central Powers had attempted to do was to press for the signing of a peace treaty as rapidly as possible. By openly saying that the Ukrainian government was finding itself in dire difficulties and that any procrastination in signing on the part of Kiev would not contribute to the conclusion of the peace treaty, they had hoped to gain the most favorable terms.

But the Ukrainian delegation proved to be extremely capable and perhaps more ingenious than the old diplomats of the Central Powers. Sevriuk and Lubynsky did not reveal any apprehension as to the outcome of the Ukrainian-Russian war, despite reports that the fall of Kiev was inevitable because of the overwhelming numerical superiority of the Soviet forces. They saw only one way to deal with the Central Powers: to demand the maximum and to make no concessions whatsoever, because only then might the foreign diplomats believe that the

Ukrainian government was firmly entrenched in Kiev and that Ukraine was in no particular hurry to sign a peace treaty. This was a sort of war of nerves, because for their part the Central Powers were suffering from a lack of food, with hunger threatening to engulf not only their cities but their armies as well. Alexander Sevriuk was apprised of this situation by Mykola Vasylyko, a Ukrainian member of the Austrian Parliament, and Mykola Zalizniak, a Ukrainian Socialist Revolutionist, who lived in Vienna during the war, both of whom had come to Brest



Arrival of the Ukrainian Delegation for the peace negotiations
in Brest Litovsk, January, 1918

Litovsk to pass this information on to the Ukrainian delegation. The firm stance of the Ukrainian delegation created consternation among the delegates of the Central Powers. Count Czernin, in his Diary, remarked that "the Ukrainians negotiate no longer; they dictate . . ."⁴³

The Ukrainian delegation worked out its own draft of the peace treaty, which was fully in accordance with the basic demands of the Ukrainian government. It provided for full equality of the contracting parties in future relationships. Moreover, the Ukrainian delegation insisted that the Austro-Hungarian delegation sign a secret agreement

⁴³ See "The Diary of Count Czernin" in **Berestysky Myr**, p. 219.

as a separate clause appended to the general treaty whereby the Austrian government undertook to divide Galicia into a Ukrainian land and a Polish crown territory. Under the existing circumstances, this was an outstanding diplomatic victory for the Ukrainian delegation, inasmuch as Austria, relative to Ukraine, was a victorious power, while Ukraine was a newly established state which was interfering in the internal affairs of the Hapsburg monarchy. In a commercial treaty the Ukrainian National Republic obligated itself to provide the Central Powers with foodstuffs, but only in exchange for manufactured merchandise and for hard currency. Therefore, it may be stated with full objectivity that the treaty was extremely beneficial for Ukraine.

The signing of the peace treaty with Ukraine in Brest Litovsk on February 9, 1918, struck the Russian delegation as if by lightning. Its head, Leon Trotsky, an implacable Russified imperialist although himself a Jew, could not reconcile himself to Ukraine's detachment from Russia as an independent state. The Russian delegation had also received from the Central Powers a draft treaty with Russia which, although providing for the separation of the Baltic countries, Byelorussia and Poland, nevertheless was favorable to Russia on the whole. It did not provide for any war indemnities nor did it incur the loss of a single square kilometer of pure ethnic Russian territory. But when Trotsky, meeting on February 10, 1918, with representatives of Germany and Austria to discuss the proposed draft, learned that a treaty with Ukraine had been signed the day before without consulting the Russian delegation, he denounced the act and stated that the concluded treaty would have no validity either for the Ukrainian people or the Russian government. He again pointed out that his delegation also included members of the "Soviet government" of Ukraine. Finally, Trotsky declared that Russia "will not continue to wage the war, but neither will it sign such a peace treaty."

With Trotsky's declaration the negotiations between Russia and the Central Powers were suspended. Previously, Lenin had been pressuring Trotsky to conclude the treaty and thereby gain a "respite" for Russia, but Trotsky had balked, believing in the swift victory of "world revolution" and convinced that his tactics of delaying the final signing would eventually precipitate the outbreak of proletarian revolutions in Austria and Germany. Significantly, Trotsky's notion of "no war and no peace" was supported by other leading Bolsheviks, and he firmly believed that by his tactics he would prevail over Lenin and eventually become head of the *Sovnarkom*. But Lenin emerged victorious over Trotsky and received the go-ahead signal from the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party to sign the treaty with the Central

Powers at all costs. This happened later and will be treated elsewhere in this book. But let us now return to the subject of the peace treaty between Ukraine and the Central Powers.

“Diversion” of “Soviet Ukrainian” Delegates

The Ukrainian delegation succeeded in securing a favorable and honorable treaty for Ukraine, with the Central Powers at the last possible hour. On the day of the signing of the treaty, that is, February 9, Soviet Russian troops seized the capital of Ukraine after a ten-day bombardment. The government of the Ukrainian National Republic and the Ukrainian Central *Rada* retreated from Kiev to the city of Zhytomyr in Volhynia. The overwhelming numerical superiority of the Soviets threatened to overrun the entire Ukrainian territory and compel the Ukrainian government to capitulate or emigrate abroad.

At this critical juncture the Ukrainian peace delegation in Brest Litovsk deemed it their sacred duty to appeal to the governments of Austria and Germany to conclude a military convention which would provide military assistance for Ukraine by these two powers. Such a military agreement was concluded on February 18, 1918, whereupon German and Austrian troops, as allies of the Ukrainian National Republic, entered Ukraine and began large-scale operations, along with the Ukrainian army, for the purpose of expelling the Soviet troops from the territory of Ukraine. On March 1, 1918, Kiev was retaken by the Ukrainian troops.⁴⁴

The Russian delegation in Brest Litovsk, which for sheer “window dressing” included two puppet delegates of the “Soviet Ukrainian government,” continued its diversionary activities even after the signing of the peace treaty with Ukraine on February 9, 1918, and the conclusion of the military agreement between Ukraine and Germany and Austria. The memoirs of M. Skrypnyk note that these two puppet delegates made the following offer to the delegations of the Central Powers after the signing of the peace treaty with Ukraine: they were ready to sign the same treaty if the Central Powers withdrew their recognition of Ukraine as an independent state, cancelled their military agreement with the Ukrainian National Republic, recognized instead the “People’s Secretariat,” which was the Soviet-imposed puppet government in Kharkiv, and allowed it to rule Ukraine.⁴⁵ This proposal was presented to the German government by the delegates of the “People’s

⁴⁴ Additional material on the conclusion of the military agreement and the texts of diplomatic documents and declarations by the Ukrainian government may be found in Khrystiuk, Vol. II, p. 139 and ff., and also in Doroshenko, Vol. I, p. 335 and ff.

⁴⁵ M. Skrypnyk, *Chervony Shliakh*, No. 3, 1923, p. 38.

Secretariat" after the signing of the peace treaty between Russia and Germany on March 3, 1918. It was completely ignored by the German government.

As is the practice with Soviet "historians," Skrypnyk in his "history" told his Soviet readers an untruth when he described the text of the treaty between Ukraine and the Central Powers. Although he knew that no one would believe him an iota, he was able to lie about this treaty because in Ukraine under the domination of Communist Russia no copy of the treaty was to be found in any library or archive. Skrypnyk wrote:

"Representatives of the Ukrainian Central *Rada* signed the treaty with Germany, in virtue of which practically all authority in Ukraine went into the hands of the German occupants, who became virtual owners of the railroads and all other economic assets of Ukraine."

Skrypnyk dealt with the treaty in such fashion simply because it was an "attack against the workers' and peasants' revolution," that is, against the Russian Bolsheviks. It is worthwhile to underscore that Skrypnyk clearly admitted that the delegation of the puppet Kharkiv government approved the German draft of the treaty for Russia as this gave the *Sovnarkom* a "respite" and saved the communist government. In the eyes of Skrypnyk and the Russian Bolsheviks, what was good for Russia was evil so far as the government of the Ukrainian National Republic was concerned; a "respite" was fine for Russia but not for Ukraine.

Russia Signs Treaty in Brest Litovsk

When the Russian delegation suspended its negotiations, the Central Powers notified the Russian *Sovnarkom* that the truce at the front had ended and that military operations would resume on February 18, 1918. Accordingly, on February 19, 1918, the German command launched a new offensive against Russia and swiftly advanced toward the Russian capital of Petrograd and toward Moscow, and occupied the territory up to Narva, Pskov and Mogilev. The Russian army, demoralized and defeated, fled as a mob.

In this situation Lenin again proved to be a great tactician. He called a meeting of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party to resolve the question: whether to continue by a "revolutionary war," as advocated by Nikolai Bukharin and Leon Trotsky and their sympathizers, or to secure "peace at all costs," which was the policy of Lenin simply because he wished to preserve his precarious government.

On February 18 these alternatives were discussed at the meeting with the Bukharin line of thought prevailing in the morning, and with Lenin's winning out by the close of the meeting. Accordingly, Lenin, as head of the *Sovnarkom*, notified the German government in Berlin on February 19, 1918, that Soviet Russia was ready to sign the peace treaty as proposed earlier in Brest Litovsk. When by February 21 no reply had come forth from Berlin the *Sovnarkom* proclaimed a "holy revolutionary war against bourgeois and imperialist Germany," in which it exhorted Soviet troops to adopt a "scorched earth" policy in retreating before the advancing German armies. Furthermore, the Russian Bolsheviks, backed up against the wall by the German "bourgeoisie," on February 22, 1918, appealed to the "bourgeoisie" of the *Entente* for assistance.

In the meantime an answer from the German government came on February 23, 1918, to the effect that Germany was willing to sign the treaty, but under different conditions. In the original treaty draft Russia had agreed that the former countries of Russia — Poland, Lithuania and Latvia — no longer belonged to Russia and that their future would be settled according to the will of their population with the consent of Germany and Austria. The new German proposal demanded that the Soviet troops immediately evacuate Estonia, which would be occupied by German forces. In addition, Germany stipulated that Russia must sign a peace treaty with Ukraine and Finland.

These new peace proposals were discussed by the Central Executive Committee of the Russian Communist Party during a session at which only a minority was in favor of Lenin's proposal, namely: Lenin, Zinoviev, Sverdlov, Sokolnikov, Stasov, Smilga and Stalin — seven members of the Central Executive Committee. Opposed to the proposal of Lenin to accept the German conditions of peace at once were only four members — Bukharin, Uritsky, Bubnov and Lomov — with seven other members abstaining — Trotzky, Dzierzhynsky, Krestinsky, Joffe, Yakovlev, Piatakov and Smirnov. In the final analysis the proposition of Lenin was accepted. By way of protest Piatakov and Smirnov resigned from the Central Executive Committee. Immediately a new delegation was dispatched to Brest Litovsk, where on March 3, 1918, a peace treaty between Russia and the Central Powers was officially concluded, thus ending the war of Russia with the Central Powers. Russia, as mentioned before, agreed to conclude a peace treaty with two national republics against which it had waged war: Ukraine and Finland.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ The vote at the plenary session of the Central Executive Committee was as follows: for the signing of the peace treaty: 116 votes; against 85, and 25 abstentions. The treaty was slated for ratification on March 18, 1918 (See: Antonov-Ovsienko: *Zapiski o grazhdanskoj voynie*, Vol. II, p. 8).

Objective Appraisal of the Ukrainian Peace in Brest Litovsk

Perhaps the most important feature of the peace treaty in Brest Litovsk as far as Ukraine was concerned was that at this peace conference the Central Powers recognized the Ukrainian National Republic as an equal party in its relations with the Central Powers, especially Germany and Austria-Hungary, which were victorious on the Eastern front at that time.

The second important feature of this treaty was the final disposition of the prisoners of war by the two contracting parties. The treaty, agreed upon by Ukraine and the Central Powers, accepted unconditionally the principle of humanity; after the war all prisoners of war were to be given the free choice either of returning to their home country, in which case the country holding them prisoner was compelled to help them return, or of remaining in the country of their captivity, or settling in any other country of their selection. What was in the minds of those drafting the text of the treaty was the fact that there evidently were many prisoners of war, who for political reasons, were apprehensive about returning to their home country, ruled by a regime to which they were opposed. This feature of the treaty stands out as a fine example of humanism, especially as compared with the agreements concluded after World War II, whereby the Western Allies callously agreed to return to the USSR war prisoners or other political refugees who were in opposition to the Communist regimes in the USSR and in the satellite countries.

The documents relating to the events leading to the signing of the peace treaty between Ukraine and the Central Powers in Brest Litovsk refute most decidedly the myth spread by the Russians and their puppets to the effect that the "Germans created the Ukrainian state in Brest Litovsk." The Ukrainian National Republic existed as a formal autonomous unit within the boundaries of Russia beginning in June 1917, and from November, 1917 on it existed as a full-fledged state entity, the independence of which was recognized even before the peace negotiations in Brest Litovsk by the following powers:

1. The government of Soviet Russia, by a note of December 17, 1917;
2. The government of France, by its notes of December 18, 1917 and January 3, 1918;
3. The government of Great Britain, by a note of December 18, 1917. Consequently, the recognition of the sovereignty of the Ukrainian state by the Central Powers in Brest Litovsk followed the recog-

nition of Ukraine by the two important Western Allies, France and Great Britain.⁴⁸

It is very important to keep in mind that the governments of Ukraine, both the autonomous and the independent, endeavored to follow a policy oriented toward the Western Allies (the United States, France, Great Britain, Italy and Japan). The Ukrainian Central *Rada* supported the policy of continuing the war against the Central Powers so long as the Russian Provisional Government under the premierships of Prince Lvov and Alexander Kerensky continued the war, and when the government of Russia went into the hands of the *Sovnarkom* the *Rada* maintained its policy until the *Sovnarkom* began negotiating with representatives of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey on December 2, 1917. Compelled to follow suit, the government of the Ukrainian National Republic held out until December 25, 1917, on which date the *Rada* decided to meet with the delegates of the Central Powers in Brest Litovsk.

When the *Sovnarkom* of Russia declared a truce at the front with the Central Powers, the Ukrainian government had no justification for continuing the war on its own. There were many reasons for such an action.

Above all, the Eastern front which ran through the territory of Ukraine was held not only by "Ukrainized" units of the Czarist army, but also by units that were purely Russian. Once the truce was declared the Russian units ceased fighting, and as a consequence threw the entire front in Ukraine to the "Ukrainized" units, that is, those units of the Russian army which had been given Ukrainian commanders and granted the Ukrainian language, the first political concessions which had been wrested by the Ukrainian Central *Rada* from the Russian Provisional Government. It was one of the reasons why the Allied missions (French and British) saw the Ukrainian forces as the only stable elements at the front. They constantly encouraged the Ukrainian front to hold up, promising financial and military support for Ukraine. These promises, of course, were never kept; the Western allies had no way of delivering military supplies, inasmuch as Ukraine was completely cut off by the long German-Austrian front extending from the Baltic to the Black Seas, and the Dardanelles were closed by the Turks.

Finally, there was a third important reason which compelled Ukraine to engage in peace negotiations in Brest Litovsk. It was the

⁴⁸ See texts, D. Doroshenko: *Illustrovana Istoria Ukrainy v 1917-1923*, (An Illustrated History of Ukraine in the Years 1917-1923), p. 234 and ff.

military aggression of Soviet Russia against Ukraine. The government of the Ukrainian National Republic hesitated a long time before beginning negotiations, hoping that the situation with the government in Russia would soon be clarified, thereby allowing the front against the Central Powers to remain active. But when on December 17, 1917, Moscow invaded Ukraine, the Ukrainian government had no choice but to liquidate the front against the Central Powers in order to defend its own territory, which was threatened by Communist Russia.

We believe that no country would have behaved differently in the same circumstances.

CHAPTER FIVE

RUSSIA AND THE NATIONALITY PROBLEM IN BREST LITOVSK

Bolshevik Aims in Peace Negotiations

At the conclusion of this brief survey of the peace conference in Brest Litovsk and its influence upon the relationship between Ukraine and Russia, it is worthwhile and opportune to touch cursorily upon the tactics of the Russian *Sovnarkom* with regard to Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. These tactics also had a significant impact upon the peace negotiations in Brest Litovsk.

There is no doubt that the Russian Bolsheviks endeavored to conquer these countries in the same manner they sought to subdue Ukraine. If Ukraine was the first target of aggression, it was because Ukraine at that time was alone and isolated; the *Sovnarkom* hoped to conquer Ukraine through the sheer numerical superiority of its armed forces. But here, too, it found that the conquest was neither assured nor easy.

On the other hand, Poland, Lithuania and Latvia, in part, were occupied at that time by German troops, a fact which caused Russia to think twice about initiating any aggressive moves against these countries. Besides, the German armies were victorious along the entire Eastern front — another substantial reason for Russian caution. Therefore, the Bolsheviks, theoretically and at least in their public statements, agreed to allow independence for these countries, especially in the case of Poland, which was out of Russian control in any case. But concurrently with this line the *Sovnarkom* covertly waged a systematic agitation aimed at swaying the peoples of these countries over to the Russian side; the re-conquest of these countries was envisioned after a “breathing space.”

This was apparent from the behavior of the Soviet delegation at the peace conference in Brest Litovsk. For the purposes of Bolshevik agitation it launched the slogan of “peace without annexations and indemnities,” whereby it hoped to influence the peoples who had already been freed of Russian control. It also directed this slogan at the Central Powers in the belief that the latter would reject it immediately,

and thereby compromise themselves in the eyes of the peoples of both Eastern and Western Europe. In addition, the Bolshevik delegation thought that this tactical maneuver would represent the Russian Bolsheviks as true and genuine defenders of the liberation of all peoples and of their right to self-determination. Unexpectedly for the Bolsheviks, however, the Central Powers at the peace conference immediately seized the occasion to accept the principle as a starting point for the negotiations. Moreover, they stated that the populations on the lands which at that time were occupied by Germany and Austro-Hungary had already demonstrated their right to national self-determination by expressing their will and decision not to belong to the Russian empire or state in general. Thus Russia had no right to speak in their behalf, nor could it conclude a peace in their name. Russia, the delegates of the Central Powers went on, was empowered to conclude a peace treaty only in the name of the remaining part of Russia.

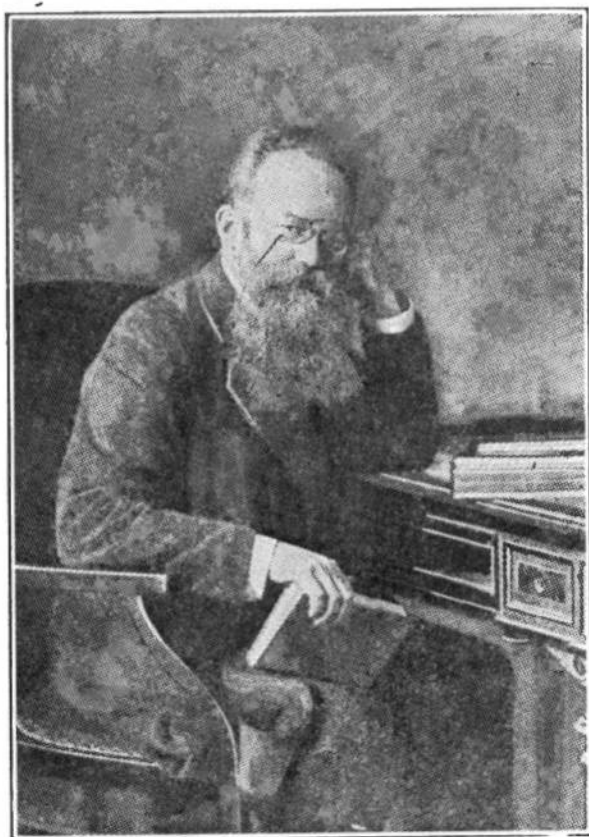
On this occasion (January 11, 1918) an extensive discussion developed on the *specific time and conditions under which a new state could be created by secession from a former state*.

Count Kuehlmann, the German delegate speaking for the Central Powers, presented the latter's views on the subject as follows:

"A new state unit is created and is in a position to issue binding declarations regarding the bases of its existence when a representation, elected by the people or through its historical origin empowered to serve as a voice of the people, declares its decision as an expression of the indubitable will of the overwhelming majority of the people to become an independent nation."

Count Kuehlmann cited the examples of Finland and Ukraine, which became sovereign on the basis of the above cited process, and the independence of which had already been recognized by the Russian government, despite the fact that the establishment of these states had not followed the principles now enunciated by the Russian government.

In reply Trotsky pointed out that Finland was not occupied by foreign troops and, as for Ukraine, a process of democratic self-determination had not terminated there as yet. He purposely omitted the fact that the major parts of Ukraine were occupied by Austrian and German armies: Podlasia, the Kholm Land, and parts of Polissia and Volhynia, not to mention the areas of Galicia, Bukovina and Transcarpathia which for almost a century and a half had been under the domination of Austria-Hungary. Trotsky pretended that there had been no formal declaration of war by Russia against Ukraine, stating



**Prof. Mykhailo Hrushevsky,
in his study (photo 1914)**

"We are of the conviction that the removal of Russian troops from the Ukrainian territory will not meet with any difficulties, inasmuch as this represents a technical and not a political matter. Therefore, we see no obstacle to the self-determination of the Ukrainian people being effectuated through the recognition of the independence of the Ukrainian Republic."

Furthermore, Trotsky demanded that on the territories occupied by the Central Powers, that is, the former non-Russian lands of the Russian empire, an all-national election should be held to elect national representative organs of these peoples which would express the will of these peoples regarding their political future. This, of course, was a typical Bolshevik trick, for Soviet Russia had declared war against

Ukraine precisely because Ukraine had held an all-national election to the Ukrainian Constituent Assembly, the outcome of which had been a devastating rout for the Bolsheviks, as was evident from the results of the election to the All-Russian Constituent Assembly, held on November 25, 1917. To propose an election on the territories occupied by the Germans and Austrians was only to set off propaganda fireworks, as the Bolsheviks knew that the majority of the peoples concerned would never vote for their candidates, as was conclusively demonstrated in the election to the All-Russian Constituent Assembly.

Again Richard Kuehlmann, the German Secretary of State, remarked:

“We stand and should stand on the principle that, because of the lack of other national representations, the existing representations now become historical and are for the time being the expression of the people’s will, especially in such a matter as the will of a nation to become independent.”

Kuehlmann and Count Czernin, the Austrian Foreign Minister, then reminded Trotsky that in December, 1917, the Russian delegation had been inclined to recognize basically the *de facto* existing national representations of the occupied countries. The representatives of the Central Powers declared that in their opinion the existing representations of Poland, Lithuania and Courland would even now conclude treaties, if they considered such to be beneficial to the future of their respective peoples.

Trotsky, in the name of the Russian delegation, thereupon proposed that representations of the occupied territories be invited to the peace conference in Brest Litovsk, hoping that the Central Powers would reject this proposal. But to the surprise of Trotsky and the other Russian delegates, Kuehlmann replied that if in the opinion of Trotsky these representations were qualified to take international obligations upon themselves, the Central Powers would not be opposed to a discussion on the ways and means whereby these representations could take part in the peace negotiations.

The next day, January 12, 1918, the discussion continued on the problems of the occupied territories of the peoples enslaved by the former Russian empire. The German Secretary of State Kuehlmann made the following statement:

“We are of the belief that the Western peoples of the former Russian empire have already expressed their decision to be independent in a way which appears valid and acceptable to us. We are ready to discuss the participation of

these peoples in the peace negotiations and we ask the Russian delegation whether it recognizes these new states as legal entities which can take part in the peace negotiations as states . . .”

Trotsky made no answer to the German delegate. Instead, Kame-nev, another member of the Russian delegation, made the following deceitful declaration:

“1. The fact that the occupied territories belonged to the former Russian empire is not considered by the Russian government to impose certain obligations upon the Russian republic. The old frontiers, created through the crimes and violence perpetrated upon these peoples, have disappeared along with Czarism. The new boundaries should be established by the free decision of the peoples concerned.

“2. Therefore, the basic task of the Russian government is not to keep these areas by force within the boundaries of the Russian state, but to defend the real freedom of self-determination with respect to their internal order and their international relationships. The Russian republic will consider itself secure from any territorial disputes when it is convinced that the new boundaries have been established by the free will of the peoples and not by any violence which temporarily suppresses this will.

“Such an understandable task has as its prerequisite a prior understanding between Germany and Austria-Hungary, on the one side, and Russia, on the other, regarding four principal points: the extent of the territory on which the peoples will be called upon to exercise their right of self-determination; the general political conditions under which the question of the state structure of the nations and states of the concerned peoples is to be resolved; the provisional governments which shall function until the final constitutional establishment of these areas and the methods and forms in which the peoples of these countries express their will. The sets of answers to these questions should be substituted for the second point of the German proposal of December 28, 1917, in the peace treaty.

“The Russian delegation for its own part should like to propose the following solution to these matters:

“a) The right of self-determination belongs to a nation as such and not to its occupied parts, as provided for by Point 2

of the German proposal of December 28, 1917. Accordingly, the Russian government grants the right of simultaneous self-determination also to those parts of a nation which are not under occupation. Russia obligates itself not to impose directly or indirectly any state form, nor to limit the independence of nations by any tariff or military agreements until the final constitutional settlement of these countries on the basis of national self-determination is made. The governments of Germany and Austria-Hungary for their part must state categorically that they will raise no demands for the inclusion of any countries of the former Russian state occupied by them into their own states, nor to make so-called rectification of borders at the expense of these countries. Moreover, they shall obligate themselves not to impose directly or indirectly any state form, nor to limit the independence of any nation by any tariff or military agreement until the final constitutional settlement of these countries on the basis of national self-determination is made.

“b) The decision regarding the fate of these countries which are to exercise the right of self-determination is to be arrived at under the condition of complete political freedom and the absence of any external pressure. Therefore, the elections should take place after the removal of troops and upon the return of refugees and displaced evacuees. The timing of the removal of troops should be determined by a special commission which would take into consideration all technical matters as well as the conditions of the unfinished war. The maintenance of order and the defense, during this period, of the right of the process of self-determination must be entrusted to the national armies and local militias. All refugees and evacuees must be given complete freedom and material assistance for return to their homelands.

“c) From the moment of the signing of the peace treaty until the final constitutional settlement in the above-mentioned countries, the internal administration in local affairs, including financial matters, shall be placed into the hands of a provisional organ established through an understanding reached among the political parties which have demonstrated their vitality among the people prior to and during the war. The task of this provisional organ, in addition to maintaining order and the course of normal social and economic life, is to make preparations for the elections.



Simon Petlura in his study
(Photo 1924)

“d) The final decision as regards the state position of these countries and the structure of their state institutions must be effectuated through a general election.”

There is no doubt that the above declaration, in addition to its formal character, had a purely propagandistic connotation as well. Although the declaration speaks formally about the *unlimited* right of self-determination of nations, it was so composed that it could be always interpreted for the benefit of the Russian Bolsheviks. It speaks about the “general election,” but fails to specify whether it was general for “proletarians” exclusively or whether other citizens — non-“proletarians” — were eligible to vote as well. (In Ukraine the *Sovnarkom* of Russia had considered only those citizens as *bona fide* who supported Bolshevism.)

Previously, on January 11, 1918, Trotsky had said that “we recognize this principle (the right of self-determination of nations) for the people themselves, and not for *their privileged classes*.” The appellation of “privileged classes” was bestowed by the Bolsheviks upon all those who were not “proletarians,” which included all peasants who owned

their own land, all workers and artisans, and traders and members of the free professions — all of whom taken together constituted the overwhelming majority of the population. This point was not mentioned in the official declaration of the Russian delegation for fear of detracting from the propaganda effect abroad. The reservation as to the “parties which have demonstrated their vitality among the people prior to and during the war” was clearly directed against the national non-Russian parties of peasants and workers, inasmuch as they had begun their political activities only after the fall of Czardom, for these peoples had been prohibited from organizing political parties by the Czarist government prior to and during the war. Thus only the Bolshevik party could remain as the one group qualified to conduct political activities, including election to the Constituent Assemblies. But what was shocking in this declaration was that it was based on complete untruth as regards the relations between Soviet Russia and Ukraine since December 17, 1917.

The Russian delegation further demanded that the troops of the Central Powers be withdrawn from the non-Russian territories before the free self-determination of a given nation be implemented. Yet Soviet Russia had invaded Ukraine, and only under the cutting pressure of Russian bayonets was it able to impose the “self-determination” of Ukraine in the shape of five Soviet “republics” in Ukraine, made them component parts of Soviet Russia and gave them governments made up of fanatical enemies of the Ukrainian people. The “elections” to the “Second All-Ukrainian Congress of *Soviets*” were conducted under a terrorized atmosphere of Russian troops and Red Guards. Thus the Russian declaration at the peace negotiations in Brest Litovsk was a brazen mockery of the principle of self-determination: while the Russian delegates were solemnly proclaiming their adherence to this principle, Soviet Russian troops were violating it in an unprovoked invasion of Ukraine to suppress the manifestation of the right of self-determination of the Ukrainian people. But we must not forget that the same Russian delegation, cornered by the Ukrainian delegates, verbally had nullified all these principles: in a statement of January 30, 1918, Trotsky stated that no treaty with the Ukrainian National Republic which was previously recognized by Soviet Russia would be valid unless Soviet Russia agreed to it. Thus we readily see that all these declarations by Russia were mere words of agitation and propaganda which the representatives of Soviet Russia never seriously considered keeping. Without shame and without remorse or conscience, they spoke one thing one day, and another and often completely contradictory thing the next.

Reply of the Central Powers

Therefore, an answer given Trotsky by General Hoffmann, one of the German delegates, was more than an apocryphos:

"The Russian delegation demands such a method of self-determination in the countries of the former Russian empire occupied by the Central Powers *which the Russians refuse to give within the limits of their own state*. Your Russian government is based on *violence*, which it uses against its own citizens who think differently and against *other nations* as well. As a proof of this is the fact that during the night of 30 to 31, December, 1917, Russian Bolshevik forces dispersed the *Byelorussian Congress in Minsk*, and when the *Ukrainians* expressed their will for self-determination, the *Sovnarkom* of Russia sent them an ultimatum and sought to conquer them by force of arms. Such in practice is the Bolshevik right of self-determination where the Bolsheviks enjoy power. Therefore, we must reject such a position of the Bolsheviks. The national congress of Courland issued a resolution on September 21, 1917, asking assistance from Germany against Russia. The Lithuanian National Council proclaimed on December 11, 1917, full separation from Russia . . ."

But it was only at the full plenary session of the peace conference on January 14, 1918, that the German Secretary of State Richard Kuehlmann, in the name of the four Central Powers, presented the final proposals regarding the countries occupied by the German and Austro-Hungarian troops, countries which had once belonged to the Russian empire:

"1. The right of self-determination may belong not only to full nations as such, but to their constituent parts as well. Moreover, from the historical point of view Courland, Lithuania and Poland constitute separate national entities. Germany and Austria-Hungary have no intention of incorporating any country; they have no intention of imposing upon the concerned countries one or another state form, but they are obligated to allow a free hand to the peoples of the occupied countries to conclude such treaties as appear advantageous to them.

"2. Removal of troops, while the war is in progress, is impossible, but such efforts should be made that, to the extent war circumstances permit, their number be limited to only that needed to maintain order and technical enter-

prises. We may also attempt to help in the creation of a national police. Because this matter has no decisive significance in the conclusion of a peace, it should be referred to a special commission.

"3. In the matter of administration of the occupied countries we may agree, without further discussion, that elected representatives may be admitted in ever-increasing measure to the administration of the country, inasmuch as the signing of the general peace treaty is soon expected.

"4. The Allied Delegations (of the Central Powers) agree in principle that an election on a wide basis should have the final decision as to the form of government to be adopted in these countries . . ."

Speaking for the Russian delegation, Trotsky stated that this declaration removed all formal difficulties. As far as the conflict with Ukraine was concerned, a conflict which was not as yet settled totally, in the opinion of the Russian delegation it in no measure could limit the right of the Ukrainian people to self-determination, and in like wise it did not impede the Russian government from recognizing the independence of the Ukrainian Republic.

We may in all objectivity assume that Trotsky was waiting for the time when the conflict with Ukraine would be settled in its "totality," that is, when Russia would occupy all Ukraine, whereupon there would be no further need of talking about the independence of Ukraine.

Trotsky Caught in Own Trap

But the question of the territories or countries which were part of the former Russian empire and which now were occupied by German and Austro-Hungarian troops was not abandoned in these talks. It bobbed up again as a subject of discussion at the session of January 15, 1918, at which Trotsky demanded, for propaganda purposes, that representatives of the countries occupied by the Central Powers, namely, Poland, Lithuania and Latvia (Courland), be formally invited to take part in the conference. Count Kuehlmann, speaking for the Central Powers, again accepted the proposal of Trotsky under the condition that the Russian delegation recognize these representations as those of new national states. But here Trotsky was caught in his own propaganda trap. He said that the existing representations in these countries, in his opinion, were not the expression of the will of the peoples there, and consequently *he withdrew his own proposal*. Eventually Kuehlmann



President M. Hrushevsky (center) during the proclamation of the Third Universal in Kiev, in the fall of 1917

proposed a discussion on the methods of all-national elections in all occupied territories, to which Trotsky replied that the Russian delegation would need a special conference to formulate its final reply.

This discussion lasted until January 18, 1918, on which date Trotsky asked for the suspension of the plenary session of the peace conference until January 29, 1918, because of his trip to Petrograd for consultation with the *Sovnarkom*. During his absence the Russian delegation was headed by Adolph Joffe.

Upon his return to Brest Litovsk the plenary sessions of the peace conference were resumed, and on January 31, 1918, Trotsky again returned to the matter of the non-Russian peoples under the German occupation, limiting, however, his discussion to *Poland*. He asked the German delegation whether it were possible for a representative of the Polish ministry in Warsaw to take part in the peace negotiations. In replying, Count Kuehlmann stated that he had already taken a position on this matter and would be willing to put this point on the agenda of the next session of the conference.

Naturally, Trotsky was in no hurry to have the representatives of the non-Russian nations at the peace table in Brest Litovsk, including those from Poland. His intent was to stall the negotiations as long as possible, hoping to confront the Central Powers with new situations. So he again brought up this matter at the conference on February 8, 1918, having with him a Russified Polish Bolshevik by the name of

Bobinski. In addition, the Russian delegation included Karl Radek, a Russified Polish Jew. Both these men were to play the role of a "Polish" delegation. Hence when Trotsky raised the matter of the Polish delegation, both Bobinski and Radek immediately took the floor and spoke on behalf of "Poland." Both roundly denounced the provisional government of Poland, stressing that "revolutionary Russia" was the true representative of Poland, and that many Poles were in the ranks of the German and Austrian armies. When Bobinski read an official statement, Count Kuehlmann pointedly asked Trotsky whether the statement read by Bobinski was that of the Russian delegation or not. Trotsky retorted that the statement was official within limits which were set by the Russian delegation at the beginning of the session, but for the remaining part the statement was to be considered as informational material.

Count Kuehlmann irately protested such conduct of the Russian delegation and declared that henceforth he would not accept any statements from members of the Russian delegation unless they were the official statements of the whole delegation.

Such was the course of the non-Russian countries at the conference in Brest Litovsk and such were the perfidious tactics of the Bolsheviks, who sought to play the role of champions of the self-determination of peoples for foreign consumption, while suppressing the same principle in Ukraine.

CHAPTER SIX

EFFECTIVE OFFENSIVE OF THE UKRAINIAN ARMIES AND THEIR ALLIES

Counterblow of Forces of the Ukrainian National Republic

On February 8, 1918, after a long siege by the Bolshevik troops and a heavy bombardment of the Ukrainian capital, the army of the Ukrainian National Republic withdrew from Kiev. The Central *Rada* and the Ukrainian government had left earlier.

The retreat was wholly orderly and planned. While the Ukrainian army fell back westward to Volhynia and Podilia, the Central *Rada* and the Ukrainian government set up a new seat in the city of Zhytomyr.

The high command of the Ukrainian army began its military operations with the aim of not only stopping the advance of the enemy, but expelling him from the Ukrainian territory as well. The Bolshevik offensive was successfully stopped, and then under effective counter-attacks by the Ukrainian units the Bolshevik troops began their own retreat. But despite this auspicious turn of events, the supreme command of the Ukrainian armies was under no illusion as to the steady growth of the Bolshevik armies. The Ukrainian armed forces, on the other hand, could not be bolstered rapidly enough to cope with the situation, inasmuch as a great part of the Ukrainian national territory was occupied by the Russian Bolsheviks. The danger always existed that the enemy, after reorganizing his armed forces, would launch a new offensive, and enjoying overwhelming numerical superiority, would oust the Ukrainian armies and the government of Ukraine.

In order to prevent this development the Ukrainian government instructed its delegates at the peace conference to approach the governments of Germany and Austria-Hungary with a view to enlisting their military assistance. Through their efforts a special military agreement was concluded between Ukraine and Germany and Austria-Hungary on February 18, 1918. One day later, February 19, 1918, German and Austro-Hungarian troops already were en route to the Ukrainian front.

No match for these combined German-Austrian-Ukrainian forces, the Soviet Russian troops began retreating to the north, east, and south. On March 1, 1918, three weeks after the capture of Kiev by the Bolshevik troops, the Ukrainian army, under the command of Simon Petlura, returned triumphantly to the Ukrainian capital. The next day an impressive military parade took place, with all Kiev adorned with the blue and yellow Ukrainian national flags. The Ukrainian press reported this parade at St. Sophia Square in Kiev in the following words:

“At nine o'clock in the morning the first Ukrainian units, commanded by Simon Petlura, reached St. Sophia Square. The triumphal march was led by two black-clad battalions of Svobidska Ukraina. They were followed by the disciplined ranks of the Galician *Sichovi Striltsi*, commanded by Otamans Konovalets and Melnyk. The troops marched in battle readiness with artillery and machine-guns. The people of the capital welcomed the Ukrainian Army with great enthusiasm. On all sides one heard happy and elated cries: ‘Our troops returned!’, ‘Glory,’ and ‘Ukraine Has Not Died’ (*Shche ne vmerla Ukraina* — the Ukrainian national anthem); and the like. Despite the long and exhausting campaigns, the soldiers were smiling, with happy gleams in their eyes, and sang, ‘We Are *Haidamaks*,’ ‘Doroshenko,’ ‘The Kozaks Whistle,’ and other songs . . . In their ranks were many local workers, members of the Ukrainian Central *Rada*, who were welcomed by families, friends and acquaintances, most of whom had tears in their eyes. Almost every soldier was covered with flowers. Military bands played, and the sounds of ‘Glory’ and the tolling of church bells filled the whole city. Such units as the Doroshenko Regiment, the *Haidamaks* of Petlura and the Kost Hordienko Regiment showed remarkable discipline . . . Finally, the whole of St. Sophia Square became a human sea, and all the streets were sealed off with artillery, cavalry, infantry and automobiles, as in the sky above a plane circled . . . The parade was reviewed by War Minister Zhukivsky while the eyes of the populace searched everywhere for Petlura. Unit after unit passed the reviewing stand to the accompaniment of cries of ‘*Slava*’ (‘Glory’). Finally, Petlura appeared at the head of his eagle-like regiment. The great masses shouted, ‘Petlura alive!’, ‘Glory’ and the like. The War Minister invited Petlura to stand beside him for the remainder of the parade . . . As the last columns of artillery and machine-guns passed the reviewing stand, a delegation ap-



A detachment of **Sichovi Striltsi**, one of the elite units of the Ukrainian National Republic

proached the stand, offering Petlura a huge basket of flowers . . . Finally, all fell silent as Minister Zhukivsky began his address. He pointed out that the Ukrainian people were now living through one of the greatest moments in Ukraine's history. He said that Ukraine had again become free, and that it wanted to restore internal order and peace to the tired citizenry. You must help us in this work, the Minister said. You must support the Ukrainian National Republic in its work of building a free and independent Ukrainian State. When Petlura began to speak, the silence became so intense that one could hear his breathing. He spoke humbly and with sincerity, describing the suffering of the Ukrainian people inflicted upon them by the robber-like Bolshevik bands. There were moments, he continued, when our people forgot the strength which is needed for the building of a state and which serves as the guarantor of their freedom and happiness. But such moments were few, because we now stand again in a free capital of a despoiled but yet of our own Ukraine, and with renewed faith in our future we shall build our Free and Independent Ukrainian State . . . He finished

amid thunderous applause and cries of 'Long Live Free Ukraine' by the multitude of people . . ."

After the liberation of Kiev the offensive of the Ukrainian armies, assisted by the German and Austrian troops, was swift and successful. By the end of April, 1918, almost the entire basic and ethnic territory of Ukraine had been cleared of the invaders. Only a small part of the territory of the Ukrainian National Republic remained under the control of the Bolsheviks.

Ukrainian Troops — Vanguard of Anti-Soviet Offensive

It is to be stressed that the brunt of the Russian Bolshevik invasion was sustained by the army of the Ukrainian National Republic, and that it was the Ukrainian army alone which stopped the Bolshevik offensive near Zhytomyr. It is not historically true that the military assistance of Germany and Austria-Hungary alone saved the Ukrainian government. The facts speak for themselves. The peace treaty between Ukraine and the Central Powers was signed in Brest Litovsk on February 9, 1918, while the military agreement extending military assistance by the Central Powers to Ukraine was signed on February 18, 1918, nine days later, and it was only on February 19, 1918, that the German and Austro-Hungarian armies were ordered to march into Ukraine. Thus the Ukrainian army *alone* sustained the brunt of the Bolshevik attack and *alone* began a counter-offensive. Only later did the military assistance of the Central Powers arrive.

But these facts were never acknowledged by the Russian Bolshevik propaganda, which claimed then as it claims now that Kiev was "taken by troops of Ukrainian workers under the command of Yuriy Kotsiubynsky." The historical facts show that there was not a single Ukrainian unit among the Bolshevik troops which took Kiev in February, 1918. The commander of the Soviet troops attacking Kiev was Colonel Mikhail Muraviev, and Yuriy Kotsiubynsky had nothing to do with the Bolshevik assault on Kiev. This invention was disseminated by the Russian Bolshevik propaganda as far back as February, 1918, for the purpose of having world opinion believe that it was Yuriy Kotsiubynsky, a son of the famous Ukrainian novelist, Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky, who had captured Kiev, the capital of Ukraine, for the Soviet government. This fiction was disseminated by the Russian delegation in Brest Litovsk with the aim of preventing the conclusion of a peace treaty with Ukraine. When Colonel Muraviev found out that the *Sovnarkom* had ascribed the capture and rape of Kiev not to him, but to Yuriy Kotsiubynsky, who did not even see the front, he was deeply offended,



A unit of the "Gray Division," one of the best disciplined divisions of the army of the Ukrainian National Republic

and berated Kotsiubynsky for shamelessly wearing "other people's feathers." This is reported by Antonov-Ovsienko in his memoirs in several places.⁴⁹

Equally untrue is another Soviet claim to the effect that the Soviet troops crushed the Ukrainian army in February, 1918, and that the Ukrainian government and the Ukrainian Central Rada were forced to flee to the Germans, who brought them back to Kiev. Ukrainian sources are not alone in stating that beyond any doubt the *army of the Ukrainian National Republic alone* broke the Soviet offensive at Zhytomyr, and that it was the Ukrainian army *alone* which initiated the counter-offensive. It was only ten days later that the counter-offensive was joined by the armies of the Central Powers. Under the conditions of the warfare that was waged at that time, ten days was a period that could well have decided the final outcome of the war.

⁴⁹ In his report to Lenin, Muraviev underscored that it had been only he who gave the power to the "Soviets in Ukraine": "All power, established by the bayonets, I gave to the Soviets of Ukraine" Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. p. 51).

The Ukrainian armies were bolstered by the armies of the Central Powers (February 19, 1918), which began their offensive in Volhynia and the northwestern parts of Podilia. This drive had as its vanguard Ukrainian units on an extensive front. This fact is attested to by none other than Antonov-Ovsienko, the supreme commander-in-chief of the Soviet Russian troops that invaded Ukraine in December, 1917.

On February 24, 1918, Mykola Skrypnyk, then a Commissar in the "Soviet government" of Ukraine, sent a telegram to Antonov-Ovsienko stressing the critical position of the Soviet troops in connection with the counter-offensive of the armies of the Ukrainian National Republic in alliance with the Central Powers. His telegram read:

"The German troops are attacking on a wide front, but in *their vanguard are the Haidamaks*, the bands of the former Central Rada . . . *Petlura* is already in Korosten . . . The *Haidamaks* are attempting to take Berdychiv . . ." (*Italics added*).

This telegram, as well as other notes of Antonov-Ovsienko, proved beyond any doubt that the offensive was carried on the shoulders of the reorganized Ukrainian troops, or the *Haidamaks* (as they were referred to by the Bolshevik propaganda). Furthermore, in an order of the day, the "Executive Committee of Ukraine" dispatched an urgent communique to all "commanders and commissars" at the end of February, 1918, in which it said:

"At the approaches to Kiev a fierce battle has been going on the past few days between Soviet units and German troops . . . and bands of *Haidamaks*, commanded by *Petlura*. The drive of the German troops, recruited from among the German bourgeoisie, and of the *Haidamak* bands threatens to suppress the revolution of the workers and peasants of Ukraine (i.e. the Bolshevik revolution — M.S.)."

Both Skrypnyk and the "Executive Committee of Ukraine" (the *Ispolkom*) tried deliberately to degrade the army of the Ukrainian National Republic in the eyes of their subordinates by constantly calling and referring to it as "bands." But it became evident even to Skrypnyk himself that these "bands" were powerful enough to menace the "proletarian revolution" in Ukraine. It is worthwhile mentioning that to sustain the morale of the Soviet commanders Skrypnyk did not hesitate to resort to lies in order to attain his objectives. He did so in reference to the peace negotiations in Brest Litovsk:

"You must explain to the working people of Ukraine that after our peace delegation signs a treaty of peace with Austria

and Germany in Brest Litovsk, the regiments of the German bourgeoisie will be compelled to return home, the former Kiev *Rada* with its bands of *Haidamaks* will remain alone, and the struggle with it will then not be difficult for us and we shall crush and destroy them without hesitation . . .”



Colonel Evhen Konovalts
Commander of the *Sichovi Striltsi* Corps,
which distinguished itself in battles
against Russian Communist invaders

Antonov-Ovsienko, as the commander-in-chief of the Soviet troops invading Ukraine, thought quite differently: he called this statement by Skrypnyk “naive”⁵⁰ (although it actually was an outright lie).

Let us cite from another place in Antonov-Ovsienko’s memoirs about the struggle of the *Haidamaks*, that is, the army of the Ukrainian National Republic, which operated both at the front and in the rear of the lines:

⁵⁰ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 296.

"The serenity was deceiving. The *Haidamak* bands were penetrating into the depths of the Right-Bank . . . Revolutionary *uprisings* were erupting with regular frequency. The Soviet power was not as yet established: offices which had been set up by the (Central) *Rada* were not abolished in many villages . . ."

In a report by Commander Assev of the First Soviet Army there are several references to anti-Soviet *uprisings*, organized by certain village "councils" (as, for instance, that of Aleksandrivsk), and to telegrams being sent from the village of Markiv over the signatures of the "commander of the Ukrainian armies of the Katerynoslav and Uman districts," Kuchevsky, his chief of staff, Bondarenko, and his adjutant, Khomenko. In one telegram there was an order to all villages to call *volost* and village councils at once to pass resolutions "in defense of the attainment of the revolution and against the Bolshevik bands . . ." It was known even to the Bolshevik leaders that the unbridled behavior of the Bolshevik troops in Ukraine, their criminal rape and pillage, contributed substantially to the growth of the anti-Soviet forces in Ukraine.⁵¹

Antonov-Ovsienko, in reporting the retreat of the Soviet troops on the left bank of the Dnieper, stated:

"All this (squeezing out — M. S.) was concurrent with the activities of the *numerous* irregular *Haidamak* units. It was several Austrian divisions⁵² advancing into Ukraine" (italics added—M. S.)

In another place Antonov reported a telegram sent on March 16, 1918, by Soviet commander Smirnov from Mykolaiv to the staff of Muraviev:

"The *Haidamaks* and the Germans are advancing . . . A unit of the *Haidamaks* took Mykolaivka . . ."⁵³

These reports by the supreme commander of the Soviet troops in Ukraine attest beyond dispute that the burden of the anti-Bolshevik offensive in February-April, 1918, was borne by the Ukrainian armies, and not by the Germans.

⁵¹ Antonov, *op. cit.* Vol. II, p. 39-40.

⁵² Antonov, *op. cit.* Vol. II, p. 46.

⁵³ Antonov, *op. cit.* Vol. II, p. 73.

CHAPTER SEVEN

BOLSHEVIK POLICY WITH RESPECT TO PEACE AND UKRAINE

Struggle For and Against Treaty of Brest Litovsk

The conditions of peace which the Central Powers proposed to Soviet Russia in Brest Litovsk, at the beginning of February 1918, were quite bearable and negotiable. Headed by Germany, the Central Powers proposed to Russia *a peace truly without annexations and indemnities* on the part of Russia. What displeased the Soviet delegation, especially Trotsky, Kamenev and Radek, was that the Central Powers demanded that Russia renounce the alien, *non-Russian* territories, which Czarist Russia had formerly conquered in Europe. After Soviet Russia itself recognized Ukraine as an independent state, capable of concluding international treaties, only Poland and the Baltic states would have remained under Russian control of all the non-Russian territories conquered by the Czars in Europe. (Finland at that time had already proclaimed its independence and was capable of defending itself by arms.) What the Russian delegation refused to do was to renounce in the name of Russia all possible claims to these non-Russian countries. The pressure exerted by the Central Powers upon Russia to give up these territories was considered by the Russian delegation as something quite arch-diabolical and criminal.

It was this impasse that compelled Trotsky to suspend the parleys in Brest Litovsk and return to Petrograd, launching a slogan of "No War — No Peace." As mentioned above, during this interval a fierce struggle was going on within the Central Executive Committee of the Russian Communist Party. Upon the break-off of the peace parleys, the Central Powers resumed operations at the front and unleashed a powerful offensive directed at Central Russia (February 19, 1918). Despite these new developments a great many members of the Central Executive Committee were not willing to resume the peace negotiations, even as they watched the German and Austrian armies make deep inroads into Russian territory.

But Lenin, from the very beginning of the peace negotiations in Brest Litovsk, defended the view that Russia must accept even the heaviest conditions, if need be, to attain a peace with the Central Powers, for he was convinced that the continuation of the war could well bring about the collapse of Bolshevik power. Thus Lenin at all costs wanted to see a peace concluded to *save the power of his party* even for a short period (*peredyshka* — “breathing space”). He knew, of course, that once the Soviet power was firmly entrenched any treaty or treaties detrimental to Russia could be broken. But a great number of his colleagues on the Central Committee could not, at that time, understand his tactics, and others still believed in the strength of Bolshevik propaganda, which they hoped would be able to destroy Germany through a revolution similar to that which had taken place in Russia.

Lenin Implements Ratification of Treaty of Brest Litovsk

The proposal of Lenin to resume peace negotiations with the Central Powers on the basis of an acceptance of their conditions was rejected on two occasions by the Central Executive Committee of the Russian Communist Party; each time Lenin was unable to muster a majority. Only at a third session of the Central Committee, when the Trotsky faction abstained from voting, did Lenin succeed in obtaining a majority in favor of his proposal. This position was eventually endorsed by the *Sovnarkom*.

But the serious difficulties for Lenin began when the Soviet Russian delegation, under the leadership of Sokolnikov, signed the peace treaty in Brest Litovsk on March 3, 1918.

The Russian party of left-wing Social Revolutionaries, which at that time had entered into a coalition with the Bolsheviks in the *Sovnarkom*, left this coalition in protest against the signing of the treaty and waged a fierce campaign for the continuation of war, even if it were only a “revolutionary war.” At the time this party exerted a strong influence upon the workers and peasants, who provided the Bolsheviks with a majority in the so-called “workers’ and peasants’ *soviets*.”

The peace treaty had also provided for its swift ratification by Russia, a development which was prevented by the strong agitation of the Social Revolutionaries, who accused the Bolsheviks of treason to “revolutionary principles,” of opportunism with regard to the German Monarcho-reactionary circles, and of causing harm to the interests of Russia. This opposition was soon swelled by the so-called “Left Com-

munists," led by Bukharin, Uritzky, Bubnov and Lomov in the Central Committee and a number of leading Bolsheviks outside that body. But where the "left" opposition waged its fight strictly within the confines of the Central Executive Committee, the other Russian political groups, whether the Socialist (Russian Socialist Revolutionaries, "People's Socialists," Social-Democrats-Internationalists, or Anarchists) or the bourgeois parties (Cadets and others) carried their criticism of the treaty to the street and the public, where they accused the Bolsheviks of treason



French General Jean Pelissier

and, for the maintenance of their power, of having sacrificed a great part of the Russian state — Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Baltic countries.

But despite this opposition the Communist Party emerged victorious when at the Fourth Congress of Soviets, March 15-17, 1918, the treaty of Brest Litovsk was ratified.⁵⁴

We must not forget that one of the clauses of the treaty between Russia and the Central Powers provided for the recognition of Ukraine as an independent state and the implementation of an immediate peace

⁵⁴ See, *Istoria sovietskogo gosudarstva i prava*. (The History of the Soviet State and Law), Gozizdat, Moscow, 1949, p. 38.

between Russia and the Ukrainian National Republic. Another clause prohibited Russia from meddling in the internal affairs of the Ukrainian Republic. These clauses gave the opposition the weighty argument that Russia without Ukraine and its products could not exist long as a prosperous state.

Double Standard of Bolshevik Morality Regarding Brest Litovsk Treaty

As Lenin and the leading group in the Central Committee of the Communist Party exerted every effort to convince the Russian opposition that Soviet Russia had done well by concluding the Brest Litovsk Treaty with the Central Powers to gain the needed "respite," the very same Lenin instructed the Bolsheviks who formed the "Soviet government of Ukraine" to fight against the Brest Litovsk treaty with Ukraine by all possible means, although there was no doubt that the peace treaty was entirely honorable to Ukraine. There was no doubt also that the young Ukrainian diplomatic corps had succeeded in taking full advantage of the critical economic situation of the Central Powers to secure the most favorable terms for Ukraine. Therefore, Lenin and his Bolsheviks, who at that time controlled a great part of Ukraine, endeavored to destroy the treaty of Ukraine with the Central Powers by characterizing it as a "sell-out of Ukraine to German imperialists." Even five years later, when the Soviet Russian occupation had triumphed in Ukraine, the Bolsheviks still deemed it necessary to contend that they had done well in supporting the ratification of the Brest Litovsk Treaty with Russia and, at the same time, in opposing the ratification of the Brest Litovsk Treaty with Ukraine. Mykola Skrypnyk, who was one of the main supporters of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine and one of the puppets of Moscow in Ukraine at that time, in his book, *Istoria proletarskoyi revolutsiyi na Ukraini*, openly admits that the task of the delegation of the "Ukrainian Soviet government" was to prevent the recognition of the Ukrainian National Republic at the peace conference. He writes that the "task of our peace delegation was . . . to state that the Ukrainian Central Rada is not recognized as a government of Ukraine and that it has no right to act on its behalf nor to accept any binding treaties . . ."

When this mission imposed upon the "Soviet Ukrainian delegation" by Moscow failed because the Ukrainian National Republic was recognized at the peace conference as an equal partner with other delegations and when the true Ukrainian delegation succeeded in securing an honorable and advantageous peace for Ukraine, then the

new task given to the Bolsheviks in Ukraine was that of castigating and deprecating the Ukrainian peace. But since there were no tangible and logical arguments against the treaty with Ukraine, the Bolshevik tactics resorted to the cheapest means at their disposal — the technique of the great lie.

Thus Skrypnyk, who in 1918 was the head of the “Soviet government in Ukraine,” wrote in his book:

“Representatives of the Ukrainian Central *Rada* signed a treaty with Germany by virtue of which all the power in Ukraine went into the hands of the German occupants who possessed the actual ownership of the railroads and all the economic assets of Ukraine. The entire treaty was a treacherous move against the workers’ and peasants’ revolution . . .”

The text of the treaty of Ukraine with the Central Powers, and not with Germany alone, contradicts most emphatically the lie of Skrypnyk, and therefore merits no further discussion. But far more acceptable to Skrypnyk was the treaty with Russia in Brest Litovsk. He wrote:

“Soviet Russia, having no way of sending the old and demoralized army to the front, began organizing a new Red army, but for this it needed a considerable amount of time. Thus it (Soviet Russia) agreed to sign the *onerous* Brest Litovsk treaty for the purpose of securing the respite required for further preparation . . .”

For Skrypnyk it was satisfactory that Russia, having no adequate army for further war operations on the two fronts — the one against the Central Powers (which at that time were still very strong) and the other against Ukraine — should have concluded a peace treaty in Brest Litovsk. But when the government of the Ukrainian National Republic did the same thing, having no adequate army to wage war on *two fronts* — one against the Central Powers and another against the preponderant forces of Soviet Russia — this was a “treacherous move against the workers’ and peasants’ revolution . . .” Skrypnyk satirized the opposition of the Russians against the ratification of the treaty when he wrote:

“There was much noise on the part of the bourgeoisie (Russian) against this move of the Soviet government; there was much noise on the part of the Social-Revolutionaries (Russian) and the Mensheviks and all the rest of the Russian Social-chauvinists against the onerous conditions (of the Brest Litovsk Treaty). On the basis of this opposition the

Social-Revolutionaries endeavored even to establish the so-called Volga front . . .”⁵⁵

In referring to the treaty signed by Ukraine, Skrypnyk posed the following question:

“What should the attitude of the Soviet workers’ and peasants’ government in Ukraine toward these two treaties have been? Understandably, the revolutionary workers and peasants greeted with sneers and curses the news of the agreement of the Ukrainian Central *Rada* with German capitalism against the Soviet revolution . . .”

But, of course, the treaty of Russia signed with the Central Powers in Brest Litovsk, that is, with the same “German capitalism,” was an entirely different matter. This was, according to Skrypnyk, a necessity. He even expressed sorrow over the fate of Russia when he wrote:

“In Brest Litovsk Russia was compelled to sign an agreement whereby it recognized Ukraine as a separate state outside the borders of Russia . . .”

Brest Litovsk Treaty Compels Soviet Government to Recognize Independence of Ukraine

Skrypnyk openly admits that there were some members in the Russian Communist Party who discussed this problem soberly. Once Moscow said that the Brest Litovsk Treaty with Russia was to be considered as political wisdom on the part of Lenin, it would follow that Russia ought to recognize the independence of the Ukrainian National Republic and cease warring against it, inasmuch as the same Brest Litovsk Treaty with Russia imposed also the recognition of the Ukrainian National Republic by Soviet Russia. He comments on this matter:

“A number of revolutionaries-workers (the appellation given the Bolsheviks by Skrypnyk) were confronted with the following dilemma: When here in Ukraine we recognize the Brest Litovsk Treaty signed with Soviet Russia, does not this also mean that we should recognize the second Brest Litovsk Treaty, signed by the Ukrainian Central *Rada*? Should we not recognize the Ukrainian Central *Rada* as the government of Ukraine, as our Russian comrades in Brest Litovsk were compelled to do? And if we cannot recognize the Ukrainian Central *Rada* as our government, if we do not want to surrender

⁵⁵ M. Skrypnyk, *Chervony Shliakh*, No. 3, 1923, p. 35.

the power to our own bourgeoisie, the power of which was conquered at the price of blood, would not this mean we are betraying the line which was followed by our comrades of Russia . . ."

It is worthwhile to introduce the testimony of Antonov-Ovsienko, the commander-in-chief of the Russian armies in Ukraine, regarding the effect of the propaganda effort by the Ukrainian National Republic on the Soviet Russian troops and on the sober and sane common sense



Col. Petro Bolbochan
one of the commanders of the Ukrainian armies
in the anti-Soviet counteroffensive

of the rank and file Soviet Russian soldiers. The propaganda campaign of the government of the Ukrainian National Republic pointed out that in Brest Litovsk two peace treaties were concluded: one with Ukraine, the other with Russia. Therefore, as a result of these treaties, there should be *peace* and, further, there should be *no necessity for Russian soldiers to fight against Ukraine*. The common sense of the Russian soldiers who were not as yet permeated with Bolshevik propaganda was certainly on the side of the Ukrainian government, a situation which led to many rebellions and mutinies among Soviet troops.

Even among the most fanatical and best disciplined "Red Guards" a series of mutinies and revolts expressed the refusal to fight against Ukraine, inasmuch as Russia had concluded a peace treaty with Germany and Austria and obligated itself to terminate the war with Ukraine and withdraw its troops from Ukraine. Antonov-Ovsienko

reported that many such incidents resulted from the discontent and dissatisfaction with the policy of the party center in Moscow. He wrote:

"Reflected in 'Red Guard' units was a general mood of fatigue and incomprehensibility: *why fight, when the peace treaty is concluded?* They were not afraid of the drive of the Germans, they felt no threat to the attainments of the revolution; *they wanted to return to their fields and factories*, since the revolution was being terminated there . . . Before me stood, pale and tired, Comrade Levinson, commander of the disciplined *Gatchina Assault Unit* (from Petrograd), who said: 'I cannot execute your order; the Red Guards decidedly refuse to go (to the front) and demand to be returned to Petrograd.'"⁵⁶

One of the subordinate commanders of Antonov-Ovsienko, Chikvanai, reported to his supreme commander:

"I report that the units which detrained from the echelons yesterday for the purpose of occupying the positions have returned to the cars . . . There is no way of compelling them to obey the order. Their demand is unanimous: send us back. The echelons are returning. The Third Army as such exists no more . . ."

Antonov-Ovsienko also admitted that even the center of his armed forces was subjected to deterioration and decline.⁵⁷

But let us return to Skrypnyk and his apology for the Soviet Russian policy in Ukraine.

Skrypnyk outlines what the members of the Russian Communist Party in Ukraine, or "the revolutionary workers and peasants," wanted as their political objective. He frankly admits that these "revolutionary workers did not want a separation of Ukraine from the workers'-peasants' Russia."

We can go along with Skrypnyk on this score, as he wrote the exact truth: the separation of Ukraine from Russia was opposed not by the leading members of the Russian Communist Party in Moscow, but by their disciplined party organizations in Ukraine. This we know from the authoritative pronouncements of Lenin and other leaders of the Russian Communist Party. Only under the impact of the establishment of the Ukrainian National Republic by the Third *Universal* of the Ukrainian Central *Rada* were they compelled to create a "Soviet Ukrainian Republic" on the Ukrainian territory occupied by the Red

⁵⁶ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 44 (italics added).

⁵⁷ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 261.

troops as a counterweight against the former. Skrypnyk writes openly that the task of the members of the Russian Communist Party in Ukraine was to bring "Soviet Ukraine into a common republic of Soviets," or, simply, to make Ukraine a part of Russia.

But after the signing of the treaty in Brest Litovsk on March 3, 1918, a new situation emerged: Russia obligated itself not only to recognize formally the independence of the Ukrainian National Republic, *but also to withdraw its troops from Ukraine as soon as possible*. We also know that at the top echelons of the Russian Communist Party there was initially a strong opposition against the ratification of the treaty simply because the Russians were averse to the provision providing for the withdrawal of the Russian troops from Ukraine. Even Lenin could not give an order for the withdrawal of his armies from Ukraine, as he was a Russian imperialist above all.

Therefore, new tactics had to be improvised. These may be summarized as follows:

The *Sovnarkom* agreed only half-heartedly to the evacuation of the Russian troops from Ukraine, that is, only to show good will. In signing the Brest Litovsk Treaty, the *Sovnarkom* wanted to *safeguard its front from the Central Powers, a front which was directed against Russia proper*. The *Sovnarkom* was seeking to save Russia from possible counterrevolutionary movements by anti-Bolshevik Russian forces which could profit by the presence of the armies of the Central Powers. Thus Lenin finally succeeded in convincing all members of the Central Committee that the first condition of strengthening the Bolshevik power in Russia was peace at all costs with the Central Powers. Another motive of Lenin in signing the treaty was his desire not to allow the Germans and Austrians to occupy Russia proper. A third reason was the plan of the *Sovnarkom* to continue the war against Ukraine. But in order not to violate the clauses of the treaty openly, the Soviet government secretly ordered its party organizations in Ukraine to proclaim a "Soviet Power of the Ukrainian National Republic." Consequently, all Soviet troops in Ukraine were transformed in a twinkling into "Red troops of the Soviet Power of the Ukrainian National Republic" without violating the treaty, which prohibited Russia from waging war against Ukraine. Moreover, the same Red troops conducted war operations also against the armies of the Central Powers, which were allied with Ukraine.

Thus on the territory of occupied Ukraine Moscow endeavored to test the methods of "revolutionary war," which she hesitated to apply to Russia proper, fearing to risk everything by allowing the Central Powers to occupy Russia proper.

How Bolsheviks Justified Their Proclamation Of Ukrainian "Independence"

But let us give the floor to the historian of Soviet policies in Ukraine, Mykola Skrypnyk, former head of the puppet Soviet "government" in Ukraine, keeping in mind that he always tried to interpret the facts so as to suit the official Soviet line regarding the war of Russia against Ukraine:

"After the treaty in Brest Litovsk (with Russia) circumstances changed . . . For Russia the Brest Litovsk Treaty meant the continuation of Soviet power, for Ukraine it meant its liquidation . . . In Russia the Bolshevik party signed, recognized and strictly implemented these clauses of the Brest Litovsk treaty and fought the (Russian) Left-Wing Social Revolutionaries, who opposed the treaty; in Ukraine the Ukrainian Social Revolutionaries from the Ukrainian Central *Rada* implemented their own treaty . . . Therefore, the Bolsheviks in Ukraine . . . could not recognize the Brest Litovsk treaty, inasmuch as it meant for Ukraine the recognition of the Ukrainian Central *Rada* as the government of Ukraine."⁵⁸

Skrypnyk explicitly admits that the principal bone of contention here was the independence of Ukraine from Russia not as a fiction, but in the real form of the Ukrainian National Republic with the Central *Rada* at its head.

Although this historian of the Soviet power in Ukraine tried to conceal the true character of the Soviet power in Ukraine during the first partial occupation of Ukraine by Russia (December, 1917–April, 1918), nonetheless he had to admit, albeit in veiled form, what the "relations" of this "Soviet Ukrainian Republic" with Russia actually were. We underscore here the fact that we have in mind the formal so-called "Soviet Ukrainian Republic" (and not the other Soviet "republics" which were established on orders from Moscow on the Ukrainian territory — those of Odessa, Kryvy Rih-Donets, and others). As cited above, Skrypnyk recognized that the Bolsheviks (the "revolutionary workers and peasants," as he refers to the Bolsheviks) "did not want to separate themselves from the Russia of workers and peasants." He also registered the evaluation of the Brest Litovsk Treaty by the Russian Bolshevik organization in Ukraine, which recognized "the Brest Litovsk Treaty as useful only for the Soviet Republic of Russia." But the Brest Litovsk Peace Treaty recognized the independence of

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

Ukraine under the government of the Ukrainian Central *Rada*, and this the Russian Bolsheviks could not accept willingly; they opposed the Ukrainian National Republic in order to prevent the firm establishment of Ukrainian statehood. But this war against the Ukrainian National Republic had to be waged not by Russia as such but by a spurious "Soviet Power of the Ukrainian National Republic." Skrypnyk explains this transformation in the following words:

"Thus Soviet Ukraine, through the logic of the struggle . . . attained its own independence as the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic independently of Russia in its struggle against the Ukrainian Central *Rada* and German imperialism, and it was finally recognized at the Second All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets in Katerinoslav in March, 1918."

"I BELIEVE IN IT . . ."

In contrast to what the Russians and their Communist agents in Ukraine thought and did, we reproduce here briefly the impressions of General Jean Pelissier, who was the first French representative to the Ukrainian Central *Rada* in Kiev from August 1917 to February 26, 1918. In his reports and memoirs concerning his stay in Ukraine, General Pelissier wrote:

"I spent 140 days in Ukraine. Some of these days were beautiful, but many uncertain, long and difficult; there were many of them, regrettably, outright bitter and horrible.

"I was a participant in the most horrifying cataclysm imaginable. After that I saw how Ukraine was reborn after a centuries-long sleep. I made many friends there. I learned its (Ukraine's) past, and became enlightened with the traits of this truly Slavic, and not Asiatic race. I was a witness to the noble endeavors of those who were trying to raise the blue and yellow banner. Although at times I was compelled to judge severely some of the steps of the Ukrainian government, I cannot refuse to give the highest respect to the people who lead it, people highly patriotic and idealistic. But the events were stronger than the energy of some people.

"Will that energy awaken today, will it find some way of expressing itself again? Is it true that, regardless of how and in what form, *Ukraine Has Not Died* but will revive? I believe in it!"

CHAPTER EIGHT

PROCLAMATION OF INDEPENDENCE OF SOVIET POWER IN UKRAINE

Bolsheviks Proclaim Themselves the Government of Ukrainian National Republic

After the army of the Ukrainian National Republic, by its brilliant counteroffensive, broke the Russian Bolshevik front near Kiev and on March 1 liberated the Ukrainian capital from foreign occupation, the puppet "Soviet government of the workers and peasants of Ukraine" transferred its seat to Poltava. Here just for the record the "Second All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets" was called, but as a result of the destruction of the Bolshevik front only a handful of Bolshevik delegates turned up in Poltava. Instead of a "Congress" in Poltava, there took place, according to Skrypnyk, a "little conference," which decided to convene the "Second Congress" in Katerinoslav. Naturally, Moscow wanted the decision on the "independence" of Soviet Ukraine to have a more solemn character, specifically, that the *continuation of the war of Russia against Ukraine should be made on behalf of a "Soviet Ukrainian government."*⁵⁹ According to Skrypnyk, the conference in Poltava was held without the participation of representatives from the other "Soviet republics" on the Ukrainian territory — those of Kryvy Rih, Odessa, the Don and the Crimea. He underscores that these republics believed that the war was not their concern, as they had separated themselves at the beginning from the "Soviet Ukrainian Republic" and had become part of the Russian republic, which in turn was at peace with the Central Powers after having signed the treaty in Brest Litovsk.

During the offensive of the Army of the Ukrainian National Republic and the allied armies of the Central Powers in March, 1918, Lenin ordered Antonov-Ovsienko to rename his army command: up to now the army he commanded was Russian, but henceforth his army was to be that of Ukraine. Lenin teased Antonov-Ovsienko, saying

⁵⁹ M. Skrypnyk, *Chervony Shliakh*, No. 3, p. 92.



A funeral cortege in Kiev, the capital of Ukraine. Bodies of Ukrainian heroes, who were killed in resisting the Russian communist aggression in the battle at Kruty, are being taken to the cemetery.

that he should be happy to command a "Ukrainian army" since he himself (Antonov-Ovsienko) was of Ukrainian origin. It is to be recalled that Antonov-Ovsienko was not only commander-in-chief of the Russian army against Ukraine, but he was also a People's Commissar of Soviet Russia, a rank he systematically underscored in his orders-of-the-day. Now suddenly, on orders from Moscow, he had to change his official title and accept a new rank, "commander-in-chief" of the armies of the *Ukrainian National Republic*!

After his "transformation" into a Ukrainian, Antonov-Ovsienko issued an order of the day to his troops which notified them formally that they were no longer an army of Russia, but a Ukrainian army, owing allegiance not to the Soviet Russian republic, but to the Ukrainian National Republic.

Below is a sample of his order to the troops:

"Order No. 1. Order of the Commander-in-chief of all troops of the Ukrainian National Republic. Poltava, March 7, 1918: 'On the basis of the decision of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies of Ukraine I assume from this day on the Supreme Command of all the troops of the Ukrainian National Republic . . . '

“Commander-in-chief of the Armies of the Ukrainian National Republic.

“Peoples Secretary Ovsienko (Antonov).”⁶⁰

Only three days before, the same Antonov had issued his orders of the day as “People’s Commissar of Russia” and had signed them with “Antonov” only. Now he had suddenly become a “Ukrainian Soviet Minister” and, in order to dupe the world, had assumed the title of “Commander-in-chief of the armies of the Ukrainian National Republic.”

Bolsheviks Never Considered Ukraine As a National State

How the “People’s Secretariat” and the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party really looked upon the Soviet Ukrainian state is disclosed by their declaration of March 7, 1918, in Poltava (text translated from the Russian language):

“1. We never regarded the Ukrainian National Republic as a *national* republic, but exclusively as a *Soviet* republic on the *territory* of Ukraine;

“2. We never supported the policy of full *independence* for the Ukrainian National Republic, but looked upon it more or less as an independent entity *connected* with the *general Russian Republic of Workers and Peasants with federalist ties*;

“3. At the same time we did not act against separate Soviet federations, leaving the matter of their relationship with the republican and Soviet authority to be decided at some future date;

“4. At the present moment, when the united bourgeois parties overtly, as in the case of the Ukrainian Central *Rada* and its allies, the Austro-German imperialists, and partly covertly, as in the case of the Russian bourgeoisie of the Don, the Crimea and other parts — are threatening to strangle the authority of the workers and peasants in Ukraine within the frameworks of the Third and Fourth *Universals*, including also these parts of Ukraine which constitute the Don, the Donets, the Crimean and the Odessa Soviet republics — it is

⁶⁰ Antonov, *op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 298 and Vol. II, pp. 1-22.

especially now clear that a *close unification of all Soviet organizations is imperative*;

"5. The Central Executive Committee calls on all Soviets to effect such unification on the following basis:

- "a) The purpose of unification is the all-out armed defense of the Soviet power on the territory on which a Committee is organized for the purpose of combatting the counterrevolution, which Committee should consist of representatives from the four Soviet republics enumerated under Art. 4;
- "b) No republic which is a member of this union can, without the understanding and approval of the other republics, quit the union or conclude a secret treaty;
- "c) This Committee assumes full authority in the matter of forming, organizing and directing the military-technical forces;
- "d) The Commander-in-chief of the armies of the Ukrainian National Republic, Comrade Ovsienko (Antonov) is appointed Commander-in-chief of all armed forces;

"6. All means necessary for the effective conduct of the civil war (finances, food supplies, equipment, armaments, and the like), are being distributed by the united committees;

"7. For the purpose of establishing a union of organizations, a conference is being called on March 15, 1918, at Katerinoslav, at which two representatives of each republic named above shall be present.⁶¹

This resolution was submitted by Mykola Skrypnyk, a Bolshevik of Ukrainian origin, who of all the Bolshevik higher-ups understood best the impact of the Ukrainian national problem at that revolutionary period in Ukraine. He was endeavoring to counteract the propaganda of truth of the new government of the Ukrainian National Republic, headed by Premier Vsevolod Holubovych and the Ukrainian Central *Rada*, under the presidency of Mykhailo Hrushevsky, who explained to the Ukrainian people that Moscow had partitioned occupied Ukraine into a series of "Soviet republics," of which only one maintained the Ukrainian name, the other four having simply merged with Communist Russia.

⁶¹ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 24.

Nonetheless the proposal to unite all these republics into one *military* alliance for the purpose of waging war against Ukraine on the Ukrainian territory could not be realized. With the exception of the "Ukrainian" Soviet Republic, all four other republics refused to join the alliance, holding that as parts of Soviet Russia, which had concluded a peace treaty with the Central Powers, they should not incur possible invasion by the Ukrainian and German and Austrian armies. Therefore, they refused the invitation to send their delegates to the conference of March 15, 1918, in Katerinoslav.⁶²

The fact that Lenin and the *Sovnarkom* appointed Antonov-Ovsienko as commander-in-chief of the armies of the Ukrainian National Republic was not publicized in order not to prejudice the relations of Communist Russia with the Central Powers. Its main target was the people of Ukraine, whom the *Sovnarkom* endeavored to confuse by conveying the impression that Antonov-Ovsienko was not on the side of Bolshevism. Here is another sample of the mendacious propaganda of Russian Bolsheviks in Ukraine:

"The Central Executive Committee of Soviet Ukraine and the People's Secretariat of the Ukrainian National Republic appeal to all who hold dear the interest of the masses, who are ready to fight for the cause of socialism, to bear arms.

"The Central Executive Committee of Soviet Ukraine and the People's Secretariat of Ukraine, by their decision of March 7, 1918, appointed Comrade Ovsienko-Antonov as People's Secretary of the Ukrainian Republic and commander-in-chief of all troops of the Ukrainian National Republic . . . All commissars are obligated unconditionally to obey all orders of the People's Secretary and the Commander-in-chief of armies of the Ukrainian National Republic, Ovsienko-Antonov . . .

"In these trying days the People's Secretariat of the Ukrainian National Republic demands a response to the struggle from every worker, every peasant, from every workman and from all those who have been oppressed and have suffered from want and enslavement . . ."⁶³

Every word in this declaration of the spurious "Ukrainian Soviet government" had no basis in fact, as Antonov-Ovsienko himself explained in his memoirs.

⁶² Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 78.

⁶³ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 24-25.

Internal Situation in Occupied Zone of Ukraine

The techniques of combat at this time were outlined in a letter by Antonov-Ovsienko to one of his subordinate commanders:

"The struggle must be *merciless*. You must organize special units of *saboteurs* in the rear of the enemy; you must spread *alarming rumors* in the hinterland, and *by all means* undermine and destroy the counterrevolutionaries . . ." ⁶⁴

In their internal dealings, the Russian rulers of this "independent Soviet government" in Ukraine referred to *all of Ukraine* as "the south of Russia," although for external use it was designated as the "Ukrainian Soviet Republic." For instance, four days after Antonov-Ovsienko had been appointed "commander-in-chief of the armies of the Ukrainian National Republic," he referred to Ukraine as "the south of Russia" in one of his orders of the day. In his order, dated March 11, 1918, he said:

"I order you to begin the organization of partisan units and combat brigades from among workers and peasants of the Soviet republics of *Southern Russia*. Upon these units and brigades I impose the following tasks:

"1. At the hinterland of the enemy: to terrorize the enemy by all means, to destroy communication routes, to blow up bridges . . . To cut telegraph and telephone communications . . . To destroy all food supplies; to provide commanders of Soviet republics with intelligence data on the strength and disposition of the enemy troops. To disorganize the enemy troops by means of verbal agitation and the dissemination of literature among the *Haidamaks* and the German bands;

"2. To reorganize combat units in the hinterland of the *Republic of Southern Russia*." ⁶⁵

In an order commending the Czechoslovak Legion, Antonov-Ovsienko refers to himself again as "Commander-in-chief of Soviet troops of the Republic of *Southern Russia*." ⁶⁶

In addition, in many other official documents which are cited by Antonov-Ovsienko, the Bolshevik Commissars refer to Ukraine as the "South of Russia," although for the benefit of the external world they

⁶⁴ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 27.

⁶⁵ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 43.

⁶⁶ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 47.

constantly maintained the existence of a "Ukrainian Soviet Republic." This reference to Ukraine as the "South of Russia" appears on pages 25, 43, 85, 237, 247 and 261 and elsewhere in Volume II of Antonov-Ovsienko's memoirs.

On March 16, 1918, Commander Sivers of the 5th Soviet Army, which was under the overall command of Antonov-Ovsienko, issued an order of the day in which he also referred to the five Soviet republics in Ukraine as the "South Russian republic."⁶⁷

The staff of General Antonov-Ovsienko went to great lengths in organizing groups of Bolshevik troops who could speak Ukrainian fluently and who could be used as *Ukrainian troops* against the army of the legitimate Ukrainian National Republic. He wrote:

"We must create . . . small but mobile units, composed of those who can speak Ukrainian well and who could be provided with proper papers, to send into the rear of the enemy . . . so that they could instigate peasant rebellions against the Germans and the *Haidamaks* . . ."

In still another chapter of his memoirs, Antonov-Ovsienko wrote how he sought such persons; in an order of the day he had said:

"Find me those who have pure Ukrainian names, or those who are fluent in the Ukrainian language, so that we can use them . . ."

Preparation of "Second Congress"

Actually the "Second Congress" was scheduled to take place in Kiev. But when the Ukrainian national armies approached Kiev, the congress was shifted to Poltava, and when it failed to meet there, it was again transferred, this time to Katerinoslav. The congress itself was held in an atmosphere of psychological and physical duress by the party's Central Executive Committee, and concerned itself mostly with the tactics of the Bolshevik delegation at the treaty parleys in Brest Litovsk. It was decided at the meeting of the Central Committee that there would be no discussion regarding the signing of the treaty by Soviet Russia. The so-called "left-wing Communists" of Russia, after the decision of the Central Committee not to have any discussion, actually kept silent, ceasing their agitation against the peace treaty.

Prior to the "Second Congress of Soviets" in Katerinoslav a meeting of the political center — the "People's Secretariat" — took place,

⁶⁷ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 85.

at which were discussed the tactical maneuvers to be followed at the congress. The majority of the "People's Secretaries" were Russian Bolsheviks, who in principle did not recognize the existence of Ukrainian statehood and who considered the Soviet republic of Ukraine as a ruse devised to confuse the Ukrainians. But they eventually were convinced that recognition in principle of the "Ukrainian Soviet Republic" was the best weapon in the struggle against the genuine Ukrainian National Republic.

But the pre-congress meeting did not go exactly according to plan. Above all, the members of the "People's Secretariat" were completely disorganized and disoriented; the planned congress of delegates from all five Soviet republics in Ukraine had not taken place because of the failure of the four republics to send representatives. This clear-cut boycott of the congress by these republics indicated that the boycott had been inspired or instigated by Moscow. The question remained: What did Moscow want? Did it wish to continue the war against Ukraine after the conclusion of the peace treaty with Germany and Austro-Hungary, which had become the allies of Ukraine? In this situation, common sense prevailed among some of the members of the "People's Secretariat." They began wondering, why, since Russia had signed and ratified the peace treaty, war should be waged in Ukraine. Would it not be better to terminate the war in Ukraine as well?

Such was the thinking of the "People's Secretariat" prior to the "Second Congress," which was held on March 16, 1918. But, significantly, what little meaning this "Second Congress of Soviets" really had for the Bolsheviks is to be seen from the fact that neither Mykola Skrypnyk nor the latest Soviet "historian," A. V. Likholat, ever bothered to write about it. Only Antonov-Ovsienko, apparently to demonstrate his own organizational "superiority" over the confusion of the "People's Secretariat," in his *Memoirs* noted the following:

"On March 16 a meeting of the People's Secretariat was held, at which I reported on the situation at the front. During a discussion that followed a sharp difference of views among the members of the secretariat became apparent. Comrades Kviring and Neronovich agreed to suggest a proposal to cease further war operations against the Central Rada and to attain a compromise with it. The majority of the secretariat (4 against 3) immediately agreed to institute *negotiations* with the Central Rada for the purpose of *terminating the war*. But on the second day this matter was discussed again

and the proposal of Comrade Kviring regarding the renunciation of the Soviet Power was rejected . . ."⁶⁸

The next day Antonov-Ovsienko received new instructions from Moscow, and the issue was "decided" the way the *Sovnarkom* wanted.

It goes without saying that the congress was so rigged that the delegates voted affirmatively on everything proposed by the Central Executive Committee and the *Sovnarkom*. But the Russian Bolshevik power, in occupied Ukraine only for a short while, was unable to falsify the elections in the local *soviets* or to dominate the voters. Thus the Ukrainian socialist parties — the Social-Revolutionaries and the Social-Democrats — succeeded, against the will of the Bolsheviks, in bringing in a certain number of their own delegates, who constituted a solid opposition to the Bolsheviks at the congress. The Russian socialists (the Mensheviks, Social-Revolutionaries and Anarchists) also were able to come up with a number of their own delegates. Ukrainian Social-Democrats from occupied Ukraine were represented by a number of peasant delegates, who posed as "non-party" delegates.

According to Antonov-Ovsienko, the "Second Congress of Soviets" had this breakdown:

Bolsheviks and their sympathizers — 428; Russian left-wing Social-Revolutionaries — 41; Ukrainian Party of Social-Revolutionaries — 6; Anarchists — 3; Maximalists — 4; non-party peasants and workers — 82 — all in all 564 delegates.

These statistics of Antonov-Ovsienko were falsified at the expense of the Ukrainian-Socialist delegates, who dared to manifest their political beliefs publicly and who apparently paid for it either with their lives or their liberty.

(Skrypnyk reports the exact number of delegates at the "Second Congress," which will be dealt with later.)

"Second Congress of Soviets"

Of his own participation in the "Second Congress of Soviets," Antonov-Ovsienko wrote:

"On March 17 I spoke at the Second All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets. The congress in its majority consisted of peasants. At the beginning the peasant deputies were openly opposed to warring against the Germans — they could not feel the Soviet power and could not understand how much they would lose with its retreat. The group of Left-Wing (Russian) Social-Revolutionaries, who in Moscow had con-

⁶⁸ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 79.

tested the signing of the Brest Litovsk Treaty, endeavored to take the opportunity at this Ukrainian congress to undermine the peace treaty with the Germans . . . A resolution of the Left-Wing Social Revolutionaries managed to muster a majority of votes against the signing of the peace treaty in Brest Litovsk. But on the second ballot the Bolsheviks succeeded in pushing through their resolution, which did not touch upon the peace treaty in Brest Litovsk but dealt instead with the problems of the struggle of Soviet power in Ukraine . . . Under the experienced direction of Comrade Skrypnyk the congress grew stronger and became permeated with a revolutionary spirit . . . Amid the thunder of the front close by, the increasing chaos in the cities and the growing anxiety in the villages, the congress adopted a radical decision to wage an implacable struggle against the treacherous Central *Rada* and its sympathizers.

"At the same time the congress adopted the following resolution:

"The Congress, imbued with an unwavering determination to defend the sacred cause of the revolution, resolves that the delegates upon returning to their localities shall cause the cities and villages to rise up and create a powerful red army of workers and peasants, an army imbued with a revolutionary spirit and a proletarian conscience . . .'"⁸⁹

Antonov unwittingly admitted that at the beginning of the congress, an artificial creation of the Bolsheviks, the majority of its peasant members was against waging a struggle against the Ukrainian Central *Rada*, which for reasons of his own the Russian Bolsheviks identified with the Germans. He failed, however, to explain how it came about that the same majority suddenly was convinced to vote for something contrary to what it had held dear at the beginning of their conference. He did try to explain it away by citing the tactics of the Russian Left-Wing Social-Revolutionaries, but this explanation is contradictory. This Left-Wing group was against peace with the Germans and the Central *Rada*. In such case how could they influence the peasant delegates to oppose war with the Germans? The logic of Antonov-Ovsienko is totally false, inasmuch as it dodges the issue and balks at telling the real truth about the events which took place at the congress in Katerinoslav. It was Antonov-Ovsienko and another Bolshevik commander, Eugenia Bosch, who ordered a strong unit of Red Marines to surround

⁸⁹ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 79-80.

the building in which the congress was held, and it was at bayonet point that they forced the delegates to vote for the proposal of the Bolsheviks. This terror "under the experienced direction of Comrade Skrypnyk" is attested to by many participants at the congress, including Ukrainian Social Democrats and their party's representatives.

As the Ukrainian national armies and their German allies approached Katerinoslav, the Bolshevik commissars used naked force to break down the opposition of the Ukrainian delegates at the congress. How this congress was run by the Bolsheviks was described in *Robitnycha Hazeta*, a Ukrainian Social-Democratic organ, by an eyewitness after the retreat of the Bolshevik troops from Katerinoslav:

"A totally confused and impossible atmosphere developed at the 'Second All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets' in Katerinoslav which the Bolsheviks considered to be their 'Constituent Assembly.' Representatives of the opposition parties were not allowed to speak, and whoever dared to reply to Bolshevik delegates was put down by armed red sailors, who threatened all in opposition with execution . . . The majority of (Bolshevik) speakers called for the staging of a 'Bartholomew Night' against the *Haidamaks*, that is the Ukrainian Social-Democrats. These appeals resulted in the fact that out of our 95 delegates only 40 remained to the end of the congress, with the rest dispersing from Katerinoslav. Our situation improved when a split occurred between the Bolsheviks and the (Russian) Left-Wing Social-Revolutionaries, who were at loggerheads with each other . . ."⁷⁰

On the other hand, Mykola Skrypnyk characterized the congress in the following words:

"Two forces confronted each other: the Bolsheviks on the one hand, and the Ukrainian Social-Revolutionaries, Social-Democrats and so-called *Haidamaks*, partisans of Ukrainian nationalism, on the other. Among them was a third group of Russian Left-Wing Social-Revolutionaries. This group pursued a treacherous course. During the Second All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets there congregated (in Ukraine) almost all the active members of the Russian Social-Revolutionaries, Braun, Fischman and others . . . Almost one-third of the congress was made up of Ukrainian Social-Democrats, mem-

⁷⁰ From the reprint of *Robitnycha Hazeta's* article in *Visnyk of Vienna*, May 28, 1918.

bers of various Peasant Unions and the like. These were dedicated enemies of the Soviet power and sincere adherents of the Ukrainian Central Rada . . . These were the leaders who with the advance of the *Haidamak* units staged uprisings against the Red authority, destroyed railroad stations, derailed trains, attacked isolated Red Guard units and representatives of the Soviet government, as for instance, the assault in Katerinoslav made on my person (i.e. Skrypnyk) by two *Haidamaks*, participants at the congress (one of them, Poltoratsky, was in jail with me in 1904). That meant a veritable civil war . . .”⁷¹

The Empty “Independence”

Despite the fact that the “Second All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets” was a creation of the Soviet occupation authorities, in reality there was no majority at this congress favoring the Soviet occupation authorities in Ukraine. This deficiency could only be compensated for by terrorism at the congress. That the Russian Communist Party mustered no majority at the congress is attested to by Skrypnyk himself, who wrote on this point:

“The number of trends and factions at the congress made it virtually impossible to adopt any resolution.”

In any event, having terrorized all opposition, the faction of Russian Bolsheviks succeeded in formally gaining adoption of such resolutions as were required by the *Sovnarkom* of Russia in its external and domestic policies. In order to be able to continue the war formally, a decision on the independence of “the Ukrainian Soviet Power of the Ukrainian National Republic” was voted. A few “laws” for the internal use of the country — which no one took seriously — also were adopted.

What this formal independence meant for the organ of the occupation authority — “the All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee” — may be seen in the decision it adopted immediately after the congress and which served as a directive for its delegation to the All-Russian

⁷¹ Attention is to be called to the flagrant discrepancy between the figures of Antonov-Ovsienko and those of Skrypnyk. According to Skrypnyk, the Ukrainian delegates constituted almost one-third of the entire congress, while Antonov-Ovsienko wrote that the “non-party” delegates numbered barely 82. We lean to Skrypnyk’s figures inasmuch as his “history” was written earlier and, as chairman of the congress, he was in a better position to know than Antonov-Ovsienko. Besides, when the latter wrote his memoirs, there was already a party dictatorship which interpreted events that had occurred according to the needs of the party.

Congress of Soviets. This decision, printed in the *Collection of Decisions and Ordinances of the Workers' and Peasants' Government of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic*, read:

"The Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies hereby decides to send its delegates to the general federative All-Russian Congress of Soviets and instructs its delegates to be guided by the following decisions:

"1. The working masses of Ukraine and the Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Ukraine obligate their delegates to lodge a stern protest against Article 8 of the peace treaty which is unequivocally directed against the Soviet authority in Ukraine, but taking into consideration interests of the development of the socialist revolution, and deeming inevitable the maintenance and strengthening of socialist Moscow and Petrograd as the bases for departure of the world revolution, the Central Executive Committee for its part finds it undesirable to express itself against the ratification of the peace treaty of the Russian Federation with Germany and Austria and accordingly instructs its delegates to support the ratification of this treaty;

"2. Regarding the clauses of the treaty with the Ukrainian National Republic, the Central Executive Committee again repeats its prior decision on the understanding of the Ukrainian National Republic and the Soviet government to accept the peace treaty concluded between Germany and Austria, on the one hand, and the Ukrainian Central *Rada*, on the other, but with the binding provision of total non-interference on the part of Germany and Austria in the internal life of Ukraine;

"3. The working class and all the laboring masses of Ukraine shall support their civil war with their internal enemies — the Ukrainian bourgeoisie and its Central *Rada* and all those who support it;

"4. The Central Executive Committee of Soviet Ukraine empowers its delegates to declare before the general federative congress and the world at large that the working masses of Ukraine regard the Ukrainian National Republic as the socialist republic, which is joined to the general Russian Republic of workers and peasants with federative ties, and that when the ratification of the treaty of the Russian federation with Germany and Austria formally breaks the federative

link with Ukraine and the Ukrainian National Republic becomes an independent republic — the internal ties of the Soviet republics will remain intact. The Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Ukraine, in the name of all the working people of Ukraine, expresses the assurance that in the continued struggle of the proletariat in Ukraine and all other countries the federative ties will, in the near future, again be renewed and all Soviet republics *will merge into one Socialist federation.*"⁷²

Before analyzing this decision critically, here are some additional data on the "Second Congress of Soviets of Ukraine." It took place on March 17-20, 1918. The decision on the "independence of Soviet Ukraine" was voted on March 18, 1918.⁷³ On the same day the "Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies of Ukraine" was accorded full authority until the convening of the next congress, and was asked to form a government known as the "People's Secretariat."

After the close of the congress the Central Executive Committee appointed a "People's Secretariat," which remained in Katerinoslav only two or three days, whereafter these Soviet organs were transferred to Tahanrih.⁷⁴ The offensive of the armies of the Ukrainian National Republic compelled the Russian Bolshevik forces and the

⁷² M. Skrypnyk, *Chervony Shliakh*, No. 3, pp. 101 and ff.

⁷³ This quasi "constituent" "Second Congress of Soviets of Ukraine" was labeled falsely "All-Ukrainian." Only delegates from the occupied parts of Ukraine were present at the congress. The larger part of Ukraine, including Kiev, was not represented at the congress, as were not the four other Soviet republics created in occupied Ukraine: Donets-Kryvy Rih, the Don, the Crimea and the Odessa republics. For various reasons the "Second Congress of Soviets of Ukraine" was not very convenient for Bolshevik history. Therefore, subsequent Soviet historians have tended to ignore it. For instance, the new *Istoria Gosudarstvennogo prava* (Moscow, 1949) makes no mention of the congress. Also *Sovietskoye gosudarstvennoye pravo* (Moscow, 1949) fails to make reference to it. The books which do mention this congress contain discrepancies as to the date of proclamation of the "Soviet independence" of Ukraine. For instance, H. Piddubny in his book, *Za radyansku Ukrainu (For a Soviet Ukraine)*, wrote that the "Second Congress" was held on "March 10-15, 1918," while Antonov-Ovsienko gave this date as March 17, 1918. Likholat wrote that the congress was held on March 17-18, 1918. Skrypnyk reported that the congress was held "in the middle of March," while Yavorsky fails to mention anything at all about the congress.

We must underscore the fact that among the Ukrainian Social-Democrats who boldly defended the Ukrainian Central Rada and the Ukrainian National Republic against the Bolshevik occupation at that congress was Prof. Isaac Mazepa, who on March 18, 1918, delivered a scathing address against the Bolsheviks (cf. Panas Fedenko: *Isaac Mazepa*, p. 38).

⁷⁴ Skrypnyk reports that they moved some time in "the middle of the month."

Red Guards to retreat to the north and to the east toward the Volga River.

From the official decision of the Central Executive Committee it is evident that the leaders of the Bolshevik party in occupied Ukraine were simply playing with words when they spoke about the "independence of Soviet Ukraine"; on the one hand, they were saying that they did not oppose the *Ukrainian National Republic* as such, but, on the other, they were against the *Ukrainian Central Rada*. Thus they were claiming that in principle they recognized the Ukrainian state but opposed the "bad government," the *Rada*. The Bolsheviks allegedly wanted nothing more than to replace the "bad government" of the Ukrainian National Republic with a "good one" — that of the "People's Secretariat." This was openly and unequivocally stated in the decision of the Central Executive Committee.

But the decision of the Central Executive Committee itself made several points which were at odds with the truth. It said that only "after the ratification of the treaty of the Russian Federation with Germany and Austria will the *federative* links between Ukraine and Russia be broken and the Ukrainian National Republic become an independent republic . . ." But there was no *federative* link with Russia from the very beginning of the establishment of the Ukrainian National Republic, that is, from November 20, 1917, inasmuch as there were no *federative organs* embracing the Russian republic and the new national states — Ukraine, Byelorussia, the Baltic States, the Caucasian nations, and the like. It is true that as far back as November 20, 1917, the Secretariat General of the Ukrainian National Republic and the Central *Rada* were ready, *if only in principle*, to enter into such a federative system with other republics of the former Russian empire if there were the possibility of establishing a union of free and equal nations. But when the government of Russia began warring against the Ukrainian National Republic, any federation with Russia was out of the question.

The factual nature of the independent Ukrainian National Republic was confirmed by the constitutional law of the Ukrainian National Republic, that is, by the Fourth *Universal* of the Ukrainian Central *Rada* of January 22, 1918. But even earlier the *Sovnarkom* had recognized the Ukrainian National Republic not only in its note of December 17, 1917, but also by the declaration of its delegation at the peace treaty negotiations in Brest Litovsk, as mentioned above. The essence of Article 8 of the peace treaty with Russia of March 3, 1918, specifically dealt with the *obligation* of Russia to immediately withdraw all its troops from the territory of the Ukrainian National Republic.

lic and not to interfere in any way in the internal affairs of Ukraine. This evidently was an "onerous" clause in the treaty with Russia about which representatives of the Russian Communist Party constantly complained, along with members of the Russian opposition parties.

Attitude of Ukraine's Proletariat toward Russian Occupation of Ukraine

We must realize that in all Soviet documents any reference to the "revolutionary masses of Ukraine" or the "working class of Ukraine" meant *Russian Bolsheviks* and their stooges, and not the masses of genuine Ukrainian people. This is clearly evident in all Soviet memoirs and "histories," despite the fact that their authors were unusually careful not to reveal the conditions as they actually existed. From them we can plainly see that the masses of the Ukrainian proletariat were markedly hostile toward the Bolshevik regime imposed upon Ukraine.

None other than Mykola Skrypnyk, the leader of the Bolshevik movement in Ukraine at that time, admits in the history of the Soviet regime in Ukraine in 1917-1918 that the proletariat of Ukraine *did not follow the Bolsheviks*, but instead supported the Ukrainian Social-Democrats and Social-Revolutionaries. In connection with the "Second Congress of Soviets of Ukraine" in Katerinoslav, Skrypnyk wrote as follows:

"The majority of workers was confused by Menshevik agitation, and with the advance of German troops they kept away from direct armed struggle . . ."

Skrypnyk admits, again, that even in the Kharkiv *oblast*, which remained longest under the propaganda barrage and agitation of the Russian Communist Party and its regime of occupation, *the majority of workers stood against the Soviet regime*:

*"Some strata of the Kharkiv workers . . . deviated from the struggle . . . and in the matter of evacuation of the means of struggle and production they showed themselves even to be against the endeavors of the Soviet government . . ."*⁷⁵

As is well known, the "principal" activity of the "Soviet government" in Ukraine consisted either of pillage or requisition of the natural resources of Ukraine. Another "activity" in Ukraine was assigned to the Soviet troops: the destruction of the army of the Ukrainian National Republic. Thus the workers of Kharkiv, even though most of them

⁷⁵ M. Skrypnyk, *Chervony Shliakh*, 1923, p. 103.

were Russians brought in by the Czarist regime before the revolution, were hostile to the Soviet regime in Ukraine, for they saw that this regime was directed against them as a class as well.

Of his arrival in Kharkiv on December 24, 1917, Antonov-Ovsienko wrote:

“At the railroad station we saw a great number of trains, among them the lost echelons of Sivers and Khovrin. The latter’s group was the so-called First Petrograd Unit . . . The unit of Sivers looked well-disciplined. Immediately after his arrival (Khovrin’s — M. S.) in Kharkiv he had misunderstandings with the local *revolutionary committee*. Members of this committee, headed by Comrade Artiom, met him at the railroad station and demanded that he *abstain from any hostile moves against the ‘Radaites’ of Kharkiv* (the sympathizers of the Ukrainian Central Rada — M.S.) . . . Local Bolsheviks considered it unwise to attack the Central Rada, whose face they deemed still undefiled. But Sivers, upon inspecting the city, immediately understood that it was imperative to neutralize the *Radaites* by decisive action . . .”

When the Russian commander ordered an attack upon a Ukrainian military unit in Kharkiv and endeavored to disarm it, this move was opposed not only by the council of the local democratic organizations, but also by the local Bolsheviks, headed by Artiom. The council of the city of Kharkiv requested of the army staff of Volinsky that the latter recall his Russian troops from Kharkiv:⁷⁶

“Comrade Artiom and others (Bolsheviks) brought up the particular situation in Ukraine against the background of the national question and demanded of Sivers *the cessation of all moves against the Radaites* and his surrender to the city’s revolutionary council . . . On demand of the (local Bolshevik) committee, Sivers released many *Radaites* previously arrested . . . Relations (in the city between Sivers and the local Bolsheviks) were very tense when he arrived with Muraviev (in Kharkiv) . . .”⁷⁷

Furthermore, the commander-in-chief of the Soviet troops in Ukraine gave some interesting observations on Kharkiv:

“The city was under strong Ukrainian influence. The 28th Regiment was Ukrainized, being named the 2nd Ukrain-

⁷⁶ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 53-54.

⁷⁷ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 55.

ian Regiment. It had 3,000 men, 427 officers and 40 machine guns. The garrison was completed by the Ukrainianized Chyhyryn Regiment, the majority of its officers Ukrainians. All the regiments supported the Central Rada. According to information supplied by our comrades, there was also in the city a counterrevolutionary organization, *Vilne Kozatstvo* ("Free Kozaks") which numbered over 300 members . . ."

Against these troops of the old regular army and against the small unit of "Free Kozaks," who supported the Ukrainian National Republic, Muraviev sent some 10,000 Red Guards. The proportion of strength was not even, both in Kharkiv and its vicinity.⁷⁸

Again, Antonov-Ovsienko had something important to say about the local *Soviet* (council) in Kharkiv, headed by Russian Bolsheviks, from which they could not oust Ukrainian Social-Democrats, elected by the workers:

"The Soviet had many opportunities (Social-Democrats). It contained also a revolutionary committee comprising Social-Democrats and Social-Revolutionaries. This *rev-kom's* attitude toward our actions was lukewarm, giving no cooperation whatsoever, rather being *permeated with hostility for the unruliness of our units*. The local Bolsheviks were indecisive, seeking compromises with the opportunists and avoiding any serious commitment. *They did not want, and did not even try to help our units . . .* The Bolshevik organization was headed by a member of the Central Committee, Artiom (Sergeiev) . . . They were prone to compromise with the bourgeoisie . . . The 'district committee,' headed by Comrades Vasylchenko and his friend, Zhakov, both of Rostov, . . . had no influence whatsoever upon events . . . *And everything around was hostile or undecisive . . .* But in Kharkiv itself there was the underground work of the White Guards, who from time to time sniped provocatively at the railroad station . . ."⁷⁹

But the Kharkiv workers were not alone in their hostility toward the military aggression of Soviet Russia. Under the influence of the working masses even the *local* Russian Communist Party believed that the war of Russia against Ukraine in December, 1917, was ill-timed

⁷⁸ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 56

⁷⁹ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 56-57. (italics added).

and unnecessary. Hence it also demanded that the Soviet Russian troops be withdrawn from Ukraine. In other cities with large concentrations of industrial workers there also was resentment and opposition to the Soviet Russian aggression against Ukraine. Even though they were under the direct control of the Russian Communist Party, the local Soviets, where they had been elected by the workers and were under their influence, were decidedly against the Russian aggression.

This is plainly seen from the conditions in the Ukrainian city of Poltava as noted by Antonov-Ovsienko:

"In Poltava the Soviet is under the heel of the *Haidamaks* . . . The northern railroad between Kharkiv and the Donbas is cut off by the 2nd Ukrainized Reserve Cavalry Regiment (a force of a few thousand men). In Pavlograd, in Synelkovo — the *Haidamaks* . . . In Konstantinovgrad, also *Haidamaks* . . ." ⁸⁰

Regarding the offensive of the armies of the Ukrainian National Republic directed against the Soviet troops commanded by Muraviev, Antonov-Ovsienko wrote, on the basis of reports by Skrypnyk and Muraviev himself:

"He (Muraviev) quickly created complications in Poltava. He adopted a violent tone, *the tone of an occupier*, and found himself in *sharp conflict with the local Soviet and with all the Ukrainians set against him*; even worse was the situation near Kiev and in Kiev itself, where he was hurt because it was not he who obtained war laurels, but the unknown Kotsiubynsky, who had been formally appointed commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian (Soviet) troops . . ." ⁸¹

"In Poltava the *Radaites* acted provocatively in an extreme fashion . . . Even a substantial number of the Bolsheviks revealed indecisiveness . . . The Poltava comrades called on us to help them. *They themselves had support in not a single military unit*. The Central Executive Committee of Ukraine insisted that I direct my offensive at Poltava . . . But the major difficulties for us became apparent after we took Poltava. They are recorded in my direct telephone talks with Muraviev:

"Muraviev: We occupied the station Poltava-South. I sent my units to take the city immediately . . . But we en-

⁸⁰ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 57.

⁸¹ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 87.

countered great difficulties . . . Send us relief as soon as possible . . . Order the immediate dispatch of a half million rifle cartridges and as much dynamite as possible, because *I would rather destroy the city (Poltava) to the last building than withdraw. I have issued an order that all the defenders of the local bourgeoisie be killed . . .*

“The city (Poltava) is taken, with the exception of the Kiev Station.’

“Those who resisted were killed along with the officers. Now I would like to report the important local political news or, rather, the negotiations of the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers’, Soldiers’ and Peasants’ Deputies with me . . . *In the first place, they asked me what brought me and my army here*, and said that they want to declare Poltava a neutral city vis-a-vis ourselves and the Kiev Rada. They asked me *to clear out immediately from the city . . .* I replied that we had come here to restore the Soviet power, which had been removed from Ukraine, and especially in Poltava, and pointed out that Poltava, in addition, is a threat to our strategical plan . . . When I asked whether they recognize ‘the Kharkiv People’s Rada’ (of Bolsheviks), they replied that they *do not recognize it*, as they did not recognize the Kievan one. Then I told them that we shall not retreat until they recognized the true Kharkiv People’s Rada and that we cannot leave the city until the government of the People’s Central Rada of Kharkiv be firmly entrenched, especially because of the fact that their power here was sovereign . . . ”⁸²

The Poltava episode, so vividly described by Muraviev, is implicit and irrefutable proof that the Soviet power in Ukraine was not Soviet, inasmuch as it was not based on councils freely elected in Ukrainian cities by Ukrainian workers, soldiers and peasants. Both the Kharkiv and the Poltava Soviets did not judge the war of Soviet Russia against Ukraine as something necessary or advantageous to themselves. They openly told the Soviet commanders to *take their armies out of Ukraine*. True, the Poltava Soviet declared itself “neutral,” but actually this was a move in the “diplomatic” game with the blood-thirsty Muraviev.

Because of the fact that the Poltava Soviet was hostile to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Muraviev adopted tactics of terror. He

⁸² Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 135-136.

simply imposed the *rev-kom* ("Revolutionary Committee") as the organ supreme over all others, even elected bodies, in the city. He reported to Antonov-Ovsienko as follows:

"Regarding the position of the local Soviet, it must be admitted it is very fluid . . . Its military section and some Right-Wing members have adopted a second resolution whereby they *rejected the recognition of the Kharkiv Rada* (i.e. the Soviet government headed by Skrypnyk — M. S.). The Soviet has erected barricades and fortified itself with artillery and machine guns. I am telling them to lay down their arms, for otherwise I shall use force . . . I assume they will accept my demand . . ."

Colonel Muraviev, an old Czarist guard, was blunt and devoid of any diplomatic veneer. The members of the Central Executive Committee of Ukraine soon got the attention of Antonov-Ovsienko and warned him that Muraviev, by his behavior and brutality, was only harming and compromising the Bolshevik policy in Ukraine. Antonov-Ovsienko, the supreme commander of Soviet troops in Ukraine and therefore Muraviev's superior, advised Muraviev discreetly to *continue* what he was doing, but not to *brag* about it! Leave all the talking, he told Muraviev, to the representatives of the "Soviet Ukrainian government." In telling Muraviev of his talks with the members of the Central Executive Committee of Ukraine, Antonov-Ovsienko said:

"I promised them (members of the Central Executive Committee of Ukraine) that you and I will allow them a free *political hand*, while *reserving freedom for ourselves in the strategical field* . . ."

In reply Muraviev explained to Antonov-Ovsienko the reasons behind his political negotiations in Poltava. He indicated that the Poltava Soviet had offended him deeply by asking such questions as "Why did I come here?" and because they "demanded" that he leave Poltava immediately. They had threatened him with the appearance of the armies of the Ukrainian National Republic, he said, adding that "our friends Bolsheviks (Russians) and Left-Wing Social-Revolutionaries were not told about my arrival and therefore they failed to contact me . . ."⁸³

In a subsequent report to Lenin, as head of the *Sovnarkom*, Muraviev gave some details bearing on the general political setup for

⁸³ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 140-141.

the appraisal of the Soviet tactics in Ukraine and the policies of the *Entente*. The first thing Muraviev did after sacking Kiev was to appoint a "*rev-kom*" ("Revolutionary Committee") for Kiev and its area. This was a repetition of the tactics used in all the other cities of Ukraine which fell to the Soviet Russian invasion. The Russian occupation authorities did not trust any *local* workers' councils that had been elected by workers. They preferred to rule through their own *appointed organ*, which was totally dependent on the Soviet army of occupation.

Another fact worthy of mention is the behavior of representatives of the *Entente* in Kiev, who shortly before had manifested their amity to the Secretariat General of the Ukrainian National Republic.

In his report to Lenin, Muraviev stated:

"I received representatives of England, France, Czechia and Serbia, and all of them declared to me, as a representative of the Soviet government, their full loyalty, and condemned the *Rada* for its Fourth *Universal*, which they refused to recognize. In general, their attitude is friendly and even enthusiastic regarding the attainments of the revolution . . . Of course, an important part was played by my heavy artillery . . ."⁸⁴

Also to be noted in the Muraviev report is his open avowal that the Soviet power in Kharkiv (the "People's Secretariat") was the creation of Soviet Russian bayonets. He reported to Lenin:

"I handed over the government, *installed by bayonets*, to the Soviet of Ukraine . . ."⁸⁵

On April 9, 1918, an *anti-Bolshevik uprising erupted in the city of Mariupol*. The attempt of the local Soviet to suppress it with artillery fire failed. The Soviet had to discontinue their bombardment because a merchant marine detachment, quartered in the city, threatened to attack the Soviet. As a result, the Soviet was forced to move the next day to the city of Tahanrih.⁸⁶

The attitude of the local Bolsheviks toward the Soviet occupation troops was also characteristic:

"The Kharkiv comrades expressed indignation at the unbridled behavior of our (Soviet Russian) units, their arbitrary requisitions, searches and arrests . . ."

⁸⁴ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 156.

⁸⁵ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 157.

⁸⁶ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 196.

He complained that operating in the rear of the Soviet troops were "anti-revolutionary organizations, especially those of Social-Democrats and railroad men, which constantly committed sabotages . . ."

Antonov-Ovsienko had a special grudge against the Russian Bolsheviks of Kharkiv because they did not wholeheartedly support the Russian military aggression against Ukraine:

"The Kharkiv Bolsheviks, from the very first days of the establishment of the All-Ukrainian revolutionary power, behaved tactlessly in the highest degree."⁸⁷

On occasion Antonov-Ovsienko himself underscored that the majority of the elected Soviets in Ukraine were not behind the Bolsheviks:

"If the majority of the local Soviets were ours, and had there been no hidden counterrevolutionary sabotage behind their shield, I would naturally have given them a free hand in administering their local affairs. But the reality was quite the opposite. Therefore, in the interest of the revolutionary struggle, I insisted that the appointment of political commissars be made by my staff."

So, that was how the "people's government" looked on the local scene: it was installed by the occupation troops.⁸⁸

Soviet Russia Recognizes Ukrainian National Republic for Third Time

In this time of the most implacable aggression of Russia against Ukraine, Moscow engineered a farcical comedy involving the exchange of diplomatic legations with the "Soviet Ukrainian Government" (in reality, only with but one of the five "Soviet republics" in Ukraine) for the purpose of convincing the world that Ukraine was truly independent under a "Soviet government." Two Ukrainians from well-known Ukrainian families were appointed to the "Soviet Ukrainian Legation" to Moscow. These two were Mykola Skrypnyk, an old member of the Russian Communist Party, and Yuriy Kotsiubynsky, a recent turn-coat and a member of the *Russian Communist Party*, which was rigidly subordinated to Lenin. These two "diplomats" were charged with handling international negotiations with a man to whom they owed political obedience and party discipline.

⁸⁷ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 170-174.

⁸⁸ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 180.

On April 4, 1918, the "delegation" was granted a special audience by the *Sovnarkom*. Both puppet "delegates" reported on the "Second All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets," especially on the resolution on the proclamation of the Ukrainian National Republic as an independent Soviet republic within a Soviet federation. The Soviet Russian government immediately and "unanimously" granted recognition to the Soviet government of Ukraine.

This farce was improvised to afford a pretext for continuing the war against Ukraine by the Soviet Russian army, but *in the name of* the "Ukrainian National Republic within a Soviet federative government," and also in order to improve Russia's chances in any future negotiations with Ukraine on the matter of borders.

In referring to this farce, Antonov-Ovsienko wrote:

"In the official statement of the *Sovnarkom* to the Ukrainian Workers-Peasants' Government it was declared that the *Sovnarkom* accepts the proclamation of the Ukrainian National Republic as an independent federative republic and expresses warm compassion for the heroic struggle of the working and exploited masses of Ukraine."⁸⁹

The mention in the official statement of the *Sovnarkom* to the effect that "the Ukrainian National Republic is federative" was designed to give the impression that the "People's Secretariat," headed by the Bolsheviks, represented a "federation" of all the Soviet republics which had been established on the territory of occupied Ukraine. In reality, as we know, such did not exist.

⁸⁹ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 250-251.

CHAPTER NINE

END OF FIRST "UKRAINIAN SOVIET REPUBLIC"

"Ukrainian Soviet Government" Votes Own Dissolution

The city of Tahanrih was the last stop of the Soviet government in Ukraine, for in order to retreat farther eastward the Soviet troops would have had to enter Russian territory. Thus Tahanrih saw the termination of the formal existence of the "Soviet Ukrainian government," because on Russian territory it would have been impossible to conduct the war against Ukraine without violation of the clauses of the Brest Litovsk Treaty, which had already been formally ratified in Moscow. The Soviet Russian troops thus had to leave the Ukrainian territory under pressure of the Ukrainian, German and Austrian troops, and the puppet "Soviet Ukrainian government" had to be dissolved. The same fate, of course, awaited the "republics" of the Crimea, the Donets-Kryvy Rih and Odessa. This solution was pressed by Moscow itself, fearful of incurring serious complications with the Central Powers. In the name of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party, Stalin telephoned to Tahanrih and ordered:

"Enough of this game of government and republic."⁹⁰

On April 19-20, 1918, the members of the Central Executive Committee and the "People's Secretariat" met in Tahanrih for the last time. The first meeting on April 18 was presided by Georgy Piatakov, while Mykola Skrypnyk was chairman of the meeting held on April 19, 1918; I. Kreisberg served as secretary at both sessions. There were some 56 persons who attended the sessions, at which a resolution was adopted calling for the dissolution of the Central Executive Committee and the "People's Secretariat" of Ukraine. Thus the "Soviet Power of the Ukrainian National Republic" was formally terminated by the vote of its own members.

One of the final "acts" of the "People's Secretariat" was the issu-

⁹⁰ Cf. "Open Letter" of Hryhory Lapchynsky. *Chervony Prapor*, Kiev, Nos. 24-25, July, 1920.



Hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky
(in uniform of general of the
Russian Imperial Army)

ance of a "manifesto" directed to the "Workers and Peasants of Ukraine." Dated April 19, 1918, it appeared in the official *Vestnik Ukrainskoy Narodnoy Respubliki, Organ VUTSIK i Taganroghskogo Soveta Deputatov*.

The sentiments of these selected puppet "leaders" are shown by this part of the "manifesto":

"At this difficult time when the Ukraine of Workers and Peasants is trodden upon by the heels of German hangmen and *Haidamak* jailers and when between you and your elected government stand the German-*Haidamak* bands — at this difficult time, we, the legal government of Ukraine, elected by the people and approved by the people's will, deem it our duty to declare our true will to struggle to the last man, to the last drop of blood against the enemies of the workers and peasants of Ukraine."⁹¹

In addition, the "manifesto" called on the workers and peasants of Ukraine to rise up against the Ukrainian Central Rada and its gov-

⁹¹ The full text of this "manifesto" appears in the book, M. Ravich-Cherkasky: *Istoria Kommunisticheskoy Partii Ukrainy*, (History of the Communist Party of Ukraine). Gosizdat Ukrainy, 1923, pp. 191 and ff.

ernment, and stressed that the Soviet Russian army, which had combatted the Ukrainian National Republic, now had to retreat to "the territory of the Russian Federation and could not continue to fight."

Subsequently, the delegates at the sessions organized an "insurgent nine" group, which was charged with the preparation of Bolshevik uprising against free Ukraine. This decision was not implemented, inasmuch as the "insurgent nine" were ordered to go to Moscow.

At this last session it was also decided to organize the "Russian Communist Party of Bolsheviks" in Ukraine. The decision was carried by a small majority to organize underground a separate party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine, which would be formally independent of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party in Moscow but which would be tied to the Russian Communist Party through its commission in the Third International in Moscow. This move, too, was more a gesture of propaganda and agitation than it was anything else, since its aim was to muster at least a theoretical opponent against the Ukrainian democratic parties supporting the Central *Rada* and its policies for an independent state of Ukraine.

All these resolutions were never implemented, for Moscow did not want a Ukrainian state even in Soviet form, nor did it want an independent Ukrainian Communist Party, for such a body might have led to the "emancipation" of even Russian Bolsheviks in Ukraine.

Formally, this resolution was amended in Moscow upon order of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party. On July 5, 1918, a conference in Moscow of members of the Russian Communist Party from Ukraine voted to establish a new name for the group, namely, the "Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine." It was stated emphatically that it was not an independent party, but rather a local branch of the Russian Communist Party which would act under the aegis of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party.

It is worthwhile to recall some of the "theses" which were proposed at the Tahanrih party conference in April, 1918, by a group composed of Piatakov, Bubnov, Kossior and Isakov-Kreisberg — all of whom were either Russians or Russified Jews:

"4. The increasing rebellions of workers and peasants against the yoke of the German-*Haydamak* conquerors constitute only a separate moment of the struggle conducted by the exploited class against world imperialism. This phenomenon places the development and result of the uprisings in Ukraine in close relation to the fate of the international workers' revolution. At the same time as the insurgent move-

ment of proletarians and semi-proletarians in Ukraine supports the development of revolution on an international scale, it cannot but have an impact on the strengthening of the central Soviet government in the north of Russia;

"5. Under these conditions the principal task of the party is the organization of armed uprising of the proletarian and working masses of Ukraine against the oppressors. The party should preserve all its force for strengthening mass organizations, for developing mass agitation and appeals for the armed struggle against the German-*Haidamak* bands and for aiding, organizationally and otherwise, partisan units by providing a maximum organizational network in their insurgent work;

"6. In connection with the establishment by the Central Executive Committee of Ukraine of a government in the form of a special 'People's Secretariat' with special tasks, the implementing by party organizations of designated objectives of the moment should be coordinated with the insurgent activity of the workers' and peasants' government of Ukraine . . ."

These "theses" of Piatakov and his comrades were not accepted by the Bolshevik conference; only 23 votes were cast in favor, while 26 were opposed. Nonetheless, the spirit they expressed regarding the continuing propaganda in Ukraine prevailed among the Bolsheviks in Ukraine. Another "thesis" was proposed here, namely, that it was not Russia, which on December 17, 1917, had tried to conquer Ukraine, but the Ukrainian troops along with their allies ("the *Haidamaks* and the Germans"), as stated in the resolution. Furthermore, the resolution made reference to "uprisings taking place" against the Ukrainian National Republic, although in another paragraph an appeal was made to stage such uprisings. Finally, there was a proposal to retain the "People's Secretariat" as a "government of workers and peasants of Ukraine," but this proposal was not accepted because it was not in the interest of Moscow.

As mentioned above, the dissolution of the puppet "Soviet Ukrainian government" occurred on April 20, 1918, in Tahanrih, when the entire leadership of the Russian Bolsheviks in Ukraine emigrated to Moscow where they remained until the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party devised new tactics for the struggle against Ukraine.⁹²

⁹² M. Skrypnyk, *Chervony Shliakh*, No. 3, 1923, p. 102 and ff.

War of Russian Army after Dissolution of "Soviet Power" in Ukraine

But the war of Soviet Russia against Ukraine under the false Ukrainian shield continued, despite the fact that the "Ukrainian Soviet government" was dissolved on April 20, 1918. The commander-in-chief of the invading armies who from March, 1918, acted as commander-in-chief of all troops of the quasi-Ukrainian National Republic, received orders from Moscow to hold on tenaciously to the Ukrainian territory which was still, if in ever diminishing degree, under his command. The Supreme Military Soviet in Moscow, even called him for special consultations and to give him fresh instructions regarding further operations in Ukraine.

Both the *Sovnarkom* and its Supreme Military Soviet knew well that in April, 1918, the Soviet Russian army in Ukraine could not win its military campaign. The Soviet government had concluded a peace treaty on March 3, 1918, with Germany and Austria-Hungary in Brest Litovsk, and therefore the Russians began demobilizing their regular army units, except those stationed in Ukraine. The latter, in fact, were expressly ordered to continue their struggle. Naturally, the Russian soldiers in these units in Ukraine saw no sense or purpose to keep on fighting.

But the Soviet government had its own ulterior plan. When Moscow pressed Antonov-Ovsienko to continue his military operations against the Ukrainians and their allies in Ukraine, it had one purpose in mind: to keep under Russian control as much Ukrainian territory as possible in order to have increased bargaining power in future boundary negotiations between Russia and Ukraine. In his *Zapiski* Antonov-Ovsienko reported on this matter:

"In Moscow at the meeting of the Supreme Military Soviet I reported on our struggle in Ukraine. I stated that this struggle was approaching an end. The only hope that remained for us was to attack from Valuyky and Starobilsk in the direction of Kupiansk and Kharkiv. Only this assault could eventually stop the offensive of the enemy and give us the chance to complete the evacuation. The Supreme Military Soviet approved my report and called attention to the *necessity of maintaining* our positions for some time for *political reasons* as well, inasmuch as negotiations with the Central Rada were expected over the boundaries of Ukraine . . . For the continuation of military operations in Ukraine we were promised equipment, reserves and specialists . . . I also

saw V. Lenin, to whom I reported on the situation in Ukraine . . ."⁹³

But not even these attempts and the support of the entire communist party apparatus managed to bring Antonov-Ovsienko any military success he was hoping to achieve.

End of Invasion Army of Antonov-Ovsienko

Under these conditions, with the rank and file of the Soviet army seeing no sense in pursuing the war any further and with the Russian



Georgy Chicherin
People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs

invasion army reeling back under the powerful offensive of the Ukrainian army and its German and Austrian allies, the Soviet government, fearing even worse results, ordered the cessation of all military operations and the demobilization of the fighting units and their return to Russian territory, so as to avoid possible violations of the peace treaty signed in Brest Litovsk.

This happened formally on April 22, 1918. The *Sovnarkom* issued a special order, fearing serious consequences in the event the peace treaty provisions were violated. (Christian Rakovsky, a Rumanian of Bulgarian descent, and an astute diplomat, was assigned to negotiate with the Ukrainian government.) The Soviet government ordered the disbanding of all army units which had fought in Ukraine; on the other

⁹³ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 250.

hand, Moscow repeated that this disarmament should not be taken too seriously, but rather formally. The same procedure was adopted with the "Donets Republic."⁹⁴

This action of liquidating the Russian invasion troops in Ukraine progressed rapidly. On April 24 the last garrison was disarmed in Tahanrih.

On May 4, 1918, Antonov-Ovsienko, following Lenin's orders, resigned as "commander-in-chief" of the troops of "the young republics" and ordered his troops to cross the "borders of Ukraine as delineated by the Third *Universal*." The order of Antonov-Ovsienko, signed by Lenin and Trotsky, the latter as head of the Supreme Military Soviet, also provided for the cessation of all military operation and stipulated that the action be reported to "The German and *Haidamak* units through parliamentaries." This order was issued in compliance with the terms of the peace treaty between Russia and the Central Powers.⁹⁵

The final disarmament of the Soviet Russian invasion army was accordingly reported to the front line troops, while the Soviet government in a special note also notified the German government.⁹⁶

Peace Negotiations between Soviet Russia and Ukraine in 1918

The government of the Ukrainian National Republic, during the entire period of the war of Soviet Russia against Ukraine, had been ready to sign a treaty of peace, provided that Russia would guarantee to respect the territorial integrity of Ukraine and would abstain from interfering in the internal affairs of Ukraine. When the Soviet government, in signing the peace treaty in Brest Litovsk, obligated itself to conclude a peace treaty with Ukraine, the Ukrainian government approached the Soviet government on March 30, 1918, with a proposal to negotiate a peace treaty with Ukraine.

On April 3, 1918, Chicherin, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, sent the following note to Kiev:

"To the Council of National Ministers in Kiev. Reply to a radio message (received on April 2) with a proposal to begin negotiations for peace. The government of the Russian Republic, which is compelled to sign a peace treaty with the *Rada* by its ultimatum of February 21 and the Brest Litovsk Treaty, proposes the city of Smolensk as the seat of negotiations. It is proposed that negotiations start on April 5

⁹⁴ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 264.

⁹⁵ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 295.

⁹⁶ Antonov, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 296.

regarding the mutual war which allegedly is being waged between two warring peoples. The People's Commissariat decidedly rejects any similar explanation of the bloody struggle which is now going on in Ukraine. The Soviet government is not waging war against the Ukrainian National Republic. The struggle is being waged between two parts of the Ukrainian people. The matter calls for compassion which the working masses of Russia, in these tragic days for the Ukrainian people, and not only for the Ukrainian people, show to the workers and peasants of Ukraine . . ."

The note of the Soviet government was shameless and had no foundation in fact. It was sent at the very moment when the Supreme Military Soviet of Russia was ordering Antonov-Ovsienko to continue the war against Ukraine with the military forces of Russia and was supplying him with military equipment in order to keep the war on Ukrainian territory in order to secure a better bargaining position in future negotiations with Ukraine. Despite all this, the Soviet government had the audacity to declare that it was not waging war against Ukraine, and that the war was between "two parts of the Ukrainian people."

Despite the tone and arrogance of the note sent by the Soviet government, the Ukrainian government did not reject it, but replied courteously. It turned down Smolensk, however, as the seat of negotiations and suggested Kiev instead.

But before the seat of the negotiations was finally established, a change of government took place in Kiev. *Hetman* Paul Skoropadsky came to power in Ukraine. The negotiations were begun during the *Hetman* regime in Kiev. The Soviet delegation was led by Christian Rakovsky and by a veteran Bolshevik, Dimitri Manuilsky, who was of Ukrainian descent. These negotiations led to the conclusion of a treaty suspending all military operations between the two parties on June 12, 1918, which treaty went into effect immediately. Both parties obligated themselves to establish consular relations. The questions of frontiers and economic relations were left to a separate treaty. Such a treaty, however, was never concluded, inasmuch as the Russian side procrastinated, counting on the imminent breaking of a "world revolution," thereby obviating any obligations with regard to Ukraine. Moreover, at the same time the *Sovnarkom* was planning for a second invasion of Ukraine in the event a favorable situation should present itself. This indeed came to pass in December, 1918, when Soviet Russia broke the truce signed on June 12, 1918, and launched a second attack of aggression against Ukraine.

CHAPTER TEN

REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET POWER IN OCCUPIED PARTS OF UKRAINE AND THE FIRST SOVIET UKRAINIAN GOVERNMENT

Russian Communist Party of Bolsheviks as Architect of Soviet Authority in Ukraine

In modern times states are created and preserved as national entities—states. That means that the *nation*, as a social and cultural community, expresses its will on the creation of its own state and on maintaining itself against any possible aggression on the part of other states. No conglomeration of various nationalities is known to have created a state in modern times. The nation is a social and spiritual community, in which various social groups express themselves by their activity and creativeness. In certain stages of social and political development certain social classes have a political preponderance; they create political parties for the purpose of carrying out their political ends. The nation acts and expresses its will through the *state*, if it has one already, or through the aspiration to attain one, if it does not yet have one. In the state itself in certain periods of history a decisive role is played by certain national parties, or a bloc of national parties. Without the support of such a national party or bloc of national parties no state can exist as a *national* creation.

Therefore, we are faced at once with the paramount question: What *Ukrainian political* party or bloc of Ukrainian political parties organized the Soviet government in Ukraine in December, 1917? What Ukrainian party gave an expression of the national will toward the establishment of a Ukrainian state in Soviet colors? Finally, what specific *Ukrainian* party wanted to create a Soviet Ukrainian state by calling an alien military force to establish the Soviet regime in Ukraine?

These queries may be answered on the basis of known historical documents, and the answer is: *No Ukrainian party* had anything to do with the establishment of the Soviet regime in Ukraine. At that time, i.e., December, 1917, when the Soviet regime was set up in

Ukraine, there was no party or group of *Ukrainian* Communists who had been organized into a separate Ukrainian communist party. The puppet Soviet government set up in Kharkiv in December, 1917, was not a creation of any *Ukrainian* political party whatsoever. This puppet government in Kharkiv was created, after the occupation of that city by Russian Soviet troops, by the Russian Communist Party of Bolsheviks, which at that time was known by its previous official name of the “Russian Social-Democratic Party of Bolsheviks” and which on March 8, 1918, adopted a new name — the “Russian Communist Party of Bolsheviks” — at its 7th congress in Moscow.



First Ukrainian postage stamps
issued by the Ukrainian National
Republic in 1918

It must be underscored that the Russian Communist Party never considered Ukraine as a separate entity either when Ukraine was an autonomous state or when it became an independent state; it invariably considered it a province of Russia. As late as the summer of 1918, all the *gubernial* towns of Ukraine had separate party organizations of the Russian Communist Party which were directly subordinated to the all-Russian center, which in turn issued directives to each party center in each *gubernia* in Ukraine. Thus the Russian Communist Party did not even have a *provincial* organization; no *provincial* organization created a “government” in Kharkiv simply because none existed. The

"government" in Kharkiv was created on direct orders of the All-Russian Communist Party of Bolsheviks. In other words, it was created by a *foreign* party, alien to the Ukrainians.

Let us again recall the date of December 26, 1917. On that day, after Kharkiv had been captured by the Russian Bolshevik troops, the so-called "First Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies," which had been pre-arranged by the Russian Communist Party, elected the so-called "All-Ukrainian Central *Rada* of Deputies." This body, subsequently renamed the "Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Ukraine," on January 2, 1918, appointed its own government, known as the "People's Secretariat." This pseudo-Soviet government of Ukraine existed until April 20, 1918, on which date it was dissolved in Tahanrih by a decision of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Ukraine. Up to this moment there had been no *Ukrainian* communist party; there had been no association of party organizations of the Russian Communist Party in Ukraine in a single national center in Ukraine.

Only in July, 1918, at a conference in Moscow, upon orders of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party were all the organizations of this party in Ukraine united into a national, central organization, known as the "*Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine*" (CPbU). It was scheduled to have its own congresses and its own central committee. But, in reality, it was not a *true* party in the strict sense of the word. Despite the fact that this was a conference of Bolsheviks in Moscow, this new and allegedly independent "*Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine*" (CPbU) was only a provincial organization of the Russian Communist Party. The name "party" had no real meaning, except to confuse the people of Ukraine into thinking that there existed an independent party of Ukrainian Communist-Bolsheviks. Behind the facade lurked the *totalitarian and indivisible Russian* Communist Party with its Central Committee in Moscow, which formally and actually directed all policies of the CPbU. At the time of its war against the Ukrainian National Republic, Moscow not only appointed the whole Central Committee of the CPbU and its Politburo in Kharkiv, but the personnel appointed to these organs were foreigners who had no interest in Ukraine and who had nothing in common either with Ukrainian culture or its political and social life. Moreover, Moscow maintained direct relations not with the Central Committee of the CPbU or its Politburo, but with its own party organizations, frequently bypassing Kharkiv.

Because of the fact that the political party factor in the building of a state has cardinal significance, we underscore once again that from

December 1917, until June, 1918, there was no Ukrainian Communist Party of Bolsheviks in Ukraine; there was only the Russian Communist Party of Bolsheviks. The majority of the members of this party in Ukraine were Russians and Russified national minorities of Ukraine. Only a handful of genuine Ukrainians were members of this party at that time in Ukraine.

Only after the collapse of the first Soviet Russian aggression against Ukraine did the leadership of the Russian Communist Party come to the conclusion that the lack of a provincial party center in Ukraine greatly weakened the effect of Bolshevik propaganda among the Ukrainians. Every politically literate Ukrainian clearly saw that the Soviet power in Ukraine had been brought in by a Russian party, and not a Ukrainian one. In order to remove this drawback to its propaganda, the Central Committee of the RCP decided to establish such a center for its party organizations in Ukraine, and for the confusion of the Ukrainian people it was given the name of "Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine." This center of the RCP in Ukraine had the same privileges and prerogatives within the all-Russian party organization as any district party organization. It had the privilege of convening congresses, issuing various decisions and resolutions within the framework of the general directives of the Central Committee of the RCP, and electing even its own "Central Committee," with the proviso that the Central Committee of the RCP could at any minute cancel or abrogate all decisions of the CPbU and dismiss its Central Committee.

According to the directives of the Central Committee of the RCP a congress of party delegates of the RCP from Ukraine was held in July, 1918, in Moscow. It was the first so-called congress of the CPbU. At that time the "Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine" had 4,364 members.⁹⁷ This figure is also mentioned in the book by Likholat. At the congress altercations broke out regarding the tactics to be followed in Ukraine. The main dispute was between partisans of the "Katerinoslav viewpoint" and the remainder of the delegates. The first group completely denied the existence of the Ukrainian nation and saw no necessity of separate Ukrainian statehood in Soviet form. The others recognized the existence of the Ukrainian nation, but held that in the future the Soviet power in Ukraine should have a close centralist link with the Russian republic. Eventually, the congress, following the instruction of the Central Committee of the RCP, issued a resolution of the following content:

⁹⁷ M. Yavorsky: *Revolutsia na Vkraini* (Revolution in Ukraine), p. 56.

"As regards the relationship between Ukraine and Russia, the separation of Ukraine from Russia is impossible because of the economic relations; the CPbU should struggle for a revolutionary *union* of both states on the basis of proletarian centralism within the boundaries of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic . . ."⁹⁸

Quite properly Likholat characterizes this resolution as a decision against any form of independence for Ukraine. It was clear in the light of the resolution that with centralism as a state pattern not only no non-Russian state had the possibility of existing but that not even an autonomy of communities could expect to survive.

The congress, again following the instructions of the Central Committee of the RCP, decided to undertake preparations for a general uprising in Ukraine and, once the Ukrainian state under *Hetman* Skoropadsky was liquidated, to proclaim a "close union with Russia on the basis of proletarian centralism." It is evident that Moscow saw as a serious inconvenience the existence of a "People's Secretariat" with a Skrypnyk as its head. For Moscow it was much more promising to have a new organ, a *Rev-Kom*, directly responsible to the Central Committee. Such a *Rev-Kom* would be a docile and expedient instrument of Moscow. The Communist writer Yavorsky reported on this phase of the congress as follows:

"The congress deems necessary the organization of an armed uprising of workers and peasants on the basis of class principles, with the help of *Rev-Koms*, for the struggle for Soviet power. The People's Secretariat is being liquidated, and the direction for the uprisings will be provided by the Central Revolutionary Committee, appointed by the Central Committee of the CPbU, which is responsible to the Central Committee (of the RCP — M. S.) . . ."

It is of interest that at this congress the general conception was that the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, and later in Ukraine, could not succeed without the help of a "world revolution." Now, the official Soviet historiography ascribes the resolutions to this effect to the Trotskyites, who did not exist at that time. It is contended that the resolution was forced through by Georgy Piatakov, who was later revealed to be "a Trotskyite and an enemy of the people." This explanation is given by Likholat in the cited history book. Significantly, the author prefers to omit the fact that at the congress Piatakov was elected to the

⁹⁸ Yavorsky, *op. cit.*, p. 56; Likholat, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

Central Committee, and that the Central Committee elected him its chairman, an election which was approved by the Central Committee of the RCP with Lenin at its head.⁹⁹

It is important to study closely the nationality background of the members of the Russian Communist Party in Ukraine, subsequently the "Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine" (CPbU). For a clear picture of this problem, it is necessary to analyze briefly the population structure in Ukraine from the viewpoint of nationality.



The 100 hryvna of the Ukrainian National Republic

Ukraine, like all other European countries, was populated in the overwhelming majority by its own people — Ukrainians. Ukrainians constituted a separate linguistic, cultural and political entity, which in modern times is termed *nationality*, *nation*. At that time in Europe (as is the case even now) state citizenship was not always identical with the nationality of the citizens. For instance, a person could be of Polish origin but be a German citizen. In Ukraine, in the years 1918-19 Ukrainians constituted 81.6 percent of the entire population of Ukraine.¹⁰⁰ The rest of the citizens of Ukraine were constituted thusly: Russians — 7.2 percent; Jews — 4.6, and others — 6.6 percent. Almost two-thirds of the Russian minority in Ukraine lived in the cities, and

⁹⁹ Yavorsky, *op. cit.*, p. 56; Likholat, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

¹⁰⁰ Cherlunchakevich: *Natsionalny sostav Sovietskoy Ukrainy*, (The National Composition of Soviet Ukraine), Kharkiv, 1924.

most of them belonged to the privileged class during Czarist times. They were of the aristocracy, high Czarist officials, merchants, and the like. When Russian capital (with foreign credits and investments) began developing the coal industry in the Donets Basin and the iron ore industry in Kryvy Rih in Ukraine, the Czarist government and the industrialists began the Russification of Ukraine by a planned importation of Russian workers from Russia, who subsequently substantially strengthened the Russian minority in Ukraine. Percentage-wise, this minority was not large and on its own it could not stage a *coup d'etat* in the Ukrainian National Republic, even if all the Russian minority were in the communist party organization. But we know from Soviet sources that the communist organization in Ukraine had only 4,364 members between December, 1917, and April, 1918.

The nationality background of the members of the Russian Communist Party is also worthwhile studying. According to official data, as late as 1927 only some 3 percent of the members of the CPbU, a branch of the RCP in Ukraine, acknowledged Ukrainian origin.¹⁰¹ When we take into consideration that the Bolshevik organization in Ukraine numbered a bare 4,364 in 1918, the number of Ukrainians was insignificant in comparison with the 30 million Ukrainians. Specifically, only about 130 Ukrainians were members of the Communist Party. These figures completely refute the Bolshevik propaganda to the effect that the war against the Ukrainian National Republic was waged by Ukrainian Communists. A bare 130 Ukrainians could hardly undertake the gigantic task of waging a war against a state, which the Ukrainian National Republic was at that time. This could only have been done with the overwhelming support of Soviet Russia, as was the case.

We must admit that with the prolonged occupation of Ukraine by Soviet Russia the number of Communists in the ranks of the communist party organization in Ukraine increased for obvious reasons. During 1919-1920 a significant percentage of Russified Jews swelled the party ranks. This element could not join either the Ukrainian national movement nor the anti-Bolshevik White Russian movement. Even so, the growth of the Bolshevik party in Ukraine was extremely slow, as is evident from the following figures.

¹⁰¹ **Sotsialny i natsionalny sostav VKPbU**, (The Social and National Composition of the All-Union Party of Bolsheviks). Moscow, 1928; also: N. Popov: **Nacherk Istorii KPbU**, (The Outline of History of the CPbU). Popov states that in the CPbU at one time there was no one who could write Ukrainian.

March, 1918	4,364 members
March, 1919	16,363 members
March, 1920	25,247 members
Dec., 1921	75,000 members
Dec., 1925	101,852 members

As is known of Bolshevik practice, every official of the Bolshevik apparatus must be a member of the Communist Party. Hence we may presume that from the very beginning of the Russian occupation the Bolshevik organization in Ukraine was a party of the occupation bureaucracy.

As stated above, at the beginning of the Soviet Russian aggression against Ukraine only a handful of Ukrainians were Bolsheviks. In 1918 they constituted *a bare 3 and a half percent* of the total membership. When it became evident that Soviet Russia would overcome the Ukrainian National Republic, the left-wing faction of the Ukrainian Party of Social-Revolutionaries was transformed into the party of *Borotbists-Communists*, which later entered the CPbU.

This move was made for the purpose of giving the CPbU some semblance of a Ukrainian character in the Russian Communist outpost in Ukraine. This fusion took place on March 19, 1920, in Kharkiv, when it became plain, with the catastrophe of the Ukrainian national armies in December, 1919, that it would take some time for the Bolsheviks to be evicted from Ukraine (the final offensive against them was the combined drive of the Polish-Ukrainian armies in the spring of 1920).

But even the fusion of the CPbU with the makeshift Ukrainian communist element did not make much of a change in the character of the CPbU. In his brochure ¹⁰² Volodymyr Vynnychenko writes that at the time he was in Kharkiv (1920) only 10 percent of the CPbU were Ukrainians, the remainder being Russians and Russified minorities (Jews, Poles and others).

Thus more than 96 per cent of the membership of the Russian Communist Party in Ukraine in 1917-1918 were not only Russians by conviction but were those who in principle refused to recognize the existence of the Ukrainian people and saw in the establishment of a Ukrainian state in Soviet form a mere tactical maneuver. They de-

¹⁰² V. Vynnychenko: **Ukrainska Komunistychna Partia (UKP) i Komunistychna Partia bolshevykiw Ukrainy (KPbU)** (The Ukrainian Communist Party [UCP] and the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine [CPbU]). Vienna-Kiev, 1921, p. 9.

spised the Ukrainian national movement and looked for its destruction as a "bourgeois invention" and were as ready to liquidate Ukrainian Communists as non-Communists.

But we must not think that the leadership of the Russian Communist Party and its branch in Ukraine, the CPbU, were alone in making a travesty of the principle of self-determination. Let us examine the program of the Russian Communist Party, adopted on April 24, 1917, on the matter of nationalities:

"All nations belonging to Russia are entitled to the right of *free secession* and the establishment of independent states. To deny this right and to reject the means which assure its practical application is tantamount to support of aggressive and annexation policies. Only the recognition of the right of nations to separation on the part of the proletariat will assure a full solidarity of workers of the various nations and cultivate a true democratic amity of nations.

"But the question of the right of nations to free separation should not be confused with the question of the practicality of separation on the part of one or another nation at this or some other time. The latter question must be solved by the proletarian party in an individual case independently, namely from the viewpoint of the interest of the entire social development and class struggle of the proletariat for socialism.

"The party requires a far-going territorial autonomy, removal of control from above, removal of an obligatory state language and fixation of frontiers in the field of self-rule and of autonomous areas on the basis of economic relations and conditions of life, national population structure and so forth, which relations must be ascertained by the local population itself.

"The party rejects most emphatically national-cultural autonomy, under which schools would not be the subject of state competence but would be in the hands of national diets. Workers who work at the same factory would be divided through a cultural national autonomy by their membership in one or another national culture, which would mean that the connection of the workers with the bourgeois cultures of various nations would be strengthened, while the task of social democracy is to strengthen the international culture of the world proletariat.

"The party demands a basic law in the constitution which would declare as invalid all privileges of one or another nation, and all violations whatever of the rights of national minorities.

"The interest of the working class demands a union of all nationalities of Russia in *uniform* proletarian organizations — political, professional, cooperative, educational, and so forth. Only such a union of workers of various nationalities in uniform organizations will provide the proletariat with the possibility of victory in the struggle against international capitalism and bourgeois nationalism . . ."¹⁰³ (*Italics added.*)

After analyzing this program on the nationality question we may deduce that it was doubtlessly prepared by Lenin himself, with Stalin merely mouthing it at the conference. Lenin proposed that the enslaved nations have the right to separate themselves from Russia, thereby gaining for his party the confidence of the workers. But, subsequently, Lenin went on to explain that the right of secession did not entail the final *application* of this right. The application of this right was to be decided not by *an enslaved nation or its proletariat*, but by the Russian Communist Party itself, a "party of the proletariat." The decision would be made not from the viewpoint of the interests of the enslaved nation, but from the vantage point of Moscow's interests.

Lenin outlined also the future relations of Ukraine, the largest enslaved nation, toward Russia. Theoretically, he recognized the right of Ukraine to secede. But in practice this right could not be implemented without the consent of the Russian Communist Party, which was guided by the interests of Russian imperialism, now under the control of the RCP.

In the light of these official statements of the Russian Communist Party and its branch in Ukraine, we understand readily why Soviet Russia launched an armed aggression when Ukraine began to apply the right of self-determination, a principle to which the Russian Communists paid lip service only.

Composition of First Organs of Soviet Government in Ukraine

A group of "workers' deputies" from the Donets basin and a handful of deputies from the original First All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets

¹⁰³ Cited from the German translation of **Istoria Kommunistychnoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza bolshevykov**, Short Course, 1954, p. 230 and ff.

of Kiev (December 17, 1917), escaping to Kharkiv, met under the protection of the Soviet troops of Antonov-Ovsienko, and on December 26, 1917, declared themselves the "First All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets." (It is to be recalled that the overwhelming majority of participants at the First All-Ukrainian Congress of Councils supported the Ukrainian Central *Rada* and condemned the Soviet Russian aggression against Ukraine.) This pseudo-congress elected a "Central Executive Committee of Ukraine," headed by Medvediev. Subsequently the Central Committee was headed by V. E. Zatonsky, who was also a member of the Russian *Sovnarkom*. On January 2, 1918, the Central Executive Committee of Ukraine appointed a "Ukrainian Soviet Government," known as the "People's Secretariat."



The first bank notes of the Ukrainian National Republic issued in 1917 (one side)

The first head of this "government" was Mykola Skrypnyk, an old Bolshevik of Ukrainian descent who knew the Ukrainian national liberation movement well and therefore was expected to fight it effectively. Other members of this puppet government were the following Bolsheviks:

Eugenia Bosch, V. Luxembourg, E. Lukanovsky (pseudonym), Aussem, Artiom (real name Sergiev), Y. Marianov, S. Bakinsky (pseudonym), E. Terletsky, H. Lapchynsky, V. Shakhrai and V. Antonov-Ovsienko (who was also commander-in-chief of the "Ukrainian Soviet" armies and a member of the Russian *Sovnarkom* which waged an aggressive war against Ukraine). With the exception of Skrypnyk and Shakhrai, who were Ukrainians, all were Russian chauvinists. To

this number was added another Ukrainian — Neronovych — who quickly became disillusioned with the Russian Communist Party and its plans for Ukraine, and escaped to his native Poltava, where he was subsequently apprehended by the Ukrainian national forces and executed as a traitor.



The same bank note on the reverse side. The inscription is not only in Ukrainian, but also in the Russian, Hebrew and Polish languages

Application of Decrees of the “Sovnarkom”

Following the tactics of the *Sovnarkom* of Russia, the “Ukrainian Soviet government” or the “People’s Secretariat” did not bother at all with any constitutional problems. To the very last day of its existence this “Ukrainian Soviet government” promulgated no constitutional provisions and no laws whatsoever.

The first “manifesto” of the “Central Executive Committee of Ukraine,” issued on December 26, 1917, declared that the Ukrainian Central Rada, as a “counterrevolutionary and bourgeois” body, was being “abrogated,” and that henceforth the “Power on the territory of the Ukrainian Republic belongs exclusively to the Soviets of Workers,’ Soldiers’ and Peasants’ Deputies.” In addition, this pseudo-Ukrainian congress voted to apply to Ukraine a series of decisions adopted by the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets and cancelled all laws promulgated by the Ukrainian Central Rada and its Secretariat General.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ Likholat, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

Not content with winning a military victory in Ukraine, the *Sovnarkom* also sought certain diplomatic advantages. It not only created a puppet Ukrainian government in Kharkiv, but it compelled it to declare war against the Ukrainian National Republic. On January 2, 1918, the "People's Secretariat" issued a special appeal to the "Population of Ukraine," in which it exhorted the people to rise and "with arms in your hands struggle against the Central Rada!"

This was, of course, a paper declaration; the "People's Secretariat" could not muster a single unit against the Ukrainian National Republic. But it was used by Moscow to propagate the fiction that it was not Russia that waged war against the *Rada* of Kiev but a "Ukrainian proletarian government of Kharkiv."

The Kharkiv "Central Executive Committee of Ukraine" and the "People's Secretariat" were careless about the proper designation of this "Soviet Ukrainian government." It was called variously: "Ukrainian Republic," "Republic of Soviet of Ukraine," "Ukrainian Soviet Republic," and also "Ukrainian National Republic." The latter name was used especially when the *Sovnarkom* wanted to underscore the falsehood that it was not a war between Russia and Ukraine but a "civil war, in which a part of the Ukrainian people were waging war against the government of the Ukrainian National Republic."

Relations with Soviet Russia

In its "manifesto" of December 26, 1917, the "First Congress of Soviets" proclaimed a *federation* with Russia. But in order that any federation exist, including a Soviet federation, the following requirements are indispensable:

- 1) each Soviet republic should have a *government freely* elected;
- 2) all Soviet republics should *freely* create a *federative government*.

But as we have seen in the previous pages, there was no such *federative* government in Russia, while the *Sovnarkom* was a government of one party.

Immediately following the pseudo-Ukrainian congress held in Kharkiv, the "Central Executive Committee of Ukraine" sent a telegram to the *Sovnarkom* expressing full loyalty and solidarity with it. It said that it stood for a peace between Ukraine and Russia, and it condemned the *Rada*, which was held "responsible" for the war between Ukraine and Russia.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁷ Likholat, *op. cit.*, p. 67-68.



The 500 hryvna bank note of the Ukrainian National Republic

In response the Sovnarkom stated that it recognized the Kharkiv Soviet government as the "only legal government of Ukraine" and promised to "give swift support in the struggle against the counter-revolutionary Central Rada." This was rather an "understatement"—the Soviet government had attacked Ukraine *ten* days before the puppet Ukrainian government was created in Kharkiv.

But what is of specific interest to us regarding the relations between Soviet Russia and the "brotherly republic" cannot be found in any official act of the Soviet government. But the fact that the first Soviet government on a partly-occupied Ukrainian territory was totally and absolutely subjected to the government of Soviet Russia is stated now in official Soviet law books:

"... The first Soviet government of Ukraine, in the short time of its existence, could not formalize its relations with the RSFSR, but they were meant to be federative. That this was so is attested to by a declaration of the delegation of the Soviet organizations of Ukraine at the Fourth Extraordinary Congress of Soviets of the RSFSR on March 16, 1918. The delegates, having declared themselves as *representatives of one of the parts of the Russian federation*, protested the treacherous separation of Ukraine from the all-

Soviet federation which was effected in 1918 by the bourgeois Central *Rada* . . . ”¹⁰⁸

Soviet falsifiers of history, like A. V. Likholat for instance, are endeavoring to convince Soviet readers that the Russian empire restored by the Bolsheviks was a federation from the beginning. What they strive to do is to hide the fact that the Soviet power in all non-Russian republics was the power of a Russian occupation. By way of proof of the “federalism” of Soviet Russia, Likholat writes the following:

“At the beginning of 1918 the Ukrainian Soviet government, through the representatives it sent to Moscow, began negotiations with the Soviet government of the RSFSR regarding the establishment of a federative link with the RSFSR. The *Sovnarkom* of the RSFSR, in compliance with the proposal of the Ukrainian Soviet government, accepted a decision to include in the *Sovnarkom* of the RSFSR a representative of the Ukrainian SSR who would have a decisive voice in matters relating to Ukraine and the right of a consultative voice in other matters . . . ”¹⁰⁹

Our remarks on the above statement are brief and to the point:

1. Likholat errs when he refers to the RSFSR. At that time the official name of Soviet Russia was the “Russian Republic,” which did not have the modifiers, “federative,” “Soviet,” and “socialist.”
2. At that time the Soviet government could not refer to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. The Soviet officials at that time, both in Russia and Ukraine, insisted that there existed only one Ukrainian state — the Ukrainian National Republic — with two different governments: the democratic government of the Central *Rada* in Kiev and the Bolshevik Soviet government in Kharkiv, which allegedly were waging a civil war.
3. In January 1918, the Russian *Sovnarkom* according to the decision of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, had 13 commissariats (war and navy, commerce and industry, justice, post and telegraph, labor, external affairs, food, finances, instruction, railroads, internal affairs,

¹⁰⁸ *Sovietskoye Gosudarstvo i Pravo*, (The Soviet State and Law), Moscow, 1948, p. 107.

¹⁰⁹ Likholat, *op. cit.*, p. 360.

land reforms, nationality affairs).¹¹⁰ This *Sovnarkom* had jurisdiction also in *all matters relating to Ukraine*, with this addition: that in Ukrainian matters it had 14 votes instead of 13. It is evident to all that the Ukrainian representative, even were he an independent leader and not a disciplined Bolshevik, could not have a decisive voice in the *Sovnarkom*.

A State of 'Rev-Koms,' Not of Workers' Councils

It is important to stress the fact that although the puppet Ukrainian government was as much propagandized as that of the *Soviets* or workers' councils, reality showed that it was not such at all. As pointed out above, the true *soviets*, i.e., the councils of workers' soldiers' or peasants' deputies, actually *did not exist* during the period of the first Soviet Russian occupation of Ukraine. These were dispersed by the Soviet troops whenever they dared to assemble. Instead, the Soviet occupation authorities appointed in the cities and villages the so-called "revolutionary committees" or *Rev-Koms*, which acted in behalf of and were responsible to the Russian Communist Party.

Such a *Rev-Kom* appointed by the party assumed all the powers of the local *Soviet*, which in most cases was either disbanded or subordinated to the *Rev-Kom*. This is irrefutably attested to in Antonov-Ovsienko's *Zapiski*. Therefore, we can freely refer to the form of the state as a "state of revolutionary committees."

But even in this case the term cannot encompass the reality which existed in those times in Ukraine. The Soviet power could not always rely on the system of *Rev-Koms*. The impact of the Ukrainian national rebirth was so strong and so overwhelming that it embraced even the Russified workers, who frequently were appointed to the *Rev-Koms* by the Russian Communist Party. In many instances, the *Rev-Koms* openly refused to antagonize the Ukrainian people or to act against their interests. Therefore, Moscow resorted to still another ruse and tactic. It replaced these committees with *War Revolutionary Committees* — *Voyen-Rev-Kom*.

These *Voyen-Rev-Koms* were subordinate to the principal "War Revolutionary Committee," which existed within the "All-Russian Central Executive Committee."

¹¹⁰ *Sovetskoe Administrativnoe Pravo*, (The Soviet Administrative Law), S. S. Studenikin, V. A. Vlassov, A. Vietkhiev. Gozizdat, Moscow. 1950 p. 26.

The *Voyen-Rev-Koms* acted along with the local Soviets. They concentrated in themselves all judicial and executive powers on the local level. And they took orders from no one except the Russian Communist Party.

Leaders of Russian Communist Party in Ukraine

In any general appraisal of the first "Ukrainian Soviet Republic" and the four other Soviet republics which were set up in Ukraine during the first Soviet military occupation of Ukraine the role of the leaders of the Russian Communist Party cannot be omitted.

It is a fact well-known to all impartial students of the history of Ukraine of that period that only a handful of leaders of Ukrainian origin were to be found in the leadership of the Russian Communist Party in Ukraine. These few were used by Moscow in its occupation regime as a masquerade for the world at large. They had no decisive power or influence either in the Russian Communist Party or in the Soviet government.

The true leaders of the Russian Communist Party in Ukraine in 1917 and at the beginning of 1918 were only Russians, Russified Jews, Poles, Latvians, and others. Of these, outstanding roles were played by P. Lebedev, Leonid Piatakov, Georgy Piatakov (brothers), and P. Zarubin. All of them came from the Russian intelligentsia. The Piatakov brothers were sons of a Russian millionaire-industrialist of Kiev. Other important communist leaders were Mayorov and Isakov-Kreisberg.¹¹¹

In the district committee of Kiev the following Communists played an important part: Eugenia Bosch, M. Tarnogradsky, A. Grinvich and Izakov-Kreisberg, all of whom directed the communist activities on the right-bank of the Dnieper River. In Kharkiv another district committee ruled the left-bank of the Dnieper River; its direction was provided by such leaders as Rukhimovich, Felix Kohn, Diodor Artiom (Sergeiev), Emanuel Kviring, Dimitri Lebed, Cherkavsky, Avsem Hopner, Mezhiluk, Epstein and, later, Georgy Petrovsky. Among them was only one Ukrainian of note — Volodymyr Zatonsky. At that time Mykola Skrypnyk was not a ranking Bolshevik leader.¹¹²

In a meeting of the delegates of the Bolshevik party during the First All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets in December 1917, in Kiev, an executive committee was elected consisting of the following

¹¹¹ M. Yavorsky: *Revolutsia na Vkraini v yiyi holovnishykh etapakh*, (The Revolution in Ukraine in its More Important Stages), Derzh. Vyd. Ukrainy, 1923, pp. 38 and 39.

¹¹² Yavorsky, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

members: Eugenia Bosch, Aussem, Alexandrov, Horovitz, B. Luxembourg, Kulik, G. Lapchynsky and V. Shakhrai. Only Shakhrai was a Ukrainian; all others were native Russians or Russified Jews, Poles, and others.

As far as the formal governments in these five "Soviet republics" in Ukraine were concerned, we must note that the puppet governments at the top and local levels changed with great frequency. For instance, in three months' time the "Soviet Ukrainian government" saw three presidents: Medvediev, S. Bakinsky (pseudonym) and V. Zatonsky.

The same instability reigned also in the "People's Secretariat." For instance, the "People's Secretary" for Military Affairs (yet there was no army!) was Vasyl Shakhrai, who was succeeded by Neronovych and, in turn, by Eugenia Bosch, Shakhrai was sent away to become a "People's Secretary" for nationality affairs in the "Donets-Kryvy Rih" republic. There are many such examples of instability.

Mention should be made also of the attitudes of Jews toward the Bolsheviks in Ukraine during those trying times. There are these who are inclined to deduce that because many Jews were in the top echelon of Bolshevik leadership the Bolshevik movement was inspired by Jews, and not by Russians. This deduction is made by overt and covert anti-Semites. It is a fact that among the leading members of the Russian Communist Party there were persons of Jewish origin: Trotsky, Zinoviev, Joffe and Sverdlov (the first "president" of Soviet Russia). Again, there were many Jews in the communist party organization in Ukraine: Kohn, Kreisberg, Luxembourg, and others. But these leaders acted in the communist party *not as Jews, but as Russian patriots*. They had become Russified and thoroughly imbued with Russian culture. They were not followed by most Jews, who had their own political parties and organizations.¹¹³

As far as the Jewish masses in Ukraine were concerned, it is known that, taken as a whole, they were against the Bolsheviks. The Jewish labor and democratic parties collaborated with the Ukrainian liberation movement in this period in the Central Rada and the Secretariat General. The Jewish People's Party, the United Jewish Party Paolei-Zion, and the Jewish Labor Party "Bund" decidedly maintained a democratic position and supported the Ukrainian Central Rada against the Bol-

¹¹³ M. Rafes: *Dva goda revolutsie na Ukrainie*. (Two Years of the Revolution in Ukraine), Gozizdat, Moscow, 1920; Also: S. Goldelmann: *Letters of a Jewish Social Democrat* (in Ukrainian language).

sheviks. These parties had their representatives in the Ukrainian government. Hence any accusations against the Jews in Ukraine in this respect are baseless.

Soviet Semicentennial in Ukraine

In concluding this analysis of the first "Soviet Ukrainian Republic" we must underscore that the observances of the semicentennial of the Soviet power in Ukraine are, at the least, falsified. Disregarding the fact that from December, 1917 to April, 1918, there were not one, but five Soviet republics on a part of Ukraine occupied by Soviet troops, all these Soviet republics on the Ukrainian territory dissolved themselves by April, 1918. This is especially well known in the case of the "Ukrainian Soviet Republic." Thus the present Soviet government in Ukraine cannot date its continuous existence as starting with the puppet regime which had been installed briefly on a part of occupied Ukraine.

The second Soviet republic in Ukraine began formally only on December 1, 1918, when on the day previous the Russian Communist Party through its representative, Joseph Dzugashvili-Stalin, established a new Soviet Ukrainian government under the leadership of the Russian, Georgy Piatakov, in Kursk, Russia.

It is to be recalled that from November 14, 1918 on the Soviet government was preparing to break the truce signed on June, 1918, with a new aggression against Ukraine. When the invasion forces were ready, *Izvestia* published on December 1, 1918, a report on the establishment of a new "Ukrainian Soviet government"; simultaneously Soviet Russia unleashed its second aggression against Ukraine, which lasted until August 3, 1919.

This time, too, Soviet Russia did not succeed in occupying Ukraine completely. The government of the Ukrainian National Republic stubbornly defended the land, and on August 30, 1919, the Ukrainian national armies liberated Kiev, the capital of Ukraine, and flung the Soviet troops out of Ukraine, along with the puppet "Ukrainian Soviet government." This puppet "Ukrainian Soviet government," on orders of the Central Executive Committee of the Russian Communist Party, dissolved itself in Moscow on October 3, 1919.

Thus the second puppet "Ukrainian Soviet government" can hardly give any historical basis for the present Soviet government of Ukraine to claim continuity with it. This puppet government, too, dissolved itself in Moscow.

The third Soviet aggression against Ukraine began in December 1919, and on the orders of Moscow no new "Ukrainian Soviet government" was established; instead, an "All-Ukrainian Revolutionary Committee" was set up under the presidency of the Russian, Gregory Petrovsky. This third Soviet aggression also met with fierce resistance on the part of the Ukrainian national armies. Only on November 20, 1920, did the Soviet armies succeed in conquering the Ukrainian lands up to the Rivers Zbruch and Sluch in the west. This line was retained for some time on the basis of the Treaty of Riga (1921). Only with the third puppet "Ukrainian Soviet government" can the present puppet rulers of Kiev claim their origin.

The three invasions by Soviet Russia of Ukraine clearly demonstrate the futility of any "coexistence" with Soviet Russia. It is the favorite tactic of the Kremlin to attack weaker neighbors and then proclaim to the world that its security had been threatened.

For three years Ukraine waged a defensive war against a numerically superior enemy. This struggle of Ukraine is by no means ended, nor has the Soviet communist rule in Ukraine been accepted by the Ukrainian people.

A number of valiant peoples have fallen victim to Soviet Russian imperialism and colonialism. But Ukrainians were the first victims of Soviet Russian aggression, and in their struggle to preserve their freedom and independence they paid a price so enormous as to defy our imagination.

If nothing else, the Western world can draw a great lesson from the insatiable thirst for territorial aggrandizement and dictatorial power that the Russian communist leaders exhibited in Ukraine in 1917-1920.

A P P E N D I X

TEXT OF THE TREATY OF PEACE BETWEEN UKRAINE AND THE CENTRAL POWERS¹¹⁴

(Signed at Brest Litovsk, on February 9, 1918)

In order to understand properly why the attacks by Soviet Russia and her friends against the Peace Treaty of Brest Litovsk between Ukraine and the Central Powers were detrimental to the interest of the Ukrainian people, and furthermore, in order to clarify American ideas about this important treaty, we reproduce below the complete texts of the treaties of Ukraine and Russia that were concluded individually by the two countries with the Central Powers:

* * *

WHEREAS the Ukrainian People have, in the course of the present world war, declared their independence and expressed the desire to establish a state of peace between the Ukrainian National Republic and the Powers at present at war with Russia, the Governments of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey have resolved to conclude a Treaty of Peace with the Government of the Ukrainian National Republic; they wish in this way to take the first step towards a lasting world peace, honorable for all parties, which shall not only put an end to the horrors of war but shall also conduce to the restoration of friendly relations between the peoples in the political, legal, economic, and intellectual spheres.

To this end the plenipotentiaries of the above mentioned Governments, viz.,

For the Imperial German Government: Imperial Actual Privy Chancellor Richard von Kuehlmann, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs;

For the Imperial and Royal Austro-Hungarian Government: His Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty's Privy Councillor Ottokar Count Czernin von and zu Chudenitz, Minister for Foreign Affairs;

For the Royal Bulgarian Government: Dr. Vassil Radoslavoff, President of the Council of Ministers; the Envoy M. Andrea Tosheff; the Envoy M. Ivan Stoyanovich; the Military Plenipotentiary Colonel Peter Gantcheff; and Dr. Theodore Anastassoff;

For the Imperial Ottoman Government: His Highness the Grand Vizier Talaat Pasha; Ahmet Nessimi Bey, Minister for Foreign Affairs; His Highness Ibrahim Hakki Pasha; and General of Cavalry Ahmet Izzet Pasha;

¹¹⁴ Texts of the Ukrainian "Peace," U. S. Department of State, 1918,

For the Government of the Ukrainian National Republic: Mr. Alexander Sevriuk, Mr. Mykola Lubytsky, and Mr. Mykola Levitsky, member of the Ukrainian Central *Rada*; — have met at Brest Litovsk, and having presented their full credentials, which were found to be in due and proper form, have agreed upon the following points:

Article I

Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey, on the one hand, and the Ukrainian National Republic, on the other, declared herewith that the state of war between them is at an end. The contracting parties are resolved henceforth to live in peace and amity with one another.

Article II

1. As between Austria-Hungary, on the one hand, and the Ukrainian National Republic, on the other, insofar as these two Powers border upon each other, the frontiers which existed between the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and Russia, prior to the outbreak of the present war, shall be preserved.

2. Further north, the frontier of the Ukrainian National Republic starting at Tarnograd, will in general, follow the line Bilhorai, Shohebroshyn, Krasnostav, Puhachiv, Radyn, Mezhyrichia, Sarnyky, Melnyk, Vysoko-Litovsk, Pruzhany and the Lake of Vyhonovske. The frontier will be defined in detail by a mixed commission according to ethnographical conditions and by taking the wishes of the inhabitants into due consideration.

3. In the event of the Ukrainian National Republic having boundaries coterminous with those of another of the Powers of the Quadruple Alliance, special agreements are reserved in respect thereto.

Article III

The evacuation of the occupied territories shall commence immediately after the ratification of the present Treaty of Peace. The manner of carrying out the evacuation and the transfer of the evacuated territories shall be determined by the Plenipotentiaries of the interested parties.

Article IV

Diplomatic and consular relations between the contracting parties shall commence immediately after the ratification of the Treaty of Peace.

In respect to the admission of consuls on the widest scale possible on both sides, special agreements are reserved.

Article V

The contracting parties mutually renounce indemnification of their war costs, that is to say, their State expenditure for the prosecution of the war, as well as compensation for war damages, that is to say, damages sustained by them and their nationals in the war areas through military measures, including all requisitions made in enemy territory.

Article VI

Prisoners of war of both parties shall be released to their homeland insofar as they do not desire, with the approval of the State in whose territory they be, to remain within its territories or to proceed to another country. Questions connected therewith shall be dealt with in separate treaties as provided for in Article VIII.

Article VII

The contracting parties are in agreement as follows with regard to mutual economic relations:

I

The contracting parties mutually undertake to enter into economic relations without delay and to organize the exchange of goods on the basis of such stipulations:

Until July 31 of the current year a reciprocal exchange of the surplus of their more important agricultural and industrial products, for the purpose of meeting current requirements, is to be effected according to the following provisions:

a) The quantities and classes of products to be exchanged in accordance with the preceding paragraph shall be determined on both sides by a commission composed of an equal number of representatives of both parties, which shall sit immediately after the Treaty of Peace is signed.

b) The prices of the products to be exchanged as specified above shall be regulated on the basis of mutual agreement by a commission composed of an equal number of representatives of both parties.

c) Calculations are to be made in gold on the following basis: 1000 German imperial gold marks shall be equivalent to 462 gold *rubles* of the former Russian Empire (1 *ruble* 2-1/6 imperial), or 1000 Austrian and Hungarian gold *kronen* shall be equivalent to 393 *karbovantsi*, 76 *grosh* gold of the Ukrainian National Republic, or to 393 *rubles*, 78 *kopeks* in gold of the former Russian Empire.

d) The exchange of goods to be determined by the commission mentioned under (a) shall take place through the existing Government central offices or through central offices controlled by the Government.

The exchange of such products as are not determined by the above-mentioned commission shall be effected on a basis of free trade, arranged for in accordance with the conditions of the provisional commercial treaty which is provided for in following Section II.

II

Insofar as not otherwise provided for under Section I hereof, economic relations between the contracting parties shall be carried on provisionally in accordance with the stipulations specified below until the conclusion of the final Commercial Treaty, but in any event until a period of at least six months shall have elapsed after the conclusion of peace between Germany, Aus-

tria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey, on the one hand, and the European States presently at war with them — the United States of America and Japan — on the other:

A

For economic relations between the German Empire and the Ukrainian National Republic, the conditions laid down in the following provisions of the German-Russian Commercial and Maritime Treaty of 1894-1904 are to apply, that is to say:

Articles 1-6 and 7 (including Tariffs "a" and "b"), 8-10, 12, 13-19; further, among the stipulations of the final Protocol (Part I), paragraphs 1 and 3 of addendum to Article 1; paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 of addenda to Articles 1 and 12 addendum to Article 3; paragraphs 1 and 2 of addendum to Article 5; addenda to Articles 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10; addenda to Articles 6, 7 and 11; to Articles 6-9; to Articles 6 and 7 paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 5 of addendum to Article 12; further, in the final Protocol (Part IV) and 3, 6, 7, 12, 12b, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 (with the reservations required by the corresponding alternations in official organizations), 19, 20, 21 and 23.

An agreement has been arrived at on the following points:

1. The General Russian Customs Tariff of January 13-26, 1903, shall continue in force.

2. Article 5 shall read as follows:

"The contracting parties bind themselves not to hinder reciprocal trade by any kind of import, export, or transit prohibitions, and to allow free transit.

"Exceptions may only be made in the case of products which are actually, or which may become, a State monopoly in the territory of one of the contracting parties; as well as in the case of certain products for which exceptional prohibitory measures might be issued in view of health conditions, veterinary police, and public safety, or on other important political and economic grounds, especially in connection with the transition period following the war."

3. Neither party shall lay claim to the preferential treatment which the other party has granted or shall grant to any other State, arising out of a present or future Customs Union (as, for instance, the one in force between the German Empire and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg), or arising in connection with petty frontier intercourse extending to a boundary zone not exceeding 15 kilometers in width.

4. Article 10 shall read as follows:

"There shall be reciprocal freedom from all transit dues for goods of all kinds conveyed through the territory of either of the parties, whether conveyed directly or unloaded, stored, and reloaded during transit."

5. Article 12 (a) shall be revised as follows:

"(a) with regard to the reciprocal protection of copyright in works of literature, art, and photography, the provisions of the Treaty concluded between the German Empire and Russia on February 28, 1913, shall prevail in the relations between Germany and the Ukrainian National Republic.

"(b) with regard to the reciprocal protection of trademarks, the provisions of the Declaration of July 11-23, 1873, shall be authoritative in the future."

6. The provision of the final Protocol to Article 19 shall read as follows:

"The contracting parties shall grant each other the greatest possible support in the matter of railway tariffs, particularly by the establishment of through rates. To this end both contracting parties are ready to enter into negotiations with one another at the earliest possible moment."

7. Par. 5 of Part IV of the final Protocol shall read as follows:

"It has been mutually agreed that the customs houses of both countries shall remain open on every day throughout the year, with the exception of Sundays and legal holidays."

B

For economic relations between Austria-Hungary and the Ukrainian National Republic, the agreements shall be valid which are set forth in the following provisions of the Austro-Hungarian-Russian Commercial and Maritime Treaty of February 15, 1906, being Articles 1, 2 and 5 (including Tariffs "a" and "b"); Articles 6, 7, 9-13; Article 14, paragraphs 2 and 3; Articles 15-24; further, in the provisions of the final Protocol, paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 of addenda to Articles 1 and 12; addenda to Article 2; to Article 2, 3 and 5; to Articles 2 and 5; to Articles 2, 4, 5, 7 and 8; to Articles 2, 5, 6 and 7; to Article 17, and likewise to paragraphs 1 and 3, Article 22.

An agreement has been arrived at on the following points:

1. The General Russian Customs Tariff of January 13-26, 1903, shall remain in force.

2. Article 4 shall read as follows:

"The contracting parties bind themselves not to hinder reciprocal trade between their territories by any kind of import, export, or transit prohibition. The only permissible exceptions shall be:

"(a) In the case of tobacco, salt, gunpowder or any other kind of explosive, and likewise in the case of other articles which may at any time constitute a State monopoly in the territories of either of the contracting parties;

"(b) With respect to war supplies in exceptional circumstances;

"(c) for reasons of public safety, public health, and veterinary police;

"(d) In the case of certain products for which, on other important political and economic grounds, exceptional prohibitory measures might be issued, especially in connection with the transition period following the war."

3. Neither party shall lay claim to the preferential treatment which the other party has granted or shall grant to any other State arising out of a present or future Customs Union (as, for instance, the one in force between Austria-Hungary and the Principality of Lichtenstein), or arising in connection with petty frontier intercourse, extending to a boundary zone not exceeding 15 kilometers in width.

4. Article 8 shall read as follows:

"There shall be reciprocal freedom for all transit dues for goods of all kinds conveyed through the territory of either of the contracting parties, whether conveyed directly or unloaded, stored, and re-loaded during transit."

5. The provision of the final Protocol to Article 21 shall read as follows:

"The contracting parties shall grant each other the greatest possible support in the matter of railway tariffs, and particularly by the establishment of through rates. To this end both contracting parties are ready to enter into negotiations with one another at the earliest possible moment.

C

In regard to the economic relations between Bulgaria and the Ukrainian National Republic, these relations shall, until such time as a definitive Commercial Treaty shall have been concluded, be regulated on the basis of the most-favored-nation treatment. Neither party shall lay claim to the preferential treatment which the other party has granted or shall grant to any other State arising out of a present or future Customs Union, or arising in connection with petty frontier intercourse, extending to a boundary zone not exceeding 15 kilometers in width.

D

In regard to the economic relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Ukrainian National Republic, these relations shall, until such time as a definitive Commercial Treaty shall have been concluded, be regulated on the basis the most-favored-nation treatment. Neither party shall lay claim to the preferential treatment which the other party has granted or shall grant to any other State arising out of a present or future Customs Union, or arising in connection with petty frontier intercourse.

III

The period of validity of the provisional stipulations (set forth under Section II hereof) governing economic relations between Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and the Ottoman Empire, on the one hand, and the Ukrainian National Republic, on the other, may be prolonged by mutual agreement.

In the event the periods specified in the first paragraph of Section II do not occur before June 30, 1919, each of the two contracting parties shall be entitled as of June 30, 1919, to renounce within six months the provisions contained in the above-mentioned section.

IV

(a) The Ukrainian National Republic shall make no claim to the preferential treatment which Germany grants to Austria-Hungary or to any other country bound to her by a Customs Union and directly bordering on Germany, or bordering indirectly thereon through another country bound to her or to Austria-Hungary by a Customs Union, or to the preferential treatment which Germany grants to her own colonies, foreign possessions, and protectorates, or to countries bound to her by a Customs Union.

Germany shall make no claim to the preferential treatment which the Ukrainian National Republic grants to any other country bound to her by a

Customs Union and bordering directly on Ukraine, or bordering indirectly thereon through any other country bound to her by a Customs Union, or to colonies, foreign possessions, and protectorates of one of the countries bound to her by a Customs Union.

(b) In economic intercourse between the territory covered by the Customs Convention of both States of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, on the one hand, and the Ukrainian National Republic, on the other, the Ukrainian National Republic shall make no claim to the preferential treatment which Austria-Hungary grants to Germany or to any other country bound to her by a Customs Union and directly bordering on Austria-Hungary, or bordering indirectly thereon through another country which is bound to her or to Germany by a Customs Union. Colonies, foreign possessions, and protectorates shall in this respect be placed on the same footing as the mother country. Austria-Hungary shall make no claim to the preferential treatment which the Ukrainian National Republic grants to any other country bound to her by a Customs Union and directly bordering on Ukraine, or bordering indirectly thereon through another country bound to her by a Customs Union, or to colonies, foreign possessions, and protectorates of one of the countries bound to her by a Customs Union.

V

(a) Insofar as goods originating in Germany or Ukraine are stored in neutral States, with the proviso that they shall not be exported, either directly or indirectly, to the territories of the other contracting party, such restrictions regarding their disposal shall be abolished so far as the contracting parties are concerned. The two contracting parties therefore undertake to notify immediately the Governments of the neutral States of the above-mentioned abolition of this restriction.

(b) Insofar as goods originating in Austria-Hungary or in Ukraine are stored in neutral States, with the proviso that they shall not be exported, either directly or indirectly, to the territories of the other contracting party, such restrictions regarding their disposal shall be abolished so far as the contracting parties are concerned. The two contracting parties therefore undertake to notify immediately the Governments of the neutral States of the above-mentioned abolition of this restriction.

Article VIII

The establishing of public and private legal relations, and the exchange of prisoners of war and interned civilians, the amnesty question, as well as the question of the treatment of merchant shipping in the enemy's hands, shall be settled by means of separate Treaties with the Ukrainian National Republic, which shall form an essential part of the present Treaty of Peace, and, as far as practicable, come into force simultaneously therewith.

Article IX

The agreement entered upon in this Treaty of Peace shall form an indivisible whole.

Article X

For interpretation of this Treaty, the German and Ukrainian text shall be authoritative for relations between Germany and Ukraine; the German, Hungarian and Ukrainian text for relations between Austria-Hungary and Ukraine; the Bulgarian and Ukrainian text for relations between Bulgaria and Ukraine; and the Turkish and Ukrainian text for relations between Turkey and Ukraine.

Final Provision

The present Treaty of Peace shall be ratified. The ratifications shall be exchanged in Vienna at the earliest possible moment.

The Treaty of Peace shall come into force upon its ratification insofar as no stipulation to the contrary is contained therein.

In witness whereof the plenipotentiaries have signed the pre-Treaty and have affixed their seals to it.

Executed in quintuplicate at Brest Litovsk this 9th day of February 1918.

SIGNATURES:

<i>Alexander Sevriuk</i>	(signed)	<i>Richard von Kuehlmann</i>	(signed)
<i>Mykola Lubytsky</i>	(signed)	<i>Maj. General Max Hoffmann</i>	(signed)
<i>Mykola Levitsky</i>	(signed)	Representative of the German Army Command	
		<i>Ottokar von Czernin</i>	(signed)
		<i>Dr. V. Radoslavoff</i>	(signed)
		<i>A. Tosheff</i>	(signed)
		<i>Ivan Stoyanovich</i>	(signed)
		<i>Col. P. Gantcheff</i>	(signed)
		<i>Dr. T. Anastassoff</i>	(signed)
		<i>Talaat Pasha</i>	(signed)
		<i>Ahmet Nessimi Bey</i>	(signed)
		<i>Ibrahim Hakki Pasha</i>	(signed)
		<i>Gen. A. Izzet Pasha</i>	(signed)

MEMORANDUM ACCEPTED BY THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN FOREIGN OFFICE, FEB. 18, 1918

The head of the Ukrainian delegation appealed to Austria-Hungary and Germany for armed assistance to the Ukrainian National Republic against the invasion of the Bolshevik forces in Ukraine. In the event of compliance on the part of the Allies, he declared that, upon the demand of the Allied Powers, he is ready to do the following on behalf of the Ukrainian National Republic:

1. To preserve in a safe place the documents signed by the Imperial and Royal Minister for Foreign Affairs and by the three Ukrainian delegates, regarding the creation of an Eastern Galician Crown Land, which declaration is in the hands of the Ukrainian delegates in Brest Litovsk, and to return the said document to the Imperial Minister for Foreign Affairs as soon as the establishment of a Crown Land from Eastern Galicia and Bukovina is effected; both copies of the declaration would be then destroyed.

2. To issue a public declaration which would be prepared by the representatives of the Quadruple Alliance, and which would read as follows:

"In order to avoid any misunderstanding regarding Paragraph 2, Article II of the Treaty of Peace, concluded on February 9, 1918, in Brest Litovsk between Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey, on the one hand, and the Ukrainian National Republic on the other, it is stated that the mixed commission, as provided for in Paragraph 2, Article II of this treaty, is not bound in delineating the boundary to follow the line Bilhorai, Shchebroshyn, Krasnostav, Puhachiv, Radyn, Mezhyrichia and Sarnyky, but is empowered on the basis of Paragraph 2, Article II of this Treaty to outline a boundary which derives from the ethnographic relations and also the wishes of the population east of the line Bilhorai-Sarnyky.

"The mixed commission will be formed out of the representatives of the parties which conclude the treaty, and the representatives of Poland, wherein each of the parties will send an equal number of delegates to the commission. The parties which are concluding the treaty accordingly will determine the time at which the commission will convene." To this von Wiesner added the following:

"The appeal from the Ukrainian side regarding military assistance will be accepted by the Allied Powers. The Austro-Hungarian military forces which will be removed from their present positions and sent into the territory of the Ukrainian National Republic will be withdrawn to their previous positions as soon as the government of the *Rada* so desires.

Sevriuk (signed)

Wiesner (signed)

TEXT OF THE TREATY OF PEACE BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE CENTRAL POWERS

Article I

Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey, for the one part, and Russia, for the other, declare that the state of war existing between them has ceased. They are resolved to live henceforth in peace and amity with one another.

Article II

The contracting parties shall refrain from any agitation or propaganda against the Government or the public and military institutions of the other party. Insofar as this obligation devolves upon Russia, it is binding also for the territories occupied by the Powers of the Quadruple Alliance.

Article III

These territories lying to the west of the line agreed upon by the contracting parties and which formerly belonged to Russia will no longer be subject to Russian sovereignty; the line agreed upon is traced on the map submitted as an essential part of this treaty of peace (Appendix I). The exact location of the line shall be established by a Russo-German Commission. No obligation whatever toward Russia shall devolve upon the territories referred to, arising from the fact that they formerly belonged to Russia. Russia refrains from all interference in the internal relations of those territories. Germany and Austria propose to determine the future status of these territories in accordance with the wishes of their population.

Article IV

As soon as a general peace is concluded and Russian demobilization has been completely carried out, Germany will evacuate the territory lying to the east of the line designated in Paragraph 1 of Article III, insofar as Article VI does not specify otherwise.

Russia will do all within her power to ensure the immediate evacuation of the provinces of Eastern Anatolia and their lawful return to Turkey. The districts of Ardahan, Kars, and Batum will likewise and without delay be cleared of Russian troops. Russia will not interfere in the reorganization of the national and international relations of these districts, but leave it to the inhabitants of these districts to carry out this reorganization in agreement with the neighboring States, especially Turkey.

Article V

Russia shall, without delay, carry out the full demobilization of her army inclusive of those units recently organized by the present Government.

Furthermore, Russia shall either bring her warships into Russian ports and there detain them until the day of conclusion of a general peace, or disarm them forthwith. Warships of the States which continue in a state of war with the Powers of the Quadruple Alliance, insofar as they are within the Russian sovereignty, shall be treated as Russian warships.

The barred zone in the Arctic Ocean continues as such until the conclusion of a general peace. In the Baltic Sea, and as far as Russian power extends into the Black Sea, removal of mines will be undertaken at once. Merchant navigation within these maritime regions is declared free and will be resumed at once. Mixed commissions will be organized to formulate more detailed regulations, especially to inform merchant shipping of restricted lanes. Navigation channels are always to be kept free of floating mines.

Article VI

Russia obligates herself to conclude peace at once with the Ukrainian National Republic and to recognize the treaty of peace between that State and the Powers of the Quadruple Alliance. The Ukrainian territory will, without delay be cleared of Russian troops and the Russian Red Guards. Russia is to put an end to all agitation or propaganda against the Government or the public institutions of the Ukrainian National Republic.

Estonia and Livonia will likewise, without delay, be cleared of Russian troops and the Russian Red Guards. The eastern boundary of Estonia is defined in general as running along the river Narva. The eastern boundary of Livonia crosses, in general, lakes Peipus and Pskov, extending to the southeastern corner of the latter, then crossing Lake Luban in the direction of Livenhof on the Dvina. Estonia and Livonia will be occupied by a German police force until security is ensured by proper national institutions and until public order has been established. Russia shall liberate at once all arrested or deported inhabitants of Estonia and Livonia, and ensure the safe return of all deported Estonians and Livonians.

Finland and the Aaland Islands will immediately be cleared of Russian troops and the Russian Red Guards, and the Finnish ports of the Russian fleet and of the Russian naval forces. So long as ice prevents the transfer of the warships to Russian ports, forces of limited size only shall remain aboard the warships. Russia is to put an end to all agitation or propaganda against the Government or the public institutions of Finland.

The fortresses built on the Aaland Islands are to be dismantled as soon as possible. As regards the permanent non-fortification of these islands as well as their further treatment in respect to military and technical navigation matters, a special agreement is to be concluded between Germany, Finland, Russia, and Sweden; there exists an understanding to the effect that, upon Germany's desire, still other countries bordering on the Baltic Sea may be consulted in this matter.

Article VII

In view of the fact that Persia and Afghanistan are free and independent States, the contracting parties obligate themselves to respect the political and economic independence and the territorial integrity of these States.

Article VIII

The prisoners of war of both parties will be released for return to their homelands. The settlement of questions connected therewith will be effected through the special treaties provided for in Article XII.

Article IX

The contracting parties mutually renounce compensation for their war expenses, *i.e.*, of the public expenditures for the conduct of the war, as well as compensation for war losses, *i.e.*, such losses as were caused them and their nationals within the war zones by military measures, inclusive of all requisitions effected in the enemy country.

Article X

Diplomatic and consular relations between the contracting parties will be resumed immediately upon the ratification of the treaty of peace. As regards the reciprocal admission of consuls, separate agreements are reserved.

Article XI

As regards the economic relations between the Powers of the Quadruple Alliance and Russia the regulations contained in Appendices II-V are determinative, namely Appendix II for the Russo-German, Appendix III for the Russo-Austro-Hungarian, Appendix IV for the Russo-Bulgarian, and Appendix V for the Russo-Turkish relations.

Article XII

The re-establishment of public and private legal relations, the exchange of war prisoners and interned civilians, the question of amnesty as well as the question anent the treatment of merchant ships which have come within the power of the opponent — all shall be regulated in separate treaties with Russia which will form an essential part of the general treaty of peace and which, as far as possible, will go into force simultaneously with the latter.

Article XIII

For interpretation of this treaty, the German and Russian texts are authoritative for the relations between Germany and Russia; the German, the Hungarian, and Russian texts for the relations between Austria-Hungary and Russia; the Bulgarian and Russian texts for the relations between Bulgaria and Russia; and the Turkish and Russian texts for the relations between Turkey and Russia.

Article XIV

The present treaty of peace shall be ratified. The documents of ratification shall, as soon as possible, be exchanged in Berlin. The Russian Govern-

ment obligates itself, upon the expressed desire of one or more of the Powers of the Quadruple Alliance, to execute the exchange of the documents of ratification within a period of two weeks. Unless otherwise provided for in its articles, in its appendices, or in the supplemental treaties, the treaty of peace goes into force at the moment of ratification.

In testimony whereof the plenipotentiaries have signed this treaty with their own hand.

Executed in quintuplicate at Brest Litovsk, March 3, 1918.

The treaty was signed on the part of the Russian Federative Soviet Republic by the following:

Gregory I. Sokolnikov, Member of the Central Executive Committee;

Lev M. Karakhan, Member of the Central Executive Committee;

Georgy V. Chicherin, Assistant to the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs;

Georgy I. Petrovsky, People's Commissar for Internal Affairs.

SHORT BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AND PUBLICATIONS OF THE AUTHOR

Matthew Stachiw: LL.D. (law and social-economic sciences) of Charles University, Prague, Czechoslovakia (January 20, 1923); Scholarship Winner of the Masaryk Foundation for Social-Historical Studies (1923-1924); editor and lawyer in Lviv (1925-1939); Director of National University of Self-Enlightenment in Lviv (1930-1939); full-fledged member of the Shevchenko Scientific Society (1941); Associate Professor and Ordinary Professor of Government and State Law at the Ukrainian Free University in Munich (1945-1967); editor of *Narodna Volya* (The People's Will), organ of the Ukrainian Workingmen's Ass'n in Scranton, Pa.; member of Editorial Board of Ukrainian Encyclopedia of the Shevchenko Scientific Society; full-fledged member of the International Free Academy of Sciences in Paris (1965); member of the Editorial Board of *The Ukrainian Quarterly*.

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REMARKS ON transliteration

All geographic names are transcribed in Russian spelling, if they pertain to Russian territory, or in Ukrainian spelling, if they relate to Ukrainian territory. Some exceptions, however, are made in a few cases. For instance, the spelling of the Ukrainian capital is given in the current English adaptation "Kiev," instead of in the Ukrainian phonetic rendition which is "Kyiv." The same is applied to the largest Ukrainian river Dnieper, spelled in the current English version instead of in the Ukrainian "Dnipro."

The proper names of persons, as a rule, are transcribed either from the Ukrainian or Russian originals in the current English version. A notable exception is made in the case of V. Antonov-Ovsienko, whose name is spelled in the Ukrainian version and pronunciation, instead of in the Russian which should be "Ovseenko." The given names are transcribed in Ukrainian or Russian spelling, and sometimes in English as well.

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