

Delegation of the Ukrainian socialistic revolutionary party.

For Galicia!

Appeal to the world democracy

Geneva, 1920

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of the Delegation of the Ukrainian socialistic revolutionary party to all socialist parties.*

Dear Comrades

You very well know that the International Conference of Lucerne, in the month of August last, unanimously resolved to protest against the policy of the Polish government and that of the Entente in Eastern Galicia. The Conference declared that the occupation of that country by force of arms by the Polish government, with the active moral and technical help of the Powers of the Entente, in the name of so called historical rights, is in flagrant contradiction with the fundamental principles of the International. The Conference begged that the occupying Polish armies should immediately be withdrawn from Eastern Galicia, and that the question of the contested Ukrainian-Polish frontiers should be resolved by the free consultation of the populations interested therein.

This resolution has remained without effect. On the contrary the Polish government, not content with the mandate of the Peace Conference of July 11th, has exacted and received still greater concessions, in spite of protestations of the delegation of the Ukrainian Republic and that of Eastern Galicia. In a resolution, the 30th November, the Supreme Council decided that Eastern Galicia must remain for twenty five years under the Polish administration with a statute that warranted her a territorial autonomy. In twenty five years the Society of Nations will decide the future fate of the country.

But the Polish government was not satisfied with this

* It has been sent to the secretary of the International the 31 Decembre 1919.

decision and insisted on having a definitive annexment and not a temporary one. The French government supported these claims, and the other day, the President of the Council, M. Clemenceau „had the pleasure of announcing“ to the Chambre des Deputés his personal victory, to have changed the temporary mandate of the Poles concerning Galicia into a definitive annexation.

This new triumph of M. Clemenceau over the more prudent opinion of the other allies astonished all those who are ever so little acquainted with the affair. It is not only a violation of the right of peoples to dispose of their own destiny, but also proclaims results absolutely opposed to the desires of peoples.

The half year of Polish occupation of Eastern Galicia has shown everybody very clearly what to expect from the Polish administration of this country. During this half year Eastern Galicia has become the most unhappy and the most miserable country in the world. This is no exaggeration. The country is veritably lawless; all her public institutions are ruined; the inhabitants live under a reign of terror. The educated classes as well as the peasants moulder in prison, and in concentration camps, which under this abominable rule have become indeed reservoirs of epidemics. The country is infected with typhus; according to official statistics, hundreds of communes are ravaged by it, and no measures are taken to arrest it. The conditions of life are terrible. People live in holes in the ground, ill provided with food, for the corn and harvests are confiscated by the Polish authorities. The inhabitants are deeply hostile to the Polish rule. Even the Polish population flies the country, seeing with terror, that in such conditions it is condemned to death or to civil war.

The socialist press, not only that of Ukraine but also the Polish socialist press, energetically condemns this state of things. Even from the point of view of those politicians who still dream of isolating Germany, and of creating a barrier of

barbed wire against bolshevism, the creation of a camp of despair and misery that Eastern Galicia will become under the Polish domination, is evident folly. The continuation of the Polish occupation of Eastern Galicia will be still more inadmissible in the minds of those who are not possessed by the chimera of imperialism and who only desire the peace of Europe. Never will the Ukrainian peasant and working population of Eastern Galicia nor the Ukrainian educated classes submit to the Polish control. And Galicia, under this control will become the centre of disturbances that will perpetually endanger the peace of Europe.

By reason of all this, we, the Ukrainian socialists, send to our comrades all over the world the prayer to bring to bear all their resources — their press, their organised societies, their parliamentary representations, — to loudly claim in the interest of the right of peoples crushed under foot to dispose of their own destiny and in the interests of peace, of the health and well being of Europe:

1. That the Polish troops immediately evacuate oriental Galicia.

2. That the Polish authorities allow all the inhabitants forcibly taken away to return.

3. That, by the medium of the local bodies, the economic commissions of the allies and the Society of the allied Red Cross bring this completely ruined country preliminary help in medicines, clothes, and materials for construction.

4. That the mandate for the administration of Eastern Galicia be withdrawn from the Polish government and that Galicia receive the means of organising her autonomy and defence under the control of the Society of Nations or that of an international commission if necessary.

In the name of the Delegation of
Ukrainian socialistic revolutionary party

M. Hrushevski, president.

D. Issalevitch, secretary.

Explanatory note on Eastern Galicia.

Eastern Galicia, or the Western Province of the Ukrainian Republic is situated to the north of the Carpathians. It has an area of 56.000 square kilometres; the principal towns being Lemberg (Lviv), Peremyshl and Stanislaviv. According to the official census of 1910 it consisted of about 5 million inhabitants, of which 63·5% were Ukrainians otherwise called Rus-sins or Rutens, 23% Poles, 12% Jews. But considering that this official census favoured the Polish claims, the ukrainian statisticians count in reality about 70% Ukrainians, 16% Poles, and 13% Jews.

This Ukrainian country, since it has thus remained in spite of everything until the present time, has been for long centuries the object of the envy of the outlying states: especially that of Poland and Hungary. This was owing to its geographical situation and its well known riches (in naphtha, salt, coal, wood and corn. In the Xth and XIth centuries it belonged to the State of Kief. From the XII to XIVth centuries it formed an independent Ukrainian State, that of Galicia and Volhynie, with the chief towns Halitsh (which gave its name to all the country, Galicia) and Vladimir, from which another name, Galicia-Lodomeria, is derived. In 1349 it was occupied by the Poles in spite of the resistance of the population, and remained under their rule until the division of Poland in 1772. During those three centuries, this country was the theatre of a struggle against Polish domination, and that struggle, with its national, religious and social tendencies did not end even on the Austrian occupation, the Polish nobility having retained under the new rule its predominant situation in the country.

The Austrian Government took only exceptionally an interest in the needs of the Ukrainian nationality, when the Polish ambitions required to be moderated, but never tried seriously to liberate the Ukrainian population from the Polish

domination. The Ukrainian movement, which was always democratic and even radical, remained ignored by the aristocratic and clerical regime of Austria and the Ukrainians of Galicia had as often to struggle against the Austrian Government as against the Poles.

This incessant and obstinate struggle made the national and social conscience of the Ukrainians of Galicia stronger than it was in the other Ukrainian countries. When the Ukrainian literature was forbidden in Russia in 1863, and still more rigorously in 1876, the Ukrainian national movement passed out of Great Ukraine into Galicia, which had, in a sort of way, some constitutional rights. The patriotic Ukrainians of Galicia began to see the necessity of the reconstitution of a Ukrainian State (abolished finally by the Russian government in the XVIIIth century) and long before the Russian revolution in 1917, the idea of a State comprising all Ukraine became their final object. But the Austro-Polish rule having become more severe than before during the war allowed no manifestation of these tendencies.

It was only in the autumn of 1918, after the allies had proclaimed the rights of the nations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire to dispose of their own destiny, that the delegates of the national Ukrainian bodies (those of Eastern Galicia and of Ukrainian Bukovina, (to which later on the bodies of the Ukrainian part of Hungary joined themselves) proclaimed their independence. The National Council which was formed in Galicia, assumed on the 1st Nov. 1918 the supreme power in Eastern Galicia and in North Bukovina. Thus, these lands formed the „Western Ukrainian Republic“. This new Republic was to be united, at a well timed moment, to the Popular Republic of Great Ukraine, founded in 1917 on the territory of former Russia, and which was, for the time being, really occupied by the Germans, with the Hetman Skoropadski as a figure-head. When the insurrection broke out in Great Ukraine and the office of the Hetman suppressed and the Re-

public re-established, the National Council unanimously voted, on the 3rd January 1919, the union of the Occidental Republic with the resuscitated Ukrainian Republic. The Congress of the Workmen (preliminary parliament of all Ukraine) on the 22nd Jan. supported this union and solemnly proclaimed it at Kief. The Eastern Republic became the „Western province of the Popular Ukrainian Republic“.

But about this time the Poles invaded Galicia. On the 15th Nov. 1918 the Polish troops took Peremyshl, while the Polish population revolted at Lemberg. The government and troops of the Eastern Republic were obliged to evacuate their capital in order to avoid battles in their streets. At the same time, the Rumanians, according to their agreement with the Poles, occupied Ukrainian Bukovina. In these extremely hard circumstances began the obstinate war for Galicia between the Ukrainians and Poles, which lasted seven months, and which finished by the victory of the Poles, thanks only to the moral and material help of the Entente.

The Peace Conference assumed the part of arbitrator, but executed its task only to favour the claims of the Poles. In opposing all compromises with the Ukrainians proposed by the Entente, the Poles ended by obtaining from the Supreme Council a commission to occupy Eastern Galicia and to „establish a civil administration“. Then they took advantage of the army of general Haller (fitted out in France, to march against Germany) to crush the Ukrainian army and took possession of all Eastern Galicia. This occupation was accepted post factum by the Supreme Council which in its decision of the 25th June authorized the forces of the Polish Republic to pursue their operations as far as the river Zbrutch.

We give some details which show forth the character of the Polish rule in Galicia, a rule which is founded on the mandate obtained from the Supreme Council — we take extracts mostly from the newspapers published in Galicia under the rigorous Polish censor.

From the 2nd to the 23 rd October 1919, the representatives of the International Red Cross visited the most important prisoners concentration camps in Poland. According to their report, the number of Ukrainian prisoners and interned is as follows:

Strzalkov	7092	Modlin	1190
Vadovice	3474	Pykulitchi.	1173
Bereste	3036	Biala	952
Dombye	2141	Ternopol	500
Peremychl	1633	Lantzut	420
Lemberg	1450	Domblin	63

Total 23133 („Vpered“ N 177).

In these numbers are not counted the less important camps nor the prisoners who are sent out to work. The conditions of life in these camps and prisons are terrible. Even the independent Polish press states that fact (see extract from „Robotnik“ below). They are veritable centres of epidemics. Here is what a Ukrainian socialist journal „Vpered“ writes:

„The epidemic at Peremychle. The typhus spreads frightfully in this town. It was brought there from the concentrations camp of Pykulitchi, where still dozens of persons fall ill from it every day. The commander of the camp and the doctor Schneider even have become ill. In the town the contagion is centred chiefly in the suburb of Zasianie, where several cases of typhus break out every day. The hospitals being full, the sick are in their homes, which helps to spread the contagion. Typhus has already been declared to exist in the military prisons“. (N 176).

The bad state of supplies of Galicia and its sanitary conditions are exposed in the question of the socialist deputy Pushak at the Polish Diet: „For some time, says he, the districts of East Galicia, especially those of Zbarash, Zboriv, Ternopil, Skalat and Terebovla have been devastated by famine and epidemics which have taken the form of elementary phenomena. The situation of the inhabitants of these

districts is desperate. From want of coal, the trains only run exceptionally. It is sufficient to mention, that the principal line, Lemberg-Pidzamtche runs only every third day. In such conditions there can be no question of regular supplies of paramount necessity, heating material and medicines. Therefore cold, famine and epidemics, especially the exanthematic typhus carry off ten per cent of the population" („Vpered" N 166)

The produce of the harvest is requisitioned by the Polish authorities by the harshest methods. Here is a little example from the „Vpered" (N172).

„From the 25th to the 30th November, in the communes of Dovha Voinylivska and Perekossy in the district of Kalush a requisition of corn was made under the command of the gendarme Ian Pavlochek of the gendarmerie of Kalush. This gentleman made the requisition in such a manner that he sent soldiers into the houses where they exacted not only the corn but the bread, butter, cheese, poultry, dried fruit, milk and boots. At the same time they did not spare the owners of these houses. Thus in the house of P. Cholovsky they beat a young girl, also they beat H. Mykytyn who is ill in bed, and J. Kopachevsky. After the requisition Mr. Pavlochek had taken to his house 6 bushels of wheat, 17 fowls and 3 bushels of potatoes".

The sanitary situation of the country was examined at the meeting of the Sanitary Council of Lemberg, on the 10th December 1919. It is affirmed that the typhus has spread without any preventive measures being taken. It spreads especially from the concentration camps and the prisons. In the first week of December, districts were infected with typhus as follows.

	district of	
Skalat-communes infected 49	Buchach	22
Bohorodchany 30	Zolochiv	22
Lemberg 28	Bereshany	21

Husiatyn	23	Dolyna	21
Chortkiv	23	Mostyska	21
		etc. „Vpered“ (N 171).	

Thus under the Polish occupation Eastern Galicia has become a kingdom of the dead. Be it from the indolence or from the ill will of the administrators, the effect is quite the same for the country. And it is the continuation of such a state of things that the Entente will assure by its strength and authority!

The conditions of life of the prisoners of Eastern Galicia in the Polish concentration camps.

Report made at the womens International League for peace and liberty.

A prisoner, escaped from Strchalkova, relates the story of his arrest, imprisonment etc.*

I was detained in the prison of Ternopol, but the 14 th June 1919 the Ukrainian troops having approached near town, we were called out, to be sent away. At 10 o'clock we were sent into the yard. The sick men, some with 40 degrees (centigrade) of fever, were forced to march by blows from the butt of the guns. Among us were women and children. Their tears and fainting only provoked the brutality of the Polish soldiery. We left, carrying the sick on litters.

In a suburb of Ternopol we met a detachment of Polish soldiers; they began to beat us with their muskets and insisted on our being shot on the spot. Then they tore off our

* „Svoboda“ (New Jersey City) N. 141 (27 Nov. 1919).

clothes and boots, so that many of us, and I among them, went bare footed and only in our underlinen. Before arriving at Osirna (about 15 kilometres from Ternopol) six persons died and were abandoned on the road. Nothing was given us to eat and we were not allowed to even drink water. The 17-th June we arrived at Zolochiv where we remained for eight hours on the public streets, where everybody had the leisure to illtreat us. The same day we were put into the train together with 300 prisoners from Zolotchiv, 50 to 60 persons in a van and arrived thus at Lemberg.

At the station we were visited by a number of Poles, military men and railway employés, who were seeking among us for persons well known. A Polish engineer Krshichtowitch, thus recognised the engineer Malichevski whom he falsely accused of having buried eighteen living persons. Upon this, he went out and soon returned with some Polish soldiers who fell upon Mr. Malichevski and hit him on the head. When he fell they continued to beat him and kick him nearly to death. Then they threw him out into a crowd of people. When he had become unconscious they put him back into the van. A doctor who happened to be among the prisoners succeeded, after three hours, in bringing him back to life. On the other stations people were awaiting our arrival. They came into the vans, the military and civilians, old women and young girls and spat upon the unhappy creatures who were lying in pools of blood.

Diseases made their appearance in the vans, which looked like stables. At Jaroslav, ten people were taken to the hospital, and at Krakow 140 and on our arrival another 100. Sixty-four died on the way. After our arrival at the concentration camp, lieutenant Malinovski ordered 20 soldiers to beat the engineer Mallichevski. Before our eyes they gave him 250 blows. He had four ribs broken, his right eye taken out, and all his body beat to a mass of wounds.

During this time, in the concentration camp of Stchalkov there

were 10.000 people, of whom 5.000 Ukrainians. Almost all were barefooted and dressed only in their under-clothes. They lived in hollows dug in the ground, ill sheltered by roofs where the rain poured in. Thus it is not surprising that 5000 persons were ill with typhus.

Every day I saw how, under the orders of Malinowski, the Polish soldiers executed punishments. The prisoners stood in a row, those who had trousers being forced to take them off. Then, one at a time, the prisoners approached and lay down in front of the lieutenant. He put one foot on their neck and then thrashed them while two soldiers held revolvers to their temples to prevent them crying out. Every night the sentinels shot several times into the sheds, wounding 5 or 6 people who, thanks to want of medical care, invariably died.

These horrible conditions impressed even the Polish society. A socialist Polish newspaper „Robotnik“ gives the following description of them :

„The life in the camps of Modline and Brest is shocking. The prisoners camp at Brest-Litovsk is an infamy for Poland. The life at Bugszop and in the fortress of Berg is enough to move the most hardhearted of spectators. At Bugszop the Ukrainian prisoners are lodged in the stables and in barracks built by the Germans. In some of these barracks the floors are not even of wood, but of plain flagstones. Do not imagine that there is any straw, they have simply thrown down a layer of thistles. There are no shutters, the embrasures themselves are demolished.

„These conditions of existence and the want of food (the third of a soldier's loaf per day), the thefts and the abuses committed by the military officials (several officers and Non-Commissioned officers now in prison have stolen half a million marks between them) have transformed the prisoner's camp into a camp of death. Out of 6.000 prisoners interned in the camp two months ago from 50 to 100 corpses

were taken away every day. Dysentery was rife and finished off the starved inmates. In a spot near to the hospital for infectious diseases, corpses were allowed to remain unburied nearly three weeks and were devoured by rats. Those who died up to this time were buried in such shallow graves that frequently the bodies were visible on the surface. As a consequence there was a continual extension of dysentery and of typhus and the soldiers whose duties take them near to the concentration camp often carry away the microbes of the malady to their quarters. On seeing these combatants in these camps one could only compare them with the dead. Some of them could not even speak, they do not even get up to eat, why? Because they will never move again until death overtakes them as they are in such a wasted condition.

One of these latter received the visit of his mother who had come from Eastern Galicia, she spoke Polish being of Polish nationality. Her son was lying on the flagstones in the camp open to the four winds. He could neither move nor speak. The eyes were immobile, the teeth stood out, he is not ill, no fever... The mother sat down beside him like one petrified, in despair, unable to do anything to relieve him... Here is a woman who has brought some food for her husband, scarcely had she reached the camp — it was not easy —, than he ate that which she had brought him and died...

When the prisoners go out of the camp and fall into the ranks for their rations, one could imagine that it was a procession of corpses. They are starved and numbed with the cold. They push and shove those who stoop down near the kitchen to pick up the scraps that have been thrown away. They eat berries of all sorts and even grass, separate the horse dung for the partially digested oats which they eat after having grilled the grains.

At night they shudder from the cold, having nothing to cover themselves with but miserable rags. They have several times tried to light fires in the camp but the Polish soldiers

prevented them and dispersed them with the butt of their rifles and put out the fires when the prisoners had succeeded in getting one alight. They can scarcely march and when they complain that they cannot move quicker they are rewarmed with blows from the butt of a rifle. The soldiers strike them with violence on the pretext that they have not much longer to live. They are sometimes so badly treated that they plead to be put out their misery, so starved are they. Several, so emaciated to stand the blows, have died. A sergeant of the Duchy of Posen walks round continually with a stick in his hand, strikes the prisoners on the head and over the eyes, several have lost their sight. Some have drowned themselves in the river Bug. Others have cut their throats. It is horrible!

The socialist newspaper of Lemberg „Vpered“ gives some more recent informations (23 Decembre 1919):

The Ukrainian Red Cross Mission under the presidency of Dr. Tcherniahivski, which visited on the 4 th Dec. 1919 the hovels of Stchalkof, once more confirmed their unhealthy condition. The 289 hovels dug in a marshy soil, are inhabited by 12.300 prisoners of different nations, these hovels are constantly under water, and they sleep on miserable mattresses and have no coverings. All are clothed in filthy rags and are barefooted. In the whole camp of Stchalkov there is not a drop of drinking water.

Publications of the Delegation:

Le parti socialiste-revolutionnaire ukrainien. Programme précédé d'une notice introductive de la delegation.

Le problème agraire en Ukraine et la loi agraire du Centralna Rada (le 18 janvier 1918).

La lutte sociale et politique en Ukraine 1917-1918-1919.

All the publications of the Delegation are to be found:

in Paris — Librairie de l'Humanité, rue Montmartre 142.

in Berlin — Buchhandlung „Freiheit“, Breite Str. 8.

in Prag — Ústřední dělnické knihkupectví, II, Hybernská 7.

For all publications concerning Ukraine apply to Librairie Genevoise A. Eggimann, Geneva, rue du Marché 40.