

VOL 2 • ISSUE 1 • 2010

# HOLODOMOR STUDIES

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# HOLODOMOR STUDIES

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### ADDENDA ET CORRIGENDA

*Holodomor Studies*, vol. 1, No. 1 (Winter-Spring 2009), page 42, footnote 3. Marco Carynnyk's name was inadvertently omitted from the list of editors.

Lubomyr Y. Luciuk, Bohan S. Kordan, Marco Carynnyk, eds., *The Foreign Office and the Famine: British Documents on Ukraine and the Great Famine of 1932-1933* (Kingston, ON: Limestone Press, 1987).

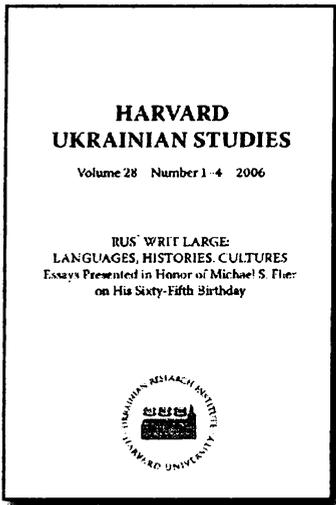


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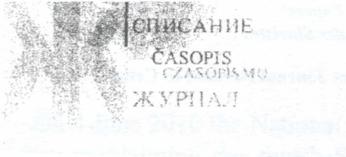
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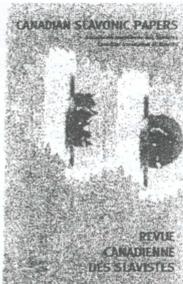
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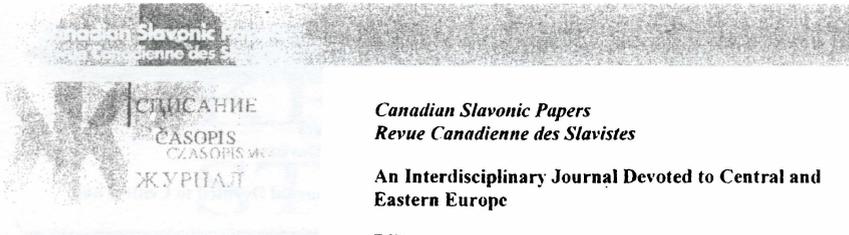
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SPECIAL ISSUE: THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF NIKOLAI GOGOL/MYKOLA HOHOL' (1809–1852)

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## *EDITOR'S FOREWORD*

On 4 June 2010 the National Assembly of the Province of Quebec adopted a law proclaiming the fourth Saturday in November as the "Day of Commemoration of the Ukrainian Famine and Genocide (the Holodomor)." This recognition of the Ukrainian genocide is significant. It comes after Viktor Yanukovich, the new president of Ukraine, in disregard of Ukraine's laws on the Holodomor, declared to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (27 April 2010) that the famine was not a genocide against the Ukrainians but a shared tragedy of the Soviet people. Yanukovich's statement moved PACE to pass a resolution the next day, which recognized the particular suffering of the Ukrainian people, but stopped short of acknowledging it as genocide. The Quebec law recognizes the Ukrainian catastrophe as genocide, while placing it in the context of a widespread destruction by starvation of other national groups in the Soviet Union.

Political and scholarly discussions of the Ukrainian tragedy of the early 1930s traditionally focus on the starvation of the peasants and treat the event as a particular genocide against the Ukrainians or a phase in Stalin's war against the Soviet peasants. However, the Ukrainian famine was part of a wider Ukrainian catastrophe that affected not only the peasants of Ukraine but the whole Ukrainian ethnic group in the USSR. Consequently, it is not enough to examine the relations of the Soviet regime with its peasants, especially if the discussion includes the issue of genocide. A key aspect of the situation was the rapport between the different levels of state authority.

In the first article in the current issue of our journal, Valerii Vasiliev examines the relations between the central power in Moscow and the republican administration in Kharkiv. The author shows how Stalin achieved a stranglehold over Ukraine. His trusted henchmen Molotov and Kaganovich were periodically sent to Ukraine and the North Caucasus to force local administrators to do Stalin's bidding, while Postyshev and Balitsky were dispatched to replace less efficient executors of Stalin's will. Ukrainian cadres, old Party faithfuls Petrovsky, Chubar, and Skrypnyk, resisted Stalin's "revolution from above," especially the exorbitant grain deliveries that were starving the peasantry. Disaffection with Stalin's policies spread among the middle and lower cadres, leading Stalin to quash the "danger of losing Ukraine" by means of purges and rotation of personnel. Well informed about the famine in Ukraine, Stalin blamed the Ukrainian cadres for economic problems and accused them of sabotage and infiltration by Ukrainian nationalists.

Genocide traumatizes the victim group and affects its psyche. Yaroslav Bilinsky examines the role of genocide as a reinforcer of national identity. He analyzes the Armenian massacres of 1915, the Katyn shootings of the Polish prisoners of war in 1940, and the Ukrainian famine of 1932-1933. Because of

dissimilar historical developments, the three nations have assimilated the traumatic events into their national psyche, their collective national memories, and self-identification in three different ways.

Promoting the memory of historical events and cultivating national identity is a function of the state. The Soviet regime feared Ukrainians with a strong national identity and did all it could to destroy the memory of the Great Famine lest it become a decisive component of their identity. Memory of the famine was all but forgotten when Ukrainian independence came and it had to be revived. Since then, opinion polls have been conducted to ascertain what Ukrainians think about the famine and if they recognize it as genocide. Yaroslav Martyniuk's analysis of a recent survey shows that, while most Ukrainians know and accept the historical fact of a massive famine, only about half of them regard it as genocide.

In the summer of 1921 the Moscow acknowledged the Russian famine and solicited the international community to send aid to the starving population. By the end of that year the American Relief Administration and the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee pressured Moscow to recognize the famine in Ukraine and to allow aid to be sent to that republic as well. Western relief workers took hundreds of photographs and made films to document the catastrophe and to raise funds. By contrast, the hidden famine of 1932-1933 left some, but very little, visual evidence. In the 1980s heated controversies developed in political and academic circles over the use of this photographic material of the two famines. We have reproduced 12 photographs from each famine to show the similarities and differences between the visual documentation of the two tragedies.

Our last installment of the Red Cross documents deals with Western reaction to Avel Enukidze's blatant denial of the Soviet famine of 1932-1933 and his mendacious assertion that Johan Ludwig Mowinckel, President of the League of Nations, renounced his statement on the Ukrainian tragedy. The Red Cross had the unpleasant duty to inform all the parties that had asked the ICRC to lead a relief action that no further action was possible. Mowinckel denied the Soviet's charge, but did not go public with it.

Two book reviews close this issue of the journal. The first examines the GPU-NKVD documents on the famine, which are held in the archives of the Security Services of Ukraine. The second examines four monographs that depict the famine period, without focusing on the famine.

In closing, I would like to welcome the members of our new Editorial Board. Your help will be invaluable in assuring that *Holodomor Studies* achieves the academic excellence expected of an academic journal.

## ARTICLES

VALERII VASILIEV

### *THE LEADERSHIP OF THE USSR AND THE UKRAINIAN SSR DURING THE HOLODOMOR OF 1932-1933: A CRISIS IN RELATIONS*

In the last few years, the field of historiography has been riven by debates surrounding certain aspects pertaining to the policies of the Soviet leadership in 1932-1933. In recent times, certain statements have been made, particularly by Russian scholars, to the effect that the communist leaders' policies *vis-à-vis* Ukraine did not differ from the policies adopted toward other regions of the Soviet Union. However, certain well known facts allow historians to underscore the specific nature of the Soviet leaders' actions in Ukraine. In the following article I analyze the relations between the leadership of the USSR and the leadership of the Ukrainian SSR in order to determine the individual features of the political course that was pursued in the largest "national" republic during the immense humanitarian catastrophe known as the Holodomor. Thus, I analyze specific changes that were introduced within the scope of the governmental-administrative functions which were delegated by the center of Soviet power, the Kremlin, to the subcenter<sup>1</sup> of this power based in Kharkiv, the capital of Soviet Ukraine until June 1934.

Scholars generally concur that accelerated industrialization and forced collectivization of agriculture led to a profound socioeconomic crisis in the early 1930s. During this period, the scope of the state grain deliveries in Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus increased markedly, with these regions supplying more than half of all the grain produced in the entire USSR. In 1930 the state grain deliveries in Ukraine reached 7.7 million tons, comprising approximately 30.2 percent of the gross yield of grain. In 1931, when the harvest was worse than in the preceding year, 7 million tons, or 41.3 percent of the gross

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1 The Ukrainian historian, Stanislav Kulchitsky, introduced the concept of "subcenter of power" into Ukrainian historiography in relation to the period of the 1920s and 1930s. Although he never explained his definition, political science offers grounds for thinking that the party-Soviet center of power in Ukraine had certain governing and administrative powers that were delegated to it from the Kremlin – initially, from the party-Soviet center of the RSFSR, and later, the USSR. During the various periods of Soviet rule, these powers changed depending on historical processes and the relations between the leaders of the RKP(B)-VKP(B) and the leaders of Soviet Ukraine.

yield of grain, were harvested.<sup>2</sup> It is thus not surprising that in December 1931 various state bodies began to record cases of starvation, and even death from starvation, in Ukraine.

In late February 1932 Hryhorii Petrovsky, the head of the All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee (VUTsVK URSR) visited several *oblast*'s in Ukraine. During his visit he spoke with the secretaries of newly created *oblast* committees of the Communist Party of Ukraine (KP[B]U), and attended meetings of local party-Soviet workers, during which the sowing campaign was discussed. He later wrote a frank letter to the Ukrainian party chief, Stanislav Kosior, proposing that the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) (TsK VKP[B]) be approached with a request to suspend the state grain deliveries from Ukraine's 1931 harvest, announce a free trade in grain, and provide assistance to the starving populace (the letter did not specify from which state reserves this assistance should be taken).<sup>3</sup>

Although Kosior's reaction to Petrovsky's letter is not known, eyewitnesses report that to the Kremlin leaders he gingerly broached the question of introducing a corrective to the policy of the Ukrainian state grain deliveries, without, however, mentioning anything about the famine that was already raging in the Ukrainian republic. On 15 March 1932 he sent a telegram to the TsK VKP(B), in which he proposed "to announce, in the name of Union organizations, the order of the state grain deliveries from the future harvest, keeping in mind that the larger the harvest achieved by the collective farm and the collective farmer, the larger the stock that will be allocated and dis-

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2. *Kolektyvizatsiia i holod na Ukraini, 1929-1933: zbirnyk dokumentiv i materialiv*, comp. H. M. Mykhailychenko and Ye. P. Shatalina, ed. S. V. Kulchitsky *et al.* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1992), p. 10; N. A. Ivnitsky, "Golod 1932-1933 gg.: kto vinovat?," in *Sudby rossiiskogo krestianstva*, ed. Yu. N. Afanasiev (Moscow: Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi gumanitarnyi universitet, 1996), p. 334. The term "gross yield" is the statistical designation for annual agricultural production from the total sowing acreage according to weight (in poods=16 kg, or tons). This designation was arrived at by measuring productivity during crop maturation or after initial processing (e.g., threshing). It should be noted that only approximate figures may be derived from the methods of assessing gross yields that existed in the 1930s.

3. *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv na Ukraini: ochyma istorykiv, movoiu dokumentiv*, ed. Ruslan Pyrih (Kyiv: Vyd-vo politychnoi lit-ry Ukrainy, 1990), p. 121. Petrovsky knew that Ukraine had state grain reserves, but they were controlled by the State Committee of Reserves of the USSR, headed by the director of the State Planning Commission of the USSR, Valerian Kuibyshev, and his deputy Genrikh Yagoda, the head of the OGPU of the USSR. As of 1 January 1932 the state grain reserves in the USSR, which were concentrated mainly in the Reserve Stock (Neprikosnovennyi fond, or Neffond) and the Mobilizational Stock (Mobilizatsionnyi fond, or Mobfond), totaled nearly 2,033,000 tons. Since one ton of grain could provide a normal grain ration for three people for the duration of one year, the state reserves could have fed approximately 12 or 13 million people until the new harvest in 1932. See R. W. Davies, M. B. Tauger, and S. G. Wheatcroft, "Stalin, Grain Stocks and the Famine of 1932-1933," *Slavic Review* 54, no. 3 (Autumn 1995): 650.

tributed for personal consumption.”<sup>4</sup> At this juncture, however, Stalin and his associates considered inadmissible any changes to the state grain deliveries and the collective farmers’ material interest in boosting their production.

On 16 March, during a meeting at the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B), Stalin read out the telegram from Kosior, whose proposal was rejected. The Ukrainian leaders were urged to focus their attention on the spring sowing and to adopt measures to avert any threats to it.<sup>5</sup>

On 19 March, the Politburo issued its first decision concerning the granting of a seed loan to Soviet Ukraine.<sup>6</sup> All heads of regional party-Soviet structures in the USSR were instructed not to exceed the plans of food distribution, on pain of criminal prosecution and the party’s censure.<sup>7</sup> The decision to provide seed assistance (in the form of an interest-free loan) was handed down over the next few weeks. However, food assistance designated for collective farms began to be issued only after 19 April 1932. The Politburo expected that a considerable part of it was to be allocated from centralized resources located in Ukraine. This decision indicates that there were state food reserves on the territory of the Ukrainian republic, but Stalin and his associates did not want to expend them on the starving. This inhumane and criminal stance went hand-in-hand with efforts to shift the blame for the famine to the Ukrainian leadership. In response to a telegram sent by Vlas Chubar, the head of the Sovnarkom (RNK) of the Ukrainian SSR, in which he reported about the huge problems with the grain deliveries in Ukraine, the Politburo declared: “a) Keeping in mind that the grain delivery problems in Ukraine are, for the most part, the result of the extremely weak receipts of the multure yield, which was supposed to produce 100,000 tons according to the plan for the month of April, the TsK KP(B)U is to be instructed to adopt all measures aimed at the maximum increase of the multure yield, with its immediate transportation to points situated near railway stations; b) as an extreme measure, to release 25,000 tons of grain in April for the needs of Ukraine’s population; c) to instruct the Narkomvneshtorg [People’s Commissariat of Foreign Trade] to disburse from warranty 30,000 tons of grain.”<sup>8</sup>

The final point meant that the Kremlin leaders had granted permission to use the grain stored at Ukrainian ports on the Black Sea to feed the population. It should be noted that Soviet grain exports during the first half of 1932

4. Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (henceforward: RGASPI), fond 17, list 3, file 876, fol. 1.

5. *Ibid.* The text of the telegram is included in the minutes of the Politburo meeting.

6. *Ibid.*, fond 17, list 3, file 877, fol. 10.

7. *Ibid.*, fond 17, list 3, file 877, fol. 39.

8. *Ibid.*, fond 17, list 162, file 12, fols. 108-09. The Politburo’s decision was drafted according to a show of hands on 23 April 1932. Chubar’s telegram may be dated between 19 and 22 April 1932. The texts of the decision and Chubar’s telegram are contained in the so-called “special dossier” of the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B).

totalled 750,000 tons,<sup>9</sup> which could supply nearly 4 million people with a daily ration of grain (1 kg.) during those months. Yet in the period from April to June 1932 the centralized delivery of grain to Ukraine reached barely 100,000 tons a month, even though the 8 million people who were supposed to receive grain from the state's centralized supply system,<sup>10</sup> most of whom, together with most of the peasants, found themselves on the brink of death by starvation. The immense scale of the disaster was becoming apparent.

In late April Chubar traveled to Moscow to reach an agreement with Stalin about increasing supplies to Ukraine.<sup>11</sup> Meanwhile, Kosior once again refused to speak candidly about the scale of the famine in the republic. On 26 April, he wrote to Stalin: "In our country there are individual cases and even individual starving villages; however this is only the result of local bungling and excesses, especially with respect to collective farms. Any talk of 'famine' in Ukraine must be categorically rejected. The considerable assistance that has been given to Ukraine is ensuring the possibility for us to liquidate all such hotspots."<sup>12</sup> Kosior thus admitted to the existence of excesses on the part of local bodies, which, ever since the first wave of collectivization in 1930, had become "traditional" and which had sparked these "hotspots" of famine in the Ukrainian republic. But he "categorically" refused to admit to any large-scale famine. Kosior's dirty political position was determined, in particular, by his unwillingness to attract any criticism from Stalin. The republican leaders knew full well how easily the Kremlin chief could shift the

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9. M. B. Tauger, "Urozhai 1932 goda i golod 1933 goda," in *Sudby Rossiiskogo krestianstva*, p. 313.

10. Centralized supply took place according to so-called lists (1, 2, 3, and 4). For example, list no. 1 envisaged 600 grams of grain per day and a restricted quantity of food products to be issued for the whole month, while list no. 4 envisaged 200 grams of grain. In the Soviet system, food was issued depending on the various social status categories formulated according to lists: party-Soviet workers, employees of the punitive organs, military personnel, workers, employees of Machine Tractor Stations (MTSs), teachers, doctors, and so on. The so-called contingent of such individuals was constantly being expanded, which fact attests to the state's inability to supply the population with food in a centralized manner.

11. On 23 April 1932 the Politburo add:TsK KP[b]U adopted a resolution which noted the following: "5. To send the TsK VKP(B), Com. Stalin the following telegram: 'The plan to supply the Donbas, metallurgy, military installations is being carried out only by means of the disbursement of Neffond stocks because there are no other resources in our country. The disbursement is taking place with great delay and in small quantities. This is creating serious interruptions in the supplying of the Donbas and other industrial centers; the 25,000 tons that were disbursed several days ago meet our needs only for a few days. It is necessary to ensure ahead of time the uninterrupted supplying of workers until the first of May and the first 4-5 days of May. We are requesting the Committee of Reserves to issue instructions on the immediate disbursement of an additional 25,000 tons of rye, wheat.' 6. To dispatch Com. Chubar to Moscow in connection with the question of Ukraine's grain resources for the 2nd quarter." See Central State Archive of Civic Organizations of Ukraine (henceforward: TsDAHO Ukraine), fond 1, list 6, file 236, fols. 8-9.

12. *Holod 1932-1933 rokiiv na Ukraini*, pp. 147-48.

blame for his criminal political course to local functionaries. Kosior's letter clearly indicates the habits that were characteristic of the Kremlin leaders and their underlings in Ukraine: mendacity, the lack of any moral standards, and concerted efforts to satisfy the *vozhd* [chief].

That same day, Stalin forwarded to Kosior a memorandum from the executive of Soiuзспirt, the All-Union Association of the Alcohol Industry, which reported armed attacks on factory granaries by starving people. In his accompanying note Stalin wrote: "Com. Kosior. Read the attached materials without fail. It would appear that in some areas of the Ukrainian SSR the Soviet power no longer exists. Is this really true? Are things that bad in the Ukrainian countryside? Where are the GPU organs, what are they doing? Maybe you could check into this matter and inform the TsK VKP(B) about the measures that have been implemented. Greetings, J. Stalin." Three days later the members of the Ukrainian Politburo discussed Stalin's telegram and formed a commission that included Stanislav Kosior, Stanislav Redens (the head of the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR), and Roman Terekhov (the secretary of the TsK KP[B]U). The commission was instructed to implement measures to prevent such incidents.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, Stalin was aware of the situation in Ukraine, but he sought to control it with the aid of police methods.

In late May 1932 it was learned that the spring sowing in Ukraine was failing because the starving peasants could not work in the fields, and they did not have sufficient quantities of seed. The Politburo of the TsK VKP(B) decided to establish a commission that would be in charge of organizing the sowing. On 26 May the members of the commission chaired by Viacheslav Molotov, the head of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR (SNK USSR), arrived in Kharkiv, where they familiarized themselves with the agricultural situation in Ukraine. During a meeting of the Ukrainian Politburo, which was attended by Viacheslav Molotov, People's Commissar of Agriculture of the USSR Yakov Yakovlev (Epshtein), and People's Commissar of Supplies Anastas Mikoian, a decision was passed to dispatch all leading workers from the Central Committee, *oblasts*, and districts to the Ukrainian countryside to ensure that the spring sowing plan was carried out in full. Collective farmers engaged in the sowing campaign were issued a food loan in the amount of 500,000 poods (=80,000 tons) and 30 train cars of *tiulka* (sardelle), as well as a seed loan in the amount of 1.7 million poods of oats (=272,000 tons).<sup>14</sup>

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13. *Chorni zhnyva: Holod 1932-1933 rr. u Valkivskomu ta Kolomatskomu raionakh Kharkiv-shchyny*, comp. Tamara Polishchuk (Kyiv; Kharkiv; New York; Philadelphia: Vyd-vo M. P. Kots, 1997), p. 72.

14. TsDAHO Ukrainy, fond 1, list 6, file 236, fols. 105-07; RGASPI, fond 17, list 3, file 886, fol. 11.

Meanwhile, Petrovsky and Chubar on 10 June sent separate letters to the Kremlin, informing the Moscow leaders that Ukraine was facing a large-scale famine. In his letter, Chubar noted that the famine had already affected no fewer than 100 *raions* in Ukraine. In his opinion, the causes were the following: the 1931 harvest was smaller than the harvest of 1930; colossal amounts of grain had been lost during the harvesting; weak work discipline on the collective farms; unfeasible plans for the state grain deliveries, during which all grain was being confiscated from the peasants, including their seed reserves and workday advances; and the sale of property belonging to peasant homesteads as punishment for not completing the plans. Chubar noted that state grain delivery brigades, comprised of *raion* activists, urban proletarians, and members of the militia, were rampaging throughout the countryside. In the wake of the violent, and frequently thuggish, actions, of these brigades, who dismissed people from their positions and prosecuted them, and dispersed rural activists, many villages had been left without heads of rural soviets or leading Soviet activists. In many *raions*, the people who had been dispatched from the center to take charge of the state grain deliveries disbanded local *raion* committees and *raion* executive committees. Chubar wrote bluntly that, as of 1 July 1932, Ukraine might be left completely without food and that in certain areas resources which had been supplied by the Soviet leadership had already been exhausted by 29 June.

In his letter to the Kremlin, Petrovsky directed the attention of the All-Union leaders to the intensification of anti-collective farm, anti-Soviet, and “Petliurite” moods among the Ukrainian peasantry (during meetings peasants asked him openly: why was this artificial famine created?). He also requested food and sowing assistance in amounts ranging between 24,000 and 32,000 tons of grain. “The all-Ukrainian *starosta*” (elder) declared bluntly that the TsK KP(B)U was to blame for having agreed without demur to fulfill the state grain delivery plan in the amount of 8,160,000 tons.<sup>15</sup>

Molotov and Kaganovich immediately forwarded both these letters to Stalin. On 15 June, Stalin wrote to Kaganovich, saying that he did not appreciate the content of those letters, particularly the position of Chubar, who was again demanding that Moscow issue additional millions of poods of grain and reduce the state grain delivery plan. “The worst thing about this matter,” Stalin added, “is Kosior’s silence. How to explain this silence? Does he know about Chubar and Petrovsky’s letters?”<sup>16</sup> It is very likely that Kaganovich, who had worked with Kosior in Kyiv during the pre-revolutionary period,

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15. *Komandiry velykoho holodu: Poizdky V. Molotova i L. Kaganovycha v Ukrainu ta na Pivnichnyi Kavkaz: 1932-1933 rr.*, ed. Valerii Vasyliev and Yuri Shapoval (Kyiv: Heneza, 2001), pp. 206-15.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

passed on Stalin's words to him, informing him at the same time that Stalin was very displeased with the Ukrainian leadership.

On 18 June, the date of his next letter to Kaganovich, Stalin referred to the crucial need to hold first secretaries of republican, territorial, and *oblast'* party committees in Ukraine, the Northern Caucasus, and other important agricultural regions of the Soviet Union personally responsible for the state of agriculture and the state grain deliveries.<sup>17</sup> He declared that the main shortcoming of the 1931 state grain delivery campaign was that its plan had been "mechanically" allocated according to districts and collective farms, without considering the situation on each individual collective farm. "As a result of this . . . egregious incongruity has emerged," Stalin wrote, "owing to which a number of fertile *raions* in Ukraine, despite the rather good harvest, have plunged into a state of impoverishment and famine. . . ." Stalin hereby acknowledged the existence of the famine in certain *raions* in Ukraine, but he explained it away by the phrase "mechanical allotment," as well as by the fact that certain first secretaries of *oblast'* party committees (in Ukraine, the Ural region, and partly Nizhegorodsky Krai) had become "enthralled" by the giants of industry and had not focused the necessary attention on agriculture. "The consequences of these mistakes," wrote Stalin, "have now appeared in the sowing issue, particularly in Ukraine; moreover, several tens of thousands of Ukrainian collective farmers are still moving about the entire European part of the USSR, and with their complaints and whining are corrupting collective farms for us."

The next day Stalin wrote a letter to Molotov: "(3) I have already written to Kaganovich about the Ukrainians (Chubar *et al.*), and by now my view is very likely known to you. The rest is the Politburo's affair. 4) Very likely, you and Kaganovich have already received my letter about convening a meeting of secretaries and heads of *oblast'* executive committees for the purposes of *organizing* the state grain deliveries. I think we must hurry with this crucial matter in order to have the possibility to *avert* a repetition of the Ukrainian mistakes in the sphere of the state grain deliveries. This is a very important matter."<sup>18</sup>

On 2 July Stalin wrote to Kaganovich and Molotov: "Pay *the most serious* attention to Ukraine. Chubar's corruptness and opportunistic essence, and Kosior's rotten diplomacy (with regard to the TsK VKP) and criminally frivolous attitude to his job will in the end bring Ukraine to ruin. These comrades are not up to the challenge of managing today's Ukraine." Stalin then

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17. *Ibid.*

18. *Pisma I. V. Stalina V. M. Molotovu: 1925-1936 gg.: sbornik dokumentov* (Moscow: Rossiia molodaia, 1995), pp. 241. The emphases in the letter are Stalin's.

mentioned the possibility of dismissing Chubar and Kosior from their posts.<sup>19</sup> His statements indicate that he had lost confidence in the Ukrainian leadership, especially in Chubar.

Stalin's opinions about the inability of Kosior, Chubar, and the other Ukrainian leaders to govern the republic had a hidden subtext. Political responsibility for the famine that was raging in 100 Ukrainian *raions*, and showing every sign of spreading, was being shifted to the leadership of the TsK KP(B)U, which had not coped with the state grain delivery plans and the supply of food to the republic. From the standpoint of the central power in the Kremlin, the subcenter of power in Kharkiv had lost the ability to carry out its directives and to maintain control over the socioeconomic processes in the republic. Furthermore, Stalin was alarmed by the fact that tens of thousands of Ukrainian peasants had left for other regions of the USSR in search of food in order to save themselves and their families from death by starvation. The Kremlin leader regarded this as a factor that was destabilizing the Soviet collective farm system. Therefore, in Stalin's view, the leaders of the Ukrainian SSR bore responsibility not only for the famine in the republic but also for their political shortcomings (as a result of their actions or, rather, their inactivity), which had caused harm to the USSR.

In this author's opinion, Stalin was deliberately shifting the blame for the catastrophic situation in Ukraine to the Soviet Ukrainian leadership. In his reflections he in no way acknowledged the perniciousness of the collectivization of agriculture and the enormous state grain deliveries that had doomed millions of people to death by starvation. His logic was utterly completely different: force the regional leaders to decisively and effectively implement a new state grain delivery campaign for the 1932 harvest in order to create huge grain reserves for the state. It is no surprise, then, that on 20-21 June 1932 the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B) denied the Ukrainian Politburo's request for additional deliveries of grain to the republic, demanding at the same time that the grain deliveries from the 1932 harvest be secured "at all costs."<sup>20</sup> These criminal decisions left the thirty-million-strong population of Ukraine without food for a period of three-four weeks (since the state grain delivery campaign would begin on July 1, one month was needed for the grain from the new harvest to arrive, be transported, milled, and baked into bread). While peasants could somehow save themselves from starving to death by eating shoots of plants that appeared in May and June 1932, as well as any left over potatoes, beets, and carrots, the urban population was

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19. *Komandyry velykoho holodu: Poizdky V. Molotova i L. Kaganovycha v Ukrainu ta na Pivnichnyi Kavkaz; 1932-1933 rr.* ed. Valerii Vasyliiev and Yuri Shapoval (Kyiv: Heneza, 2001), pp. 20-21; *Stalin i Kaganovich: perepiska 1931-1936 gg.*, comp. O. V. Khlevniuk et al. (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2001), p. 210.

20. *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv na Ukraini*, pp. 186-87, 190.

doomed. It is possible that considerable numbers of urban residents survived as a result of the illegal sale of items to peasants, and of the peasants' assistance to the residents of cities and towns, who were seen begging throughout the countryside.

In order to ensure the completion of the state grain delivery plans, the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B) dispatched Molotov and Kaganovich to the III All-Ukrainian Party Conference, which was convened on 6 July 1932. Before it began, Molotov and Kaganovich attended a meeting of the Ukrainian Politburo, during which the participants outlined resolutions calling for the unconditional completion of the plan to deliver grain in the amount of 356 million poods (5,696,091 tons),<sup>21</sup> as established by the TsK VKP(B). These resolutions were passed, despite the proposals put forward by the members of the Ukrainian Politburo to reduce the state grain delivery plan.<sup>22</sup> At the party conference a few hours later, no one dared contradict Stalin's emissaries in any concerted fashion, despite the Ukrainians' smoldering opposition. The resolution noted that the conference accepted the unconditional implementation of the state grain delivery plan designated for the republic. Thus, Molotov and Kaganovich succeeded in achieving their primary goal: the numerically largest "national republican" Communist Party in the USSR<sup>23</sup> – nearly half a million members – officially confirmed the correctness of the course set by Stalin and his associates with respect to the completion of the new state grain delivery campaign.<sup>24</sup>

Nevertheless, the Soviet leadership fully realized that the famine in Ukraine was gearing up to a catastrophe of immense proportions. During a meeting of the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B) Molotov admitted (most likely after returning from Ukraine): "We are truly facing the specter of famine, and one [that is unfolding] in the rich, grain-producing *raions*." But the Politburo decided "no matter what, to complete the authorized state grain delivery plan."<sup>25</sup> How should one interpret this criminal decision? After all, the Kremlin leaders knew full well that they were condemning millions of people to

21. Simple calculations indicate that this quantity of grain could have fed between 15 and 17 million people for one year.

22. *Stalin i Kaganovich: perepiska*, p. 219.

23. According to the statute of the VKP(B), the leadership of the Communist Party of Ukraine functioned as a regional committee of the Communist Party, just like in certain regions of Russia, where regional party organizations were ten times smaller.

24. *Komandyry velykoho holodu*, pp. 152-54.

25. Ivnitsky, "Golod 1932-1933 gg.," p. 355. The Russian historian, Nikolai Ivnitsky, discovered a document about this in the 1960s, when he was granted permission to study the materials of the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B) on the 1930s. Today these documents are stored in the Archive of the President of the Russian Federation. Since these documents have not been declassified, the above-cited source does not mention them. The reference to Molotov's statement appears in another book, but also without a clear-cut citation. See *Repressivnaia politika soverskoi vlasti v derevne 1928-1933 gg.* (Moscow: In-t rossiiskoi istorii RAN, 2000), p. 296.

death. The logic behind their decision may be explained thus: the refusal of the state grain deliveries would put an end to the export of wheat, the inflow of currency, the purchase of equipment for factories that were under construction, and – in the final analysis – to the “pace of socialist construction.” It would have been necessary to acknowledge the erroneous policy of the “great leap” implemented by Stalin and his associates, which action would have meant only one thing: their utter political discreditation and the end of all their expectations.

Stalin was perfectly aware of, and reckoned with, the degree to which the public and the members of the Communist Party were dissatisfied with his policies (the case of Mikhail Riutin corroborates this).<sup>26</sup> Both he and the Soviet leaders who supported him realized that in refusing to carry out this policy, they might not be able to hold onto power in the party and the country. In other words, in the conditions of the profound socioeconomic crisis that their irresponsible policy had brought about, the possibilities for a change of course or maneuver for Stalin’s group were exceedingly narrow. These people preferred to go to the very end and in doing so, to condemn millions of people to starvation and death. The end goal of their policy was the building of a “commune state” (according to Lenin, which required the creation of artificial, extra-market economic relations and the rebuilding of the social structure of society (according to the Bolshevik-Marxist characteristic of Stalin and his associates). Owing to these ideological factors, the state played a leading role in “social engineering,” a process that was strikingly manifested in the imposition of the collective farm system, the implementation of the state grain procurement policy, and the organizing of mass repressive actions targeting various population groups.

On 24 July 1932 Stalin sent Molotov and Kaganovich a very significant letter, in which he confirmed his readiness “for the unconditional implementation of the state grain delivery plan in the USSR.” He expressed the conviction that “we will have to make an exception for the Ukrainian *raions* that

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26. Mikhail Riutin joined the Bolshevik Party in 1914. In 1930, when he was a candidate member of the TsK VKP(B), he circulated an appeal among party officials, entitled “To All Members of the VKP(B),” in which he accused Stalin of usurping state power. Riutin drafted an ideological platform entitled “Stalin and the Crisis of the Proletarian Dictatorship,” which was disseminated among the members of the party apparatus. In it he claimed that Stalin had betrayed Lenin’s ideals, and insisted that Stalin be removed from the leadership of the Communist Party. Riutin was arrested in 1932 on charges of creating a counterrevolutionary organization called the “Union of Marxist-Leninists,” whose goal was to foment a struggle against the Soviet power. More than thirty people, including former high-ranking Communist Party members Lev Kamenev and Grigorii Zinoviev, were prosecuted extra-judicially in connection with Riutin’s case, which was opened by the Collegium of the OGPU of the USSR on Stalin’s initiative in 1932-1933. In 1937 additional charges were laid against Riutin and he was ultimately sentenced to death. See *Reabilitatsiia: Politicheskie protsessy 30-50-kh godov*, ed. A. N. Yakovlev (Moscow: Izd-vo politicheskoi lit-ry, 1991), pp. 92-104.

have especially suffered. This is necessary not only from the standpoint of fairness but also because of Ukraine's special status, the joint border with Poland, etc." The next day Stalin demonstrated his "fairness" when he proposed to reduce the grain procurement plan by 30-40 million poods.<sup>27</sup>

The grain procurement plan remained unrealistically high. Like earlier, the state grain deliveries continued to spark desperate resistance among the Ukrainian peasants as well as many local party-Soviet officials. In the fields starving people were cutting unripe wheat ears and trying their utmost to conceal harvested grain from the grain procurement brigades. This was the state of affairs when the Law on the Protection of Socialist Property, written in Stalin's own hand, was passed on 7 August 1932. Known popularly as the "Law of Five Ears of Grain," this decree prescribed the death penalty, together with confiscation of all property, for theft of collective farm or cooperative property; in the presence of mitigating circumstances, the sentence was to be reduced to no less than ten years' imprisonment, also with confiscation of all property. Amnesty for such legal cases was prohibited.

It is important to note that the law was being scrupulously drafted in July 1932 on the initiative of Stalin, who introduced corrections and additions to it.<sup>28</sup> After reading the letters from Chubar and Petrovsky, Stalin already knew that the starving peasants were being driven to steal grain from the fields. Therefore, his initiative was not a reaction to this situation but, rather, anticipation of the peasants' actions. For that reason, he proposed that this issue be treated legislatively as a crime: the peasants should starve to death, but on no account should they lay a hand on the grain in the fields.

Concurrently with the escalation of his repressive policies, Stalin sought to introduce stricter control over the activities of the Soviet Ukrainian leadership. On 11 August he sent Kaganovich an important letter, in which he confirmed that nearly fifty *raion* party committees in Ukraine had expressed opposition to the state grain delivery plan. A similar mood was observed in other *raion* committees. The Soviet leader commented sarcastically that this was a "caricature of a parliament" in opposition to the iron discipline of the Bolshevik Party. Blame for this was laid on Kosior, who "was constantly maneuvering between the directives of the TsK VKP(B) and the demands of the *raion* committees." In Stalin's opinion, Chubar had lost control over the Soviet administrative structures, while Stalin's brother-in-law, Stanislav Redens, the head of the Ukrainian GPU, had demonstrated that he was incapable of leading the struggle against the counterrevolution in Ukraine.

Stalin commented: "If we do not start correcting the situation in Ukraine now, we may lose Ukraine. Keep in mind that Piłsudski is not dozing, and his agentura network in Ukraine is much stronger than Redens or Kosior think.

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27. *Stalin i Kaganovich: perepiska*, p. 245.

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 235, 240-41, 245-46, 249, 260.

Also keep in mind that the Ukrainian Communist Party (500,000 members, ha-ha) contains many (yes, many!) rotten elements, conscious and unconscious Petliurites and, lastly, direct agents of Piłsudski.” The Soviet leader declared that “as soon as things get worse” (an unambiguous reference to the escalation of the famine as a result of the unrealistic grain procurements), hostile elements within the country and beyond its borders “will open up a front” against the Communist Party. Further on in his letter Stalin formulated the strategic task of the Soviet leadership with regard to Ukraine: “. . . To set ourselves the goal of transforming Ukraine in the shortest possible time into a real fortress of the USSR, into a truly model republic. Money should not be spared for this. Without these and similar measures (the economic and political strengthening of Ukraine, first and foremost its border *raions*, etc.) I repeat: we may lose Ukraine.”<sup>29</sup>

It is difficult to say how real the prospect was that the Ukrainian peasants would launch a vigorous, wide-scale protest against the central government, in tandem with local leaders. Most likely, the starvation-weakened population was not physically capable of taking part in any sort of actions. Stalin knew perfectly well that in the early 1930s Ukraine’s GPU troops had succeeded in crushing mass – and occasionally armed – peasant protests against collectivization.<sup>30</sup> It was also highly unlikely that Polish troops would invade Ukraine in the event of a peasant uprising. In this author’s view, Stalin’s logic, with its political accusations against the Soviet Ukrainian leadership, above all had a preventative character and was aimed at introducing harsher control over the activities of the top Soviet Ukrainian leaders and forestalling expressions of dissatisfaction on their part.

With good reason Stalin proposed the appointment of Kaganovich as first secretary of the TsK KP(B)U, who would continue to occupy the post of secretary of the TsK VKP(B); Stalin made a similar decision with regard to Vsevolod Balytsky, the deputy head of the All-Union GPU, whom he appointed to head the Ukrainian GPU. Stalin also broached the idea of replacing Chubar, the head of the Sovnarkom of the Ukrainian SSR, with one of the heads of the All-Union economic departments, and appointing Chubar as Molotov’s deputy in the Sovnarkom of the USSR. He was also thinking of transferring Kosior to the post of secretary of the TsK VKP(B).<sup>31</sup>

On 16 August 1932 Kaganovich wrote a letter, in which he expressed support for Stalin’s views, noting the confusion, dissatisfaction, and solidarity among the Soviet Ukrainian party-Soviet workers and leaders with regard

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29. *Ibid.*, pp. 273-74.

30. For detailed discussion, see Valerii Vasyliiev and Linn [Lynn] Viola, *Kollektivizatsiia i krestianskoe soprotivlenie na Ukraini: noiabr 1929-mart 1930 g.g. = Kollectyvizatsiia i selianskyi opir na Ukraini: lystopad 1929-berezen 1930 rr.* (Vinnytsia: Lohos, 1997).

31. *Stalin i Kaganovich: perepiska*, p. 274.

to their negative assessments of the state grain delivery plans. According to Kaganovich, they believed that the resolution passed at the III Party Conference of the Communist Party of Ukraine had been coerced. Kosior had “demonstrated great weaknesses and shortcomings,” “having reduced to the bare bones” the tasks of the leadership of the largest party organization. Stalin and Kaganovich thus shifted the blame for the negative moods among the workers who were responsible for the state grain procurements on various levels of the administrative system to the leaders of the Ukrainian SSR.<sup>32</sup>

Several days later Kaganovich received another letter from Stalin, who repeated his idea that Kosior could only be replaced by Kaganovich, but that it would be impractical to send the latter to Ukraine at this time: “We will weaken the Secretariat of the TsK. . . . As for Chubar, he may be left in place for now, and we will see how he works out.”<sup>33</sup>

In this author’s opinion, Stalin abandoned the idea to dispatch Kaganovich to Ukraine in order to maintain control over the party’s vertical of power in the USSR, which formed the skeleton of all the other power and administrative structures of the communist regime. In the crisis conditions the exceptionally dedicated Kaganovich was needed in the Kremlin, as was Molotov, who headed the Soviet vertical of power. Without a doubt, Stalin grasped the severity of the socioeconomic crisis and the possible scale of the new famine that was approaching Ukraine. However, he saw no new political figures capable of implementing his political course in Ukraine. Therefore, he decided to keep the highest-ranking political leaders of the Ukrainian SSR in their positions, at the same time strengthening the leaders of the lower administrative links.

Stalin’s plan to bolster Ukraine’s leadership with the appointment of people dedicated to his political course was set in motion in September 1932. On September 16 the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B) appointed Ivan Akulov as first secretary of the Donetsk *oblast’* party committee (prior to this appointment he was the first deputy head of the All-Union OGPU), and Sarkis Sarkisov as secretary of this same *oblast’* committee (prior to this appointment he was the head of the All-Union grain procurement association, Zagotzerno). On 1 October Mikhail Khataevich, the energetic first secretary of the party committee of the Central Volga Krai (Territory), where he was in charge of the state grain deliveries, was appointed second secretary of the TsK KP(B)U. A precedent was thus established: the secretary of the Central Committee of Ukraine’s Communist Party – an individual who had been dispatched from the Kremlin – was to be the overseer of the general secretary of the TsK KP(B)U and other Soviet Ukrainian leaders. On 9 and 15 October the following individuals were confirmed as first secretaries of three key

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32. *Ibid.*, p. 283.

33. RGASPI, fond 81, list 3, file 99, fols. 145-51, 170-71.

*oblast'* committees of the KP(B)U: Vasili Stroganov (Dnipropetrovsk); Volodymyr Cherniavsky (Vinnytsia); and Pavlo Markitan (Chernihiv). Other leaders' appointments on the republican and *oblast'* levels also came into effect.<sup>34</sup>

In October the pace of the state grain procurements slowed down significantly. The Ukrainian peasants were refusing to hand over their grain to the state because they realized it would confiscate everything, and they would starve to death. On 22 October, with the goal of accelerating the pace of the state grain deliveries, the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B) passed a resolution to dispatch to Ukraine a group of leaders headed by Molotov, and another group to the Northern Caucasus, headed by Kaganovich.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, Molotov, as the head of the Soviet vertical of power in the USSR, and Kaganovich, as the head of the Communist Party's vertical of power, were tasked with creating state grain reserves out of the procurements in two key regions of the USSR. The activities of these two groups, which were called commissions, attest to the fact that the leadership of the All-Union Communist Party headed by Stalin had switched to the use of mass repressive actions against the population, inasmuch as their activities could not possibly be called grain procurements.

On 29 October 1932 Molotov's commission arrived in Kharkiv. From that point onward, decisions of the republican leadership were handed down through the direct participation or on the instructions of the members of this commission. In Ukraine, prosecution in the courts became the chief method of the state grain procurement. In keeping with a directive issued by the Ukrainian Politburo on 5 November 1932, between 5 and 10 circuit judicial groups were created in each *oblast'*. Their job was to examine cases related to the grain procurements (on the basis of the "Law of Five Ears of Grain") outside the regular schedule, "as a rule, by means of circuit court hearings on the spot with the application of harsh repressions."<sup>36</sup> These repressions included the confiscation of all goods from districts that were not carrying out the state grain delivery plans. The sale of manufactured goods to independent farmers who refused to hand over their grain to the state was suspended. Lists containing the names of these individuals were displayed in shops and trading areas, and fines and payments were levied from these people. "Kulaks," i.e., individuals on whose property grain was found buried in pits, and people who were engaged in "subversive work against the state grain procurements," were arrested and deported. Thousands of urban communists, grouped in brigades numbering between four and five people, were sent into the countryside, where they carried out searches of farmyards and confiscated not just

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34. *Ibid.*, fond 17, list 3, file 900, fol. 34; fond 17, list 2, file 500, fol. 26.

35. *Ibid.*, fond 17, list 3, file 904, fol. 11.

36. *Ibid.*, fond 82, list 2, file 141, fols. 12-16, 18; TsDAHO Ukrainy, fond 1, list 6, file 237, fol. 177.

grain but all foodstuffs. Local communists and village activists assisted them in these searches.

All reserves in kind that had been established on collective farms were re-directed to the grain procurement reserve. Confiscations of grain from collective farmers that had been “pilfered from collective and state farms” were carried out, and fines in kind, equal to a fifteen-month quota of meat deliveries, were applied. Collective farms not carrying out the delivery plans were put on blacklists. The following repressive measures were adopted: the delivery of merchandise was suspended, trade was banned, and “inspections and purges of collective farms with the expulsion of counterrevolutionary elements – organizers of sabotage of the state grain procurements” – were carried out. Party organizations in five *raions* of Odesa and Dnipropetrovsk *oblast*'s were subjected to a show purge, with those who had been purged slated for deportation as “politically dangerous” individuals. The Ukrainian GPU intensified operations to liquidate “kulak and Petliurite counterrevolutionary nests.”

All these measures were sanctioned by the Ukrainian Politburo, with Molotov's participation, on 18 November 1932. As it turns out, the goal of the mass repressions was to ship grain out of Ukraine. The republic was ordered to transport 99,000 tons of grain in excess of the export quota to Moscow, Ivanov, Transcaucasia, Gorky, Leningrad, Belarus, and the Crimea by 8 December 1932. According to plans, all reserves of wheat stored at railway points were to be shipped out by 25 November.<sup>37</sup> This meant that insufficient quantities of reserve grain were left in Ukraine. It is understandable that historians may have differing interpretations of these actions of the Kremlin leaders and their republican subordinates. However, why did such large reserves of grain have to be removed from the territory of the Ukrainian SSR? I believe it would be premature to reach a simple conclusion with regard to this question because, unfortunately, it has still not been determined whether grain was removed on the same scale from other regions of the USSR.

An important component of the Kremlin leaders' repressive policies in Ukraine was an operation launched by the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR on 20 November 1932. By the time it ended in February 1933 thousands of people had been arrested. Between November 1932 and January 1933 more than 390 “anti-Soviet counterrevolutionary-insurgent, chauvinist” organizations and groups were liquidated and 37,797 people were arrested. More than 12,000 cases were initiated, as a result of which 719 people were sentenced to death by shooting, 8,003 were sent to the Gulag, and 2,533 people were deported.<sup>38</sup>

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37. *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv na Ukraïni*, pp. 250-61.

38. *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraïni: Prychyny ta naslidky*, ed. V. A. Smolii et al. (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2003), p. 94.

A similar situation developed in the Northern Caucasus, where Kaganovich's brutal actions were directed against the Kuban, a region populated mostly by ethnic Ukrainians.<sup>39</sup> A total of 51,600 people were deported to the Far North from only four Kuban Cossack villages that had been blacklisted (Poltavska, Medvedivska, Urupska, and Umanska); approximately 10,000 people were deported from other Cossack villages. Roughly 100,000 people were arrested and imprisoned, 26,000 of whom were deported. Nearly 40,000 communists were expelled from the party, and the majority of them were subjected to repressions. Another 30,000 communists who were not struck off the party lists simply abandoned their positions and fled from the region.<sup>40</sup>

The above-cited data prove that between the end of 1932 and the beginning of 1933 Stalin and his associates unleashed a whole range of repressive actions, the political groundwork of which was laid by Stalin himself. At a meeting of the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B) held on 10 December 1932, during which the participants heard speeches on the state grain procurements by members of the TsK KP(B)U, the Northern Caucasus territorial party committee, and the Western *Oblast'* party committee, Stalin subjected the Ukrainian leaders to harsh criticism, which at times descended into rude insults. He not only accused them of being unable to or unwilling to carry out the state grain delivery plans, but of pursuing an erroneous political line, "spinelessness," and lack of determination in the struggle against "saboteurs."<sup>41</sup> Stalin launched a particularly concerted attack against Ukrainian Politburo member Mykola Skrypnyk for his "non-Bolshevik" policy of Ukrainization and links with "nationalistic elements." During the meeting a commission of the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B) was formed to draft a resolution on the state grain deliveries. The commission's ten members included the Ukrainian leaders, Kosior and Stroganov.

On 14 December, the TsK VKP(B) passed the resolution "About the State Grain Deliveries in Ukraine, the Northern Caucasus, and in the Western *Oblast'*."<sup>42</sup> This document blamed local party organizations in Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus for extremely ineffective work and lack of political

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39. See *Komandyry velykoho holodu*, pp. 248-307.

40. Evgenii Oskolkov, "Golod 1932-1933 gg. v zernovykh raionakh Severo-Kavkazskogo kraia," in *Holodomor 1932-1933 rr. v Ukraini: prychny i naslidky. Mizhnarodna. konferentsiia, Kyiv, 9-10 veresnia 1993 r.: Materialy* (Kyiv, 1995), p. 120.

41. "Saboteurs" were individuals – occasionally Communist Party members – who refused to carry out the decisions of the Communist Party leadership, or did so without doggedness, and opposed forcible collectivization, dekulakization, and the confiscation of grain. This definition, which was formulated by the leaders of the VKP(B), allowed the Soviet authorities to label any individual, regardless of his or her social origins (an important element in Soviet communist practice) as a "counterrevolutionary." In my view, the term "saboteur" was used by the Soviet communist leaders to serve as a logical bridge between the concept of "class enemy" and the concept of "enemy of the people," which had a broader meaning.

42. RGASPI, fond 17, list 3, file 910, fol. 3; fond 17, list 3, file 911, fol. 11.

vigilance, which had allowed “counterrevolutionary elements” to penetrate the leadership as well as the managerial personnel of collective farms and subordinate Soviet organs. These elements sought to organize a “counter-revolutionary movement” and “sabotage” of the state grain deliveries and the sowing campaign. The leaders of Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus were ordered to “uproot” them by means of arrests and lengthy sentences in concentration camps, up to and including capital punishment.

The document, signed by Molotov for the SNK of the USSR and Stalin for TsK VKP(B) declared that the fiercest enemies of the party, the working class, and the collective farm peasantry were “saboteurs of the state grain deliveries with a party membership card in their pockets.” With regard to these individuals, prosecution in the courts was envisaged, with sentences of between five and ten years in forced labor camps or death by shooting. All communists who were expelled from the party on charges of engaging in the “sabotage” of the state grain deliveries and the sowing campaign were deported to the Soviet Far North together with kulaks.

These drastic measures were accompanied by accusations that the leaders of Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus were pursuing an erroneous nationality policy. The Kremlin leaders maintained that “mechanical” Ukrainization, which had been implemented without reckoning with the specific features of each *raion*,<sup>43</sup> had allowed bourgeois nationalist elements and Petliurites to create counterrevolutionary centers and organizations. In the Northern Caucasus, the argument went, the “non-Bolshevik Ukrainization” of nearly half of the region’s districts had given legal form to the resistance of kulaks, officers, Cossack re-emigrants, and members of the Kuban Council to measures instituted by the Soviet government.<sup>44</sup> Thus, the highest party-Soviet leader-

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43. “Ukrainization” was part of the Soviet communist regime’s policy of *korenizatsiia* – indigenization, or nativization – introduced in the Union republics of the USSR (except the RSFSR) in 1923. The policy of “Ukrainization” envisaged the Soviet government’s active support for the development of the Ukrainian language and culture, and the training and appointment of local Ukrainian party-Soviet workers to responsible positions in the administrative system. Its end goal was the legitimization of the communist regime in Ukraine. The policy sparked hopes among some Ukrainian intellectuals that cooperation with the Soviet Ukrainian government was feasible. But, starting in the second half of the 1920s, the leaders of the USSR and the Ukrainian SSR were alarmed to note that Ukrainization was leading to the rise of national feelings and an increase in national awareness among Ukrainians. This policy, which was gradually phased out by the end of the 1930s, was accompanied by furious debates among the communist leaders about its pace and forms, and ultimately Ukrainian intellectuals fell victim to wide-scale political repressions.

44. The Kuban Council was the political organization of the Kuban Cossack Host. Founded in April 1917, this organization engaged in a concerted struggle against the Soviet power. On 28 January 1918 the council proclaimed the independent Kuban National Republic in the lands of the former Kuban *oblast’*. The Kuban Council ended its existence in 1920. In December 1926 the USSR population census indicated that 103,000 Ukrainians resided in Krasnodar Krai (84

ship of the USSR preferred to characterize society's resistance to the state grain deliveries as the activity of "counterrevolutionaries" and the anti-Soviet organizations that they had created. This is a classic example of political mendacity, which is characteristic of dictatorial regimes.

Similar opinions were voiced with regard to Ukraine, where it was proposed to expel Petliurite and bourgeois nationalist elements from party and Soviet organizations, and to maintain systematic party control and monitoring of the Ukrainization process. In the Northern Caucasus all office work, newspapers, journals, teaching in schools was switched to Russian as a language that was "more comprehensible to the people of the Kuban," despite the fact that Ukrainians comprised the majority of the population.

It is clear that organized forms of resistance to the Soviet government's policies, which were taking place in late 1932, were isolated incidents. Archival documents from the collections of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU)<sup>45</sup> show that there were no real organizations of "kulaks," former officers, Cossacks, and "Petliurites". This does not mean, however, that the general public did not put up desperate resistance (with the escalation of the famine, active forms of resistance had become passive ones) to the criminal policies of the Stalinist regime. It must be noted that, in formulating these harsh assessments, Stalin and his associates were preparing the groundwork for instituting repressions against everyone who was dissatisfied – a preventative basis for destroying any and all forms of resistance. Furthermore, with these resolutions they were creating their own world, in which they preferred to live, while ignoring the value of the lives of millions of people.

On 15 December the TsK VKP(B) and the SNK of the USSR handed down a resolution condemning the statements of "individual Ukrainian comrades" (in particular, Skrypnyk's articles) on "compulsory Ukrainization" that had been implemented in a number of Soviet *raiony* (districts), in the Far Eastern Krai, Kazakhstan, Central Asia, and the Central Chernozem *oblast'*.<sup>46</sup> The resolution emphasized the following: "Such statements can only play into the hands of those bourgeois nationalist elements which, having been

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percent of the population); 192,000 Ukrainians (72 percent), resided in the Tahanrih (Rus.: Tanagerog) district; and 915,000 Ukrainians (62 percent) lived in the Kuban district.

45. See *Rozsekrechena pamiat: Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini v dokumentakh GPU-NKVD*, comp. Valentyna Borysenko *et al.* (Kyiv: Vydavnychiy dim "Stylos," 2007).

46. Mykola Skrypnyk had taken the liberty of declaring on the pages of various foreign newspapers that the Ukrainian SSR was an independent member of the Soviet Union, and that Ukrainization was supposed to be implemented by means of decisive measures. Those who did not understand this would be treated as "counterrevolutionaries" and "enemies of the Soviet power." On his initiative, Ukrainization spread even to the territory of several regions of Russia, where Ukrainian-language schools, the press, and deliveries of works of Ukrainian literature had been introduced. Skrypnyk published a number of articles, in which he called for the decisive Ukrainization of those regions of Russia that were compactly settled by Ukrainians, and the eventual annexation of these regions to the Ukrainian SSR.

expelled from Ukraine as harmful elements, are penetrating to re-Ukrainized *raions* and carrying out work there with the goal of disintegration.” The party and Soviet organs in these regions of the USSR were ordered to put an immediate stop to Ukrainization.<sup>47</sup>

Why did the Soviet leadership resort to such measures in the sphere of the nationality policy in Ukraine? It is well known that for the leaders of the Communist Party, the national question was subordinated to the class approach. They remembered all too well the complex political and armed struggle against the Ukrainian national movement that they had had to endure in the period from 1917 to 1920. It should be remembered that the policy of Ukrainization, launched in 1923, was designed to expand the social base of the communist regime and to provide it with psychological legitimacy and attractiveness in the social consciousness both inside the republic and outside its borders. At the same time, the Kremlin leaders always emphasized the compulsory Sovietness (devotion to the Communist Party and its leader) of Ukrainian national aspirations. From 1927 Mykola Skrypnyk, the former head of the People’s Secretariat (the first Soviet government in Ukraine), one-time high-ranking Chekist, and old comrade of Lenin’s, was responsible for implementing the nationality policy in the Ukrainian SSR in his capacity as People’s Commissar of Education. The state security organs monitored the manifestations of “Ukrainian separatism,” which they duly reported to the TsK KP(B)U and Tsk VKP(B). The Chekists’ actions were grounded in the party leaders’ demagogic position, according to which “Ukrainian nationalists” want “to sell Ukraine to the Poles.” During the second half of the 1920s, this claim was used to compromise the Ukrainian national movement.<sup>48</sup>

In the escalating socioeconomic and political crisis in Ukraine, in late 1932, Stalin preferred “to explain” officially the resistance to the state grain procurements within the Ukrainian society and the Communist Party of Ukraine as problem of “domestic Ukrainian counterrevolution” operating jointly with Piłsudski’s network of secret agents. On the one hand, this enabled the Soviet authorities to crush resistance totally and complete the state grain delivery plans by instituting wide-scale repressions against all categories of the above-mentioned “class enemies,” i.e., disgruntled people and those who were resisting. On the other hand, the political accusations against the leaders of Ukraine allowed the Kremlin to put an end to any autonomy and independence they may have had. Skrypnyk and the group of leaders in the republic’s administrative structures who were responsible for Ukrainization were exposed as “abettors” of bourgeois nationalist elements.

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47. *Stalin i Kaganovich: perepiska*, p. 480

48. See Volodymyr Prystaiko and Yuri Shapoval, *Mykhailo Hrushevskyy: Sprava “UNTs” i ostanni roky (1931-1934)* (Kyiv: Krytyka, 1999), pp. 79-80.

In this way, the implementation of the nationality policy in Ukraine – the ultimate sphere of relative autonomy in the activities of the Ukrainian sub-center of communist power – passed directly into the hands of the Kremlin. Stalin was liquidating the remnants of Soviet Ukrainian statehood within the USSR.

Stalin's exasperation with the Soviet Ukrainian leadership was clear from the resolution passed by the TsK VKP(B) and the SNK of the USSR on 19 December 1932. Entitled "About the State Grain Deliveries in Ukraine," this document stated that, without a fundamental turning point in Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, and Odesa *oblast's*, Ukraine would not be able to complete the already twice-reduced state grain procurement plan (the two reductions were of a purely symbolic nature and the scope of the grain deliveries were still huge). Ukrainian workers were "obviously ruining" this task "thanks to their flippant attitude to the tasks of the party and the government." Lazar Kaganovich and Pavel Postyshev, the secretary of the TsK VKP(B), were ordered to go to Ukraine, "establish themselves in the crucial *oblast's*" as special plenipotentiaries of the TsK VKP(B) and the SNK of the USSR, and – together with Kosior, Chubar, and Khataevich – to adopt all necessary organizational and administrative measures to complete the state grain delivery plan.<sup>49</sup> The work of the Kaganovich and Postyshev commissions in Ukraine in late December 1932 was characterized by an escalation of mass repressions and the continuing confiscation of grain.

At the joint plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission (TsKK) of the VKP(B) held on 7-12 January 1933, Stalin and Kaganovich provided political justification for the expediency of mass repressions during the state grain procurements, which were proving to be so complicated for the Soviet government. Stalin claimed that agriculture was suffering because of the collective farmers' obsolete private-property mentality. This "holdover" mentality was being exploited by "former people" from the exploiting classes in order to organize mass theft, which "was undermining" the foundations of the socialist order – collective ownership. A powerful dictatorship of the proletariat was crucially needed to "smash the thieving machinations of the remnants of the dying classes." In this connection, Stalin revised several Marxist ideas: he pointed out that the expectation of the destruction of the class society in the USSR was baseless, as was that of the dying-away of the state. According to Stalin's logic, which was completely different from Karl Marx's pronouncements of the mid-nineteenth century, it was necessary to strengthen state power to the maximum so as to "do away" with the "former elements" (representatives of the exploiting classes) quickly and without special sacrifices.

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49. RGASPI, fond 17, list 3, file 912, fol. 54.

Stalin openly declared that the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B) and the SNK of the USSR had overestimated “the Leninist temperament and farsightedness of our local cadres.” Thus, “local cadres” once again turned out to be the guilty parties because they had misunderstood and distorted the “general line.” They were also at fault for not having grasped the crucial need to take over the management of collective farms and to help collective farmers develop the economy on the basis of science and technology. Former White officers, Petliurites, and all enemies of the Soviet power had penetrated collective farms on the sly and begun to “rule the roost” in them by exploiting local communists’ lack of class vigilance.

Emphasizing Stalin’s role in the implementation of a firm course set on crushing all resistance to the state grain deliveries, Kaganovich reiterated his ideas on the struggle against “kulak psychology” in the Northern Caucasus and Ukraine. He condemned local workers for creating collective farm reserves, noting that the first commandment of a communist, and a tool for uniting people devoted to the Soviet government, was the fulfillment of the state grain procurement plan.

During the joint plenum Kosior reported on the huge successes of the first Five-Year Plan in Ukraine, particularly in the sphere of industrialization. This struck a “heavy blow” at the Ukrainian “nationalists” who were claiming that the “Bolsheviks are robbing and devastating immensely rich, grain-producing Ukraine.” Kosior declared that the communists had succeeded in eradicating unemployment and were in the process of resolving a very acute problem: the overpopulation of the Podillia and Volyn regions. Maintaining the correctness of this policy, while concealing the realities of starving Ukraine, Kosior turned shamelessly to bald-faced lies when he declared: “. . . with documents in our hands we can state that with every passing year the condition of the working class and the peasant masses is constantly improving.”

According to Kosior’s official statement, the difficulties connected with the state grain procurements, which the numerous “left and right oppositionists” viewed as a consequence of the party’s flawed policies, were caused exclusively “by shortcomings in the practical work of local leaders.” This obsequious declaration was followed by “repentance” for the fact that the leadership of the KP(B)U had “overlooked” the penetration of hostile elements in the collective farms, the “infestation” of the party ranks, and the intensification of activity of nationalistic, counterrevolutionary organizations. Kosior’s statements were echoed by Chubar, who promised to correct these “mistakes” in 1933.<sup>50</sup>

Out of all the Ukrainian leaders, only Mykola Skrypnyk intended to speak out against Stalin, even though he had already been politically ostracized by

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50. RGASPI, fond 17, list 2, file 514, no. 1, fols. 9, 12-12v., 33-34v, 42-43, 50v-52; no. 2, fols. 3-3v, 4v-9v, 17v-20.

the resolution of 15 December 1932. During the plenum Skrypnyk told his wife Maria that he was planning to make some harsh statements about the nationality policy that Stalin was implementing in Ukraine. But for reasons that have still not been determined, he did not do this.<sup>51</sup>

At the plenum Stalin received unanimous political support. In order to establish control over the lower ranks of the party organs and the local situation, the plenum issued a resolution to create political departments at Machine Tractor Stations (MTSs).

In the days following the plenum, the actions undertaken by the *vozhd* and his associates demonstrated their utter inhumanity and amorality. From late 1932 and through the early months of 1933 peasants fled en masse to Ukrainian cities and left Ukraine for other districts of the USSR in search of food. The Soviet leaders, who were aware of this from reports submitted by the OGPU of the USSR, resolved to block the movement of starving peasants. On 22 January 1933 party and Soviet organizations and the OGPU organs received a directive signed by Stalin and Molotov, which noted: “. . . immediately arrest the ‘peasants’ of Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus who have made their way north, and after removing the counterrevolutionary elements, return the rest to their places of residence.” In keeping with this directive, railway stations throughout the republic completely suspended the sale of train tickets. Transport departments of the GPU were responsible for turning back fleeing peasants. At about the same time, in February, it was decided to cleanse the railway transport of “anti-Soviet element” by the deporting to the Far North all those who had been exposed as “kulak, Petliurite, and other anti-Soviet counterrevolutionaries.”<sup>52</sup>

As a result of these operations, the OGPU of the USSR reported that as of 22 April 1933, 258,401 people had been arrested; 230,633 were sent back to their places of residence; 8,743 were tried and convicted; 6,196 were sent to filtration camps; 2,823 were deported to Siberia; 725 were sent to forced labor camps in Kazakhstan; and 9,282 were released. A total of 37,924 people were arrested in Ukraine, and of them 34,433 were sent back to their places of residence; 300 were prosecuted; 579 people were deported to Kazakhstan; and 2,612 were released.<sup>53</sup>

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51. In response to her husband's remark, Skrypnyk's wife said that if he delivered his speech criticizing Stalin, then she would commit suicide by throwing herself out of the window. Possibly this threat stopped Skrypnyk from speaking out. See *Sovetskoe rukovodstvo perepiska 1928-1941 gg.* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1999), p. 244.

52. *Tragediia sovetskoi derevni: kollektivizatsiia i raskulachivanie 1927-1939: dokumenty i materialy v 5 tomakh*, vol. 3, *Konets 1930-1933*, ed. V. Danilov, R. Manning, L. Viola et al. (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2001), pp. 634-35.

53. *Famine in the USSR, 1929-1934: New Documentary Evidence*, Historical Essay: Viktor Kondrashin, DVD, 2009, p. 83.

By late January 1933 it had become clear that, once again, Ukraine was not carrying out the state grain delivery plan. The escalation of the famine and the new development in the disastrous socioeconomic crisis exacerbated Stalin's dissatisfaction with the Ukrainian leaders. On 24 January the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B) issued a resolution entitled "On the Strengthening of the Party Organizations of the TsK KP(B)U," which noted: "The TsK VKP(B) considers it an undeniable fact that the party organizations of Ukraine have not coped with the task of organizing the state grain deliveries and the completion of the state grain delivery plan, which they were assigned by the party, despite a three-time reduction of an already reduced plan. The TsK VKP(B) believes that the main *oblast's*, which decide the fate of Ukraine's agriculture, and which must be strengthened first and foremost, are Odesa, Dnipropetrovsk, and Kharkiv." The party appointed Evgenii Veger, first secretary of the Crimea *oblast'* committee of the VKP(B), as first secretary of the Odesa *oblast'* party committee. At the same time, Mikhail Khataevich was appointed first secretary of the Dnipropetrovsk *oblast'* party committee and Pavel Postyshev of the Kharkiv *oblast'* (also appointed as second secretary of the TsK KP(B)U while retaining his post as secretary of the TsK VKP[B]).<sup>54</sup>

Stalin thus took personal control over the situation in Ukraine. As subsequent events revealed, Postyshev not only assumed control over all the actions of the Ukrainian leadership but also those of Kosior, the first secretary of the TsK KP(B)U and member of the All-Union Politburo. During the first half of 1933, on Postyshev's request, more than a hundred responsible party-Soviet workers were dispatched to Ukraine from various regions of the USSR. With their help, he carried out a number of important personnel shuffles in the administrative structures of the Ukrainian SSR. A substantial number of the dismissed functionaries, including many who had come from western Ukraine, were subjected to repressions.

At the TsK KP(B)U plenum held in June 1933, Postyshev accused these individuals of having imposed the "nationalistic, chauvinistic, bourgeois culture of the Dontsovs, Yefremovs, and Hrushevskys." The task of Ukrainization had ended up in their hands and, maintained Postyshev, they were concealing their "spying, subversive" activities under the slogan of *soborna Ukraina* (united Ukraine), and behind the "broad back" of one of the oldest members of the All-Union Politburo – Skrypnyk.<sup>55</sup>

Skrypnyk was subjected to increasingly provocative and brutal criticism after 23 February 1933, the date of his final meeting with Stalin, which lasted

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54. RGASPI, fond 17, list 3, file 914, fol. 13.

55. TsDAHO Ukrainy, fond 1, list 1, file 413, fols. 42-43.

for forty minutes.<sup>56</sup> We do not know what their conversation was about. However, after the meeting Postyshev applied maximum efforts to link Skrypnyk's name with the erroneous nationality policy that the Ukrainian leadership had been implementing with a certain degree of independence. The political baiting of Skrypnyk led directly to his suicide.

In order to overcome the dissatisfaction and resistance of local party-Soviet workers, Stalin initiated a purge of the KP(B)U. By 15 October 1933, 120,000 Ukrainian communists had been subjected to this process, and of them 27,500 (23 percent) were purged as "class-hostile elements." During the first ten months of 1933 the TsK KP(B)U appointed 233 new people to *oblast'* committees, and 1,340 people were appointed to work on the *raion* level. A total of 278 new *raion* committee secretaries (70 percent) were named.

In early 1933 political departments were established at MTSs in the Ukrainian SSR. These departments represented a new type of controlling administrative structure parallel to *raion* party committees. Postyshev personally confirmed the appointments of the heads of these departments, most of whom were military political workers. A new position of deputy heads of the MTS political departments was created and filled by GPU officials. The main task of these political departments and the state security organs of the Ukrainian SSR was to carry out a "purge of class-hostile elements." The scale of repressive actions undertaken by them in 1933 was immense. Postyshev personally initiated and controlled the "political vetting" of the executive personnel of various administrative structures in Ukraine. The greatest "achievements" were noted on the lower rungs of various administrative bodies. At the November plenum of the TsK KP(B)U Postyshev declared that approximately 40,000 workers had been purged from local Soviet institutions. By the time the XII Congress of the KP(B)U was held on 18-23 January 1934, 60 percent of the heads of *raion* executive committees and 60 percent of the heads of rural soviets had been replaced in the Ukrainian SSR.<sup>57</sup>

Therefore, the policies pursued by the Communist Party leadership in the late 1920s and early 1930s brought on the Holodomor of 1932-1933, one of the greatest humanitarian disasters of the twentieth century, whose direct loss in Ukraine was from 3.5 million to 4.5 million people. To these mortality statistics should be added the number of Ukrainians who starved to death in the RSFSR, particularly in the Kuban region. Of course, the problems of demographic statistics aside, efforts should be made to find scientific ways of establishing reliable figures for the Ukrainian population losses in Russian regions.

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56. See *Istoricheskii arkhiv*, no. 6 (1994); nos. 2-6 (1995); nos. 2-6 (1996); no. 1 (1997); no. 4 (1998).

57. TsDAHO Ukrainy, fond 1, list 1, file 421, fol. 165; fond 1, list 1, file 436, fol. 474.

It would not be amiss here to note that analyses of documents created by the highest organs of government and administration of the Soviet Union and the Ukrainian SSR prove without a doubt that Stalin and his associates exploited the famine, which was provoked by their collectivization and dekulakization policies, in order to further their political goals. First of all, the set of measures relating to the confiscation of grain and food, which the Communist Party leadership implemented in the Ukrainian countryside, was aimed at breaking Ukrainian society's resistance to the Soviet leaders' political course. If the logic behind these measures is studied objectively, then it becomes clear that during the Holodomor Stalin and his supporters carried out mass repressive actions that targeted Ukrainians in the Ukrainian SSR and the USSR.

Second, scholars in various countries claim that after Lenin's death Stalin, in keeping with his personal views, was building the Soviet system of government and administration.<sup>58</sup> The characteristic feature of this system was the growing role of the *vozhd* (leader), who designated the priorities of the political course between late 1929 and early 1930. The anti-democratic Soviet government, which at this time was evolving into a tyranny (if not despotism) allowed the "vozhd" to shift the blame for his mistakes in policy implementation to his associates or officials on the lower administrative rungs, especially the leadership of the Ukrainian SSR. If one reconstructs Stalin's logic even schematically, it becomes instantly clear that he sought to "divest" himself of responsibility for the political course that was being implemented in Ukraine by accusing Ukrainian officials of political errors and ineptitude in managing the republic. This led logically to the decision to replace the leaders of Soviet Ukrainian and to introduce a clearer structure of controls over the administration of Ukraine. This meant that during the profound socioeconomic crisis that was caused by the policies of collectivization and dekulakization Stalin provoked a crisis in relations between the center of power in the Kremlin and the subcenter of power in Kharkiv, with the goal of introducing changes into the system of governance in the USSR.

The sense of any kind of political crisis resides in a conflict between people's motives and interests and the structures in which they take part. Let us assume that Stalin deliberately concentrated the levers of control over the Ukrainian SSR in his own hands by prevailing over the subcenter of power. In the context of Stalin's logic, several features of his political actions must

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58. See O. V. [Oleg Vitalievich] Khlevniuk, *Politburo: mekhanizmy politicheskoi vlasti v 1930-e gody* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1996), and other editions of this book: O. Khlevniouk, *Le Cercle du Kremlin: Staline et le Bureau politique dans les années 1930: les jeux du pouvoir* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1996); Oleg W. Chlewnjuk, *Das Politburo: Mechanismen der politischen Macht in der Sowjetunion der dreissiger Jahre* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1998). See also Paul R. Gregory, *The Political Economy of Stalinism: Evidence from the Soviet Secret Archives* (Cambridge, U.K.; New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2004).

be underscored. In Ukraine, the men who were closest to Stalin carried out the repressive actions against the population: Molotov, Kaganovich, and Postyshev, all of whom headed state grain procurement commissions. This does not mean that the administrative structures of the Ukrainian SSR, beginning with the republican level and ending with rural party centers and rural soviets, did not take part in these repressions. But for the purposes of my topic, the direct participation in the repressions by the political leaders of the USSR is especially important: they not only issued orders, but also participated, in one form or another, in the destruction of the people.

In addition, Postyshev's appointment as second secretary of the TsK KP(B)U and his subsequent actions pertaining to his control over the conduct of the Soviet Ukrainian leadership, particularly Kosior's, who was a member of the All-Union Politburo, was an innovation in the Soviet administrative system. The second secretary of the republican Communist Party became personally responsible before Stalin for the situation in the republic. This is convincing proof that Stalin took control the governance of Ukraine into his own hands. Additional evidence of this is provided by the accusations by Stalin and the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B) that Mykola Skrypnyk was implementing an erroneous nationality policy. After Kaganovich left Ukraine in 1928, Stalin gave none other than Skrypnyk the right to interpret and carry out the nationality policy in Ukraine. However, by the end of 1932 Stalin took the nationality policy in the Ukrainian SSR under his personal control. No wonder Postyshev sent to Stalin for editing all the Ukrainian party plenums' resolutions on the nationality policy.<sup>59</sup>

Stalin was fully aware of the scope of the repressions targeting the Ukrainian intelligentsia and Ukrainian government officials. Political vetting and repressive "cleansing" engulfed all levels of the republic's administrative structures. They attained a particularly broad sweep on collective farms, state farms, and MTSs. According to our calculations, more than half a million people were repressed, and hundreds of thousands of people were labeled as "class-hostile elements."<sup>60</sup> The Ukrainian historian, Yuri Shapoval, has justly noted that in 1932-1933 Ukraine was transformed into a testing ground for Stalinist repressions.<sup>61</sup>

A genuine cadre revolution took place in the Soviet Ukrainian republic. Communists dispatched from various cities in the USSR and from the Red

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59. Drafts of the resolutions of the plenums of the TsK KP(B)U bearing Stalin's corrections are stored in the Stalin Collection at RGASPI. See fond 558 – Stalin (Dzhugashvili) Yosif Visarionovich (1878-1953).

60. For detailed discussions, see *Komandyry velykoho holodu*, pp. 70-73.

61. See Yuri Shapoval, Volodymyr Prystaiko, and Vadym Zolotariov, *ChK-GPU-NKVD v Ukraini: osoby, fakty, dokumenty* (Kyiv: Abrys, 1997), pp. 254-67; Yuri Shapoval, *Ukraina XX stolittia: osoby ta podii v konteksti vazhkoï istorii* (Kyiv: Heneza, 2001), pp. 19-53.

Army filled leading positions in the administrative structures of the Ukrainian SSR and established control over the local situation.

The above-cited features of the Communist Party's leadership in Ukraine on the institutional level reflected the process of destruction of the ruling authority of the party's subcenter in the Ukrainian SSR, as well as the transformation of Ukraine into a Union republic whose leadership had extremely restricted administrative functions. An even greater concentration of power was achieved by the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B) and in the center of this ruling clique – by Stalin, who went from being a dictator to a despotic tyrant. One can expect that further research into the 1932-1933 famine in the various regions of the Russian Federation will bring out the specific features of the policies of Soviet leaders in Ukraine and in other territories of the huge Soviet state. In closing, I must note that both in Ukraine and the Kuban region the famine, which claimed millions of victims, was accompanied in late 1932 and early 1933 by the arrests of tens of thousands of people; the incarceration of thousands of people in forced labor camps; the executions of more than 700 individuals; the political purges of government structures; and a witch-hunt against Ukrainian nationalism and Ukrainian intellectuals.

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YAROSLAV BILINSKY

*GENOCIDE AS A REINFORCER OF  
NATIONAL IDENTITY: REFLECTIONS  
ON THE “ARMENIAN MASSACRES” OF  
1915; “KATYN,” 1940; AND HOLODOMOR  
 (“FAMINE-GENOCIDE”) IN UKRAINE, 1932-1933\**

“Depend upon it, Sir, when a man knows he is to be hanged  
in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully.”  
Samuel Johnson, *Letter to Boswell*, 19 September 1777<sup>1</sup>

The main empirical proposition of my article is that memory of genocide can reinforce the feeling of national identity, or to follow the motto, can help concentrate our minds wonderfully; but that it is not a substitute for a strong sense of identity. In the case of the Armenians, they have profited handsomely from their sense of having been victims. The massacres at Katyn, and elsewhere, quickly augmented the Polish revulsion against Soviet Russians in a country with a very strong sense of identity. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, when the Russians began asking questions about themselves, the Polish governments even turned the tables against Russia, and made first Mikhail S. Gorbachev and then Boris N. Yeltsin formally express regret for “Katyn.”

It is the Ukrainians who should have gained most from their memory of Stalin’s pro-Russian genocidal policies in the 1930s. Had not their first popularly elected President Leonid M. Kravchuk declared genocide to be his own rationale for obtaining independence in 1991? But under his successor, President Leonid D. Kuchma (1994-2004), relatively minimal attention was paid to *Holodomor* by the Ukrainian government in general and Kuchma personally. Kuchma’s successor, President Viktor A. Yushchenko (2004-2010), was different in this respect. He commemorated the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Famine-Genocide at an appropriate level and was openly attacked for that by

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\* Under a slightly different title, “Genocide as a Reinforcer of National Identity: Reflections on the ‘Armenian Massacres’ of 1915; ‘Katyn,’ 1940; and ‘The Terror-Famine’ in Ukraine, 1932-1933,” the first version of this was presented at the Warsaw Special Convention of the ASN (Association for the Study of Nationalities), 18-21 July 2004.

1. *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966), p. 273, no. 22.

Vladimir V. Putin's formal successor, but de facto subordinate, President of Russia Dmitry A. Medvedev. Yushchenko also had to redo some of Kuchma's legislation. Under Kuchma, rather than acting as a spur to a normal sense of national identity in Ukraine, the memory of the Stalinist genocide showed that the genocide itself may have been relatively complete, resulting in a less than normal, weak sense of national identity, which was only imperfectly disguised as the multi-vector approach in foreign policy. I am going to argue that Yushchenko did advance national identity through the celebration of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Holodomor* somewhat.

In more theoretical terms, the three cases – the Armenian massacre, “Katyń,” and *Holodomor* – are important because they demonstrate the proposition that genocide can be effective by eliminating only parts of a given nation. Finally, I am going to comment why “terror-famine” may not have been the most felicitous translation of *Holodomor*.

The far-sighted Polish-Jewish lawyer Raphael Lemkin (1900-1959) wrote in 1944:

New conceptions require new terms. By “genocide” we mean the destruction of a nation or of an ethnic group. . . . Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of the essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. The objectives of such a plan would be disintegration of the political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups. *Genocide is directed against the national group as an entity; and the actions involved are directed against individuals, not in their individual capacity, but as members of the national group.*<sup>2</sup> (Emphasis added.)

In this article it is appropriate to quote Lemkin's original definition of genocide, because he not only thought that the Armenians and the Jews had been subject to genocidal policies in the twentieth century, but he was also

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2. Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government, Proposals for Redress* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Division of International Law, 1944), p. 79.

known to have applied his concept to the Ukrainian terror-famine of 1932-1933.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Lemkin is also the spiritual father of the UN “Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide,” or Genocide Convention, in short, that was adopted by Resolution 260 (III) A of the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1948, and entered into force 12 January 1951, after it was ratified by twenty states.<sup>4</sup> Since the Genocide Convention has been the product of political compromises, I am going to use both the original concept of Lemkin of 1944 and the modified concept in the Convention of 1948, whenever appropriate. The hesitant policy of the United States *vis à vis* the Genocide Convention is beyond the scope of my article.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, to simplify our task a little bit, without doing injustice to Lemkin, one can restate the essence of the classical (1944) definition in the words of Henry R. Huttenbach: “Genocide is the destruction of a specific group within a given national or even international community. . . . Genocide is any act that puts the very existence of the group in jeopardy.”<sup>6</sup>

Furthermore, Lemkin’s second most important insight next to his definition of genocide, which I have already put into italics, is that “*generally speaking*, genocide does not mean the immediate destruction of a nation. . . .” It is not so easy to shoot thousands of people. The Turks massacred the Armenians under cover of World War I. In World War II, the Germans finally achieved a psychological and technological breakthrough by using ruse (the unsuspecting victims were being selected for “labor” and had to take a shower, or be “sanitized,” in gas chambers). Also during World War II, the Soviet Russians shot the Poles in a well-planned, secretive operation lasting several months. As to the Ukrainians, in Lemkin’s own words: “Ukraine is highly susceptible to *racial murder by select parts* and so the Communist tac-

3. On that last point see Robert Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986), p. 272. Above all, see Raphael [Raphaël] Lemkin, “Soviet Genocide in Ukraine,” *Holodomor Studies* [henceforth: *H.S.*], 1, no. 1 (Winter-Spring 2009): 3-8, together with Roman Serbyn’s introduction, *ibid.*, pp. 1-2. Most appropriately, the entire issue was dedicated to Lemkin’s memory.

4. For the full text of the Convention, see Robert Gellately and Ben Kiernan, eds., *The Specter of Genocide: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2003), pp. 381-84. For a list of parties to the Convention, see <http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/treaty1gen.htm>. See also complete text of the Convention in Appendix A, Lawrence J. LeBlanc, *The United States and the Genocide Convention* (Durham, NC: Duke Univ. Press, 1991), pp. 245-49. The “Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide” can also be easily accessed by Google, the search terms being “genocide convention 1948.”

5. LeBlanc, *The United States and the Genocide Convention*, passim, and especially Appendices B, C and D, pp. 251, 253-56.

6. Henry R. Huttenbach, “Locating the Holocaust on the genocide spectrum: towards a methodology of definition and categorization,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 3, no. 3 (1988): 295, 297.

tics there have not followed the pattern taken by the German attacks against the Jews. *The nation is too populous to be exterminated completely with any efficiency.* However, its leadership, religious, intellectual, *its select and determining parts*, are quite small and therefore easily eliminated, and so it is upon these groups particularly that the full force of the Soviet axe has fallen, with its familiar tools of mass murder, deportation and forced labor, exile and starvation.” [Emphasis added.]<sup>7</sup> Critics of the UN Genocide Convention have attacked it for mentioning the partial destruction of a national group.<sup>8</sup> As Lemkin had foreseen, that provision makes practical sense.

### The genocide of Armenians, 1915

In the Soviet Union, the feeling of national identity among the Armenians has been very high, despite their being scattered throughout the country and throughout the world. Professor Ronald Gregor Suny has taught me that it was two traits which distinguish modern Armenians: first, their longing to see Mount Ararat at least once in their lifetime; and, second, their passionate conviction that the “Armenian massacres” of 1915 were genocide. At the same time, it would appear from an article by an Armenian-born historian affiliated with the Institute of Turkish Studies in Washington, D.C., that a statement which has been widely attributed to Adolf Hitler speaking at Obersalzberg 23 August 1939 (“Who, after all, speaks to-day of the annihilation of the Armenians?”) may have been added by a member of an anti-Hitler circle identified with Colonel General Ludwig von Beck. The context also does not link the purported Hitler quote to the planned Holocaust of the Jews, but to the killing of “men, women and children of Polish derivation and language” in order to create more living space (*Lebensraum*) for the Germans.<sup>9</sup> The Armenian-born historian of the Institute of Turkish Studies does prove that the alleged Hitler statement was deliberately not included in the Nuremberg Trial of Major War Criminals. Nevertheless, I would submit that the statement is striking – and plausible – enough to have caught the ear of a political

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7. Lemkin, “Soviet Genocide in Ukraine,” *H.S.*, 1, no. 1: 4.

8. The key Second Article of the Convention mentions “in part” twice. “Article II. In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or *in part*, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or *in part*; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group. [Emphasis added.] Accessed on February 6, 2010, via Google (see note 4, above).

9. Heath W. Lowry, “The US Congress and Adolf Hitler on the Armenians: Historian of Armenian descent says frequently used Hitler quote is nothing but a forgery. . . .,” *Political Communication and Persuasion* [Crane, Russak & Company, Inc], 3, no. 2 (1985). Accessed by University of Delaware Reference Librarian June 24, 2004, at 8:45 a.m. [http://www.tetedeturc.com/Armenien/Phrase-de-Hitler\\_Etude-de-Lowry.htm](http://www.tetedeturc.com/Armenien/Phrase-de-Hitler_Etude-de-Lowry.htm), on pp. 6 and 11 out of 16.

opponent, as contrasted with a military keeper of records. The Italian saying “Se non e vero, e molto ben trovato” (If it is not true, it is a happy invention), which Giordano Bruno first used in 1585, may also apply in this particular case.<sup>10</sup>

As late as 2000, the Turkish government has denied that its predecessor in Istanbul had engaged in genocide. Wrote *The New York Times*: “In 2000, for example, Ankara derailed an American congressional resolution calling the 1915 killings ‘genocide’ by threatening to cut access to military bases in the country. ‘We accept that tragic events occurred at that time involving all the subjects of the Ottoman Empire,’ said Tulay Tanc, minister counselor at the Turkish Embassy in Washington, ‘but it is the firm Turkish belief that there was no genocide but self-defense of the Ottoman Empire’.”<sup>11</sup> The argument implicitly made by the Turkish government in 2000 and also in the Armenian-born historian’s article of 1985<sup>12</sup> is that modern Turkey is not the successor state to the Ottoman Empire and should, therefore, not be blamed for the “massacres,” which were not unprovoked. This argument cannot be accepted.

As a minimum, we can assume that between 800,000 and one million Armenians were killed in 1915. Robert Gellately and Ben Kiernan, who use that minimum figure, also point out: “Unknown numbers of others converted to Islam or in other ways survived but were lost to Armenian culture.”<sup>13</sup> Thus the round figure of 1.5 million victims, which has been used by Armenian spokesmen, would appear to be reasonable.<sup>14</sup> There are, however, three new elements in the approach to the Armenian genocide question. First, there has been a conversion of some Turkish sociologists and historians to the Armenian position. Second, “the wall of silence” has also been breached at the influential *New York Times*. Third, in 2008 the Internet has been effectively used by Turks to apologize for “the great catastrophe” and to affirm that they “shared the pain of their Armenian brothers and sisters.”

It appears that “a handful” of Turkish-born scholars, such as Taner Akcam, of the University of Minnesota; Fikret Adanir, a historian who has lived in Germany for many years; and Fatma Muge Gocek, who teaches sociology

10. *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1979), p. 10, no. 3.

11. Belinda Cooper, “Turks Breach War of Silence on Armenians,” *New York Times*, 6 March 2004, pp. A15+17, on p. A15. This is a well-researched article running in the *Times*’s “Arts and Ideas” section, on Saturdays.

12. Lowry, “The US Congress and Adolf Hitler on the Armenians,” off the Internet [see note 9, above], p. 7 of 16.

13. Gellately and Kiernan, “The Study of Mass Murder and Genocide,” *The Specter of Genocide*, p. 5, referring to many historians. See also Hay Winter, “Under Cover of War: The Armenian Genocide in the Context of Total War,” *The Specter of Genocide*, pp. 189-213.

14. Cooper, “Turks Breach Wall of Silence,” *New York Times*, 6 March 2004, p. A17.

at the University of Michigan, have accepted the position that the Turkish Ottoman government had practiced genocide.<sup>15</sup> Primarily, they have done this as a matter of research scholars' conscience. At the same time, Akcam had been a student leader of the leftist opposition to the Turkish governments of the 1970s. Furthermore, Akcam and Adanir, who had first emigrated to Germany, had been influenced by the soul searching among some German historians. All three – Akcam, Adanir and Gocek – had debated the issue with Armenian-American scholars.

Last, but not the least, in terms of making their message politically effective, the Armenians were able to convince the publisher and editors of *The New York Times*, notably the new Executive Editor Bill Keller, to use for “massacres” the term “genocide.” It would appear that the latter word had been banned at the newspaper as late as February 2004.<sup>16</sup>

A promising, coordinated approach by Armenian writers and Turkish intellectuals was launched in December 2008. In September 2008, Turkish President Abdullah Gul, who probably had heard of U.S. President Richard M. Nixon's “ping-pong diplomacy” with the Chinese People's Republic, had attended a soccer match in Yerevan. That led to great improvement in relations between the two countries. 9 December 2008, “a group of 30 Armenian intellectuals have written an open letter to . . . [President Gul], urging him to recognize the genocide. Referring to the almost century-old enmity between their two nations, the signatories say the historic memory of both nations is ‘deep and disturbing’.”<sup>17</sup>

15 December 2008, “some 200 Turkish academics, writers, and artists have issued over the Internet an apology for the massacre of ethnic Armenians in 1915, and they are inviting the Turkish public to join them in signing the petition.”<sup>18</sup> According to AP, some 2,500 people signed the petition on that day. Admittedly, the petition did not use the word “genocide.”

It referred to the “great catastrophe” and said that the authors of the petition shared “the pain” of their “Armenian brothers and sisters, and apologize to them.” There was a difference of opinion as to whether the petitioners lacked moral courage in avoiding the term genocide. I do think they did. On the other hand, in 2007 an Armenian journalist, Hrant Dink, who did use the

15. *Ibid.*, pp. A15+A17.

16. For details see Gary Bass, “Word Problem,” *The New Yorker*, 3 May 2004, in “The Talk of the Town: Department of Style,” as posted 26 April 2004 <[wysiwyg://4http://www.newyorker.com/printable/?talk/040503ta\\_talk\\_bass](http://www.newyorker.com/printable/?talk/040503ta_talk_bass)>. According to Bass, Keller changed the *Times*'s policy on the Armenian genocide “earlier this month” [sic]. This may not be quite accurate in view of the major Cooper article, published 6 March 2004.

17. Breffni O'Rourke, “Turkish, Armenian Intellectuals Seek New Ways To Bring Genocide Issue Into Open,” 16 December 2008, *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* <http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1360333.html>, accessed 12/18/2008 6:14 PM

18. *Ibid.*

“g”-word, was assassinated in Istanbul by a teenage Turkish nationalist. The Turkish intellectuals’ petition of apology may be a good way to proceed to the mutual recognition of the Armenian genocide on its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2015.

### **The killings at Katyn and elsewhere, 1940-1946: War crimes or genocide?**

How many Poles were killed by Soviet executioners during World War II and in the immediate post-war years (in 1944-1946)? Where did the murders take place, and for what reasons? The precise total for the early killings – 21,827 – has been provided by KGB Chief Aleksandr N. Shelepin in a handwritten secret report to Nikita S. Khrushchev.<sup>19</sup> Shelepin also gave the sub-total for Poles executed in the prisons of “western Ukraine” and “western Belarus” as 7,305.<sup>20</sup> The balance of the victims had been drawn from three POW camps: Kozielsk (4,421 buried at Katyn), Starobelsk (3,820 buried near Kharkiv), and Ostashkovo (6,311 buried near Tver’).<sup>21</sup> In addition, Soviet authorities deported from the “eastern territories” about 1.2 million Polish citizens between 1939 and 1941 – the death toll among them was very high.<sup>22</sup>

Since the killings included as many as 14,522 POWs, one might have assumed that it was an ordinary war crime. In fact, thanks to Russian President Yeltsin, who on 14 October 1992 turned over to Polish President Lech Walesa the key document, a decision of Stalin’s Politburo of 5 March 1940, we know that far from being a crime incidental to the conduct of the war, the mass killings were very carefully planned and carried out in utmost secrecy. We also know that Khrushchev overruled Shelepin’s recommendation to have the documents destroyed, and that the well-known Communist reformer Gorbachev, whom Yeltsin detested, had a chance to give them to Walesa in 1990, but did not. Lavrentiy P. Beria, who in 1940 was Stalin’s People’s Commissar for Internal Affairs, had his police keep very detailed dossiers on whom he considered “hardened and uncompromising enemies of Soviet authority.” Whether held in three POW camps (a total of 14,736) or in civilian prisons (a sub-total of 10,685 Poles, rounded up to 11,000, out of a total of 18,632 detained people), they were to be secretly judged by a three-person

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19. The best source for this in English is Louisa Vinton, “The Katyn Documents: Politics and History, *RFE/RL [Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty] Research Report*, 2, no. 4, 22 Jan. 1993, pp. 20, 21 + 24.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

21. I owe the sub-totals to a Website maintained by David Paterson Mirams, of P.O. Box 17-141, Karori, Wellington, New Zealand, “Katyn Forest Massacres: Polish deaths at Soviet hands,” <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Troy/1791/hole.html>, accessed by me 24 June 2004, at 10:10 a.m. Vinton’s POW sub-totals do not add up to Shelepin’s grand total.

22. Vladimir Abarimov, *The Murderers of Katyn* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1993), p. 327. Foreword and Chronology by Iwo Cyprian Pogonowski.

tribunal [*trojka*], consisting of Beria's deputies Merkulov, Kabulov and of the head of the first special department of the USSR NKVD Mashtakov. Furthermore, "the examination of the cases is to be carried out without summoning those detained and without bringing charges."<sup>23</sup> All of this fits better Lemkin's concept of genocide than the notion of ordinary war crimes. (Admittedly, this raises the question why Stalin did not pursue genocide in Poland in the late 1940s and early 1950s.)

Benjamin B. Fisher, who is on the History Staff of CIA's Center for the Study of Intelligence, has also drawn our attention to the less well publicized killings of Polish officers in 1944-1946. He wrote: ". . . In 1998, a Russian-Polish research team issued a series of previously classified secret police reports with the title *Eyes Only for J. V. Stalin: NKVD Reports from Poland, 1944-1946*. The reports detailed a second wave of terror unleashed during the post-war occupation, showing that the crimes committed during 1939-1941 were not an aberration but part of a single imperial design. Soon thereafter, a group of Polish members of parliament spent ten days in Russia, *trying unsuccessfully to obtain an official acknowledgment that the Soviet Government had engaged in genocide*. In the meantime, more graves filled with Polish corpses were found near Tavda and Tomsk, east of the Urals."<sup>24</sup> [Emphasis added.] As expected, neither Yeltsin nor Gorbachev formally admitted that Stalin had practiced genocide against the Poles, even though Polish statesmen and deputies of Parliament kept pressing them. The first Russian researcher to write on Katyn, Vladimir Abarimov, who published his book in Russian in January 1991, followed Gorbachev's lead. He held that the "Katyn affair should be qualified as murder under aggravating circumstances . . . [and] beyond all doubt, . . . a war crime."<sup>25</sup> But apparently under the impact of Yeltsin's transfer of the key Politburo document, a second Russian historian, Natalya S. Lebedeva, called Katyn a "crime against humanity."<sup>26</sup>

Lebedeva appears as a significant, nay, crucial, contributor to a major joint Polish-Russian archival publication on "Katyn."<sup>27</sup> For deciding to keep the

23. The document is fully and well translated in Vinton, "Katyn Documents," p. 22. An alternative translation is on the "Katyn Forest Massacre: Polish deaths at Stalin's hands" Website.

24. Benjamin B. Fisher, "The Katyn Controversy: Stalin's Killing Field," [http://www.cia.gov/csi/studies/winter\\_99-00/art.6.html](http://www.cia.gov/csi/studies/winter_99-00/art.6.html), accessed on 21 July 2003; 2:51 p.m. by Thomas C. Melvin, Associate Librarian, Reference Department, University of Delaware Library, p. 8 out of 12.

25. Vladimir Abarimov, *The Murderers of Katyn* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1993), p. 327. Foreword and Chronology by Iwo Cyprian Pogonowski.

26. Natalya S. Lebedeva, *Katyn: prestuplenie protiv chelovechestva* [Katyn: A Crime Against Humanity] (Moscow: Izdatel'skaia gruppa Progress: Kul'tura, 1994). I found two references to that book, but was unable to read it.

27. Naczelna Dyrekcja Archiwow Panstwowych w Warszawie [Main Administration of State Archives in Warsaw]; Panstwowa Sluzba Archiwalna Rosji w Moskwie; Instytut Historii Powszechnej RAN; Instytut Słowianoznawstwa i Balkanistyki RAN; Instytut Historii Wo-

documents on Katyn and other transgressions, Khrushchev was almost killed by his successor, the “closet Stalinist” Leonid I. Brezhnev, of which later. Lebedeva, or Lebediewa, in Polish transliteration, together with the Polish historian Wojciech Materski, were jointly responsible for the historical introduction and footnotes of *Katyn’: dokumenty zbrodni . . .* [Katyn: Documents of a Crime].<sup>28</sup> On page 45 of their introduction they almost, but not explicitly, call the murders genocide: “The documents that are being presented to the reader show that the crimes toward the Polish officers and policemen were *part of a plan to destroy the Polish state (czescia planu zniszczenia panstwa polskiego)*, which had been prepared in advance and implemented at the highest state and Party level.” [Emphasis in italics added; Polish original of emphasized text in bold italics.] Most interestingly, in footnote 27, on page 19, Materski and Lebediewa [Lebedeva] do refer to “elements constituting genocide inflicted onto the Polish people” (*byly to elementy skladowe ludobojstwa stosowanego wobec narodu polskiego*). But the main historical reference in that footnote is to the so-called “Action AB,” or executions of Polish leadership, carried out by the Nazis in occupied Poland, followed by a second important point that both Stalin and Hitler coordinated the genocidal policy in time. That footnote also includes a reference to the Russian edition of the Nuremberg Trial Proceedings, in which the German atrocities toward the Poles were highlighted. Both Materski and Lebedeva are correct that Hitler tried to kill all the Poles that mattered. After all, Lemkin developed his concept of genocide in a book on German occupation policy. But Stalin did also commit genocide towards the Polish *people*, the difference in emphasis on page 45 notwithstanding. Whatever my quibbles about the introduction, the book is absolutely first-rate in presenting in Russian facsimile, with copious scholarly notes, and in Polish translation the major documents, for in-

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jskowej MO FR; Centralne Archiwum Federalnej Sluzby Bezpieczenstwa FR [State Service of Archives of Russia in Moscow; Institute of General or World History, Russian Academy of Sciences; Institute of Slavic and Balkan Studies, RAS; Institute of Military History, Russian Federation Ministry of Defense; Central Archives of the Federal Security Service, Russian Federation]. *Katyn: Dokumenty zbrodni* [Katyn: Documents of a Crime]. Polski Komitet Redakcyjny: przewodniczacy: Aleksander Gięsztor . . . [Polish Editorial Committee: Chairman: Aleksander Gięsztor . . .]; Rosyjski Komitet Redakcyjny: przewodniczacy: Rudolf G. Pichoja . . . [Russian Editorial Committee: Chairman: Rudolf G. Pichoja, or Pikhioia]. *Katyn: Dokumenty zbrodni*; Tom 1: *Jency nie wypowiedzianej wojny, sierpien 1939-marzec 1940* [Katyn: Documents of a Crime; volume 1, Prisoners of a non-declared war, September 1939-March 1940]. Redakcja naukowa [Scholarly editors]; [on Polish side] Wojciech Materski; [on Russian side] Wadim P. Gusaczenko or Vadim P. Gusachenko [listed first, in alphabetical order]. . . , Natalia S. Lebediewa or Natalya S. Lebedeva [listed 4th, but not 4th in order of importance]. Warszawa [Warsaw]: Wydawnictwo “Trio” [Trio Publishing House], 1995; obtained by Inter-Library Loan from the University of Kansas. Henceforth to be cited as *Katyn: Dokumenty zbrodni*; tom 1.

28. *Katyn: Dokumenty zbrodni*; tom 1, p. 55.

stance, No. 216, of 5 March 1940, on L. Beria's ". . . Note to J. Stalin with the proposition to murder Polish POWs."<sup>29</sup>

Khrushchev has not been given enough credit for preserving all those documents, against advice by then KGB chief Shelepin. Conventional wisdom has it that his ouster on 13-14 October 1964 was bloodless. Not so. 19 October 1964, a Soviet Ilyushin-18 crashed on the way to Belgrade. The plane carried a high ranking official military Soviet delegation to help celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Yugoslavia's liberation. On that ill-fated plane was Marshal Sergei S. Biryuzov, since 1963 Chief of General Staff, and a well-known supporter of Khrushchev.<sup>30</sup> On that plane there also happened to be Nikolai R. Mironov, Chief of the Central Committee Department of Administrative Organs. Mironov, too, had been close to Khrushchev, and formally a supervisor of former KGB chief Shelepin and then, in 1964, KGB chief Vladimir I. Semichastny. It was Semichastny who technically engineered Khrushchev's loss of power.<sup>31</sup> I had researched Khrushchev's ouster and recall distinctly that none other than wily Dr. Konrad Adenauer, West Germany's first Chancellor (1949-1963), found that plane crash highly suspicious. Dr. Adenauer remarked that the weather had been clear. In an interview, Semichastny told William Taubman that in June 1964, "Brezhnev briefly considered having [Khrushchev] arrested as he returned from Scandinavia."<sup>32</sup> More was involved: Brezhnev and Co. wanted to kill him for splitting the Party and last, but not the least, for ordering the preservation of the Katyn documents. Moderation prevailed for Khrushchev himself. But not for Biryuzov and Mironov, who were "plane-crashed" within six days of the humiliating removal of the Party's only First Secretary. It is more than symbolic that Brezhnev resumed using Stalin's title Secretary General.

Finally, as Janusz K. Zawodny brought out in his early, but still excellent 1962 study, that the mass killings of 1940-1941 were genocide can be inferred from a rather unusual source, which is Stalin's son, Jacob Dzugashvili. Before his eventual execution by the Germans, when Stalin refused to buy him out, Dzugashvili, Jr. in the spring of 1942 and 1943 was kept in a regular German POW camp near Lübeck. Wrote Zawodny:

Polish First Lieutenant Lewszecki, who spoke fluent Russian, became rather well acquainted with Dzugashvili. When, in 1943, the news of the discovery of the Katyn Forest graves was announced, Lewszecki went to Stalin's son to inquire about this affair. Dzugashvili's comments were

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29. *Ibid.*, pp. 469-75.

30. Google, accessed 22 January 2010, search terms Biryuzov Sergei marshal death.

31. William Taubman, *Khrushchev: The Man and His Era* (New York & London; W. W. Norton, 2003), pp. 10-13.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 615 and 787, note 162.

typical: “What is all that noise about 10,000 or 15,000 Poles being killed? During the collectivization of Ukraine about three million [*sic*] people perished! Why be concerned about the Polish officers. . . . Those were intelligentsia, the most dangerous element to us, and they had to be eliminated.” He evidently believed they were incorrigible, could not be “converted,” and therefore had to be liquidated. He reassured Lewszecki that they were exterminated “with a humanitarian method [*sic*] unlike the brutal tactics of the Germans.”<sup>33</sup>

As I see it, if you eliminate almost one half of the Polish officer corps at Katyn, Kharkiv and Tver’, and kill, in addition, over seven thousand carefully selected civilians in the prisons, and, furthermore, deport 1.2 million to Siberia, this does amount to genocide.

### **Commemoration of the 1932-1933 famine-genocide in Ukraine today: Will Holodomor be recognized as famine-genocide?**

That the Ukrainian famine was indeed genocide I have argued in an article published in 1999.<sup>34</sup> Leaving aside the review of Western literature, which is inappropriate here, my argument was based on two propositions: Stalin’s Ukrainophobia and political usage in independent Ukraine. A key assumption was also that while in the early and mid-1920s Stalin was merely the most skilful among Lenin’s heirs, beginning with about 1929 the Russified Georgian was assuming the role of a totalitarian dictator. As early as 4 April 1918 Stalin had sent a telegram to the Ukrainian communist leader Volodymyr Zatsky: “You have been playing long enough those [childish] games of a government and a republic. Enough is enough, stop it!” It also stands to reason that Stalin hated Lenin’s associate Mykola Skrypnyk, who in 1923, in alliance with autonomy-minded Georgian Communists, defeated Stalin’s plan to reconstitute and expand the Soviet Russian Federation as a direct replica of the Russian Empire. Backed by Lenin’s authority, the so-called Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was set up. Significantly, Skrypnyk committed suicide at the height of Stalin’s attack on Ukraine, in July 1933. In 1925, Stalin had also publicly said: “The peasantry constitutes the main army of the national movement.”

As to political usage, Kravchuk, the first popularly elected Ukrainian president, said in his first foreign interview, in 1992, that Stalin had committed *Völkermord*, the German word for genocide, against the Ukrainian peo-

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33. J[anusz] K. Zawodny, *Death in the Forest: The Story of the Katyn Forest Massacre* (Notre Dame, IN: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1962), pp. 156-57.

34. Bilinsky, “Was the Ukrainian famine of 1932-1933 genocide?,” *Journal of Genocide Research*, 1, no. 2 (1999): 147-56; reprinted in Lubomyr Luciuk, ed., *Not Worthy: Walter Durrty’s Pulitzer Prize and The New York Times* (Kingston, Ont.: Kashtan Press, 2004), pp. 27-41. Published for the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Association.

ple, killing as many as five million in the famine and two more million during the purges. Implicitly at least, Kravchuk presented the Stalinist genocide as the most powerful rationale for Ukrainian independence.

Finally in re-reading Lemkin's classical definition of genocide of 1944, I was struck by his references to the disintegration of culture, language and national feelings. Could not, therefore, the Tsarist policy against the use of Ukrainian in the Russian Empire (Minister of the Interior Petr Valuev's secret instructions of July 1863, with their arrogant conclusion that a Ukrainian language "never existed, does not exist and shall never exist"; supplemented by the even stricter Ems Ukaz of 18 May 1876, which was signed by Tsar Alexander II) be considered as the true beginning of a long-range policy of genocide? A counterargument, however, might be that it was the Poles whom the Russians feared most in the nineteenth century and that the Valuev secret instructions and the *ukaz* by Alexander II were an overreaction to the Polish uprising of 1863-1864.

Be it as it may, whether you put the beginning of the genocide in 1863, or in 1932, another, more recently discovered letter of Stalin would indicate that, for all practical purposes, Stalin had declared war not only on the Ukrainian peasants, but on all the Soviet Ukrainian political institutions, from the Communist Party of Ukraine to the Soviet Ukrainian state administration, not sparing even the Ukrainian branch of the political police (GPU). I am referring of, course, to Stalin's letter to Lazar Kaganovich, dated 11 August 1932. Roman Serbyn has wisely published its full original Russian text, with a good English idiomatic translation on the opposite page in *Holodomor Studies*, volume 1, issue 2.<sup>35</sup>

Reading carefully in Russian and English the two paragraphs beginning with point 3: "The *most important* right now is Ukraine. Things in Ukraine have hit rock bottom. ... ." And ending with "The worst aspect is that the Ukrainian leadership does *not* see these dangers"; and then continuing through the very revealing "P.S. I have already spoken with Menzhinsky about Balitsky and Redens. He agrees and welcomes this move in every possible way" – I have been struck by how ill-tempered and, in part, inchoate this letter was to Stalin's faithful lieutenant, troubleshooter and eventual brother-in-law. If anything, it is a prime example of Stalin's Ukrainophobia. [Emphasis in the original] Furthermore, while the 11 August 1932 letter was a "declaration of war on Ukraine," better, conclusive evidence of genocide is

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35. No. 6: 11 avgusta 1932 g. Stalin-Kaganovichu: *osuzhdaet proniknovenie kontrrevoliutsionnykh elementov v KP(b)U i otkaz Ukraine [sic]vypolnial plan khlebzagotovok; preduprezhdaet ob opasnosti poteriat' Ukrainu i zaiavliaet' ob neobkhodimosti peremen rukovodstva* [No. 6: 11 August 1932: "Stalin in a letter to Kaganovich criticizes the CP(b) U for infiltration by counterrevolutionary elements and insubordination to Moscow's orders on grain procurement; he warns of the danger of 'losing Ukraine' and discusses necessary changes in the leadership of the CP(b) U," *H.S.*, 1, no. 2 (Summer-Autumn 2009): 68-73.

to be found in the detailed “marching orders” of 14 December 1932. Document No. 8 is “Party and government resolution on grain procurement in Ukraine, North Caucasus and Western Oblast and limitations to Ukrainization in Ukraine and North Caucasus.”<sup>36</sup> It was signed by Viacheslav Molotov (Skriabin), as Chairman of the All-Union Council of People’s Commissars and Joseph Stalin, as Secretary of the All-Union Party Central Committee. Ominously, the only firm organizational detail in the 11 August letter lies in its Postscript, the All-Union OGPU Chief Menzhinsky obsequiously agreeing to the firing of Ukraine’s OGPU head Redens and his replacement by with Vsevolod Balitsky. Balitsky took over from Redens already in November 1932.<sup>37</sup>

The second paragraph in the 11 August letter mentions the Polish President Josef Pilsudski twice. See especially “Keep in mind that Pilsudski is not dozing off, and his agents in Ukraine are many times stronger than Redens or Kosior thinks.” This is really a red herring. From a very authoritative and comprehensive article by Robert Kusnierz we know that while Polish intelligence in Ukraine worked well, their “information about the famine did not have any influence on [the] Polish-Soviet relationship.” Prior to genocide, the Holocaust, and the work of Lemkin – this is my gloss – “[f]amine was regarded ‘by the civilized world’ as an ‘interior problem’ of the Soviet Union and nobody wanted to interfere in it.”<sup>38</sup> Above all, “. . . in July 1932 Poland had signed a Non-Aggression Pact with the Soviet Union. . . .”<sup>39</sup> January 24, 1934, the Polish Embassy in Moscow even rebuked the Polish Consulate in Kyiv for exaggerating the impact of the famine.<sup>40</sup>

In the preceding paragraph of the 11 August 1932 letter, Stalin is furious about the open criticism of the harsh procurement plan, especially in the Kyiv and Dnipropetrovsk oblasts, where about fifty Party district committees had called the plan “*unrealistic*.” He sharply denounces Kosior, the head of the Communist Party of Ukraine. “Instead of *leading* the districts, Kosior kept maneuvering between the directives of the CC of the A[ll] U[nion] C[ommunist] P[arty] and the demands of the *raion* and now he has maneuvered himself into a corner.”<sup>41</sup> But Stalin’s response to that is, at bottom, so inchoate as to be impractical. Kosior is to be removed from Ukraine forth-

36. No. 8: 14 dekabria 1932 g. Postanovlenie TsK VKP(b) I SNK SSR o khlebozagotovkakh v Ukraine, na Severnom Kavkaze i v Zapadnoi oblast [sic], i ogranicheniakh ukrainizatsii v Ukraine i na Severnom Kavkaze, *ibid.*, pp. 80-87.

37. Roman Serbyn, “A Selection of Soviet Documents on the Ukrainian Holodomor,” *ibid.*, p. 52.

38. Robert Kusnierz, “The Question of the Holodomor in Ukraine in 1932-1933 in the Polish Diplomatic and Intelligence Reports,” *H.S.*, 1, no. 1 (Winter-Spring 2009): 78.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

41. No. 6: 11 avgusta 1932 g. Stalin-Kaganovichu . . . [see note 35, above], p. 71.

with and Kaganovich is to take his post in Kharkiv, while keeping his old job as All-Union Party Secretary in Moscow. Capable Kaganovich had been Party Secretary in Ukraine from 1925-1928, but even he could not be in two cities at the same time.

Stalin's letter to Kaganovich of 11 August is best explained by his Ukrainophobia. I beg to differ on this with Hennadii Yefimenko, when he wrote about that letter: "Stalin was not *a priori* a Ukrainophobe, but he was an unparalleled master of preventive repressions. In 1932 the greatest threat to the Kremlin came from the Ukrainian peasants, intelligentsia, and national communists, i.e., the majority of the Ukrainian nation. Stalin feared that mass dissatisfaction with the government's socioeconomic actions could lead to their united opposition to the Bolshevik center. For that reason, the entire Ukrainian nation was subjected to preventive repressions in 1932-1933."<sup>42</sup> That Stalin hated Ukrainians was attested in a matter of fact way by an ethnic Russian, Academician Andrei D. Sakharov in 1968.<sup>43</sup> Above all, Stalin never allowed an ethnic Ukrainian to head the Communist Party in Ukraine. It took Khrushchev in 1953 to break that strict taboo after Stalin's death, in 1953. In August 1932, Stalin may have been afraid of Ukrainians' resistance to the draconian laws on the theft of *kolkhoz* property<sup>44</sup>; but to me the extreme ill temper and inchoate plans to deal with Kosior show a massive dose of Ukrainophobia.

What about "political usage" of genocide under President Kuchma? On the surface, Kuchma, who in 1999 successfully ran for re-election as a defender of Ukrainian statehood and economic reformer, did a great deal to commemorate genocide. Already in 1998, the tradition had been established to officially commemorate the Holodomor every fourth Sunday in November. November 28, 2002, Ukrainian Parliament passed a resolution to hold hearings on the genocide, which was done 12-13 February 2003.<sup>45</sup> 15 May 2003, Parliament passed a resolution that it, the *Verkhovna Rada*, "recognizes the Famine of 1932-1933 as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian nation, based on the hellish plans of the Stalinist regime."<sup>46</sup> In Kuchma's excused

42. Hennadii Yefimenko, "The Soviet Nationalities Policy Change of 1933, or why 'Ukrainian Nationalism' Became the Main Threat to Stalin in Ukraine," *H.S.*, 1, no. 1 (Winter-Spring 2009): 32.

43. Andrei D. Sakharov, *Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom* (New York: Norton, 1968), p. 54.

44. Serbyn, "A Selection of Soviet Documents on the Ukrainian Holodomor," *H.S.*, 1, no. 2 (Summer-Autumn 2009): 50.

45. Taras Kuzio, "Ukraine Begins to Deal Seriously with Soviet Past," *RFE/RL Poland Belarus and Ukraine Report*, 5, no. 7, 25 Febr. 2003, by e-mail pbureports@list.rferl.org, accessed 26 Feb. 2003.

46. Roman Woronowycz, Kyiv Press Bureau, "Verkhovna Rada declares Famine of 1932-1933 act of genocide," *Ukrainian Weekly* [henceforth: *Ukr. Weekly*] (Parsippany, NJ), LXXI

absence (he had just undergone emergency major surgery), on 22 November 2003, the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Famine, Ukrainian Government leaders – then Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich, Verkhovna Rada Chairman or Parliament Speaker Volodymyr Lytvyn, and Kyiv Mayor Oleksander Omelchenko – drove up in their limousines and in silence placed wreaths at the small, but already existing monument on Mykhailivsky Square. In the afternoon, there was a government sponsored “requiem concert attended by hundreds of school-age children,” but no government officials, with the exception of the concert’s formal sponsor, the Minister of Culture Yury Bohutsky and some of his subordinates.<sup>47</sup>

Viewed more critically, however, it would appear that the official political actions in Ukraine were definitely “under-organized,” at least by previous Soviet standards. Neither Kuchma nor Yanukovich wanted to spend their “political capital” on the Holodomor issue. For instance, the crucial February 2003 Parliamentary hearings on genocide were not given “great attention” by the mass media in Ukraine,<sup>48</sup> which, to a certain degree, are controlled by government. Kuchma also does not appear to have required that his supporters go to the sessions on 14 and 15 May 2003 and strongly back the admittedly controversial Parliamentary resolution on genocide. Vice Prime Minister Dmytro Tabachnyk, a historian and close Kuchma associate, presided over “a nearly vacant parliamentary session hall” on the eve of the vote of 15 May, reassuring the deputies, almost in Soviet style “that at all echelons of the state leadership of Ukraine there is full recognition that the Famine was a planned attempt to extinguish a portion of the Ukrainian nation by starvation. He called on a Verkhovna Rada-led effort to have the United Nations recognize the Great Famine as genocide, on par with the Holocaust committed against the Jewish nation.”<sup>49</sup> Eventually, the resolution on genocide was passed on a second try, by a bare majority of 226 votes, with 183 deputies abstaining, and none voting against. But it is also very significant that the passage of the Parliamentary resolution on genocide was underreported in the Ukrainian press, as had been the Parliamentary hearings of February 2003.

While Kuchma’s absence from the festivities could not be avoided, one anonymous critic has blamed Yanukovich for under-organizing the celebrations in 2003. Yanukovich headed the government committee, which had

[71], no. 22, 1 June 2003 or <http://www.ukrweekly.com/Archive/2003/220301.shtml>, accessed 6 July 2004.

47. Woronowycz, “Kyiv remembers 1932-1933 Famine-Genocide,” *Ukr. Weekly*, vol. LXXI, no. 48, 30 Nov. 2003 <http://www.ukrweekly.com/Archive/2003/480301.shtml>

48. V. L. Smoliy, “Peredmova” [Foreword], *Ukrains'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal* [henceforth: *Ukr. ist. zhurnal*, Ukrainian Historical Journal], no. 5 (Sept.-Oct. 2003): 4. Smoliy is the editor-in-chief of the journal; the entire issue was dedicated to the famine-genocide.

49. Woronowycz, “Verkhovna Rada declares Famine of 1932-1933 act of genocide,” *Ukr. Weekly*, 1 June 2003, see note 46, above.

been formed ten months before. But the committee met only once in 2003, on 19 November, i.e., three days before the ceremonies.<sup>50</sup>

By default, a moving part-religious, part-political memorial celebration was organized by Patriarch Filaret, of the Kyiv Orthodox Church, and by Yushchenko's Our Ukraine bloc, both of whom were in political opposition to Kuchma and the pro-presidential majority in Parliament. The turnout in Kyiv was also rather small, between 2,000-2,500 participants.<sup>51</sup> (For comparison, a 50-block memorial march in New York City 15 November 2003 had drawn over 2,000 people, and St. Patrick's Cathedral, with its 2,400 seats, was completely filled.)<sup>52</sup>

Ukrainians, both in and out of government, have also tried to legitimize their conception of genocide by first appealing to individual Russian scholars, and then to foreign governments and international organizations, the UN in particular. But unlike the Armenians and the Poles, they failed to enlist scholars from the country which had committed genocide. There are no Russian equivalents to Professors Akcam, Adanir and Gocek. There is no counterpart to Lebedeva, who has yielded on the issue of Katyn. Not only this, but Russian scholars I. Ye. Zelenin, M. O. Ivnikskii, V. V. Kondrashin, and Ye. M. Oskolkov stressed the "unwarranted accentuation of a certain exceptionalism for Ukraine," emphasis added, which to me appears to fly in the face of historical evidence. Furthermore, all four lodged an official protest against any expressions of repentance by Russia for having allegedly committed genocide in the famine-genocide.<sup>53</sup> It is a sign of progress, however, that Kondrashin had to defend his old view during a symposium on Holodomor as genocide in Australia<sup>54</sup> against Serbyn<sup>55</sup> and Stanislav Kulchytsky.<sup>56</sup>

Possibly because most of the Soviet Ukrainian foreign policy had taken place within the system of the UN and also because in 1996 then Foreign

50. [Anonymous] Commentary, "Who's in charge of public education in Ukraine about the Famine-Genocide?," *Ukr. Weekly*, LXXI, no. 50, Dec. 14, 2003 or <http://www.ukrweekly.com/Archive/2003/500319.shtml>, accessed on 5 July 2004.

51. Lower figure ("some 2,000 people") in Woronowycz, "Kyiv remembers 1932-1933 Famine-genocide"; higher figure from [Anonymous] Commentary, "Who's in charge of public education . . ."

52. Adriana Paska, "Solemn march and memorial service in New York recall deaths of millions in Holodomor," *Ukr. Weekly*, LXXI, no. 47, 23 Nov. 2003 or <http://www.ukrweekly.com/Archive/2003/470336.shtml>.

53. V. I. Marochko (Kyiv), "Kontseptual'ni pidvalyny zakhidnoyevropeys'koyi ta rosiys'koyi istoriohrafiiyi holodomoru 1932-1933 rr. v Ukraini" [Conceptual bases of Western European and Russian historiography on the terror famine in Ukraine in 1932-1933], *Ukr. ist. zhurnal* (Sept.-Oct. 2003): 138.

54. Viktor Kondrashin, "Hunger in 1932-1933 – A tragedy of the peoples of the USSR," *H.S.*, 1, no. 2 (Summer-Autumn 2009): 16-21.

55. Serbyn, "Holodomor – The Ukrainian Genocide," *ibid.*, pp. 4-9.

56. Stanislav Kulchytsky, "Investigating the Holodomor," *ibid.*, pp. 10-18.

Minister Hennadiy Udovenko had been elected President of the UN General Assembly, which is, for one year, a very prestigious part-time post, Parliament, backed by Kuchma, tried to have the UN pass a resolution declaring that the famine had been genocide, as outlawed by the Genocide Convention of 1948. It failed. As a consolation prize, the UN officially accepted, on 7 November 2003, as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 117 (b), a “Joint Statement on the seventieth anniversary of the Great Famine of 1932-1933 in Ukraine (Holodomor),” which was signed by the delegations of thirty countries and by the European Union. It was signed by Russia and the United States, and by the former Soviet republics of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

In return for the support of Russia, however, the joint statement was both defanged and generalized to the point of nebulosity. The Famine-Genocide, or Holodomor, with its victims numbering from 7 to 10 million, “became a national tragedy for the Ukrainian people.” The Soviet “totalitarian regime” was to blame, not genocide, which word does *not* appear anywhere. As a quid pro quo, the second paragraph contains the following:

Honoring the seventieth anniversary of the Ukrainian tragedy, we also commemorate the memory of millions of Russians, Kazakhs and *representatives of other nationalities* [emphasis added, note both the Sovietese expression and the suppression of a reference to the Soviet Germans – Y.B.] who died of starvation in the Volga River region, Northern Caucasus, Kazakhstan and in other parts of the former Soviet Union, as a result of civil war [sic] and forced collectivization, leaving deep scars in the consciousness of future generations.

The last, fourth paragraph is a less than forceful denunciation of the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms.<sup>57</sup>

More forceful and also explicitly focused on genocide have been a unanimous resolution of the U.S. House of Representatives of 20 October 2003,<sup>58</sup>

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57. For the most authoritative text of the joint declaration, together with a facsimile of the cover letter by H.E. Valerii Kuchinsky, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the UN, see Luciuk, ed., *Not Worthy*, note 34, above, pp. 174-78. More up to date, but less accurate on the text of the joint declaration is Anonymous, “30 UN member-states sign joint declaration on Great Famine,” *Ukr. Weekly*, LXXI, no. 46, 16 Nov. 2003 <http://www.ukrweekly.com/Archive/2003/460301.shtml>.

58. Mr. Hyde, “Expressing Sense of [US] House [of Representatives] Regarding Man-Made Famine that Occurred in Ukraine in 1932-1933,” *Congressional Record – House*, Monday, 20 October 2003, 108th Congress, 1st Session, 149 CongRecH 9692 [http://web.lexis-nexis.com/congcomp/docu...SA\\_md5...](http://web.lexis-nexis.com/congcomp/docu...SA_md5...) accessed 24 June 2004. See also [http://www.csce.gov/crs\\_csce.cfm?crs\\_id=23](http://www.csce.gov/crs_csce.cfm?crs_id=23). Excerpt from remarks and text of resolution reprinted in Luciuk, ed., *Not Worthy*, pp. 142-45. Adopted by a vote of 382-0. House Resolution 356. Admittedly, the House resolution does not emphasize the word genocide. It appears only once: “WHEREAS the final

the stalled resolution in the U.S. Senate,<sup>59</sup> the successful resolution in the Senate of Canada,<sup>60</sup> one in the Senate of Australia,<sup>61</sup> and one in the Congress of Argentina. The Ukrainian diaspora in the West has been supportive of all the national resolutions. But the attempted resolution of the UN was a disappointment. A source at the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry told *The Ukrainian Weekly*: “I think you understand that the Russians would never have allowed for the word of ‘genocide’ to be used. We agreed to this version because we realized that we could end up with nothing. If the Russians had blocked the statement, we might not even have had this.”<sup>62</sup> Diplomacy, like politics, is the art of the possible. But, in the long run, conceptual fuzziness may hurt national identity even more than one diplomatic defeat.

President Yushchenko (2004-2010), whose father had survived Auschwitz, and the First Lady of Ukraine Kateryna Yushchenko, whose father was a Holodomor survivor, were well placed to lead the commemoration of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2008. Yushchenko even provoked Medvedev into a sharp public attack, on the “Official Web Portal [of the] President of Russia,” on 11 August 2009: “Russian-Ukrainian relations have been further tested as a result of your administration’s willingness to engage in historical revisionism, . . . [including] imposition among the international community of a nationalistic [sic] interpretation of the mass famine of 1932-1933 in the USSR, calling it the ‘genocide of the Ukrainian people’.” [Emphasis added.]<sup>63</sup> Earlier in

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report of the United States Government’s Commission on the Ukraine Famine, established on 13 December 1985, concluded that the victims were ‘starved to death in a man-made famine’ and that ‘Joseph Stalin and those around him committed *genocide* against Ukrainians in 1932-1933’; . . .” [Emphasis added.] Luciuk, *Not Worthy*, p. 144.

59. For text of stalled US Senate Resolution, see Senator B. Nighthorse Campbell (R-Colorado), “Senate Resolution 202 – Expressing the Sense of the Senate Regarding the Genocidal Ukraine Famine of 1932-33,” *Congressional Record*, 149, no. 113, Monday, 28 July 2003, Senate legislative day of Monday 21, 2003 [http://www.csce.gov/crs\\_csce.cfm?crs\\_id=201](http://www.csce.gov/crs_csce.cfm?crs_id=201), accessed with the help of Mr. Orest Deychakivsky on 28 June 2004. The key difference between the successful House Resolution 356 and the stalled Senate Resolution 202 lies in paragraph no. 4 (“It is the sense of the Senate that- . . . [4] the man-made Ukraine famine of 1932-33 was an act of genocide as defined by the United Nations Genocide Convention.”) According to one of its co-sponsors, Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (D-Delaware), then the ranking minority member on the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, and the time of writing (13 February 2010) Vice President of the United States, this formulation was objected to by the George W. Bush Administration. Apparently Russia lobbied hard in Washington, and won. Possibly Russia was joined by Turkey, still objecting to the Armenian genocide.

60. [The Honorable] Senator Raynell Andreychuk, “Resolution on the Ukrainian Famine/Genocide,” 19 June 2003, in Luciuk, ed., *Not Worthy*, pp. 116-17.

61. Anonymous, “Australian Senate condemns Famine-Genocide,” *Ukr. Weekly*, LXXI, no. 46, 16 Nov. 2003, pp. 1+3; or <http://www.ukrweekly.com/Archive/2003/460302.shtml>

62. Anonymous, “30 UN member-states sign joint declaration on Great Famine,” *ibid.*, pp. 1+20; or <http://www.ukrweekly.com/Archive/2003/460301.shtml>

63. Michael Schwartz, Moscow Signals Widening Rift With Ukraine,” *New York Times*, 12 Aug. 2009 [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/12/world/europe/12moscow.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/12/world/europe/12moscow.html?_r=1); and, as a

2009, Vladimir Kozlov, the head of Russia's Federal Archives Agency, had released a new collection of documents "The Famine in the USSR." ". . . [H]e insisted that he and his researchers had not found 'a single document' showing that Stalin planned a 'terror-famine' in Ukraine."<sup>64</sup> To readers of this journal this may be debatable.

By contrast, official relations with the United States were better. 2 December 2008, Ukraine's First Lady spoke at the groundbreaking ceremony at the site for Holodomor Memorial, which is at a good location in Washington, D.C. Supported by the Ukrainian-American community, its friends among the Armenians, and influential Members of Congress and Senators, notably Congressman Sander Levin, the House of Representatives passed on 16 November 2005 Bill H.R. 562. The press release of the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) of 17 November 2005 included the full text of the bill as an appendix. Section 1 (a) said: ". . . The Government of Ukraine is authorized to establish a memorial on Federal land in the District of Columbia to honor the victims of the *Ukrainian famine-genocide* of 1932-1933." [Emphasis added.] Section 2 provided that the U.S. Government would not pay anything for the establishment or maintenance of that memorial.<sup>65</sup> ANCA welcomed the adoption of H.R. 562, but it also called on then Speaker Hastert to schedule a vote to pass a bill on Armenian Genocide. Politely put, Levin's bill had 36 Representatives' cosponsors, while the Armenian Genocide legislation in November 2005 was supported by over 170 Representatives. 29 September 2006 the Senate followed suit, and President George W. Bush signed the bill into law 13 October 2006.<sup>66</sup> The law is interesting in that it clearly used the term "famine-genocide."

Yushchenko insisted that after debate the Ukrainian Parliament pass a regular law or *zakon* finding that Holodomor was genocide against the Ukrainian "nation." He did not fully succeed. A compromise version was passed 28 November 2006, by a vote of 233 for, which was only 7 votes more than Kuchma's parliamentary resolution or *postanova* on genocide of 15 May 2003. Judging from the official summary of parliamentary actions on

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link to excerpts from Medvedev's letter, "Address to the President of Ukraine Victor Yushchenko," <http://eng.kremlin.ru/text/docs/2009/08/220759.shtml>, accessed via Google, 10 Febr. 2010.

64. Paul Goble, "Window on Eurasia: To Counter Ukraine's Charges of Genocide, Moscow Admits to Mass Murder," Thursday, 26 Febr. 2009 <http://windowoneurasia.blogspot.com/2009/02/window-on-eurasia-to-counter-ukraine.html>

65. Armenian National Committee of America, Press Release, . . . 2005-11-17, "ANCA welcomes adoption of U.S. House Resolution Marking the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide of 1932-1933," [http://www.anca.org/press\\_releases/press\\_releases\\_print.php?prid=859](http://www.anca.org/press_releases/press_releases_print.php?prid=859)

66. Embassy of Ukraine to the United States of America, News, 2 Dec. 2008, "Ukrainian Genocide Memorial groundbreaking ceremony in Washington, D.C.," and "Remarks by H. E. Ambassador Oleh Shamshur at the Holodomor Memorial groundbreaking ceremony, 2 December 2008, Washington, D.C." <http://www.mfa.gov.ua/usa/en/news/detail/18139.htm>.

28 November 2006,<sup>67</sup> there was much discussion before the three electronic votes at 16:25:17; 16:25:43 and 16:26:32 hours.<sup>68</sup> Yanukovych did not participate in the debate and it is not clear how he voted. Yulia Tymoshenko, who had been Prime Minister in 2005, did not attend the parliamentary session at all. By electronic card, however, she voted for the compromise.<sup>69</sup> For the seeming compromise, which was weighted toward Yushchenko's original bill, there were only 2 votes from the Party of Regions, 118 from "BYUT" (Bloc of Yulia Tymoshenko), 79 votes from Yushchenko's "Nasha Ukraina," 30 votes from the SPU or Socialist party, and 4 Independent Votes (not belonging to any caucus). Not a single Communist deputy voted for that bill.<sup>70</sup> It should be noted that the bill passed on the third vote, thanks to the skills of Speaker of Parliament, the Socialist leader Oleksandr O. Moroz. Furthermore, the bill had been toned down so as to de-emphasize Ukrainian ethnic identity in favor of civic or territorial identity. To a certain extent, this undercuts the essence of *Ukrainian* famine-genocide.

The President's bill, according to his spokesman Dr. Ihor R. Yukhnovsky, then the Acting Director of Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance, "proposes to recognize the Holodomor of 1932-1933 as genocide of the Ukrainian *nation*." [Emphasis added.]<sup>71</sup> Implicitly, Yukhnovsky referred to a broader concept of genocide when he stated that 30 percent of Ukrainians had "shamefully rejected (*tsurayet'sya*) their native language." Furthermore, Yushchenko's bill also wanted to "forbid," *zaboronyayet'sya*, or to make it a criminal offense to publicly deny that the Holodomor had been genocide. The counter-bill by the Party of Regions wanted to treat genocide as "criminal acts of the totalitarian repressive Stalinist regime, directed at the mass destruction of a part of the Ukrainian and other peoples of the USSR as a result of the artificial Holodomor of 1932-1933" (*zloidiys'ki diyi totalitarnoho represyvnoho stalins'koho rezhymu, spryamovani na masove znyshchennya ukrains'koho ta inshykh narodiv SRSR v rezul'tati shtuchnoho Holodomoru 1932-1933 rokiv*) [Emphasis, through italics in the English translation and through bold italics in the Ukrainian original, added].<sup>72</sup> V. Zabarsky, who presented the Party of Regions counter-bill, correctly emphasized that the UN

67. Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy, "Plenarni zasidannya 28 lystopada 2006 roku" (Plenary sessions of 28 November 2008); Informatsiyne upravlinnya [Directorate of Information] <[http://portal.rada.gov.ua/control/uk/printable\\_article?art\\_id=80882](http://portal.rada.gov.ua/control/uk/printable_article?art_id=80882)>, accessed 28.11.2006, passim.

68. "Zasidannya trydtsyat' s'yome" (37th session), p. 9 of 56 [http://www.rada.gov.ua/zakon/new/STENOGR/28110602\\_37.htm](http://www.rada.gov.ua/zakon/new/STENOGR/28110602_37.htm), accessed 29 Nov. 2006.

69. "Plenarni zasidannya 28 lystopada . . .," p. 5 of 6.

70. "Zasidannya trydtsyat' s'yome," pp. 9-10 of 56.

71. "Plenarni zasidannya 28 lystopada . . .," p. 1.

72. *Parlament vyznav Holodomor henotsydom; Yushchenko radiye* (Parliament has recognized the Holodomor as genocide; Yushchenko rejoices). [www.Pravda.com.ua.28.11.2006, 16:31...](http://www.Pravda.com.ua.28.11.2006,16:31...) supplied by Natalia Pylypiuk [natalia.pylypiuk@ualberta.ca](mailto:natalia.pylypiuk@ualberta.ca)

document of November 2003 did not use the term genocide.<sup>73</sup> The Communist Party deputy O. Holub, in opposing Yushchenko's bill, said that his proposal "could [well] cause and is already causing a chain reaction of contradictions (*protystoyannya*). It will lead to increased tensions in the interstate relations between Russia and Ukraine." He also called for Yushchenko's impeachment.<sup>74</sup> Yushchenko's bill received only 198 votes, and thus failed. The Zabarsky-Holub bill received even fewer votes (193). The Yushchenko-Moroz compromise bill won with 233 votes, even though Moroz pleaded with the deputies to pass the bill with a strong majority, not "with 230, 250 or 300 votes."<sup>75</sup>

What was the compromise? Article 1 declared the Holodomor to be "the genocide of the Ukrainian people (*narodu*)," not, as Yushchenko had originally proposed, of the Ukrainian nation (*natsiyi*). Yushchenko, however, got more than half-a-loaf in that it recognized it to be genocide (*henotsydom*). In Article 2, the public denial of the Holodomor was made illegitimate (*protypravnym*), or by clear implication, not a criminal act and not subject to prosecution. Also, the first sentence of the preamble said that the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine wanted to honor the memory of millions of "fellow-citizens" (*spivviichyzykiv*), not Ukrainians, thus blunting the idea that the regime wanted to kill Ukrainians because they were ethnic Ukrainians. The second sentence of the preamble, in referring to the horrible tragedy of the Ukrainians apparently substituted people (*narodu*) for nation (*natsiyi*). The sixth sentence in the preamble expressed sympathy to the other peoples of the former USSR, which had suffered casualties (*zaznaly zhertv*) as a result of the Holodomor.<sup>76</sup> Moroz averred that this would pre-empt the question against whom the bill was passed. This is somewhat disingenuous. But he also said that this will cover not only the criminal acts against the Ukrainian peasants, but also Kuban, the Lower Volga, Moldova, Belarus [sic], Kazakhstan and other regions of the former USSR.<sup>77</sup> The sentence in the preamble is somewhat confusing about its intent and ineffectual.

The true cause for Yanukovich's win of the Presidency, despite the legal challenges from Tymoshenko, may lie in modern Ukraine's unique contribution to world history, the discovery of the "biethnor." To quote a little over two paragraphs from a brilliant 2005 address by Dr. Myroslav Popovych:

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73. "Plenarni zasidannya 28 lystopada . . .," p. 2.

74. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

75. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

76. "Zakon Ukrainy Pro Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini" (Law of Ukraine On Holodomor of 1932-1933 in Ukraine), Maidan, "Shcho same pryynala Verkhovna Rada" (What is it that the Verkhovna Rada Passed) <http://maidan.org.ua/static/news/2006/1164726292.html>>.,

77. "Plenarni zasidannya 28 lystopada . . .," p. 4.

[Census – attribute added – Y.B.] statistics do not doubt that every citizen belongs to one and only one national (ethnic) community. But is it really so?

Sociologists in Kyiv assumed that people's identity was the result of a determined consciousness of belonging to any nationality and a vague one. The earlier mentioned case used three constructs – Ukrainians, Russians and a new identity, which we call “biethnors.” Biethnors are people who attribute themselves membership at to [sic] both nationalities at the same time. The choice of a language for everyday communication doesn't immediately depend upon this national self-identification.

The results of the investigations were sensational: according to results of 13 surveys of adults during a period from 1994 to 2003, only 60-63% of the population identified themselves as Ukrainians, 11-10% – as Russians and 24.4% in the 1990s, 22.5% in our century – as biethnors. Naturally, the part of biethnors in West and South of Ukraine were [sic] higher than in the East and Central Ukraine: in the western region of Ukraine, ethnic Ukrainians made up 92.6% of the population while Russians consisted of only 1.4%. The Ukrainian-Russian biethnors comprised 6%. In the East ethnic Ukrainians constitute 34% of the population, Russians made up 20.8% and biethnors comprised 45% of the population!<sup>78</sup>

The most important, but not exclusive, reason for the “biethnors” is the Holodomor. It had a decisive impact not only on the number but on the quality of ethnic Ukrainians.

I presume that Yushchenko by addressing the problems of genocide, national memory, the role of the Ukrainians Insurgent Army (UPA) and its commander Roman Shukhevych, by favoring Ukrainian language, especially in higher education, must have increased the average national ethnic identity, though I do not have the figures. His political unpopularity could have lowered those feelings later.

There is, however, proof that between 2002 and 2007 Ukrainian civic identity has increased. In December 2009, Mykola [Nikolai] Tomenko, Ukraine's Deputy Speaker of Parliament, told during a Parliamentary hearing on “National Identity in Ukraine under the Challenges of Globalization: Problems and Ways toward Preservation” that according to a poll of the “Ukrainian Democratic Circle,” which had been commissioned by the Insti-

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78. Myroslav Popovych, Director of the Hryhoriy Skovoroda Institute of Philosophy of the [Ukrainian] National Academy of Sciences, “Problem of National Self-Identification in Ukraine, “ Remarks Delivered at the “Ukraine's Quest for Mature Nation Statehood Roundtable VI: Ukraine's Transition to an Established National Identity” Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center, Washington, D.C., 27-28 Sept. 2005 <http://ucca.org/uccanews/story/0930051346.shtml>

tute of Politics, the number of respondents who were proud of being citizens of Ukraine had increased from 49 percent in 2002 to 65 percent in 2007. Most important, according to Tomenko, was that in 2007 the number of respondents who were proud of the Ukrainian state was higher than 50 percent in all regions of Ukraine. In response to the opposite question, “do you feel rather closer to the Soviet Union than to Ukraine” (*Oshchushchaete li vy svoiu blizost', skoree, s Sovetskim Soiuzom, chem s Ukrainoi?* [in Russian]), in 2002 39 percent said yes, and in 2007 replied yes 34 percent. Tomenko called this “a serious step on the way of society’s acceptance of the Ukrainian state as their own.”<sup>79</sup>

Tomenko admitted that the problem of national identity was more complicated and multifaceted and called for both government and societal actions. A lot depended on information policy. In this context, “the competitive quality of our cultural product in information was of extraordinary importance.”

As I see it: The emphasis on civic, territorial nationalism was all to the good. But as the results of the 2010 elections showed, a strong sense of ethnic nationalism coupled with a knowledge of Putin’s Russia may be even more important. Paul Goble had it right when he told me: Ukraine *is* located in a bad neighborhood. A neighbor, moreover, who does not want to admit to Holodomor and genocide. A neighbor triumphant – in foreign affairs, Putin “hit a super quadruple Rapallo.” He hired former German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and persuaded his successor, Dr. Angela Merkel, to isolate NATO’s and EU’s Poland, and to bar Ukraine from both NATO and the EU

Finally, as a quasi-appendix, there is a seemingly little matter of terminology. In his e-mail to me of 1 January 2010, Roman Serbyn wrote: “. . . [T]he usage of ‘terror-famine’ deflects attention from the criminal act to its effect, not on the primary . . . victims of the act, but on the survivors.” I agree. There is also a difference in meaning of the word “terror” as it is used in the West and the usage in Ukraine and Russia. The more Western, international understanding of terror is extreme fear. This is picked up by N. Ie. Iatsenko’s 1999 Russian Dictionary of Social Science terms: “fear, horror, caused by the politics and practice of cruel intimidation and violence” (*strakh, uzhas, vyzvannyi politikoi zhestokogo zapugivaniia i nasiliia*) [http://slovarnik.ru/html\\_tsot/t/terror.html](http://slovarnik.ru/html_tsot/t/terror.html)> A Ukrainian Internet dictionary, however, still uses a Soviet-derived specific definition of terror: “terror: 1. Most extreme form of struggle against one’s political and class enemies, using violence, including even physical destruction; 2. Excessive cruelty toward anybody whatsoever; intimidation” (*teror: 1. Naihostrisha forma borot'by proty politychnykh i klasovykh suprotyvnykiv iz zastovunniam nasyt'stva azh do fizychnoho zny-*

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79. UNIAN (10.12.2009 05:45), “Oshchushchaete li vy svoiu blizost' s SSSR?” [Do you feel rather closer to the USSR?]. Source for the Russian press release is Tomenko’s Press Office. <<http://www.unian.net/rus/print/351358>>

*shchennia. 2. Nadmirna zhorstokist' stosovno do kohonebud'; zaliakuvannia* ).< <http://sloynyk.net/?swrd>>. Both sources supplied by Serbyn.

More specific, and incorporated into U.S. law though HR 562 is the hyphenated term famine-genocide. It also emphasizes the criminal act in the second word (“genocide”), while the first word “famine” refers to the means by which the crime has been carried out. Hence I have used that hyphenated word in my article.

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JAROSLAW MARTYNIUK

*PUBLIC OPINION IN UKRAINE: ATTITUDES  
TOWARD THE 1932-1933 HOLODOMOR.  
THE LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR THE  
GENOCIDE THESIS AMONG UKRAINIANS*

**Abstract**

This article examines the extent to which residents of Ukraine accept or reject the proposition that the Holodomor was genocide. Interviewees were asked to express their opinions on the fundamental question “Was the 1932/33 famine in Ukraine – the Holodomor – a genocide committed against the people of Ukraine?” The analysis is based on the results of a nationwide survey conducted in Ukraine in September 2009. The analysis describes the kind of respondents who agree with the proposition that the Holodomor was a genocide (the genocide thesis) and those who do not. It will also examine in some detail the demographic profiles and regional distribution of those who accept the genocide proposition and those who do not.<sup>1</sup>

Before presenting the survey’s findings, a few words about the current state of the discourse surrounding the Holodomor is in order. I begin with an overview of proclamations of Ukrainian and Russian leaders and resolutions adopted by the Ukrainian parliament, followed by a brief discussion about the history and condition of national memory of the Holodomor.

**Ukrainian parliament declares the 1932-1933 famine an act of genocide**

On 28 November 2009 the Verkhovna Rada – the Ukrainian parliament – adopted the law recognizing that the 1932/1933 famine was an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people. Seven years earlier, in 2002, President Kuchma signed a presidential decree asserting that the famine of 1932-1933 had indeed been genocide against the Ukrainian nation. More recently President

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1. The study was carried out under the Broadcasting Board of Governors’ (BBG) International Audience Research Program (IARP). The research was carried out by InterMedia, BBG’s prime contractor for the IARP, who partnered with Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) a subcontractor that carried out the local fieldwork during September 2009. A total of 2,023 face-to-face interviews were conducted with respondents aged fifteen and over in all *oblast*’s of Ukraine. The survey – representative of the population of Ukraine – has a margin of error of + or -2.2 percent.

Viktor Yushchenko made remembering the famine a cornerstone of his presidency. One of his last acts as president of Ukraine was to praise the January 2010 Ukrainian court ruling that found former Soviet leaders culpable in the mass famine in Ukraine in 1932-1933, declaring that the ruling is a landmark decision “that restores historical justice and gives a chance to build Ukraine on fair and democratic principle.” After pronouncing the verdict, the judge declared the case closed, as all of the defendants are deceased.

All of this is in sharp contrast to the way leaders of the Russian Federation view the Holodomor. In April 2006 the Duma – the Russian parliament – passed a resolution that stipulated that the 1930s famine that killed millions should not be considered a genocide. Moreover, in December 2008 Russia blocked the Ukraine-initiated UN resolution claiming that the Holodomor was a famine-genocide aimed against ethnic Ukrainians. At the same time Russia’s intelligence agency, the FSB, dismissed the Holodomor as a Ukrainian “nationalist” invention, and President Dmitry Medvedev declined to attend ceremonies to mark its seventy-fifth anniversary, accusing Ukraine’s president of distorting history for political gain. This view is also widely reflected in the Russian media and arguably represents the opinion of the Russian population at large. Although admittedly not a scientific poll, on my many trips to Russia over the years I have rarely, if ever, met any Russians who would be remotely sympathetic with the “genocide thesis.” The typical response was: “*Golod byl vsiuda*” – “the famine was everywhere.”

### **The magnitude and terminology of the Holodomor is still debated**

Seventy-seven years after the Holodomor, the circumstances connected with the starvation of millions of Ukrainians are still being debated. There are continuing terminological disputes between scholars and politicians about the number of victims. Often people with diverse views reach opposite conclusions. While Ukrainians are becoming increasingly aware of the magnitude of the Holodomor, many Russian politicians, writers, historians, and, I might add, academics in the West, continue to deny its genocidal nature.<sup>2</sup>

One fact that historians generally agree on is that the 1932-1933 famine was engineered by Joseph Stalin to force peasants to give up their private plots of land and join collective farms. However, they disagree whether it was organized along ethnic lines, particularly against the Ukrainian people. Even the Nobel Prize-winning Russian author Alexander Solzhenitsyn categorically denied this, because the famine affected Ukraine’s neighboring Kuban and lower Volga regions, and accused the Ukrainian authorities of “historical revisionism.” While it is true that some private Russian, ethnic German, and Kazakh agricultural activities were also destroyed, the Soviet gov-

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2. Stanislav Kulchytsky, “Investigating the Holodomor,” *Holodomor Studies*, 1, no. 2 (2009): 10-15.

ernment concentrated its major attacks on the Ukrainian populace. Solzhenitsyn avoided mentioning that nearly half of the population of the Kuban – the region of the Russian SFSR where the famine was most pronounced – spoke Ukrainian and considered itself ethnic Ukrainian.<sup>3</sup>

### **The Holodomor erased from national memory**

In assessing the results of the September survey, it is important to be aware that over more than half a century the collective memory of the Holodomor in Ukraine had been practically extinguished. While a minority of the population was vaguely aware of this tragedy, they rarely dared to speak of it openly, even among friends and family. Two or more generations of fierce suppression of any discussion led to near obliteration of the nation's collective memory of the famine-genocide.

For decades the tragedy remained a state secret, denied by Stalin and Soviet leaders and concealed from the outside world. Even in official correspondence marked "top secret" it was forbidden to use the word famine, and until the 1980s talk of the Holodomor was forbidden and harshly punished. Fear of talking about it was so pervasive that the subject was rarely mentioned even in the intimate confines of a family. The veil of silence gradually began lifting after with Volodymyr Shcherbytsky's speech on 25 December 1987, during which he stated that "in 1932-33 there had been hardships and even famine in some areas."

The fear factor remained extremely powerful after World War II and even after Stalin's death, especially among those who had any recollection of the famine. For example, an expatriate Ukrainian friend of mine living in Paris, the artist Volodymyr Makarenko, once told me that in the early 1960s, when he had heard rumors of a terrible event that took place in the 1930s, asked his grandmother – a Holodomor survivor from a village near Dnipropetrovsk – to whom he was very attached – "*Babtsiu*: [Granma], what is it that happened in the 1930s that nobody wants to talk about?" The grandmother abruptly covered his mouth with her hand and, obviously terrified, said: "Shush! Be quiet and never ask that question again, because it will mean nothing but trouble for all of us." So Makarenko never asked again.

Educated people, particularly privileged Communist Party members in Kyiv and residents of Western Ukraine knew more, but to avoid any trouble they kept what they knew to themselves. Yet another expatriate friend of mine, the artist and photographer Anton Solomoukha, has told me that his father, a Party official in Kyiv, told him that the famine had occurred, but never volunteered any details, except to say to his son, "it's better if you don't know." This was not just reluctance to talk about a traumatic event, which is

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3. Volodymyr Serhijchuk, "The 1932/33 Holodomor in Kuban: Evidence of Ukrainian Genocide," *ibid.*, p. 29

so common among Holocaust survivors. It was also a kind of forced amnesia, brought about by widespread fear of physical punishment that silenced even those who were able and willing to talk.

By the mid-1980s any residual memory of the 1932-1933 famine seemingly disappeared into a black hole. If anyone was aware of the famine, what they knew was largely incomplete and inaccurate. I have often encountered this phenomenon when talking to visitors or refugees I interviewed for Radio Liberty during the 1980s. They all told similar stories. If they got any information about the famine while living in the USSR, it was generally not from stories they heard from other people; rather, they got it mainly from Radio Liberty, whose Ukrainian broadcasts reported an event that had been erased from the national memory for over a half of a century.

Only in the second half of the 1980s did researchers begin writing about the Holodomor as information about it was gradually revealed in the Soviet media. But only after Ukraine became independent in 1991 was the shroud of secrecy lifted completely and the people of Ukraine were free to talk about the “forgotten” famine.

### **Gauging perceptions of the Holodomor**

For the past twenty years Ukraine has been reconstructing its national memory. Today, nineteen years after independence, the picture has changed dramatically. As noted earlier, in 2008 the Ukrainian parliament declared the famine as genocide and President Yushchenko made the Holodomor the centerpiece of his presidency. There are signs that even in the West knowledge and perceptions of the Holodomor are changing.<sup>4</sup>

Although these perceptions have changed, particularly since the Orange Revolution, they are by no means uniform. The September 2009 BBG survey managed by InterMedia exploring media use in Ukraine contained a section with statements related to important issues facing Ukraine, such as attitudes toward NATO membership, the European Union, and so on. For each of the statements, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree, agree strongly, agree somewhat, neither agree nor disagree, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with such propositions.

With regard to the Holodomor, the statement put forward to all respondents was: The Holodomor in Ukraine was genocide against the Ukrainian people. In Ukrainian and Russian the statements read:

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4. For example, one-third of the 22 January 22 2010 Fox News one-hour program hosted by Glenn Beck was devoted to the Ukrainian famine-genocide.

Ukrainian:

Зараз я зачитаю Вам кілька тверджень щодо широкого кола проблем. Користуючись варіантами відповідей з картки, будь ласка, скажіть мені, наскільки Ви згодні з кожним з цих тверджень.

**Голодомор 1932-33 років в Україні був геноцидом проти українського народу.**

Possible responses on answer cards were:

Цілком згоден

Скоріше згоден

Насільки згоден, настільки й не згоден

Скоріше не згоден

Зовсім не згоден

Russian:

Сейчас я прочитаю Вам несколько утверждений, касающихся широкого круга проблем. Пользуясь вариантами ответов из карточки, пожалуйста, скажите мне, насколько Вы согласны с каждым из этих суждений.

**Голодомор 1932-33 годов в Украине был геноцидом против украинского народа.**

Полностью согласен

Скорее согласен

Насколько согласен, настолько и не согласен

Скорее не согласен

Совсем не согласен

**Attitudes toward the Holodomor: The findings**

Overall, nearly half of the survey's respondents (47 percent) agreed with the statement that the 1932-33 Holodomor in Ukraine was a genocide against the Ukrainian people (henceforth referred to as the "genocide thesis," while less than one-third (30 percent) disagreed. One out of ten respondents (10 percent) neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement, and 13 percent either did not know or refused to say.

However, when considering only those respondents who identified themselves as Ukrainians (83 percent of the sample), the majority (52 percent) agreed with the said statement. Among those who identify themselves as ethnic Russians, however, only one out of five (19 percent) accepted this thesis. Filtering further, we found that among respondents who speak Ukrainian at home (48 percent of the sample), 68 percent accepted the "genocide thesis," while only 11 percent did not. Combining both variables – Ukrainian nationality and those who speak Ukrainian at home and eliminating duplication – the portion increases to 69 percent (not shown in table): that is, almost seven

out of ten respondents who considered themselves Ukrainian and spoke Ukrainian, agreed strongly or somewhat with the statement that the famine was a genocide.

**Table 1. The 1932-1933 Holodomor in Ukraine was Genocide against the Ukrainian People (Percent Who Agree/Disagree, by Nationality and Language Spoken at Home)**

	National Sample	Ukrainian Nationality	Russian Nationality	Ukrainian Speakers	Russian Speakers	Surzhyk* Speakers
Strongly agree	29	32	14	44	15	15
Somewhat agree	18	20	5	23	17	14
<b>TOTAL WHO AGREE</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>29</b>
Neither agree, not disagree	10	11	7	9	10	12
Somewhat disagree	7	7	9	4	10	8
Strongly disagree	2	1	5	7	9	3
<b>TOTAL WHO DISAGREE</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>41</b>
Don't know/refused	13	13	10	11	14	18
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

\**Surzhyk* speakers are those respondents who said they speak a mix of Ukrainian and Russian at home. In addition, of the sample total of 2,023 respondents, 21 said they speak another language or did not say.

Source: September 2009-BBG/InterMedis/KIIS national survey of 2,023 respondents in Ukraine.

It is clear that attitudes toward the Holodomor are not only sharply split along ethnic lines but also along the variable showing language spoken at home. Respondents who identified themselves as Ukrainian were more than two and a half times (52 percent) as likely to accept the “genocide thesis” than those who said they were Russian (19 percent). In this respect the views of these two ethnic groups were diametrically opposed: the Russian respondents were two and a half times as likely to reject the genocide thesis (64 percent) as the Ukrainian respondents (24 percent). We found similar patterns and proportions when looking at attitudes toward the Holodomor using the “language spoken at home” variable. Among respondents who usually spoke the Russian-Ukrainian patois called “*surzhyk*” (12 percent of the sample), support for the “genocide thesis” tended to resemble that of the Russian speakers.

**Table 2. The 1932-1933 Holodomor in Ukraine Was Genocide against the Ukrainian People (Percent Who Agree/Disagree, by Age)**

	National Sample	Age group 15-24	Age group 25-34	Age group 35-44	Age group 45-54	Age group 55-64	Age group 65+
<b>Strongly agree</b>	29	33	28	29	29	28	26
<b>Somewhat agree</b>	18	15	17	19	16	18	16
<b>TOTAL WHO AGREE</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	10	9	9	11	11	12	9
<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	7	5	9	6	9	6	7
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	23	13	21	23	24	27	30
<b>TOTAL WHO DISAGREE</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Don't know/refused</b>	13	25	16	12	8	8	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: September 2009 BBG/InterMedia/KIIS national survey of 2,023 respondents in Ukraine.

Table 2 shows support for the genocide thesis by age group. Overall – except for differences between the very youngest and the oldest age groups – there were only small variations in attitudes: 48 percent of younger respondents aged 15 to 24 accepted the genocide thesis compared to only 42 percent of senior citizens aged 65 and over. However, significantly, there are over twice as many (37 percent) senior respondents who disagreed with the statement that the Holodomor was a genocide aimed at the Ukrainian people than among those aged 15 to 24 (18 percent). This indicates not only a much lower level of opposition among the youngest group, but also a greater degree of openness and willingness to listen among the younger set. Curiously, but not surprisingly, one-quarter of young respondents did not have an opinion with regard to the statement; more than twice as many of them were undecided compared to those aged 65 and over (12 percent).

Agreement with the genocide thesis also showed a high correlation with other demographic variables, such as religious affiliation. For example, over 90 percent of the respondents who were members of or close to the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church or to the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church agreed with the genocide thesis. Among the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyiv Patriarchate, the proportion was 55 percent, but among those who were members of or felt close to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate the percentage dropped to 38 percent. Only 23 percent

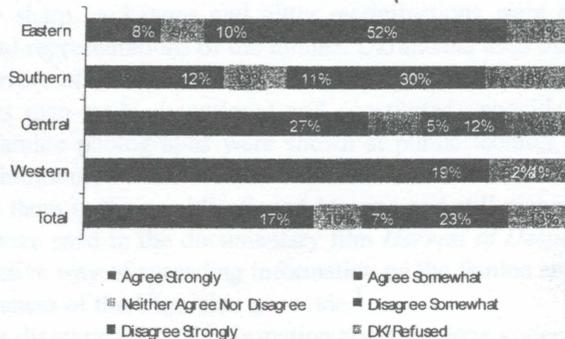
of respondents who identified themselves as Russian Orthodox believed that the famine was a genocide perpetrated against the Ukrainian people.

Analysis of support for the genocide thesis by gender shows no significant differences between males and females, and their levels of agreement or disagreement do not deviate significantly from the national sample. Likewise, no significant differences in attitudes can be discerned by level of education. For example, 49 percent of respondents with only primary education agreed with the "genocide thesis," compared to 47 percent of those who had completed their higher education. While it may appear that the level of agreement is higher among the less educated, the difference is not statistically significant.

Survey results, however, showed very significant regional differences in the level of agreement or disagreement with the "genocide thesis." Table 3 clearly illustrates how support increases from east to west. Only about one out of seven (15 percent) respondents in eastern Ukraine agreed with the genocide thesis, while two-thirds there disagreed. There are many reasons for this, the most likely being that a large proportion of the present population of eastern Ukraine consists of Russians or Russified Ukrainians who settled in the region after the 1932-1933 famine, or their descendants, replacing the residents of Ukraine's easternmost *oblast's* of Donetsk, Luhansk, and Kharkiv who had perished during the Holodomor. Those new migrants who populated the heavily industrialized cities of eastern Ukraine would not likely have a well formed memory of the tragedy. In southern Ukraine where memory of the famine might be slightly stronger, the proportions change. In central Ukraine, a region whose population was not as thoroughly displaced as that of eastern or southern Ukraine, a large majority of respondents (58 percent) agreed with the "genocide thesis." Western Ukrainians, who did not suffer from the ravages of the famine but were fully aware of what was happening in the rest of Ukraine, and whose national memory arguably has not been as thoroughly eradicated, showed the highest level of agreement (83 percent) with the genocide thesis: five out of six respondents in that region agreed with it.

**Table 3. The 1932-1933 Holodomor in Ukraine was Genocide against the Ukrainian People (Percent Who Agree or Disagree, by Region)**

	National Sample	Eastern	Southern	Central	Western
	n=2,023	n=446	n=530	n=607	n=440
Strongly agree	29	7	16	31	64
Somewhat agree	18	8	12	27	19
<b>TOTAL WHO AGREE</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>83</b>
Neither agree nor disagree	10	9	13	11	5
Somewhat disagree	7	10	11	5	2
Strongly disagree	23	52	30	12	16
<b>TOTAL WHO DISAGREE</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>
Don't know/refused	13	14	18	14	9



Source: September 2009 BBG/InterMedia/KIIS national survey of 2,023

## Conclusion

Support for the genocide thesis reflects a divided Ukraine. However, overall, more respondents accepted the genocide thesis than rejected it: nearly half (47 percent) of the respondents agreed with the statement that the Holodomor was a genocide against the Ukrainian people. Only 30 percent did not. The proportion who agreed rose to 69 percent among respondents who considered themselves Ukrainian and spoke the language at home. Regional support for the genocide thesis was much higher in western and central Ukraine than in the south and east. The youngest respondents (aged 15 to 24) were slightly more likely to agree with the genocide thesis than those aged 65 and over.



## DOCUMENTS

ROMAN SERBYN, compiler and editor

### *PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE OF THE UKRAINIAN FAMINES OF 1921-1923 AND 1932-1933*

While the Great Famine of 1932-1933 remained taboo in Soviet Ukraine until the demise of the Soviet Union, only the Ukrainian diaspora periodically raised the subject, which inevitably provoked heated altercations with famine deniers in the Soviet Union and in the West. Polemics over the famine reached their peak in the 1980s, when the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the catastrophe impelled the Ukrainian diaspora once again to focus its attention on the tragedy. Especially sharp exchanges and bitter recriminations were exchanged over the pictorial representations of the famine. Ukrainians used this material to show the horrors of starvation and to elicit sympathy for their claim that the tragedy was man-made, intentional and constituted genocide. Disturbingly explicit famine photographs were shown at public lectures and commemorative exhibitions,<sup>1</sup> while famine survivors and authors of academic studies inserted them in their publications.<sup>2</sup> Moving and still pictures depicting starvation were used in the documentary film *Harvest of Despair*, which became an effective way of spreading information on the famine and promoting public awareness of the Ukrainian genocide.<sup>3</sup>

The effective dissemination of information about the long concealed man-made famine in Ukraine was met with a virulent attack from the Soviet Union. Soviet diplomatic missions in the West, aided by Western communists, pro-Soviet organizations and leftist intellectuals, launched a vigorous vindictive campaign against the Ukrainian diaspora. At first they denied outright that any starvation had taken place in Ukraine in the 1930s. Later, in the face

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1. See, e.g., *Famine in the Soviet Ukraine, 1932-1933: A Memorial Exhibition*, Widener Library, Harvard University, prepared by Oksana Procyk, Leonik Heretz, James E. Mace (Cambridge, MA: Harvard College Library; Distributed by Harvard Univ. Press, 1986). The 96-page folio-format booklet contains photographs not only of the famine but also of Ukraine's sociopolitical and cultural life.

2. Borys Martchenko and Olexa Woropay *La Famine-Génocide en Ukraine*, Préface de Guillaume Lalaurie (Paris: L'Est Européen, 1983); Robert Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* (Edmonton: Univ. of Alberta Press, 1987).

3. Director Slavko Novytsky, producer and editor Jurij Luhovy, available online: <http://thelastoutpost.com/video-4/communism/harvest-of-despair.html>

of incontestable evidence to the contrary, provided by documents from Western diplomatic archives that were made accessible in the mid-1980s, they had to admit that there had been economic difficulties, and even starvation. However, this did not stop the Soviet Union and its apologists from continuing to reject the notion that the famine had been artificially induced and that it constituted genocide. They condemned these accusations as anti-Soviet propaganda spread by Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists and Western anti-Soviet politicians.

The most elaborate attack on the Ukrainian diaspora came from Douglas Tottle, a Canadian communist trade unionist and social activist, who set out to prove that the notion of a Ukrainian genocide was nothing but a hoax. With Soviet help, Tottle elaborated a masterpiece of propaganda under the provocative title "Fraud, Famine and Fascism: The Ukrainian Genocide Myth from Hitler to Harvard."<sup>4</sup> The author denied the Holodomor and argued that even though there had been a famine in Ukraine in the 1930s, it was caused by natural and other factors, for which the Soviet government was not responsible. However, Tottle's book was part of a broader goal than just famine denial.<sup>5</sup> These were the years of intensive hunting for Nazi war criminals in the West, and the Soviets intended to take advantage of this opportunity to demonize the anti-Soviet Ukrainian diaspora by linking it to World War II Nazi war crimes. In line with this objective, Tottle argued that Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists, who had collaborated with the Nazi occupiers, fled to the West after the war, and in order to deflect attention from their own war crimes, resurrected the old propaganda of an artificial famine. The Germans Nazis, and the American capitalists like Randolph Hearst, sermonized about the famine in the 1930s, with the intention of discrediting the Soviet Union's achievements and tarnishing its reputation, he claimed.

Tottle's book is abundantly illustrated with reproductions of texts and photographs from a number of sources: Nazi and Hearst publications, texts and photographs on the Soviet famine of 1921-1923, which were published before the second famine, as well as texts and photographs on the Holodomor published by the Ukrainian diaspora. Tottle states that a thorough examination of the material shows that, while some of the photographs were authentic, they were not of the famine claimed by the Ukrainian diaspora. In fact, claims Tottle, they show the Russian famine of 1921, which was caused by

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4. Douglas Tottle, *Fraud, Famine and Fascism. The Ukrainian Genocide Myth from Hitler to Harvard* (Toronto: Progress Books, 1987). Online: <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:NID0wbxaBMJ:rationalrevolution.net/special/library/famine.htm+douglas+tottle+fraud,+famine&cd=4&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=ca>

5. The origins of the Tottle book and its role in the controversy over the Ukrainian famine are briefly discussed in Roman Serbyn, "Echoes of the Holocaust in Jewish-Ukrainian Relations: The Canadian Experience," *The Ukrainian Quarterly* LX, nos. 1-2 (Spring-Summer 2004): 85-87.

drought, and not the Ukrainian famine of 1933, allegedly created by the Soviet regime.

Before analyzing the substance of Tottle's arguments, it will be useful to recall the main facts about the two Soviet famines and to see what possibilities existed for recording these tragedies on film. The first famine broke out in the summer of 1921 as a result of drought in the Volga Valley, Northern Caucasus and Southern Ukraine. The drought lasted two years in a row, and the famine was not over until 1923. After some hesitation, Lenin decided to acknowledge the dire conditions and appealed to the West for help.<sup>6</sup> Moscow's original request was for Russia only, but under pressure from the American Relief Administration (ARA) – the chief supplier of aid to Russia – and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), which wanted to help the starving Jewish population of Ukraine, the Kremlin agreed to allow famine relief into Ukraine as well.<sup>7</sup> Foreign aid began arriving in Russia at the end of the summer of 1921 and in Ukraine in the beginning of the following year. Foreign aid continued in both countries until the summer of 1923. Numerous foreign charities brought and distributed aid, observed the tragedy, and recorded it. Because showing films and photographs of the famine in the West would bolster public sympathy and increase private contributions for famine relief, it was in the Soviets' interest to allow the famine to be recorded. Photographers had freedom of movement and easy access to the starving population. Hundreds of pictures were taken in Russia and Ukraine, most of them in the winter and spring of 1921-1922, and mainly in urban centers, where the relief activity was concentrated.

The ARA, the JDC, the Nansen Committee of the League of Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and many other charitable organizations took pictures, published them in their bulletins, supplied them to newspapers, and printed them as postcards. These photographs can now be found in various archives.<sup>8</sup> Famine looks the same the world over, and pictures of starving people resemble each other wherever they are taken. However, there can be little confusion between photographs from Russia and Ukraine because most of them were labeled. The relief agencies concentrated their photography on two things: the horrors of starvation and their work to alleviate it. These are the most common themes in the photographs: corpses

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6. Bernard M. Patenaude, *The Big Show in Bololand: The American Relief to Soviet Russia in the Famine of 1921* (Stanford, CA, Stanford Univ. Press, 2002).

7. Roman Serbyn, "The Famine of 1921-1923: A Model for 1932-1933?," in *Famine in Ukraine: 1932-1933*, ed. Roman Serbyn and Bohdan Krawchenko (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, Univ. of Alberta, Downsview, Ont., Canada: Distributed by the Univ. of Toronto Press, 1986).

8. The Ukrainian Red Cross put together a series of photographs and sent them abroad to various foreign charitable organizations and to Ukrainian diaspora newspapers. The seventeen pictures can be seen here: <http://www.ukrlife.org/main/evshan/famine.htm>

of men, women, and children, piled up in morgues and cemeteries; cadavers cut up by starving people or ravaged by famished animals; emaciated children and adults; soup kitchens with children waiting in line or sitting at tables; food distribution points; food stores belonging to relief organizations. There are also photographs, probably of Soviet origin, showing demented cannibals with their human wares. Finally, we have a few so-called "stolen pictures," which depicted things that the Soviet authorities would not have wished to be shown abroad. One photograph from the port of Odesa reveals a ship being loaded with Ukrainian wheat for export; a set of pictures show an outdoor banquet enjoyed by Bolshevik functionaries and their American guest in the middle of a famine zone.

The great famine of 1933 was different in many respects from that of 1921. No adverse natural force of any significance can be blamed for the calamity: the harvests throughout the whole period were adequate to feed the population. The famine was the result of exorbitant state "grain procurements," where "procurement" signified requisitioning of goods and not equitable "buying." In Ukraine it was further intensified by the confiscation of all edibles from those who did not fulfill their imposed delivery quotas. Having caused the famine in the grain producing regions of Ukraine and the RSFSR,<sup>9</sup> Stalin had no intention of alleviating it by asking for outside aid, or even letting the world know about it. Officially, there was no starvation in Ukraine and any claim of famine was treated as anti-Soviet propaganda. There were no foreign relief workers who could freely photograph what they witnessed, as there were in the 1920s. In fact, famine-ridden Ukraine and the Kuban region of the Northern Caucasus were closed to ordinary foreign tourists and journalists. Permission to travel was granted only to foreign communists and Soviet sympathizers, who would not want to take incriminating photographs. Soviet citizens would not dare take photographs of a "non-existing" famine. Under these circumstances, photographs of the famine would have to be taken surreptitiously, a fact that would be reflected in the appearance of this kind of documentary evidence.

Many Westerners have left written descriptions of the 1933 famine, but few had the opportunity or were brave enough to record it on film. The wife of a German diplomat in Kharkiv recalled that she took photographs to show that the situation in Germany was not worse than in Ukraine.<sup>10</sup> Other foreigners might have photographed what they saw, but no such documents have come to light. It is not surprising, therefore, that the prevailing opinion today is that there are no photographs of the 1933 famine. This makes the 1933 photographs of Alexander Wienerberger, an Austrian engineer, especially

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9. In Kazakhstan, then part of the RSFSR, the famine was connected with the sedentarization of the nomad population.

10. Interviews in film *Harvest of Despair*.

valuable for us. Wienerberger's pictures of the "non-existent" famine in Kharkiv and its outskirts had to be concealed, and could not cover the wide range of subjects recorded during the 1921 famine. He donated his photographs to the Interconfessional Relief Committee for Famine Areas in the Soviet Union, headed by Cardinal Theodore Innitzer of Vienna.<sup>11</sup> Six years later Wienerberger published a book on his work in the Soviet Union and illustrated it with 52 of his photographs, most of which are of the famine. Probably because the book was published in 1939, it is little known today.<sup>12</sup>

Dr. Ewald Ammende was a Baltic German, who had participated in the Russian famine relief in 1921. Later he was appointed Secretary General of the European Nationalities, and in 1934 became secretary of the Innitzer Relief Committee. In 1935 Ammende published a well documented study of the famine of 1933, in which he included 21 plates from the Wienerberger collection and an antireligious cartoon from the Soviet magazine *Bezbozhnik* (Unbeliever).<sup>13</sup> Fourteen of the pictures are included in the Wienerberger book, or are stored in the Vienna archives, or in both. The photographs show crowds of people standing in front of closed food shops; corpses lying outdoors; starving people straggling, sitting, or lying in the streets; a country road with a stream of peasant "traders" carrying their paltry wares to exchange for food; burial grounds with crosses; a sign posted on a tree: "Categorically forbidden to carry out funerals here." Significantly, there are no dramatic scenes of piles of corpses, no group shots of starving children, and nothing to suggest any relief work – all subjects that were depicted in photographs of the 1921 famine.

In 1936 an English translation of Ammende's book was published in London. It includes 26 photographs, 10 of which were the same as those in the German original. The author explains in the preface that a certain Dr. F. Dittloff, Director of the German Agricultural Concession – *Drusag* – in the North Caucasus, made photographs of the famine, which were included in the new edition of the book. Ammende must have had some reservations because he added: "Dr. Dittloff accepts full responsibility for the guarantee of their authenticity."<sup>14</sup> Just which photographs came from Dittloff the author did not specify, but eight of the new pictures in the book had been previously pub-

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11. The original collection was probably larger than the set of 25 photographs now in the Innitzer archives in Vienna. Copies are stored at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. I wish to thank Dr. Jurij Dobczansky for making them available to me.

12. Alexander Wienerberger, *Hart auf hart: 15 Jahre Ingenieur in Sowjetrußland; ein Tatsachenbericht* (Mit 52 Original-Leicaausnahmen des Berfassers) (Salzburg; Leipzig: Verlag Anton Pustet, 1939). Tottle does not mention this book.

13. Dr. Ewald Ammende, *Muss Russland Hungern? Menschen-und Völkerschicksale in der Sowjetunion* (Wien: Wilhelm Braumüller's Universitäts-Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1935).

14. Dr. Ewald Ammende, *Human Life in Russia* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1936; 1st reprint. ed. (Cleveland, Ohio: John T. Zubal, 1984), p. 23.

lished in connection with the 1921 famine, and two of these are definitely from Ukraine (nos. 1 & 4 in our set) and not from Russia. It is possible that Ammende was pressured to add more sensational photographs to his English edition after a series of generously illustrated articles on the famine appeared in the Hearst newspapers.<sup>15</sup> Fifty years later some of the pictures from the American newspapers and Ammende's British monograph were unthinkingly used by Ukrainians to bolster their famine-genocide claim.

We can now pick up the Tottle thread on the famine and the photographic evidence. The thrust of Tottle's attack on the famine-genocide thesis was that, since the photographs used as proof of the alleged Ukrainian genocidal famine in 1933 actually depicted the Russian famine that had been caused by drought in 1921, there was no case for a Ukrainian genocide. Tottle's analysis, however, is flawed in two respects. First, some of the pictures were of the Soviet famine of 1921, but they were not all from Russia, as Tottle claimed. Most of them were from Ukraine. The Wienerberger material was from the 1933 Ukrainian famine. Therefore, the photographs that the diaspora used to illustrate the famine gave an authentic picture of the terrible conditions in Ukraine in 1933. Second, Tottle fails to realize that neither proof of the famine's existence, nor its recognition as genocide, depends on photographs. There was enough documentary evidence, even in the 1980s, from survivor testimonies, witness reports and Western diplomatic archives, to show that there had been a famine and that responsibility for it fell on Stalin and his regime. When pictures are used not as testimony of a specific case but as illustration of a typical phenomenon, then not only photographic documentation from the 1921 famine in Ukraine, but relevant imagery of famines from different epochs and different countries can be used as well. As for the controversy over genocide, it must be resolved according to the criteria defined in pertinent legal documents: the UN Convention on Genocide and the Rome Statute of the International Court.

Besides the surreptitiously taken photographs of the 1933 famine, which focus of necessity on individual corpses and emaciated stragglers, we have other pictures, which while not showing the famine itself, place it in its historical context. These may be considered promotional pictures, taken openly by the Soviet authorities, with the purpose of showing, on the one hand, the communist regime's struggle with its class enemies, and on the other, Stalin's efforts to build socialism in the countryside. The numerous photographs of dekulakization, collectivization, guarding of state granaries, grain deliveries to collection points, and shipment of grain out of Ukraine reveal, in fact, the causes of the famine and the mechanism behind its implementation.

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15. A series of articles by Thomas Walker was published in February and March 1935 in the *Chicago American*, the *New York Journal* and other Hearst papers.

## **I. Photographs of the Famine of 1921-1923**

Photographs of the famine are found in publications synchronic with the tragedy and in archives of relief organizations. Our pictures come from the Cantonal Archives of Geneva (1, 2, 4, 5, 7); ARA Archives, Hoover Institution, Stanford University (3, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12); a Soviet publication (9).

1. Huliai Pole. Starving children. One of 17 promotional pictures sent by the Ukrainian Red Cross to Western charitable organizations and newspapers.

2. Berdiansk. Starving adults. Promotion picture shows early stage of starvation: loss of body fat and swollen feet.

3. Ukraine. Refugee train. Starving people rode freight trains in search for food. They came from Russia not realizing that the "bread basket" was empty.

4. Kherson. Cart with corpses. Corpses were picked up in the village and transported to the cemetery for burial in common graves.

5. Kherson. Moggles were filled with corpses, which were periodically taken out for burial in common graves.

6. Odesa. Corpses piled in a cemetery. Bodies were picked up in villages and towns and carted to common burial grounds.

7. Kherson. The corpse was cut up by starving people for food and devoured by animals. Necrophagy and cannibalism were common phenomena.

8. Odesa. Unidentified ARA workers visit a cemetery. In the background are piles of corpses waiting to be buried in common graves.

9. Odesa. Trainload of foodstuffs sent from Odesa to Volga & Don regions. Starving Ukraine was forced to alleviate starvation in Russia.

10. Odesa. Ukrainian grain loaded for export during the famine. The inscription on the photograph belongs to an indignant ARA employee.

11. Odesa. Soup kitchens were set up mainly in towns and catered primarily to children, who underwent examinations to qualify for feeding passes.

12. Mariupol. Bolsheviks organized an outing for ARA men. Note on the back of the picture: "This is the way the Bolos live while the people starve."

## II. Photographs of the Famine of 1932-1933

Six of the photographs reproduced here come from the Wienerberger collection (19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24); the others are taken from various other printed sources. The whole set can be found on the Ukrainian government site: <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/photos.php>

13. Ukraine. Interrogation of a “kulak” village elite who was the first victim of “revolution in the countryside” that ended in the Ukrainian genocide.

14. Ukraine. Dekulakization. Kulaks lost their property; some were executed, others deported to Russia; their families were evicted. Many died.

15. Ukraine. Individual and collective farmers were forced to bring grain to collecting points. The sign reads: “All surplus grain for the cooperative!”

16. Ukraine. Grain transported from deliveries points to further destinations. The sign on the truck reads: “In place of kulak bread – socialist bread”.

17. Ukraine. Guard by the granary. Stored grain was protected from starving peasants. Sign on door: Granary N. 1. Seed and Insurance for 1934

18. Ukraine. Loading grain onto a boat. Ukrainian grain was exported to various European countries throughout the famine period.

19. Ukraine. Exodus from the villages in search of victuals. Peasants went to nearby towns and then to Russia or Belarus until the border was closed.

20. Kharkiv. Torgsin store. For gold coins, personal jewelry or money orders from abroad, peasants could get food products at these stores.

21. Kharkiv. Starving women at the city outskirts. Caption under the picture in Wienerberger’s collection “infested with lice before death.”

22. Kharkiv. Bezpryzorny. Famine orphans often ended up as street children. Many died of malnutrition and disease; others resorted to crime to survive.

23. Kharkiv. Photograph of a corpse – probably that of a peasant woman. The militia tried to keep starving peasants out of the urban centers.

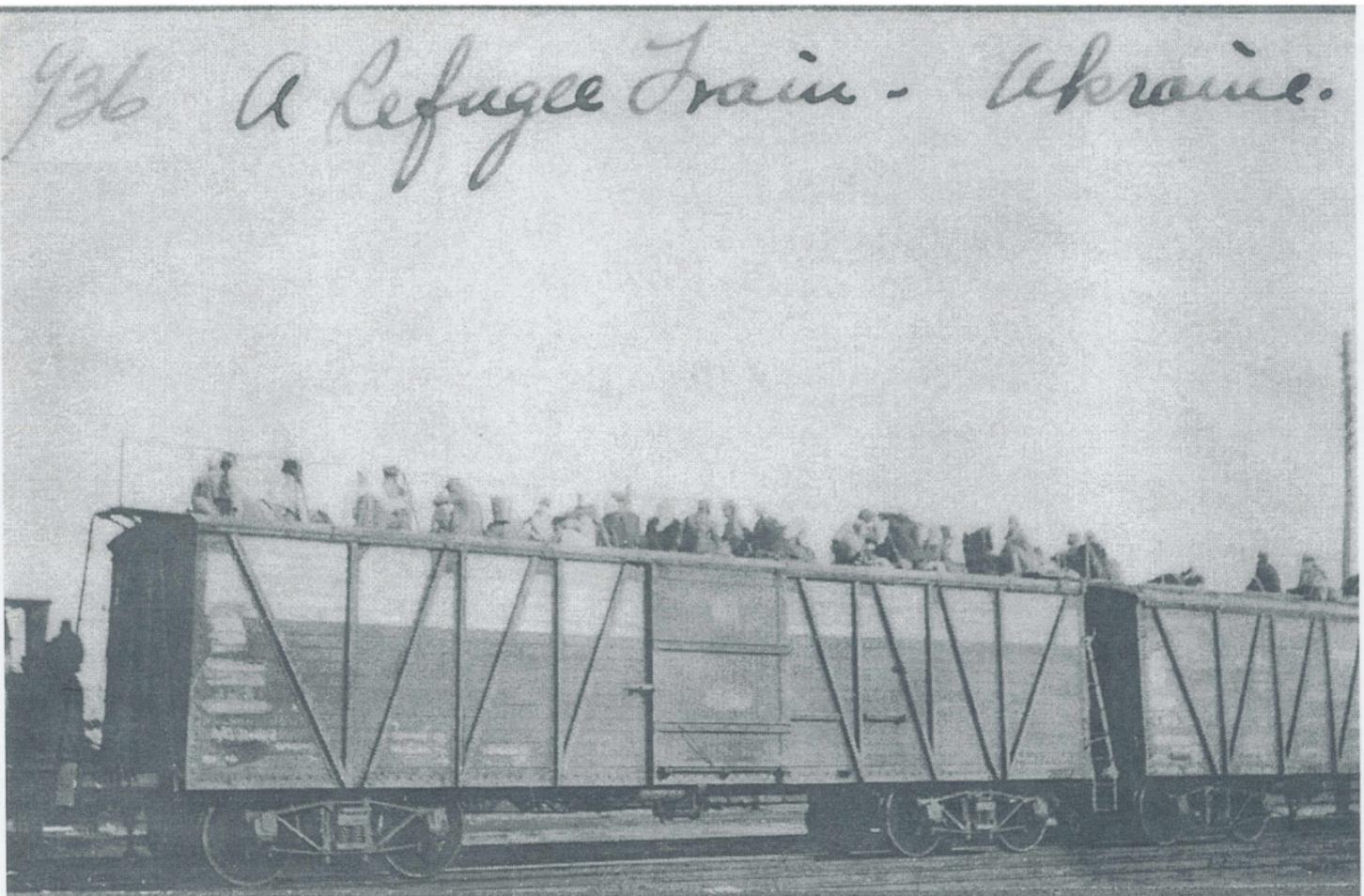
24. Kharkiv. Dead man, lying in the street. Presence of curious warmly dressed onlookers and leaves on trees suggest early period of famine – fall of 1932.

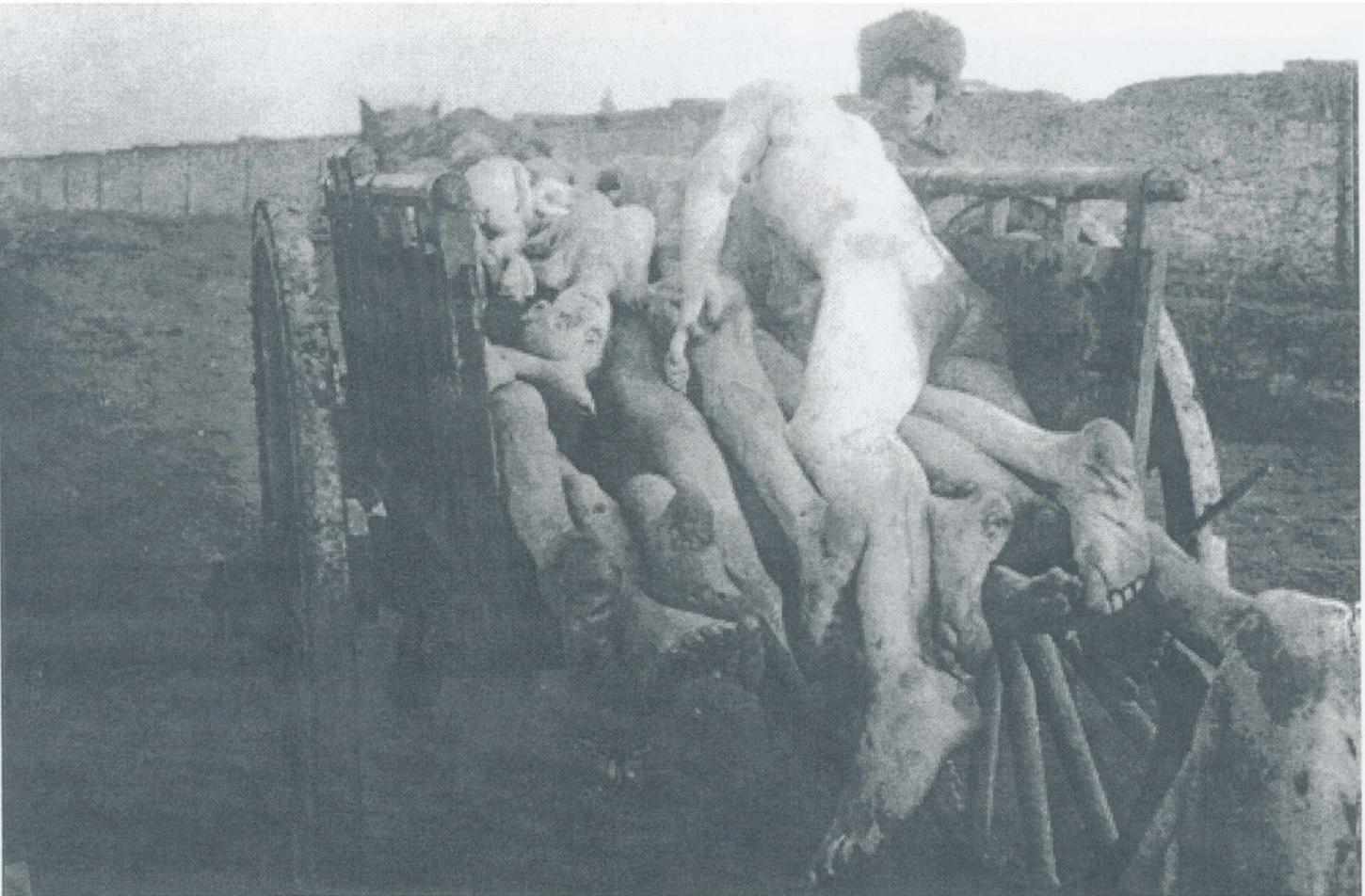


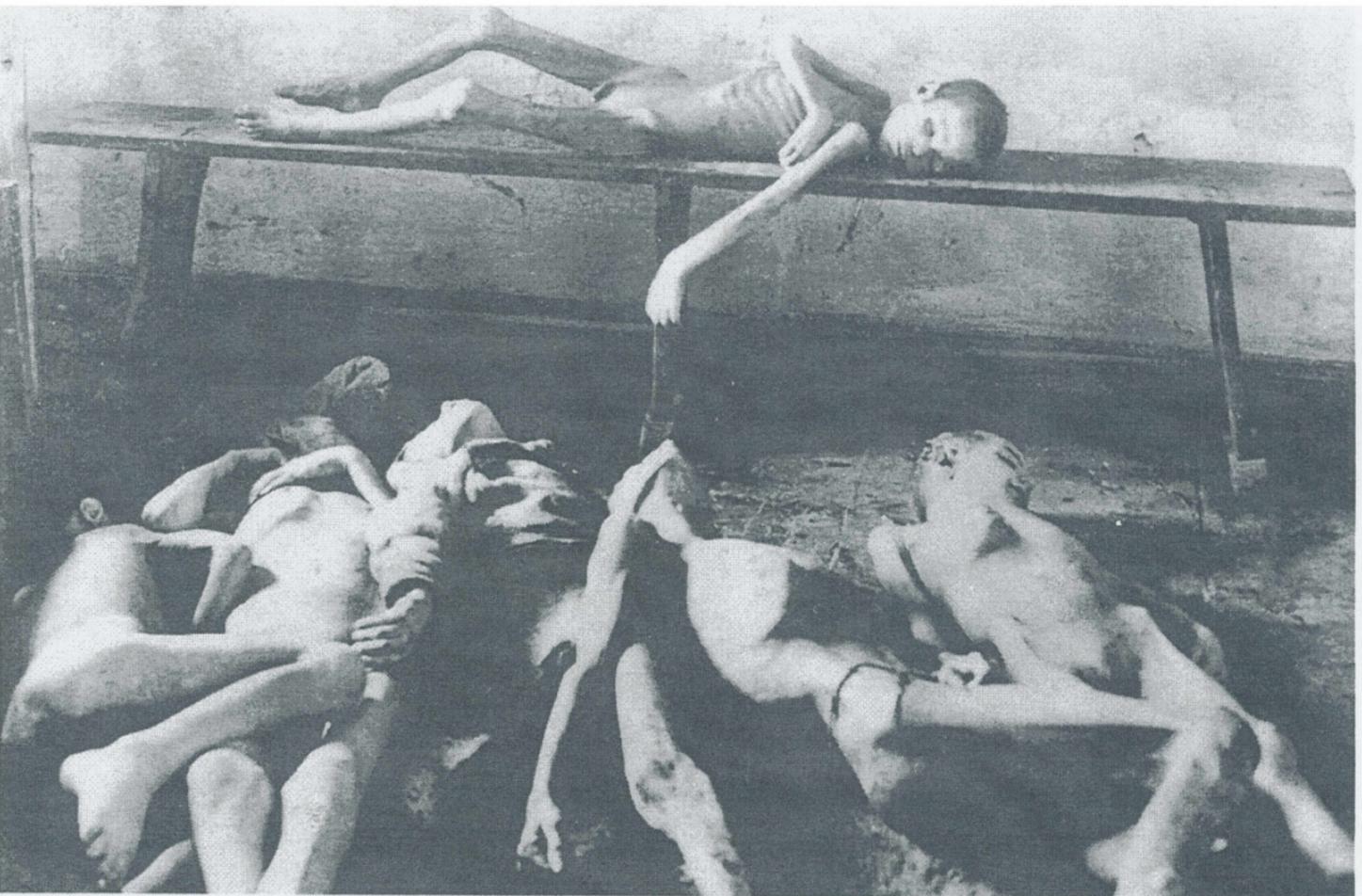
No. 1



No. 2







2022







No. 8





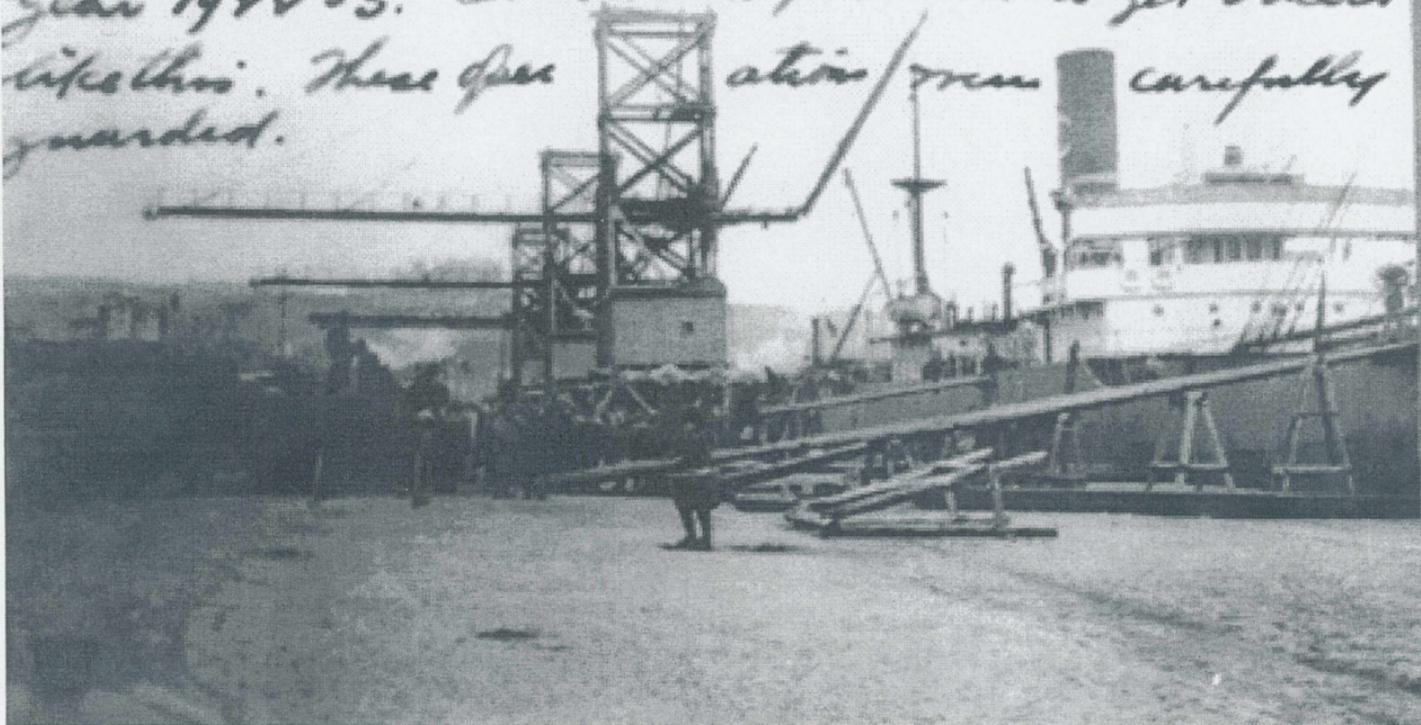
No. 10



No. 11

Гор. Одесса. 4-й продмаршрут, отправленный для поддержки голодающих Поволжья.

This is a "Stblen" picture. It shows the Soviets  
 exporting grain from Odessa in the Famine  
 year 1945-3. It was impossible to get others  
 like this. These operations were carefully  
 guarded.







No. 14



















No. 23



ROMAN SERBYN, Compiler and Editor

*WESTERN REACTION TO STALIN'S DENIAL  
OF THE FAMINE AND TO HIS REJECTION  
OF AID TO THE STARVING POPULATION\**

On 3 January 1934 the International Committee of the Red-Cross (ICRC) finally received the long-awaited reply from the Alliance of Soviet Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (ASRCRCS) to its request for clarification of the famine situation in Ukraine and the North Caucasus.<sup>1</sup> Valdemar (Woldemar) Wehrlin, the ICRC representative in Moscow, also received a copy of the document (Doc. 61). Now the International Committee (IC) had to deal with the Soviet denial of the famine and rejection of foreign aid for the starving population. In addition, Avel Enoukidze, the head of the ASRCRCS, maintained that Johan Ludwig Mowinckel, Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs of Norway, admitted having been misled by enemies of the USSR and thus retracted his earlier statements on the famine, made when he was President of the Council of Ministers of the League of Nations.

The following day Max Huber, President of the ICRC, sent a copy of the Soviet document to Mowinckel (Doc. 62). Requesting that the document be kept confidential, Huber drew Mowinckel's attention to Enoukidze's allegation concerning the former president's change of mind on the famine. Because such a reversal of opinion would annul the League of Nations' previous request to the ICRC for action on the famine, Huber asked for clarification. In the event that Mowinckel denied having made the declaration, or admitted to the declaration but found its interpretation by Enoukidze erroneous, the International Committee requested permission to use his rebuttal in its correspondence with the ASRCRCS.

The ICRC simultaneously communicated Enoukidze's reply to the General Secretary of the League of Red Cross Societies, along with a request not to divulge the contents of the document to the national Red Cross organizations (Doc. 63). The ICRC intended to examine the matter after receiving Mowinckel's reply and would subsequently inform the League of its decision. The third letter was to Cardinal Innitzer (Doc. 64). Huber thanked the cardinal for the information pertaining to the conference on the famine in the USSR, held

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1. See the text of the letter in *Holodomor Studies* 1, no. 1 (Summer-Autumn, 2009): 140-41.

at around that time in Vienna.<sup>2</sup> The ICRC had contacted the ASCRCRS in connection with that question, promising to inform the cardinal as soon as it was in a position to issue an official statement. Tellingly, the addressee was not advised of the Enukidze letter.

Meanwhile, the ICRC continued to be urged to do something about the Soviet famine, even though the pressure on the international body had lost much of its intensity. On 5 January a Geneva daily published an appeal to the ICRC from Metropolitan Antoine, the head of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. Invoking the terrible famine, in “the south of Russia,” he called on the ICRC to come to Russia’s aid.<sup>3</sup> Two weeks later, the ICRC received a request from Pastor N. de Haller, of Saint-Livres, Vaud (Switzerland) for a public statement in support of fundraising for Russian Christians suffering from the famine (Doc. 71). The pastor asked for permission to use the ICRC statement in its fundraising efforts, in particular for Swiss nationals living in Russia, because the socialist press contested the necessity of famine relief in Russia.

Possibly around the same time the ICRC received a detailed letter from Metropolitan Antoine, in which he repeated statements from his article, added new data on the famine, and directed attention to new sources of information on the catastrophe. Various newspapers had recently published hundreds of letters from famine victims. Public exhibitions were organized in Bulgaria and Germany. The prelate directed particular attention to reports by Otto Schiller, Counselor at the German Embassy in Moscow, and Harry Lang, correspondent of the New York-based Yiddish-language newspaper, *Vorwärts* (Doc. 69).

On 5 January all members of the ICRC were sent Enukidze’s letter, and were summoned to a meeting on 18 January (Doc. 65). The next day Sydney H. Brown, a secretary at the ICRC, wrote to Valdemar Wehrlin, ICRC’s representative in Moscow, saying that the IC had asked Mowinckel to respond to Enukidze’s allegations. The IC had not given any information to the press, and Brown wondered if the Soviets were publicly discussing the issue. He also wanted to know if the whole affair was having negative repercussions for Wehrlin’s work. Finally, Brown requested Wehrlin’s opinion on the question, asking him to keep the information confidential (Doc. 66).

Scheduled for 18 January, the ICRC assembly was not ready to meet until a week later. By then it had a rejoinder from Mowinckel to Enukidze’s allegations and an article from a Norwegian newspaper to back up Mowinckel’s

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2. Cardinal Innitzer’s letter and the resolutions of the Vienna conference on the famine are in *Holodomor Studies* 1, no. 2 (Summer-Autumn 2009): 136-39.

3. “La famine que démentent les Soviets,” *La Suisse*, 5 janvier 1934. Metropolitan Antoine’s letter was dated 25 November 1933. <http://www.fonjallaz.net/Ukraine-Grand-Famine/Suisse/CICR/index.html>

claim; it also had information from its Moscow representative on the attitude of the Soviet authorities toward the affair. As well, Huber had drafted a reply, which was sent to the members of the ICRC for comment.

Mowinkel's reply (Doc. 67) was couched in diplomatic language. Denying Enukidze's claim that he (Mowinkel) had apologized for letting himself be misled about the famine in Ukraine, and calling it a "misunderstanding," he assured the ICRC that he had made no such statement. He insisted that he had told the newspapers that the League of Nations had responded to the numerous petitions concerning the famine in Ukraine by turning to the ICRC for authentic information on the matter. The veracity of Mowinkel's affirmation was borne out by an article in the periodical, *Goteborge Handels* (Goteborg Trade), a translated copy of which was supplied by the League of Nations (Doc. 73). Well documented, the report gave a penetrating analysis of the Soviet famine and recounted how, on the basis of Ukrainian documentation, Mowinkel had tried to put the famine on the League of Nations' agenda. However, a closed session of the Council of Ministers decided not to deal with this question on the pretext that the USSR was not a member of the League and referred it to the ICRC.

In its reply the ICRC had to take into account the disposition of the Soviet authorities and the effect that its answer to the ASCRCRS would have on future bilateral relations. Acquainted with the contents of Enukidze's letter and well versed in Moscow affairs, Wehrlin counseled caution, fearful of any move on Geneva's part that might jeopardize relations with the Kremlin. In his letter of 13 January he repeated his conviction that, while the ICRC's behavior was beyond reproach, its message was nonetheless embarrassing for the Soviets, who were obliged to reject it (Doc. 68). He was worried about Enukidze's claim with regard to Mowinkel's retraction, and asked for an explanation. Responding three days later, and still ignorant of the contents of Mowinkel's response, Wehrlin stated that there had been no mention of the exchange of letters and that the Soviets would rather keep silent about this embarrassing question (Doc. 70). Only if Mowinkel rejected the allegation would the Soviets feel obliged to use the press. For the sake of prestige and propaganda, they would vehemently deny Mowinkel's statement and call it political. On 23 January Wehrlin once more confirmed the silence reigning in the Soviet press on the exchange of the letters (Doc. 72).

The preparation of the ICRC reply to the ASCRCRS began one week before the scheduled IC meeting. On 11 January Huber penned the first draft; it was typed the next day and sent to the members of the ICRC for commentary. The documents stored in the ICRC archives show some comments but little controversy. The suggestions were mainly questions of emphasis and stylistic redaction. The most significant comments were those by R. de Halder, which, along with the president's draft, were retained for the meeting.

The ICRC finally met on 25 January; the meeting was presided over by Max Huber, with 13 of the 20 members in attendance (Doc. 74). Huber read Mowinckel's reply and concluded that it was not an admission of retraction, as claimed by Enukidze. The ICRC was thus protected, but Huber preferred to keep Mowinckel's declaration confidential and not mention it in the ICRC's reply to the ASCRCRS. After some discussion, the text was adopted with amendments. An exchange of views followed on what should be done next. Huber thought that the press should not be contacted "about this sad affair." The ICRC should inform the League of Nations, but in a sober and pondered way, without elaborate explanations. Huber read a draft letter to the League, in which there was no reference to the Mowinckel rejoinder. De Haller believed that the ICRC should not be afraid to reveal Soviet deceitfulness; he was in favor of publishing the ASCRCRS letter. Burckhardt wished to send the Soviet letter to the League of Nations, but Huber objected, calling it "impertinent and perverse." Huber's text was finally approved, and it was decided to answer Cardinal Innitzer's request in the same manner.

The following day Étienne Clouzot, head of the ICRC secretariat, submitted the final draft of the ICRC's reply to ASCRCRS for Huber's signature (Doc. 75). The letter to Enukidze would go the same day from Zurich and two copies would be sent to Wehrlin, one by diplomatic pouch and the other by regular mail (Doc.79).

Huber's response to Enukidze was as diplomatic and as inoffensive as the ICRC's expertise in public relations allowed it to be (Doc. 76). The committee expressed regret and surprise that its request for information, presented in the frank manner required for close and confident collaboration, should have caused any grief. The ICRC had had no communication from the League of Nations regarding Mowinckel's renunciation of his previous statement, to which Enukidze had alluded. Since Enukidze did not say when and where Mowinckel was supposed to have made the declaration, the ICRC had no way of knowing if it should have been aware of it. For this reason, the ICRC felt obliged to reject Enukidze's criticism, contained in the first part of his letter.<sup>4</sup> Huber takes note of the fact that the ASCRCRS had refused to provide information on the substance of the matter, but affirms the ICRC's right to gather, courteously and impartially, the information necessary for its humanitarian work. The ICRC respects this principle in its request to the ASCRCRS, Huber writes.

It is significant that the word "famine" did not once appear in Huber's letter to Enukidze and that there was no mention of Mowinckel's refutation of Enukidze's fraudulent assertion of Mowinckel's renunciation. The message

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4. Enukidze objected to the ICRC's basing its request for information on the famine on Mowinckel's enquiry since Mowinckel himself admitted that he had been misled. See Enukidze's letter in *Holodomor Studies* 1, no. 2 (Summer-Autumn 2009): 140.

to Moscow was one of closure: the embarrassing famine question was terminated and the ICRC and the ASCRCRS should resume their previous working relations. Satisfied with its response to Moscow, the ICRC could now send the same message to the parties in the West who had pressured the ICRC on this issue. However, while the ICRC could expect a warm welcome for its conciliatory attitude from Enukidze and Wehrlin, it had to be ready for a mixed reception in the West.

The same day Huber sent a rather curious letter to the League of Nations (Doc. 77). The letter was addressed to the President of the Council of Ministers, but the addressee's proper name was not included. In the body of the text Mowinckel, who was back in Norway, was confused with the current head of the League. Huber informed the President of the League that in response to "his" letter of 30 September (in fact, Mowinckel's), the ICRC wrote to the ASCRCRS on 12 October. The reply from Moscow, received on 3 January, precluded any possibility for the further development of any activity in this field by the ICRC. In failing to mention the famine and ignoring Enukidze's allegations and Mowinckel's correction, the ICRC was in fact informing the League that it was terminating all discussion on that matter. This solution suited the League, especially its General Secretary, the Frenchman Joseph Avenol. With Mowinckel out of the picture, the League could steer its policies toward closer relations with the USSR. Getting rid of the famine business was removing a major impediment.

The decision of the ICRC to abandon the question of the Soviet famine was not welcome news to the other parties concerned. Cardinal Innitzer received a letter from Huber, which was written the same day and along the same lines: the ASCRCRS's response to the ICRC's request for information on the famine made further pursuit of relief effort impossible (Doc. 78). Clouzot's reply to Pastor N. de Haller was clear and concise: the ICRC could not grant permission to his organization to use the ICRC name in relief work. R. de Haller would provide personally a more detailed explanation (Doc. 80).

On 30 January Huber wrote to Mowinckel to thank him for his reply and categorical rejection of Enukidze's allegation (Doc. 81). The letter was discussed at the CI meeting, but it was decided not to communicate its contents to the Soviets, and Huber requested the author's permission to use it later, if the need arose. Four days later Avenol wrote to Huber, thanking him for the letter of 26 January to the President of the League of Nations, and to tell him that, since it concerned the issue of the Ukrainian famine, which had been raised by Mowinckel, he was sending him a copy (Doc. 82). Upon receipt of the letter from Avenol, Mowinckel thanked him but underlined his "deep regret" that the ICRC did not deem it possible to develop any action regarding the famine in Ukraine (Doc. 83). Avenol transmitted Mowinckel's reply to the ICRC but without sufficient caution, for on 28 February a functionary of the League telephoned Clouzot and insisted that Mowinckel's letter be treated as coming from the Norwegian foreign minister and not the President of the Council of Ministers of the League of Nations (Doc. 88).

The archives of the ICRC, or at least the documents that I saw, do not show whether the ICRC informed the various individuals and organizations, which had appealed to it to intervene in the Soviet famine, about the outcome of its dealings with the ASCRCRS. On 21 February Georges Werner, the Vice-President of the ICRC wrote to Metropolitan Antoine to state the reasons (seen above) why no aid program could be organized for the USSR (Doc. 85). Werner suggested, however, that money be sent to the USSR through the ICRC representative in Moscow, who was authorized to distribute it to designated individuals. The only caution was that the service not be advertised, as it could put the practice in jeopardy. The same day Sydney Brown informed the Canadian Red Cross Society of the possibility of transmitting individual money transactions through the ICRC to designated persons in the Soviet Union (Doc. 86). However, the ICRC could not accept any transfers of goods, as the Canadians had suggested, because the Soviets did not recognize the famine and refused to allow the importation of grain and foodstuffs. With money from the West, Soviet citizens could buy food without difficulty in the Soviet Union. J. L. Biggar of the Canadian Red Cross found Werner's information about the possibility of money transfers very satisfactory and anticipated much pleasure in circulating it among concerned Canadians (Doc. 89).

In February 1934 Wehrlin had only encouraging news from Moscow. On 12 February he sent Clouzot a clipping from a recent issue of the newspaper, *Izvestiia*, with details about the extension of the laws improving the life of *kolkhozniks* in the Far East to their confreres in Western Siberia (Doc. 84). Kolkhozes were to be freed from state deliveries in grain, meat, potatoes, and other products for a period of six years. Salaries would be raised for military personnel, engineers and workers. Two weeks later Wehrlin thanked Clouzot for the latest information on the alleged Mowinckel retraction and the article in the Norwegian newspaper (Doc. 87). No reference was made to the famine.

The last documented reminder to the ICRC of the great famine came from Mouravieff-Apostol in mid-March 1934. The representative of the old Russian Red Cross sent Werner a batch of travel reports by Harry Lang (Doc. 90). The unnamed publication was undoubtedly the Yiddish-language newspaper, *Vorwärts*, put out in New York. Harry Lang and his wife Lucy had toured Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine in the autumn of 1933 and sent detailed descriptions of what they had seen and heard.

As the winter of 1934 was drawing to an end, interest in the Soviet famine waned and was pushed into the background. Although the famine was still claiming innocent lives, the worst days were over. There was less of alarming news coming from Ukraine to the West, and pressure on international organizations by the Ukrainian and Russian diasporas had ceased. The Soviet tragedy now awaited its historians to tell its story.

**No. 61: 2 January 1934**

*L. Bronstein sends E. Wehrlin a copy of A. Enoukidze's answer to M. Weber's letter concerning the famine.*

Moscou, le 2 janvier 1934

Monsieur W. Wehrlin  
Délégué du CICR en URSS.  
Moscou.

Cher Monsieur Wehrlin,

J'ai le plaisir de vous remettre ci-[a]près copie de la réponse du Président du Comité Exécutif de l'Alliance des sociétés de la Croix et du Croissant Rouges de l'URSS à la lettre de M. Huber, Président du Comité International de la Croix-Rouge, en date du 12 octobre dernier, qui nous est parvenue par Votre bien aimable intermédiaire.

Je saisis cette occasion pour Vous réitérer, Monsieur, les assurances de mes sentiments les meilleurs.

Directeur du Département  
Des Affaires Etrangères :

L. Bronstein

**No. 62: 4 January 1934**

*Huber requests J. L. Mowinckel to respond to Enoukidze's letter denying the existence of famine and claiming that Mowinckel retracted his own accusation.*

4 janvier 1934

Son Excellence  
Monsieur MOWINCKEL  
Président du conseil des Ministres  
Ministère des Affaires étrangères  
OSLO

Monsieur le Président,

J'ai l'honneur de vous remettre sous ce pli copie de la lettre datée du 26 décembre 1933 que nous venons de recevoir de M. Enoukidzé, président de l'Alliance des Sociétés de la Croix et du Croissant Rouges de l'URSS en réponse à la lettre que nous lui avons adressée en date du 12 octobre dernier.

Nous vous la remettons à titre confidentiel, en vous priant instamment d'éviter toute communication à la presse.

Vous ne manquerez pas de remarquer que le Président de l'Alliance de Sociétés de la Croix et du Croissant rouges de l'URSS fait allusion à un démenti que vous auriez vous-même donné "publiquement" et qui annulerait la portée de la lettre que vous nous aviez adressée en date du 30 septembre 1933.

Nous n'avons eu jusqu'ici aucune connaissance d'un semblable démenti émanant de vous, bien que nous ayons suivi régulièrement toutes les informations de la presse relatives à cette question. Nous vous serions en conséquence extrêmement reconnaissants de bien vouloir nous faire savoir aussitôt que possible ce qu'il y a de fondé dans cette allégation. Dans le cas où l'affirmation contenue dans la lettre du président de l'Alliance des Sociétés de la Croix et du Croissant Rouges de l'URSS relative, à ce démenti repose-rait sur une interprétation erronée ou serait controuvée, nous vous demandons dès maintenant l'autorisation de faire état de votre rectification dans la lettre que nous nous proposons d'écrire à Moscou.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Président, les assurances de ma très haute considération.

Max HUBER, Président,

**No. 63: 4 January 1934**

*The ICRC informs the League of Red Cross Societies about the Soviet reply on the famine and IC's request to Mowinckel for further clarification.*

Confidential

4th January, 1934

Mr. Ernest J. SWIFT  
General Secretary of the  
League of Red Cross Societies  
PARIS  
Avenue Velasquez, 2

Dear Mr. Swift,

I am hereby sending you a copy of the not too polite letter dated December 26<sup>th</sup>, 1933, which we have received from the Alliance of Soviet [sic] Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, in answer to our very prudent and guarded one dated October 12<sup>th</sup>. President Huber thought that you should be informed, but as strictly confidential until further notice.

Before bringing the affair to the attention of the International Committee, Mr. Huber has written to the Norwegian Prime Minister, Mr. Mowinckel, asking for an explanation on the subject of the allegations contained in Mr. Enoukidze's letter. We hope to have his answer before the 18<sup>th</sup> of January, when the Committee is to decide on its course of action.

Any further statement on the subject would, at the present moment, be premature and must be reserved until the Committee has had time to consider the matter. Nevertheless, it can hardly be expected of us to leave a letter such as the one enclosed without an adequate answer. Needless to say, we shall keep you informed of all further developments.

With Mr. Huber's best compliments and all our good wishes for the season,

Sincerely yours,

(Sidney H. Brown)

Secretary of the International Red Cross Committee.

**No. 64: 4 January 1934**

*Huber to Cardinal Innitzer: IC communicating with Soviet Red Cross on the famine; will inform the Cardinal when ready to make official statement.*

4 janvier 1934

Son Éminence le Cardinal INNITZER  
Archevêque de Vienne  
Erzbischöfliches Palais  
Rotenturmstrasse 2  
Vienne I

Monseigneur,

Votre Éminence a daigné porter à notre connaissance, en date du 22 décembre 1933 les résultats de la Conférence interconfessionnelle et internationale qui a eu lieu les 16 et 17 décembre sous Votre Présidence, en faveur des affamés de l'URSS.

Je me permet de remercier Votre Éminence de nous avoir envoyé copie des résolutions qui ont été votées par la Conférence précitée.

En ce qui concerne la communication faite à la Conférence par certains de ses membres au sujet de l'intervention de M. le Président Mowinkel auprès du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge, nous n'avons aucune objection à Vous faire savoir que nous nous sommes mis en rapport à ce sujet avec l'Alliance des Sociétés de la Croix et du Croissant Rouges de l'URSS. Dès

que nous serons à même de faire à cet égard une communication officielle, vraisemblablement dans le courant du présent mois, nous ne manquerons pas de la porter immédiatement à la connaissance de Votre Éminence.

Veillez agréer, Monsieur, les assurances de ma très haute considération.  
Max HUBER, Président,

**No. 65: 5 January 1933**

*Enukidze's response to the ICRC letter is sent as confidential information to members of the IC, to be discussed at the IC meeting of 18 January.*

COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

Genève, 5 janvier 1933

NOTE AUX MEMBRES DE C.I.C.R.

Veillez trouver ci-joint – à titre confidentiel – la réponse de l'Alliance des Sociétés de la Croix et du Croissant Rouges de l'URSS à notre lettre du 12 octobre dernier, au sujet de la famine dans ce pays.

La question sera portée à l'Ordre du jour du Comité international dans sa séance du 18 janvier.

M. Max Huber a écrit à M. Mowinckel, président du conseil des Ministres de Norvège en lui demandant des explications sur le bien-fondé des allégations contenues dans le second alinéa de la lettre soviétiste.

**No. 66: 6 January 1934**

*S. H. Brown to Wehrlin: ICRC will have to respond to Enukidze's allegation of Mowinckel's retraction, which is an error or a fabrication; was it published in Russia; has it affected Wehrlin's work?*

PERSONNELLE

6 janvier 1934

Monsieur Woldemar WEHRLIN  
Délégué du CICR en URSS  
Moscou

Cher Monsieur,

Permettez-moi d'abord de vous remercier de votre si aimable vœu de nouvel an et en même temps de m'excuser de ne pas vous avoir écrit depuis votre retour à Moscou. Je sais qu'avec votre amabilité habituelle et la grande mansuétude que vous m'avez toujours témoignée, vous voudrez cette fois encore me pardonner.

Notre Président M. Max Huber – que j'ai vu pendant les fêtes de Noël – a demandé de vos nouvelles et m'a chargé de vous transmettre ses meilleurs compliments et ses vœux les plus cordiaux pour la nouvelle année.

Nous avons reçu votre télégramme 1197 au sujet de la réponse de l'ASCCR du 26 décembre à notre lettre du 12 octobre. Vous êtes donc au courant du fait principal et nous n'avons pas besoin de vous envoyer copie de cette lettre, comme vous nous l'aviez demandé.

Vu le second alinéa de la lettre de l'ASCCR, au sujet d'une rétractation ou prétendue rétractation faite par M. Mowinckel, premier ministre de Norvège, nous n'avons pas pu faire autrement que lui transmettre – à titre confidentiel – la lettre en question, en le priant de bien vouloir nous faire savoir aussitôt que possible ce qu'il y a de fondé dans cette allégation. Dans le cas où l'affirmation contenue dans la lettre de l'ASCCR reposerait sur une interprétation erronée ou serait controuvée, nous avons demandé à M. Mowinckel l'autorisation de faire état de sa rectification dans la lettre que nous nous proposons d'écrire à Moscou.

Dès maintenant, je puis vous dire que personnellement je ne crois pas que cette prétendue rétractation repose sur la vérité si l'on s'en rapporte à la lettre du 9 décembre de M. Mowinckel, et dont la copie vous a été adressée.

Il n'a rien été publié dans la presse européenne à ce sujet. Néanmoins, M. Huber aimerait savoir si dans la presse soviétique il a été publié la déclaration ou prétendue déclaration émanant de M. Mowinckel.

Nous ne sommes pas encore en mesure de vous dire quelle sera l'attitude du CICR dans cette affaire, la question devant être portée dans sa prochaine séance du 18 c[ou]r[a]t. Cependant, je puis vous dire d'ores et déjà que d'après mon opinion personnelle, le Comité ne pourra probablement pas laisser la lettre du 26 décembre sans réponse, même si la question du secours passe au second plan. Je suppose que nous devons maintenir notre droit et même notre devoir d'écrire à une Société nationale de la Croix-Rouge sur n'importe quel sujet, même le plus épineux. Il va sans dire que c'est là une opinion personnelle et que la question n'a pas encore été discutée par le Comité.

Le Président vous demande s'il vous est possible de nous faire part de vos impressions dans cette affaire. Avez-vous déjà entendu des échos de la lettre du 26 décembre? Est-ce que l'ASCCR a fait paraître une notice dans la presse? Cette lettre a-t-elle eu une répercussion dans votre activité?

Veuillez considérer ma lettre comme personnelle et confidentielle pour que la décision du Comité ne soit pas préjugée d'une façon ou d'une autre.

Pour votre information j'ajoute que nous n'avons donné jusqu'ici aucune information à la presse.

Veillez croire, Cher Monsieur, à mes compliments les meilleurs et à mes sentiments les plus amicaux.

Sidney H. BROWN  
Secrétaire au C.I.C.R.

**No. 67: 13 January 1934**

*Mowinckel to Huber: denies Enoukidze's claim that he had publicly apologized for having been misled about the famine in Ukraine.*

Ministère des Affaires Étrangères

Oslo, le 13 janvier 1934.

Monsieur le Professeur Dr. Max Huber,  
Président du Comité International de la Croix-Rouge

Monsieur le Président,

J'ai l'honneur de vous accuser réception de votre lettre du 4 de ce mois, en réponse à laquelle je me permets de porter à votre connaissance ce qui suit :

Ce ne peut être dû qu'à un malentendu lorsque Monsieur Enoukidzé, Président des Sociétés de la Croix et de Croissant rouge de l'URSS, dans sa lettre du 26 décembre dernier dit que « M. Mowinckel, initiateur de l'examen de ce problème par le Conseil des Nations, a déjà eu l'occasion d'exprimer publiquement son regret d'avoir été induit en erreur par des informateurs pas consciencieux, hostiles à l'Union Soviétiste ».

Comme vous comprendrez aisément, je n'ai fait aucune déclaration d'une telle portée à la presse. Ce que j'ai fait comprendre aux journaux norvégiens, c'est que l'initiative prise par moi et les autres représentants au Conseil de la Société des Nations était due aux nombreuses pétitions et demandes qui m'avaient été adressées en ma qualité de Président de Conseil et d'après lesquelles une famine étendue régnerait dans l'Ukraine, mais que ni moi ni les autres membres du Conseil ne pouvaient à ladite époque savoir comment la situation était réellement. C'était précisément pour être renseigné d'une manière authentique sur ce point qu'on avait décidé de saisir la Croix-Rouge de la question.

En vous exprimant mes meilleurs remerciements de l'intérêt que vous avez bien voulu porter à cette affaire qui présente de si grandes difficultés, je

vous prie d'agréer, Monsieur le Président, les assurances de ma très haute considération.

[signed :] *Johan Ludwig Mowinckel*

**No. 68: 13 January 1934**

*Wehrlin to Clouzot: clarifies confusion in past correspondence; shows embarrassing situation for the Soviets and asks for clarification concerning Erukidze's allegation of Mowinckel's apology.*

Comité International de la Croix-Rouge  
Siège central à Genève (Suisse)  
Délégation en URSS.  
Moscou, Iljinka, Verkhnie Torgovye Riady ;  
2-me étage № 126  
Adresse Télégraphique : INTERROTKREUZ  
T. 96-41  
No. 327

Moscou, le 13 janvier 1934

CONFIDENTIELLE

Monsieur Etienne CLOUZOT  
Chef du Secrétariat du C.I.C.R.  
Genève

[in pencil :] *répondu le*  
*23/1/34*

Cher Monsieur Clouzot,

J'ai l'honneur de vous confirmer votre télégramme d'hier № 8731, ainsi que ma réponse de ce jour, № 1205, ainsi conçue :

“Votre 8731 navré malentendu évident interprétation

“rapport 10287 excuses exprimé pas clairement lettre suit.

En effet je suis extrêmement désolé d'avoir causé en dérangement inutile au comité international de la Croix-Rouge, faute de m'être exprimé assez nettement.

En disant “fort de certains témoignages inattendus et venus si à propos” j'avais particulièrement en vue les observations optimistes si non enthousiastes émanant de personnalités des plus connues et publiées cet automne.

Comme pendant mon séjour à Genève on a parlé plusieurs fois de l'influence défavorable de pareilles publications sur les possibilités de

l'action projetée de secours en Ukraine, je me suis servi de cette formule par trop brève, je le reconnais.

J'aime à penser qu'il serait superflu d'indiquer mon opinion sur la situation d'ici ; elle est très nettement exprimée tant dans mes lettres pendant ces trois dernières années que dans l'exposé que j'ai eu l'honneur de faire à la séance du Comité International de la Croix-Rouge.

Dans mon rapport № 10287 je me suis permis une fois de plus de l'affirmer (excusez que je me cite moi-même) : "situation inattaquable du point de vue des faits" par rapport à la lettre du C.I.C.R., "contenu quelque peu embarrassant" pour les démentis obligés de l'ASCCR.

Je vous serais infiniment reconnaissant de me renseigner sur le sens de la phrase employée par l'ASCCR dans la lettre du 26 décembre : "M. Mowinkel, initiateur de ce problème par le Conseil des Nation, a déjà eu l'occasion d'exprimer publiquement ses regrets". Pour moi cette remarque est incompréhensible.

Veillez transmettre au Comité et accepter vous-même mes regrets pour le dérangement involontairement causé.

Je vous prie d'agréer, cher Monsieur Clouzot, l'assurance de mes sentiments de plus dévoués.

[signed :] V. Wehrlin

Délégué du CICR en URSS

(V. Wehrlin)

**No. 69: 15 January 1934**

*Metropolitan Antoni to ICRC: information about famine in Russia comes from various sources; requests ICRC to organize famine relief.*

COMITÉ GÉNÉRAL D'AIDE  
AUX VICTIMES DE LA FAMINE  
EN RUSSIE

2/15 janvier 1934  
Sremski Karlovci

AU COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX ROUGE

[in pencil:] r[epondu] 21/2/34

GENÈVE

Les nombreuses informations, concernant les souffrances de la famine de la population du sud de la Russie, ont été la cause de l'organisation des comités ayant pour but l'aide à nos malheureux compatriotes. Des comités pareils ont été organisés grâce à l'initiative de l'Église Orthodoxe Russe. À la tête de

ces comités se trouve le Comité Général de Belgrade, ayant pour Président d'Honneur Sa Sainteté le Patriarche Varnava de Serbie.

Nous ne doutons pas que la Croix Rouge Internationale, qui a acquit une notabilité honorable par son aide généreux aux souffrants dans tout les pays du monde, portera toute son attention et sa pitié à la terrible famine qui régné sur le territoire de la Russie. Que cette famine a atteint une proportion inconnue jusqu'à présent nous l'apprenons des nombreuses lettres de nos compatriotes. Les derniers mois les journaux ont publié quelques centaines de ces lettres. En Allemagne et en Bulgarie ont lieux des expositions entièrement consacrées à la famine et à Berlin il y avait une vitrine contenant des lettres authentiques des colonistes allemands, témoignant que leurs auteurs souffraient d'une terrible famine. La famine atteint une telle intensité que les cas d'anthropophagie deviennent de plus en plus fréquents. Nous pouvons mettre à la disposition de la Croix Rouge Internationale de nombreux matériaux conformant le susdit. Il est à remarque que l'horrible famine dévaste des villages entiers et diminue la population de plusieurs ville de 50%, ce qui est aussi constaté par le Conseiller de l'Ambassade Allemande à Moscou M. Otto Schiller, ainsi que par l'israélite M. Harry Lang et sa femme, correspondants du journal juif "Vorwärts" (New York). Enfin la preuve indubitable de l'existence de la famine est le fait que les émigrés russes, vivant en Europe, sont forcés d'envoyer à leurs parents en Russie des vivres. Ce n'est que le manque des produits dans un pays, qui peut faire naître un tel genre de secours. Personne n'aurait l'idée d'envoyer un ou deux kilos de farine en France ou en Suisse. Il faut prendre en considération que le peu de provisions qui se trouve en Russie est distribué seulement entre une certaine partie de la population, tandis que l'autre partie, qui est la plus grande est considérée comme "koulak", d'autant plus le clergé, sont complètement privés de ration.

Tout ce qui est précité sera conformé par plusieurs matériaux qui seront transmis au Comité de la Croix Rouge par notre représentant l'Archiprêtre S. Orloff.

Nous espérons que convaincu par ces données incontestables de l'existence en Russie d'une terrible famine, qui dépasse la famine de 1921, la Croix Rouge Internationale créera une organisation de secours dans un très large cadre.

Nous savons parfaitement que cette décision peut être liée à des pourparlers préalables ainsi qu'aux recherches de nouvelles données incontestables, mais il est à désirer que cette bonne intention, réalisée même dans des dimensions modestes puisse présentement atteindre les malheureux affamés.

Mais si on l'effectue par voie ordinaire, c'est-à-dire par envoyant l'argent par le Torgsin, un trop grand pourcentage sera déduit au nom des impôts soviétiques. Par conséquent, nous prions la Croix Rouge Internationale de se changer des à présent de l'intermédiaire, en transmettant nos envois sous forme différentes et sous Votre titre par Votre représentant à l'U.S.S.R.

[signed :] *Président : Métropolitaine Antoine*  
*Secrétaire : Comte G. Grabbé*

**No. 70: 16 January 1934**

*Wehrlin to Brown: Mowinckel's denial of Enoukidze's allegations may provoke a vehement reaction in Soviet press; nothing in Soviet papers yet.*

[On printed ICRC (Moscow) Letterhead. (See Doc. 68) – RS]

No. 710

Moscou, le 16 janvier 1934

PERSONNELLE

Monsieur Sidney H. BROWN  
 Secrétaire AU C.I.C.R.  
Genève

[in pencil :] *répondu le*  
*23/1/34*

Cher Monsieur Brown,

Votre si aimable lettre du 6 janvier, CR 203 GV, m'a procuré le plus grand plaisir. J'étais extrêmement sensible à la courtoise attention que Monsieur le Président a bien voulu me témoigner.

C'est avec un très vif plaisir que j'ai pris connaissance de vos considérations par rapport à la réponse de l'ASCCR du 26 décembre.

L'allusion faite au sujet du changement d'opinion de M. Mowinckel m'a également frappé, – je me réfère à ma lettre du 13 janvier, No 327, à N. Clouzot.

La situation de l'ASCCR serait des plus embarrassante en cas d'un démenti opposé par M. Mowinckel à cette allégation qui aurait alors un caractère fort audacieux.

Comme le courrier m'apportant votre lettre du 6 janvier est arrivé hier soir et que j'expédie la présente poste dans la matinée, je n'ai pas encore pu faire d'investigations quant à des publications dans la presse soviétique sur cette correspondance. Mais, connaissant les usages d'ici, je ne puis admettre que la lettre de l'ASCCR, vu qu'elle traite d'une question de prestige d'une si grande importance politique, ait pu paraître dans quelque journal autre que les "Izvestié" ou la "Pravda". Or dans ces journaux-ci rien n'a paru.

Je ne puis être aussi affirmatif au sujet de quelque entrefilet ayant trait à une prétendue déclaration de M. Mowinckel.

Je suis d'avis que les milieux d'ici ne sont pas du tout enclins à donner à cette question si ingrate pour eux une publicité avant qu'ils ne la jugent inévitable, – voir mon rapport du 19 décembre dernier, No. 10287. Seulement dans le cas où ils y seront forcés, ils recourront à la presse, mais alors ils le feront dans la manière la plus véhémement, en niant tout et en alléguant que l'intervention de M. Mowinckel est due à des raisons purement politiques.

Cette conduite leur sera dictée par des considérations de prestige, comme on le compren ici, et de propagande.

Vous m'excuserez du style un peu hâché de cette lettre écrite à la hâte.

Vous remerciant encore une fois pour votre bonne lettre, je vous prie de croire, cher Monsieur Brown, à mes sentiments très cordialement et sincèrement dévoués.

[signed:] *V. Wehrlin*

Délégué du CICR en URSS

(V. Wehrlin)

**No. 71: 13 January 1934**

*N. de Haller requests CICR support of fund raising for starving Swiss nationals in USSR, to counter opposition from the socialist parties.*

N. DE HALLER

Pasteur

ST-LIVRES (VAUD) SUISSE

TEL. AUBONNE 78.157

Le 17 janvier 1934

Secrétariat de la Croix Rouge International

Genève

Monsieur,

Je m'occupe des œuvres de secours aux chrétiens de Russie. C'est à ce titre que je vous écris.

La presse socialiste de notre pays met en doute l'opportunité de ces secours; et je constate qu'une partie de la population a été entraînée par ces dires.

Au moment d'ouvrir l'exposition de l'œuvres des Sans Dieu à Lausanne, exposition qui doit avoir le but pratique d'augmenter les dons en faveur des chrétiens de Russie, et particulièrement des suisses de Russie, je vous serais reconnaissant si vous pouviez me donner une déclaration courte attestant la nécessité de ces secours.

Si vous croyez pouvoir me donner cette déclaration, vous voudrez bien me dire si vous m'autorisez à le dire ou l'afficher publiquement.

Agréez, Monsieur, mes très respectueuses salutations.

N. de Haller

**No. 72: 23 January 1934**

*Wehrlin informs Brown that nothing has appeared in the Soviet press on the ICRC-ASCRCRS correspondence regarding the famine.*

[On printed ICRC (Moscow) Letterhead. (See Doc. 68) – RS]

No. 912

Moscou, le 23 janvier 1934

CONFIDENTIELLE

Monsieur Sidney H. BROWN

Secrétaire au C.I.C.R.

Genève

Cher Monsieur Brown,

Faisant suite à ma lettre du 16 du courant, № 710, je dois dire que jusqu'ici je n'ai pu découvrir aucune publication dans la presse soviétique ayant trait à l'échange de lettres entre le Comité International de la Croix-Rouge et l'ASCCR par rapport à la démarche de Monsieur le Président Mowinckel.

Veuillez agréer, cher Monsieur Brown, l'expression de mes sentiments les meilleurs.

[signed :] V. Wehrlin

Délégué du CICR en URSS

(V. Wehrlin)

**No. 73: 24 January 1934**

*Article in a Norwegian newspaper containing an explanation of Mowinckel's statement on the famine in Ukraine.*

SOSIÉTÉ DES NATIONS

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

De la part de M. PELT

Le 24 janvier 1934.

Le *Geteborg Handels – ooh Sjöfartstidning* du 11 Novembre publie un article sur la situation précaire en Russie. L'article raconte comment M. Mo-winkel, à l'occasions de la documentation ukrainienne au sujet de la détresse dans ce pays, a proposé de mettre l'affaire à l'ordre du jour du conseil, mais que celui-ci, dans une séance secrète, a hésité pour les raisons formelles (parce que la Russie n'était pas membre de la S.D.N.) a décidé de mettre l'affaire entre les mains de la Croix Rouge.

Le journal raconte comment les cercles d'église ont entrepris des actions pour venir en aide en Russie, – qu'entre autres les comités suédois de l'union mondiale luthérienne a rédigé un appel à ce sujet, soulignant le fait, que des milliers de personnes en Russie vont vers une mort lente de faim, et que la famine règne en Russie, – que la presse mondiale en dehors de la Russie avait déjà donné des renseignements sur la famine en Russie et les épidémies qui en résultaient, mais que ce n'était que quand une action internationale d'aide d'une certaine envergure commençait, que la Russie a, par ses représentants officiels à l'Étranger, nié toute existence de famine en Russie, en soulignant que le pays avait eu une récolte très satisfaisante. La Russie ne s'était cependant pas déclarée avant que l'on avait pu se servir de la nouvelle récolte.

Les défenseurs de la Russie ont maintenu, dit l'auteur, que les indications dans la presse anglaise concernant la famine et les épidémies avant la récolte, étaient fausses, inventées par les ennemis de la Russie. Le journal trouve que la conception diverse que l'on a à l'étranger au sujet de la situation en Russie est moins compréhensible maintenant que l'on a l'occasion d'étudier la vie en Russie sur place. Il croit que la différence d'opinion dépend pour grande partie de la prédisposition des auteurs, comment ils sont disposés vis-à-vis de l'expérience des soviets, pour ou contre. Il faut cependant se souvenir, dit le journal, qu'il existe un grand nombre d'observateurs qui s'efforcent d'être objectifs, mais que même de leur description il est difficile de se présenter la véritable situation. On ne peut naturellement pas compter ni Bernard Shaw, ni Herriot parmi ces observateurs impartiaux, car volontairement ou non, ils ont fait des déclarations dans des buts spéciaux et on sait que leurs expériences en Russie sont aussi fugitives et superficielles que leur voyage fut bien arrangé.

L'article donne diverses raisons pour faire comprendre combien il est difficile de se faire une idée des réalités, pour celui qui voudrait faire un compte-rendu objectif de la situation en Russie. Il explique que le plus que l'on puisse faire, c'est de chercher des renseignements dans les sources qui pour des motifs différents semblent être les plus véridiques et faire une comparaison de certains faits. La presse soviétique présente à cet effet une source d'une grande valeur – pas par ses louanges de ce qui a été fait, mais par ses critiques. On doit pourtant ici aussi se rappeler, que la presse soviétique exerce sa critique contre les défauts de la situations pour pousser la population à faire de plus grand efforts.

Vu de ces points de départ on peut constater, dit le journal, que de grandes régions rurales de la Russie ont souffert de manque de vivres au commencement de l'hiver et que vers le printemps et en été, une véritable famine s'est présentée. Le tragique en était que ces régions étaient les plus peuplées et les plus fertiles en ce qui concerne les blés. C'était l'Ukraine, les districts autour du Volga au milieu et au sud, et la Caucase du Nord, qui d'ordinaire sont le grenier de la Russie. C'était aussi en effet les régions qui ont été soumises à la collectivité d'une manière énergique et sans scrupules et où les « fabriques de bestiaux et des céréales » étaient organisées. Ces régions n'avaient pas une récolte spécialement mauvaise l'année dernière (1932) pas de catastrophes de la nature, comme sécheresse, ou d'autres difficultés climatiques. La raison de la famine était simplement, que le système de collectivité ne réussit pas : l'organisation des ouvriers dans des collectivités était défectueuse, le manque de chevaux et de bœufs pour l'agriculture (résultat du système de collectivité par des moyens coercitifs) qui n'avaient pas pu être remplacés par des machines, – et ajoutés à cela, il y avait l'opposition passive des paysans.

La rentrée ordinaire des blés dans le grenier de l'État fut exécutée sans prendre en considération le mauvais résultat de la récolte. Cette rentrée a été depuis 1928 menée après le principe, qu'il fallait selon les circonstances locales et les moyens de force dont on disposait, tirer tout ce que l'on pouvait des paysans. Tout cela se faisait, comme il se fait toujours en Russie, après un « plan », et si l'on pouvait obtenir plus une fois que ce plan était réalisé, on créait tout de suite un nouveau plan, qu'on appelé « un plan facultatif », créé sous le prétexte que c'était le peuple lui-même qui le demandait dans son désir de vouloir aider à l'État de remplir son grenier.

On avait tiré le plus possible des paysans dans les régions susmentionnées et les conséquences ne se faisaient pas attendre. Les dirigeants au Kremlin ne semblaient pas avoir compris que plus tard le sérieux de la misère, que l'on attribuait comme à l'ordinaire à des saboteurs et des ennemis de l'État. On se souvient des exécutions de fonctionnaires, de dirigeants de l'administration des céréales, de déportations etc. etc., et de la publication d'un plan de création de colonies pour l'agriculture et l'élevage de bestiaux, entre autres en Sibérie. Pour réaliser le plan de faire entrer les céréales, le Caucase du Nord fut déclaré en état de siège et le gouvernement commençait la destruction méthodique des communautés cosaques du pays. Des villes entières furent détruites, les populations envoyées dans des camps de prisonniers ou dans des régions éloignées de la Sibérie. Les districts dévastés et dépeuplés de cette manière, furent peuplés de nouveau par des paysans pauvres que l'on transporta d'autres régions. De cette manière un de peuples le plus fier et le plus indépendant de la Russie, les cosaques, qui s'étaient opposés à la terreur de système de collectivité, furent dispersés et brisés. Il va de soi que ces mesures n'ont pas contribué à améliorer le rendement de l'agriculture.

La famine augmenta, des milliers de personnes s'enfuirent dans les villes, ce qui avait pour résultat l'introduction du régime de passeports pour pouvoir entrer dans les lieux centraux et les districts industriels. Cela accentuait la misère pour les milliers de personnes qui devaient errer sur les chemins.

La population de ces régions (Ukraine, Caucase du Nord, Volga au sud, Kazakhstan et l'Asie centrale) pouvaient partout être divisée en trois groupes en ce qui concerne la famine : les mourants, les faibles par manque de nourriture qui se trouvaient parmi ceux qui ont une part dans les provisions restreintes de l'État et les ouvriers responsables, (militaires Chéka, les hauts fonctionnaires etc.) qui survivaient à l'hiver d'une manière assez tolérable. C'est pourquoi ce n'est pas juste de parler d'une famine générale. Il faut comprendre la Russie pour oser déclarer, que la décision de se laisser mourir par la famine était une dernière protestation politique contre les bolchéviques.

En juillet commençait la meilleure période attendue.

En ce qui concerne la récolte de l'année, il y a deux mesures prises qu'il faut mentionner. D'abord l'organisation politique avec une discipline presque militaire. L'autre mesure prise est un changement dans l'impôt payé en nature qui a été décrété en janvier dernier. Selon cette méthode, l'agriculteur doit payer environ 30% de la quantité que le gouvernement décide d'avance doit être le produit de la culture d'un certain aréal que le gouvernement indique d'avance. L'impôt n'est pas payé, ni d'après l'aréal que l'on a vraiment cultivé, ni d'après la récolte.

Les paysans doivent en outre remettre 20% environ de la totalité de la récolte à la station de machines et de tracteurs de l'État pour la location d'outils. Ils doivent payer la semence, etc. etc. On compte que les collectivistes doivent donner 60 à 80% de la récolte totale à l'État. La nouvelle forme d'impôt que l'on déclarait être une concession importante aux paysans, n'est en réalité qu'une manière comme la militarisation et l'étatisation de l'agriculture, de faire de sorte que les paysans fassent tout leur possible pour travailler la campagne d'une manière effective.

La récolte de cet été a été bonne, mais cela ne donne pas de sécurité pour l'hiver à venir. La presse soviétique signale qu'il y a des grandes difficultés pour la moisson à cause de mauvais temps, des difficultés pour l'approvisionnement et pour le transport, qui est mal organisé.

De bons observateurs expriment l'opinion qu'il est douteux, malgré la bonne récolte, si le pays va avoir assez de vivres pour l'hiver qui vient.

#### **No. 74: 25 January 1934**

*Excerpt from the Minutes of the ICRC meeting, recording the discussion of Huber's proposal for a response to Enoukidze's letter.*

Séance du 25 janvier 1934 à 14h 15

Présents : M. Max Huber, président	Excusés : Mme Champonière-Chais
W. Werner	M. de Planta
Col. Patry	Mlle Ferrière
Col. Favre	M. Motta
M. de Haller	M. de Meuron
M. Bernard Bouvier	M. Logoz
Col. Audeoud	M. Zangger
Mlle Odier	
M. Boissier	
M. Des Gouttes	
Räber	
M. Chenevrière	
M. Burkhardt	

[. . .]

#### RÉPONSE à L'ASCCR.

La réponse du 26 décembre 1933 de l'ASCCR a été distribué aux membres du CICR.

LE PRÉSIDENT donne lecture de la réponse du 13 janvier de M. Mowinckel à notre lettre du 4 janvier 1934. M. Huber dit qu'en tous les cas, ce n'est pas un aveu. M. Mowinckel n'a certes pas fait des déclarations dans le sens de la lettre de M. Enoukidzé. Fort probablement la lettre de M. Mowinckel est conforme à la réalité. En tous cas, le CICR est couvert par cette lettre. Personnellement, le Président préfère ne pas mentionner cette lettre dans notre réponse à l'ASCCR, quitte à la mentionner éventuellement plus tard.

Le projet du Président est pris comme base de discussion avec les amendements de M. de Haller.

Après discussion, il est adopté un texte qui – aux fins d'une rédaction définitive – sera soumis à M. Werner, en tenant compte des opinions émises.

Le PRÉSIDENT trouve que le CICR devra aussi répondre à la SdN. M. Huber aimerait répondre de la manière la plus sobre et la plus réfléchie, sans longues explications. Si, plus tard, nous devons dublier toute cette correspondance, c'est autre chose. Pour le moment, il est dans l'intérêt de la Croix-Rouge de ne pas saisir la presse de cette triste affaire. Dans ce sens le Président propose un texte de réponse à la SdN.

M. de Haller voudrait aller un peu plus loin, il y a dans le monde une foule de gens qui ignorent ou qui veulent ignorer la misère qui existe en URSS. Nous ne devrions pas craindre de dévoiler la fausseté des soviétiques. Il ne serait pas opposé à ce qu'on publie la lettre de l'ASCCR.

MM. BOUVIER & DES GOUTTES ne sont pas non plus d'accord avec le texte proposé.

M. WERNER propose de dire à la SdN que, par ce réponse, l'ASCCR a écarté notre demande d'intervention. En tous les cas, il faut faire très attention de ne pas nous laisser envahir par la politique. Il faut tâcher d'être impartial. L'ASCCR ne s'est pas prononcée sur le fond de la question et nous n'avons pas le droit d'interpréter leur réponse dans ce sens.

M. BURCKHARD demande pourquoi nous ne transmettrions pas la lettre de l'ASCCR à la SdN.

LE PRÉSIDENT voudrait l'éviter, vu le ton de cette lettre impertinente et perverse.

Après discussion, le texte du président est accepté avec quelques légères modifications.

Au sujet de la réponse au cardinal-archevêque de Vienne, LE PRÉSIDENT trouve qu'on pourra lui répondre selon la même formule. Ceci est approuvé.

A titre général, M. Bernard BOUVIER ajoute que le CICR ne devrait pas quelquefois avoir peur de commettre des imprudences si cela nous paraît utile aux fins humanitaires.

LE PRÉSIDENT voudrait néanmoins maintenir le contact avec les gouvernements et les Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge. En tant que CROIX-ROUGE, le CICR ne pourra pas s'opposer, à l'intérieur d'un pays, à la volonté de la Société nationale de ce pays. Aussi longtemps qu'il y a dans un pays une Société reconnue de la Croix-Rouge, il faudrait travailler avec elle.

#### **No. 75: 26 January 1934**

*Clouzot to Huber: sends final draft of letter to Enoukidze for signature.*

26 janvier 1934

M. Max HUBER

#### **NOTE SUR LA RÉPONSE À L'ALLIANCE D'URSS**

Ci-inclus je me permets de soumettre à votre signature la réponse à l'Alliance des Croix et Croissant Rouges de l'U.R.S.S., revue ce matin par M. Werner. Si cette lettre à votre approbation elle pourra partir directement de Zürich ; j'y joins une enveloppe toute affranchie.

Nous nous proposons d'envoyer demain à M. Wehrlin, par la valise diplomatique, un double de cette lettre; nous lui en enverrons également un second exemplaire pour voie postale ordinaire.

1 annexe

Chef du Secrétariat

**No. 76: 26 January 1934**

*Max Huber to Avel Enoukidze: surprised by Soviet grief over CICR's request of information; had no knowledge of any retraction by Mowinckel; takes note of Soviet refusal to discuss the subject of enquiry; defends the right of the CICR to seek information necessary for its humanitarian work.*

26 janvier 1934

Monsieur A. ENOUKIDZÉ  
Président du Comité Exécutif de l'Alliance  
Des Sociétés de la Croix et du Croissant rouges de l'U.R.S.S.  
MOSCOU

Monsieur le Président,

J'ai l'honneur de vous accuser réception de votre lettre du 26 décembre répondant à la nôtre du 12 octobre.

Le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge regrette vivement et ne comprend pas que sa demande de renseignement vous ait causé le chagrin auquel vous faites allusion. Il en est d'autant plus surpris qu'il a suivi la tradition en s'adressant directement à vous, car la franchise est nécessaire à l'étroite et confiante collaboration entre les organisations de Croix-Rouge.

Vous nous reprochez de nous être adressés à votre Société alors que selon vous M. le Président Mowinckel aurait exprimé "publiquement son regret d'avoir été induit en erreur par des informateurs pas consciencieux hostiles à l'Union Sovietiste". Permettez-nous de vous faire observer qu'à aucun moment, ni avant ni après le 12 octobre, date de notre lettre, nous n'avons eu la moindre connaissance de déclarations de M. Mowinckel telles que celles auxquelles vous vous référez. Nous n'avons, d'autre part, reçu aucune communication de la Société des Nations qui nous permette de penser que sa démarche auprès de notre Comité soit devenue sans objet. Comme vous ne dites pas quand ni où les déclarations de M. Mowinckel auraient été faites, nous ne sommes pas en mesure de savoir si l'on pouvait s'attendre à ce que nous soyons informés.

Sur la base de ces constatations nous avons le devoir de repousser formellement comme injustifié le grave reproche que vous avez cru pouvoir nous faire dans la première partie de votre lettre.

En ce qui concerne votre refus de nous donner un renseignements sur le fond de la question que nous nous sommes permis de vous soumettre à la suite de la démarche du Conseil de la Société des Nations, nous en prenons acte.

Mais d'autre part, le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge attache le plus haut prix à la faculté qui lui a toujours été reconnue de s'adresser aux

Sociétés nationales de les prier de lui fournir, si possible, des renseignements sur les questions dont il est saisi et qui, par leur nature, rentrent dans le domaine de son activité humanitaire. Il est évident que le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge se doit de procéder avec la plus impartiale courtoisie et d'éviter de préjuger d'une manière quelconque la question sur laquelle il demande des renseignements. Nous croyons ne pas nous être départis de cette règle dans notre lettre du 12 octobre.

Pour accomplir la mission qui est essentiellement la sienne, il demeure indispensable que le Comité international de la Croix-rouge puisse, comme il l'a toujours fait, prendre librement des informations auprès des sociétés nationales sans risquer de troubler par là ses rapports harmonieux avec elles.

Veillez agréer, Monsieur le président, les assurances de ma considération la plus distinguée.

Max HUBER, Président

**No. 77: 26 January 1934**

*Huber to President of League of Nations: Soviet answer of 26 December renders impossible any work on the matter raised by Mowinckel in his letter of 3 October last.*

26 janvier 1934

À Son Excellence  
Monsieur le Président du Conseil de la  
Société des Nations  
Genève

Monsieur le Président,

Comme suite à notre lettre du 3 octobre répondant à la vôtre du 30 septembre, nous avons l'honneur de vous informer qu'en date du 12 octobre 1933 nous avons écrit, selon les traditions suivies dans des situations analogues, à la Société nationale directement intéressée, à savoir l'Alliance des Croix et Croissants-Rouges de l'Union des Républiques socialistes soviétiques, afin d'obtenir des informations de cette Société.

La réponse que nous avons reçue le 3 janvier datée de Moscou le 26 décembre 1933, nous amène à constater que dans les circonstances présentes, le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge se trouve dans l'impossibilité de développer quelque action que ce soit et, par conséquent, de donner suite à cette affaire.

Veillez agréer, Monsieur le Président, les assurances de ma très haute considération.

Max HUBER, Président

**No. 78: 26 January 1934**

*Huber informs Cardinal Innitzer that the Soviets' reply to CICR's enquiry concerning the famine further action in that regard impossible.*

26 janvier 1934

Son Éminence le Cardinal INNITZER

Archevêque de Vienne

Erzbischöfliches Palais

Rotenturmstrasse, 2

VIENNE I

Monseigneur,

Comme suite à notre lettre du 4 janvier, nous avons l'honneur de porter à la connaissance de Votre Éminence qu'en date du 12 octobre 1933 nous avons écrit, selon les traditions suivies dans des situations analogues, à la Société nationale directement intéressée, à savoir l'Alliance des Croix et Croissant Rouges de l'union des Républiques socialistes soviétistes, afin d'obtenir des informations de cette Société.

La réponse que nous avons reçue le 3 janvier, datée de Moscou le 26 décembre 1933, nous amène à constater que dans les circonstances présentes, le comité international de la Croix-Rouge se trouve dans l'impossibilité de développer quelque action que ce soit et, par conséquent, de donner suite à cette affaire.

Daigner agréer, Monseigneur, les assurances de ma haute considération.

Max HUBER, Président

**No. 79: 26 January 1934**

*Clouzot to Wehrlin: sends copy of Huber's reply to Enoukidze.*

26 janvier 1934

Monsieur W. WEHRLIN

Délégué du C.I.C.R. en U.R.S.S.

MOSCOU

Cher Monsieur,

Nous vous envoyons, sous ce pli, un exemplaire de la lettre que nous envoyons à l'Alliance des Sociétés de la Croix et du Croissant Rouges de l'U. R. S. S. en réponse à la sienne du 26 décembre.

Nous vous prions d'agréer, cher Monsieur, l'assurance de nos sentiments très dévoués.

1 annexe.

Chef du Secrétariat

**No. 80: 26 January 1934**

*Clouzot to N. de Haller: refuses permission to use ICRC name in famine relief drive by de Haller's parish.*

26 janvier 1934

Monsieur N. de HALLER

Pasteur

St. Livres (VAUD)

Monsieur,

Comme suite à ma lettre du 23 c[ou]r[an]t., j'ai le regret de vous informer qu'il nous est impossible de vous autoriser à mettre en avant le nom du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge. Monsieur R. de Haller vous parlera de tout ceci à l'occasion.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur, l'assurance de notre considération la plus distinguée.

Chef du Secrétariat

**No. 81: 30 January 1934**

*Huber to Mowinckel: thanks for reply to Enoukidze's letter; did not use Mowinckel's reply; sends Mowinckel a copy of his letter to the current President of the League of Nations.*

30 janvier 1934

Son Excellence

Monsieur MOWINCKEL

Président du Conseil des Ministres

Ministère des Affaires étrangères

Oslo

Monsieur le Président,

J'ai l'honneur de vous accuser réception de votre lettre du 18 c[ou]r[an]t et je n'ai pas manqué de donner connaissance à notre Comité dans sa dernière séance.

Le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge m'a prié de vous exprimer sa vive gratitude pour votre déclaration si catégorique sur la question soulevée par M. Enoukidzé, Président de l'Alliance des Croix et Croissant-Rouges de l'URSS.

En répondant à M. Enoukidzé nous n'avons pas voulu toutefois faire état de votre lettre, nous réservant d'y revenir, avec votre assentiment, si le développement ultérieur de notre correspondance le nécessitait.

Je me permets d'adresser à Votre Excellence, sous ce pli, copie de la lettre et je viens d'envoyer au Président en exercice du Conseil de la Société des Nations.

Veillez agréer, Monsieur le Président, les assurances de ma très haute considération.

Max HUBER, Président

**No. 82: 3 February 1934**

*Joseph Avenol, Gen. Sec. of the League of Nations thanks Huber for the letter regarding the Ukrainian famine; the letter was sent to Mowinckel.*

Service télégraphique : NATIONS GENEVE

COMITÉ DES NATIONS

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

En la réponse prière de rappeler

Please quote ref. No. in reply  
No. 1/7005/2692  
Geneva, February 3rd, 1934.

Monsieur Max Huber,  
Président of the International  
Committee of the Red Cross,  
Promenade du Pin,  
Geneva

I have the honour to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your letter of February 26<sup>th</sup>, 1934, written in reply to letter of 30<sup>th</sup> September 1933, by His Excellency Monsieur J. L. Mowinckel, then President of the Council of the League of Nations, relevant to the questions of the famine in the Ukraine. I

have not failed to forward to his Excellency Monsieur Mowinckel a copy of your letter.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

[signed:] *J. Avenol*

Secretary-General

**No. 83: 12 February 1934**

*Mowinckel to Avenol: thanks for copy of Huber's letter regarding the Ukrainian famine; disappointed that ICRC stopped further action.*

Monsieur le Secrétaire général

De la Société des Nations

GENÈVE

Ministère des Affaires Etrangères

Oslo, le 12 février 1934

Monsieur le Secrétaire général,

J'ai l'honneur de recevoir votre lettre du 3 de ce mois par laquelle vous avez bien voulu me transmettre copie de la lettre que vous a envoyé le Président du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge, en date du 26 janvier dernier, au sujet de la famine en Ukraine.

En vous remerciant de cette obligeante communication, je ne peux m'empêcher d'exprimer mon profond regret que le Comité n'ait cru pouvoir développer aucune action dans cette affaire.

Veillez etc.

(s.) : J. L. Mowinckel

**No. 84: 12 February 1934**

*Wehrlin to Clouzot: sends clipping from Izvestiia about tax exceptions and other improvements for peasants in Western Siberia.*

[On printed ICRC (Moscow) Letterhead. (See Doc. 68) – RS]

No. 1604

Moscou, le 12 février 1934

CONFIDENTIELLE

Monsieur Etienne CLOUZOT  
 Chef du Secrétariat du C.I.C.R.  
Genève

Cher Monsieur Clouzot,

Me référant à ma lettre du 18 décembre dernier, No 10259, et à votre très aimable réponse du 28 décembre, CR. 203 et CR. 00/4 j'ai l'honneur de vous remettre sous ce pli une nouvelle coupure du journal « Izvestia » du 6 février No 32/5280, élargissant à peu près les mêmes mesures appliquées par la loi du 12 décembre 1933 au territoire d'Extrême Orient sur celui de la Sibérie Occidentale.

Conformément à la teneur de ces dispositions, pour toutes les céréales ainsi que la viande, les pommes de terre, le lait, le beurre et la laine, les prestations en nature, à partir du 15 février 1934, sont abolies dans certaines régions – bien entendue les plus proches de la frontière – de cette énorme province, tandis que pour les autres régions elles sont diminuées d'un tiers, etc. et ceci pendant six ans pour les exploitations collectives (Kolkhossy), et pendant trois années pour les propriétaires privés.

La solde des militaires, soldats et officiers et tous les salaires des fonctionnaires, ingénieurs et ouvriers sont augmentés.

Les motifs de ces privilèges sont déjà indiqués dans mon rapport précité.

Veillez agréer, cher Monsieur Clouzot, l'expression de mes sentiments sincèrement dévoués.

[signed :] V. Wehrlin  
 Délégué du CICR en URSS  
 (V. Wehrlin)

**No. 85: 21 February 1934**

*Werner to Metropolitan Antoine: ARCRCS response precludes any relief by ICRC; individual aid can be sent through ICRC representative in Moscow; any publicity on this subject will only jeopardize further work.*

21 février 1934

Sa Béatitude  
 Monseigneur ANTOINE  
 Métropolitaine Président du Synode des Évêques russes à l'étranger  
 c/o Monsieur le Révérend Père S. ORLOFF  
 75, rue des Eaux-Vives  
GENÈVE

Monseigneur,

En réponse à votre lettre du 2/15 janvier 1934 au sujet de secours en U.R.S.S., nous avons l'honneur de porter à votre connaissance qu'en date du 12 octobre 1933 nous avons écrit, selon les traditions suivies dans des situations analogues, à la Société nationale directement intéressée, à savoir l'Alliance des Croix et Croissant Rouges de l'Union des Républiques socialistes soviétistes, afin d'obtenir des informations de cette Société.

La réponse que nous avons reçue le 3 janvier, datée de Moscou le 26 décembre 1933, nous amène à constater que dans les circonstances présentes, le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge se trouve dans l'impossibilité de développer quelque action que ce soit et, par conséquent, de donner suite à cette affaire.

En ce qui concerne les envois ordinaires de secours à des personnes habitant en U.R.S.S., ils s'effectuent par notre intermédiaire et celui de notre délégation à Moscou, c'est-à-dire par la voie la seule praticable dans les circonstances actuelles. En outre, les personnes désireuses de venir en aide aux habitants de l'U.R.S.S. peuvent envoyer de l'argent pour le fonds de secours de notre délégué à Moscou qui se chargera de le distribuer à des personnes nécessiteuses.

Nous nous permettons d'attirer votre attention sur le fait que toute publication au sujet de ces secours en U.R.S.S. (comme par exemple la notice dont nous joignons la traduction ici, parue dans le "Vozrojdénié" № 3180, Paris le 16 février 1934) risquerait de porter préjudice à cette œuvre de secours.

Daignez agréer, Monseigneur, les assurances de ma haute considération.

1 annexe.

Georges Werner, Vice-Président

**No. 86: 21 February 1934**

*Brown to Biggar, Canadian Red Cross: aid can be sent through ICRC representative in Moscow; Russia denies the existence of a famine and only money can be sent and food bought there.*

21 février 1934

J. L. BIGGAR, M. B.,  
National Commissioner,  
The Canadian Red Cross Society,  
410, Sherbourne Street,  
TORONTO

Dear Sir,

We beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dates December 11, 1933, on the subject of food supplies to people residing in the Union of Socialist Sowiet [sic] Republics and beg you to excuse our answer having been delayed for purposes of information.

As you know, the International Red Cross Committee has a permanent Delegation at Moscow, duly accredited to the Alliance of Sowiet Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, to deal with matters such as you mention in your letter.

It is therefore quite easy for us – indeed it is one of the chief activities of our Delegation in Moscow – to transmit money to people residing in the Union of Socialist Sowiet Republics. If former Russian citizens now living in Canada wish to do so, they can either write to us directly (in Russian, if they choose) or through the Canadian Red Cross and send us the sum they wish to have forwarded. They should also send us the address (i.e. the last known address, with dates, if possible) of the person or persons whom they wish to assist. Our Delegate in Moscow then forwards the money to the addressees or buys them food or other requisites, according to their desire or that of the donator. The addressees' receipts are then returned to the donators through our intermediary.

On the other hand, it is quite impossible for us to transmit anything but money to people living in Russia. The Sowiet authorities, as you are no doubt informed, deny the very existence of a famine in Russia, and the Alliance of Sowiet Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies therefore refuses to consider any action like the one you suggest. Importation of grain, food stuffs, etc. into Russia is either forbidden or subject to duties as would make it prohibitive. On the other hand, according to very reliable information from our Delegate, it is possible to buy the said articles at reasonable prices in Russia, even at the forced rate exchange. We therefore suggest that perhaps you had better inform people desirous of assisting their friends in the Sowiet Union that the easiest and, on the long run, the cheapest way to do so is by sending them money, with which they can buy the necessities of life.

I think I ought to add that the Sowiet authorities are well aware of our activities in transmitting such funds and that – as far as we know – nobody has, up to now, been molested for receiving assistance through our Delegation.

With our best compliments and hoping that these explanation may suffice you to deal with the situation,

Yours faithfully,

Sidney H. Brown

Secretary to the I. R. C. C.

**No. 87: 26 February 1934**

*Wehrlin to Clouzot: thanks for information about the alleged retraction of Mowinckel's letter; read with great interest the article in Norwegian paper.*

*[On printed ICRC (Moscow) Letterhead. (See Doc. 68) – RS]*

No. 1910

Moscou, le 26 février 1934

CONFIDENTIELLE

Monsieur Etienne CLOUZOT  
Chef du Secrétariat du C.I.C.R.  
Genève

Cher Monsieur Clouzot,

Je tiens à vous remercier grandement de vos deux aimables lettres du 23 janvier, CR. 203, et du 10 février, Mis. 54.6.0 Secours, Confidentielle, relatives au prétendu démenti de M. Mowinckel.

J'ai lu avec grand intérêt l'article, en traduction, paru dans un journal socialiste norvégien.

Veillez agréer, cher Monsieur Clouzot, l'expression de mes sentiments sincèrement dévouées.

Délégué du CICR en URSS  
(V. Wehrlin)

**No. 88: 28 February 1934**

*Clouzot to Huber: Mowinckel letter sent by Avenol comes from the Norwegian Ministry, not the President of the League of Nations.*

28 février 1934

NOTE SUR LA FAMINE EN U. R. S. S.

Note pour M. Max HUBER

Le mercredi 28 février 1934, M. D. de Montenach a téléphoné à M. Clouzot, de la part de M. Avenol, pour dire que la lettre de M. Mowinckel, transmise par M. Avenol au C. I. C. R., doit être considérée comme une lettre émanant du Ministre des Affaires Étrangères de Norvège et non pas comme une lettre du Président du Conseil de la Société des Nations.



Monsieur le Vice-Président,

Il vous sera peut-être intéressant de prendre connaissance du document envoyé ci-joint, sous banderole, reproduisant l'impression du voyage en Russie de Mr. et Mrs. Harry Lang, Américains, fait l'automne dernier et qui m'a été communiqué dernièrement de Paris.

Étant donné le triste résultat de la démarche faite par le Comité de la Croix Rouge International à Moscou, que j'avais prévu et escompté au cours de notre dernier entretien à ce sujet, je me demande à quel résultat aboutiront les efforts de la Direction Générale de notre Croix-Rouge à Paris tendant à organiser un Comité Central, mi-International dans l'intérêt des affamés Russes.

Veillez agréer, Monsieur le Vice-Président, assurance de ma haute considération.

Mouravief-Apostol



## REVIEW ARTICLES

HENRY ABRAMSON

### *HOLODOMOR AND HOLOCAUST*

Karel C. Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair: Life and Death in Ukraine under Nazi Rule*. Cambridge and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004. xiii, 463 pp.

Wendy Lower, *Nazi Empire-Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press/United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2005. xviii, 307 pp.

Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern, *The Anti-Imperial Choice: The Making of the Ukrainian Jew*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009. xv, 344 pp.

Myroslav Shkandrij, *Jews in Ukrainian Literature: Representation and Identity*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009. xiv, 265 pp.

*If one attempts to answer the question "What is Ukrainian-Jewish?" à la Derrida, perhaps one would pause at the hyphen between the two words, the "silent witness" concealing mutual antagonisms, pain, hatred, and blood – those indisputable markers of victimized national memories.*

Petrovsky-Shtern, *The Anti-Imperial Choice*

Students reflecting on the dual genocides that Ukraine endured during the twentieth century cannot avoid the cruel paradigm of Ukrainian-Jewish history, in which each group constructs competing and often mutually exclusive narratives of suffering at the hands of the other. Viewed from afar, the pendulum of abuse and violence seems clear: the Jewish *orendars* exploit the Ukrainian peasantry, who exact terrible revenge in 1648-49 and the *Kolivshchyna*; Jewish Russophiles undermine the fledgling Ukrainian state, which is then submerged in the bloody pogroms of 1919. Convinced that the Ukrainian national movement represents a distinct threat both physical and ideological, Jews join the Communist Party, and both engineer and enforce the policies that lead to the Holodomor; Ukrainians retaliate with widespread col-

laboration with the Nazis in the Holocaust. Even the contemporary usage of the term “Holodomor” is clearly influenced by Jewish usage of the term “Holocaust” (although Roman Serbyn points out that the expression “morytyholodom” was used in GPU documents as early as 1933). Viewed from this perspective, the logic of Jewish participation in the NKVD and CPU, as well as the Ukrainian participation in Hilfswillige units assisting the *Einsatzgruppen* and the *Waffen-SS* make brutal sense. The four publications briefly reviewed here each challenge, to some degree, this cyclical understanding of Ukrainian-Jewish history. Our understanding of the mechanics of both the Holodomor and the Holocaust is improved in direct proportion to the amount of attention devoted to this question.

\* \* \*

Karel Berkhoff’s masterful *Harvest of Despair: Life and Death in Ukraine under Nazi Rule* even appears to begin on this note, with a title that seems to read as a subtle allusion to Robert Conquest’s influential work, *Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine*. Berkhoff, a native of the Netherlands who did his doctoral work at the Chair of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Toronto, steps far back from ethnic agendas by stating that his goal was “to write a territorial history, not a national one . . . rather than a study of Ukrainians, it is a study of all its natives.” While the bulk of the book is appropriately devoted to the experience of ethnic Ukrainians, Berkhoff integrates the experience of Jews, Roma, Russians and even ethnic Germans into what he describes as a history “from the bottom up.”

The Holodomor is not within the scope of Berkhoff’s book, but it looms large in the background. Berkhoff, for example, cites an article from the Ukrainian press from 1942 that bitterly notes that the Jews, who “lacked neither gold nor dollars,” did not suffer from hunger during the Holodomor, and quotes the memoirs of an Ukrainian woman from Podolia:

When she was a girl, she insisted that her mother tell her what was happening with the Jews she had seen in the woods. After some hesitation, her mother finally did: German SS men and Ukrainian policemen were forcing the men and women to bury their own children alive, and then the parents would be taken to Germany and turned into soap. To her daughter’s anguished Why?, this peasant woman said, in a monotonous voice, “The Jews killed Christ.” All the while, she had the same stony look as during the Great Famine, when her son perished.

In a chapter entitled “Ethnic Identity and Political Loyalties,” Berkhoff also alludes to the prevalence of this perspective by commenting on how Ukrainians understood who was to blame for the Holodomor: “evidently the

vast majority of Ukrainians in Nazi-ruled Dnieper Ukraine did not collectively blame 'the Russians' for anything. (Complaints about Jews are not relevant here.)" Indeed, this discussion of Ukrainian consciousness of the factors leading to the Holodomor deserves further exploration.

\* \* \*

Wendy Lower's *Nazi Empire-Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine*, even though it studies the same period as *Harvest of Despair*, could not be a more different work. Whereas Berkhoff attempted to take a "bottom-up" approach, Lower's study is very much "top-down:" the principal sources are German-language documents held in Soviet archives (only a handful of Russian and Ukrainian sources are listed in the bibliography; neither Hebrew nor Yiddish sources). Lower places her work in context by arguing that it "builds on Berkhoff's social history because it provides an ideological framework for understanding German aims and behavior in Ukraine." This is a fair and useful assessment, as Berkhoff concentrates on the experience of the natives of Ukraine, while Lower studies the invaders. Nevertheless, even these documents shed some light on the internal dynamic of Ukrainian-Jewish relations. Concentrating on Zhytomyr, Lower demonstrates that the Ukrainian population was, by and large, hesitant to become involved in widespread pogroms, despite pronounced instigation by the Germans (this is confirmed by Berkhoff's research as well). The Ukrainian militia, on the other hand, was often very willing to assist the Nazis with their persecution:

In a village near Chudniv, the Jewish survivor Galina Efimovna Pekerman recalled, the Germans arrived at the end of July and enlisted local Ukrainians to massacre first the Jewish children of the village and then the rest of the Jews (about 800 persons), who were seized and gunned down at a local park. In general, German officials instigated the pogroms, but they preferred not to bloody their own hands since local militiamen (Ukrainian and ethnic German), anti-Semites, and plunderers were so obliging.

Most Ukrainians viewed these collaborators with suspicion because of their excessive brutality. Next to the stiffly uniformed Nazi secret police, who were assumed to be "cultured," the rather ragged local thugs in many ways posed a greater threat to the local population; they could identify individual Jews and carry out personal vendettas with force. In some cases the Germans found that the Ukrainian militia acted against German interests. In the city of Zhytomyr in 1941, the Germans hanged a Russian named Briukhanov because his sadistic attacks against the Jews and others in the population could not be contained. The Germans needed help from the indigenous population, but they also expected obedience and a controllable level of mass violence.

Unfortunately, Lower's emphasis on the Nazi perspective sheds very little light on the Holodomor, or even on the attitudes of the local population and its impact on collaboration. The word "famine" does not occur in the index, reflecting in turn the level of importance the Germans attached to the Holodomor.

\* \* \*

Returning to the theme of the cyclical nature of Ukrainian-Jewish history, Myroslav Shkandrij, in *Jews in Ukrainian Literature: Representation and Identity*, argues that Ukrainians and Jews have suffered from a flawed narrative that "played a very important role in influencing understanding of these [historical] events and in the construction of national identity. Often readers have uncritically taken the literary constructs for reality." Surveying the representation of Jews in Ukrainian literature from Kotliarevsky to the crude publications of the Mizhrehional'na Akademiia Upravlinnia Personalom (an unlikely institution of higher education in Ukraine that has been widely criticized for, among other activities, inviting Ku Klux Klan members to speak on campus), Shkandrij argues that political considerations have motivated Ukrainian political activists (like political activists everywhere) to emphasize portrayals of Jews that advanced specific ideological goals. By contrast, "post independence Ukrainian readers are in fact the first to have the full range of these representations available to them. They are currently mapping the contours of their cultural history and grappling with its meaning for future Ukrainian-Jewish relations." Shkandrij's survey of Ukrainian literature demonstrates the vibrancy and richness of divergent representations of Jews, with nuanced portrayals both negative and positive.

The revisiting of the theme of Jewish participation in collectivization, argues Shkandrij, occurs in a context of "Awakening from History" (the title of one of the chapters in his work), as Ukrainian literature began to examine the Holocaust as well. Shkandrij summarizes Anatolii Dimarov's story of Hryhori Ginsburg, the Jewish secretary of a regional party committee who foolishly writes a letter to Stalin "questioning the wisdom of forced collectivization. He is denounced at a public meeting, removed from his position, and told to surrender his party card. Ginsburg takes out a gun and shoots himself. . . . Other characters are quick to denounce Ginsburg and support the party in order to gain promotion." The task of capturing the realities of the Holodomor and the Holocaust in Ukrainian literature, however, are formidable, due in large part to the long enforced silence on such issues under Soviet rule. Shkandrij cites Oksana Zabuzhko, who "described the contemporary Ukrainian intellectual . . . as playing the role of Fortinbras making his appearance at the end of *Hamlet*, removing the dead bodies, registering everything that has

occurred, and appropriately characterizing the gravity and tragic nature of the events that have gone before.”

\* \* \*

The task is made much easier, however, with the publication of Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern’s brilliant study, *The Anti-Imperial Choice: The Making of the Ukrainian Jew*. A native of Ukraine who studied in Boston and Jerusalem, Petrovsky-Shtern describes himself as one who “teaches in English, speaks in Russian, prays in Hebrew, and dreams in Ukrainian” – based on personal experience, I can add “argues in Aramaic” and, after one notable encounter with a street salesperson in New York, “haggles in Spanish.” Petrovsky-Shtern challenges the received wisdom of traditional Jewish Russotopism, and studies the literary works of Jews who went against the grain and identified with the colonial Ukrainians rather than the imperial Russians. These quirky, but sometimes hugely talented individuals, argues Petrovsky-Shtern, played an important role in the development of civil society in post independence Ukraine:

By virtue of their marginality in cultural discourse, the Ukrainian Jews [i.e., those Jews who identified with Ukrainian rather than Russian culture – H.M.A.] could never become mainstream figures nor could Ukrainian-Jewish literary texts acquire a domineering position in the national culture. The Ukrainian-Jewish discourse was shaped by an inherent tragedy: it was about failure, not triumph. Ukrainian-Jewish poets represented a marginalized and powerless minority affirming the significance of the marginalized and powerless identity within the Ukrainian culture. They underscored an absolute value of the marginality and hybridity. *Because of that, the presence of Ukrainian-Jewish texts in the Ukrainian culture helped resist coercive agendas (either of nationalist or of imperial origin) and contributed to the creation of a democratic and pluralistic cultural space in post-1991 Ukraine* [emphasis added].

Petrovsky-Shtern’s analysis of the treatment of the Holodomor in this literature is extensive. (Indeed, it is Holodomor rather than “famine” or “Great Famine” that is used in the index.) Particularly noted is the treatment of early literary descriptions of the Holodomor in Jewish writings:

Some direct references to the catastrophic effects of the Ukrainian famine may also be found in [Leonid] Pervomais’kyi’s play *The Shtetl Ladeniu*. Perhaps these very references to an altogether prohibited theme, and not merely the abundance of Jewish ideas and metaphors, made both texts, *The Shtetl Ladeniu* and *The Promised Land*, quite im-

possible to print in the Soviet Union after 1933. That Pervomais'kyi raised the issue of famine – he was finishing *The Shtetl Ladeniu* in 1933 when it was in full sway – allows us to place him, together with Osip Mandel'shtam, among those very few who dared raise their voice in favor of the Ukrainian victims of the famine in the midst of the deafening and unanimous silence reigning in the contemporary Soviet literature.

Petrovsky-Shtern's research scope also extends to Russian-language Ukrainian-Jewish writers such as Vassili Grossman, who in a similar vein “emerged as an anti-imperial Jew not only when he, for the first time in Russian literary history, equated the Third Reich with Stalin's regime, but also when he traced the path-breaking parallels between the Jewish victims of the Holocaust and the Ukrainian victims of the early 1930s famine known as the Holodomor.” Petrovsky-Shtern's work is exceptionally rich on in terms of cultural theory, and without exaggeration, it marks the beginning of an entirely new sub-field of study.

The complex and interrelated histories of the Holodomor and the Holocaust in Ukraine require greater scholarly attention. These four publications all serve, in their distinct ways, to advance this scholarly agenda.

*Touro College South, Miami Beach, Florida*

ROMAN PODKUR

*Rozsekrečena pamiat: Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini v dokumentakh GPU-NKVD* [Declassified Memory: The Holodomor of 1932-1933 in Ukraine in GPU-NKVD Documents], comp. V. Borysenko, V. Danylenko, S. Kokin, O. Stasiuk, and Yu. Shapoval. Kyiv: Stylos, 2007. 604 pp.

The publication under review contains unique documents, including operational orders, memoranda, special announcements about the famine in Ukraine, which were issued by the OGPU of the USSR and its affiliate, the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR, information on the public mood, and the results of operations aimed at “the eradication of counterrevolutionary elements.” In bringing these archival materials to the public’s attention, the compilers – Valentyna Borysenko, Vasyl Danylenko, Serhii Kokin, Olesia Stasiuk, and Yuri Shapoval – affirmed that the increase in the amount of data on the famine of 1932-1933 has not been accompanied by a concomitant rise in contemporary society’s awareness of the harm that was inflicted on the Ukrainian nation. This group of scholars anticipated that the publication of documents issued by the former Soviet security services would prove to be a convincing argument in discussions of the causes that led to the genocide against the Ukrainian nation.

It should be noted that this collection of documents was prepared for publication with the assistance of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), which enjoys a rather high level of trust among Ukrainian citizens (in contrast to other state government institutions).<sup>1</sup> The publication of this book was aimed at convincing the general public that the famine of 1932-1933 had a deliberate character and that the Soviet leadership intentionally implemented political actions that led to the mass deaths of Ukrainians.

However, both members of the public and scholars have long discussed the following problem: To what extent can information emanating from the Soviet state security agencies be trusted? Is it reliable? The American scholar Terry Martin has singled out two aspects to which researchers of such archival materials should pay heed: firstly, informational-analytical documents were focused on “negative information” (anti-Soviet statements, rumors, strikes, and so on). But how typical were they? Did the security services intensify the threat of oppositional ideas and actions in order to emphasize their own importance to the political leadership? Martin notes that these types of documents may be evaluated only by comparing them with other types of

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1. For further details, see A. A. Bova, “Riven doviry do politsii (militsii): kros-natsionalni zistavlennia,” *Boroiba z orhanizovanoi zločynnistiu i koruptsiieu (teoria i praktyka)*, no. 13 2006.

documents (Communist Party archives, Soviet records, and archives of military institutions). Secondly, this information reflected the authors' "class awareness," i.e., the events figuring in these documents were evaluated in relation to the authors' interpretation of the Marxist perceptual scheme. The main social groups whose moods were of interest to the Kremlin were workers, peasants, military personnel, national minorities, and intellectuals in the national republics.<sup>2</sup>

Critical analysis of the documents that were issued by the All-Union and the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR in connection with the political-economic situation in agriculture and the Holodomor of the 1930s is a key component of the scholarly discussions taking place in Ukraine today. The compilers of the document collection entitled *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv na Ukraini: ochyma istorykiv, movoiu dokumentiv* [The Famine of 1932-1933 in Ukraine: Through the Eyes of Historians, the Language of Documents] did not even create a separate category for these kinds of documents, but grouped them in thematic clusters that throw light on the political moods of the peasantry.<sup>3</sup> Later on, researchers began focusing on OGPU-GPU documents per se, which were grouped in a separate category and classified according to provenance (territorial and structural subdivisions of the OGPU-GPU), time frame (periodic and special announcements), and subject matter (incidents of starvation; states of mind among the population and the members of the party-Soviet apparatus, the situation on collective farms and in local industry, mortality statistics, and so on).<sup>4</sup> Initially, however, the informational potential of data produced by the Soviet security services was utilized solely to illustrate the mass famine.

Ukrainian scholar Ruslan Pyrih established the parameters of the first critical analysis. As of 2002 he was convinced that the factological materials

2. T. Martin, "Obzory GPU i sovetskie istoriki," in "Sovershenno sekretno": *Lubianka – Stalinu o polozhenii v strane (1922-1934 gg.)* = "Top Secret": *Lubianka to Stalin on the state of the nation (1922-1934)*, vol. 1, pt. 1 (Moscow: In-t rossiiskoi istorii RAN, 2001), pp. 22-24.

3. *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv na Ukraini: ochyma istorykiv, movoiu dokumentiv* (Kyiv: Vyd-vo politychnoi literatury Ukrainy, 1990), pp. 7-9.

4. R. Podkur, "Dokumenty Derzhavnogo Politychnoho Upravlinnia iak dzherele do vyvchennia kolektyvizatsii ta holodu 30-kh rokiv na Podilli," in *Holod 1932-33, 1946-47; Vinnytska oblast: Dokumenty i materialy*, comp. F. Vynokurova and R. Podkur (Vinnytsia: Anteks-U LTD, 1998), pp. 28-34; see also Roman Podkur's "'Vinnytskyi oblasnyi viddil DPU povidomiaie . . .': Suspilno-politychne zhyttia Podillia na pochatku 30-kh rokiv za materialamy DPU," *Z arkhiviv VUChK-GPU-NKVD-KGB*, nos. 1–2 (1997): 90-108; V. Nikolsky, "Represyva diialnist orhaniv GPU pid chas Holodomoriv v USRR (1932-1933 rr.)," *Z arkhiviv VUChK-GPU-NKVD-KGB*, no. 2 (2001): 477-95; V. Petrenko, "Doslidzhennia holodu 1928-1931 rr. za dokumentamy derzhavnogo arkhivu Vinnytskoi oblasti," in *Politychni represii ta holodomory na Vinnychchyni v XX stolitti u konteksti natsionalnoi pamiaty: Materialy obl. nauk-prakt. konferentsii* (Vinnytsia, 24 lystopada 2005 r.), ed. I. S. Hamretsky and Yu. A. Zinko, et al. (Vinnytsia: Knyha-Vega, 2006), pp. 128-42, and elsewhere.

of the OGPU-GPU possess a “rather high degree of reliability, retrospectively fits the historical context, [and] corresponds to the realities of the course of events of the times.”<sup>5</sup> In assessing documents emanating from the Soviet state security services, researchers should be aware that these agencies were controlled by the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) (TsK VKP[B]). Thus, the employees of those agencies were carrying out a definite political directive.

Public criticism of the VKP(B)’s agricultural policies, for example, was viewed as “anti-Soviet” and “kulak.” Efforts to ensure minimal grain stores were perceived as “concealing grain from the state grain deliveries” and “theft,” while spontaneous protests by starving people were viewed as “uprisings” and “strikes and unrest” (*volynky*), and so on. Therefore, Pyrih believed, such documents cannot be regarded as an independent source on the history of the Holodomor owing to their departmental provenance and subjectivity.<sup>6</sup> After analyzing informational-analytical documents of the Soviet Ukrainian GPU, the Ukrainian historian Vasyl Danylenko reached the conclusion that the Chekists showed a certain initiative “with respect to the necessity to resort to radical measures [that were] decisive and unquestionably forceful” in order to put a stop to the social crisis that emerged in the early 1930s.<sup>7</sup>

A few years later Danylenko further developed this train of thought in an article that was published in the well known collective work entitled *The Famine of 1932-1933 in Ukraine: Causes and Consequences*,<sup>8</sup> and, later, in the publication under review. The author classified documents that had been introduced into scholarly circulation into the following groups of sources: normative-legal and regulatory documents; informational-analytical documents (memoranda, information, special announcements, operational compiled reports (bulletins); operational-statistical reporting; archived criminal cases; eyewitnesses’ recollections, which served as material evidence of their “counterrevolutionary activity”; and personal documents and photographs. Therefore, from the typical classification of Soviet security service documents now accessible to scholars Danylenko singled out “operational-

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5. R. Ya. Pyrih, “Dokumenty Derzhavnogo Politychnoho Upravlinnia USRR iak dzherelo istorii Holodomoru 1932-1933 rokiv,” in *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv iak velychezna trahediia ukrainskoho narodu: mater. Vseukr. nauk. konf.*, Kyiv, 15 lystopada 2002 r. (Kyiv: MAUP, 2003), p. 53.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

7. See V. M. Danylenko, “Vidobrazhennia holodomoru 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini u materialakh radianskykh spetssluzhb,” in *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv iak velychezna trahediia*, p. 101.

8. See V. M. Danylenko and V. I. Prystaiko, “Dokumenty Derzhavnoho arkhivu Sluzhby bezpeky Ukrainy iak dzherelo vvychennia holodomoru 1932-1933 rr. v Ukraini,” in *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini: Prychyny ta naslidky*, ed. V. A. Smolii et al. (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2003), pp. 81-98.

statistical reporting,” which had always been assigned to the “informational-analytical group” of sources, as well as recollections, personal documents and photographs listed as “material evidence” in archived criminal cases.

A somewhat different classification was proposed by Ruslan Pyrih: normative-prescriptive, informational, statistical, operational, and archived criminal cases. According to this classification system, operational documents (e.g., special dispatches, “direct line,” and so on) and statistical materials form a separate group. However, Pyrih noted that this classification cannot be considered “pure,” inasmuch as the majority of OGPU-GPU documents contain elements of operational, informational, and statistical information.<sup>9</sup>

Attempts to change the document classification system of sources and to designate new groups of documents attest to the need for deeper source-based research into the informational potential of Soviet security service materials. As for critical attitudes to such documents, the compilers of the present volume, for example, believe that it contains reliable facts and that the course of events described in them corresponds closely to reality. This has been stated in particular by Vasyl Danylenko.

An analysis of the documents published in the present compilation and the investigation into the array of OGPU-GPU measures (the liquidation of the Ukrainian Church, constant “purges” of scholarly-educational institutions, mass arrests and deportations of politically concerned peasants and nationally engaged intellectuals, the creation of mythical anti-Soviet organizations, and the holding of open trials) led Serhii Kokin, in his article “Holodomor v Ukraini ta DPU” [The Holodomor in Ukraine and the GPU], to conclude that the Kremlin organized a genocide that specifically targeted the population of the Ukrainian SSR.

Kokin proposed an intellectual schema, in which he summarized scholarly work that has been completed on the question of “the Holodomor as an act of genocide.” In his opinion, the Ukrainian genocide should be examined on several planes:

- political: the centralization, in the Kremlin’s hands, of governmental powers on the territory of the Ukrainian SSR;
- social: the physical liquidation of individual social strata, which, in the Bolshevik leadership’s view, were impeding the accelerated modernization of Soviet society and the completion of the process of the “population’s proletarianization” as a tool in the liquidation of “petty bourgeois remnants”;

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<sup>9</sup> *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini: dokumenty i materialy*, comp. R. Ya. Pyrih (Kyiv: Vyd. dim “Kyievo-Mohylianska akademiia,” 2007), p. 19.

- sociocultural and spiritual: the eradication of ethnic and national differences; the formation of a new community known as the “Soviet man.”<sup>10</sup>

Naturally, this interpretation of the term “genocide” departs markedly from the limits established by the UN Convention on Genocide of 9 December 1948. However, scholars have long discussed the crucial need to expand the interpretation of the definition of “genocide.” As well, the definition of “genocide” that was adopted in 1948 was the result of a compromise between the Soviet leadership, on one side, and Great Britain and the US, on the other.

In Kokin’s interpretation of the “Holodomor as genocide,” the state security organs were one of the instruments of mass state terror in the early 1930s. As Lazar Kaganovich famously declared, they removed “people in layers.”<sup>11</sup>

The documents contained in the present volume indicate that the highest party-state leadership of the USSR was utterly convinced of the anti-Soviet tendencies of Ukraine’s population. This characterization of actions that were aimed at people’s survival in conditions of escalating famine by the personnel of the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR and members of the party-Soviet apparatus coincided with the assessments of the leaders of the VKP(B) and the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine (KP[B]U). In the numerous documents issued by the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B) and the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR (SNK SRSR) about “necessary threshing and harvest stock-taking” and “protecting the grain from theft,” the peasants’ attempts to secure the barest subsistence level are interpreted as “kulak resistance,” “opportunism,” and agricultural “sabotage.” This is illustrated by the resolution entitled “About the Harvesting Campaign of 1932,” issued by the SNK of the USSR and the TsK VKP(B) on 5 July 1932. It notes the crucial need “to adopt appropriate measures in order to protect the harvest from theft, to carry out scrupulous threshing, to organize strict stock-taking of the harvest, gathering of ears of grain, and so on.”<sup>12</sup>

Viacheslav Molotov and Lazar Kaganovich, who were dispatched to Kharkiv to organize the state grain deliveries, issued similar directives to the Ukrainian leadership. Reporting to Stalin in a letter dated 6 July 1932 concerning discussions of the state grain delivery plan that took place during a meeting of the Politburo of the TsK KP(B) U and the Third All-Ukrainian Party Conference, they wrote: “We categorically rejected a reassessment of the plan, demanding the mobilization of party forces for the struggle against losses, squandering of grain. . . .”<sup>13</sup>

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10. See: S. A. Kokin, “Holodomor v Ukraini ta dPU,” in *Rozsekrechena pamiat: Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini v dokumentakh GPU-NKVD* (Kyiv: Stylos, 2007), pp. 82-83.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

12. *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini*, p. 288.

13. *Stalin i Kaganovich: Perepiska, 1931-1936 gg.*, comp. O. V. Khlevniuk et al. (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2001), p. 219; *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini*, p. 231.

The resolution of the Third All-Ukrainian Party Conference,<sup>14</sup> organized under Molotov and Kaganovich's supervision, demanded that the highest and local party-Soviet apparatus of Ukraine "mercilessly expose opportunists, capitulators, and whiners."<sup>15</sup>

The resolution "About the Organization of the State Grain Deliveries in 1932," adopted by the TsK VKP(B) on 7 July 1932, stated that the kulaks are definitely organizing resistance to the state grain deliveries, and therefore "party organizations should be prepared to break this opposition and, in order for this not to happen, they must carry out the approved state grain delivery plan."<sup>16</sup> The phrase "in order for this not to happen" was a direct order obliging the local apparatus and Soviet organs of law and order, particularly the OGPU-GPU, to employ extraordinary measures with respect to the implementation of the state grain deliveries.

Similar party resolutions that were adopted by the TsK VKP(B) led to the creation of departmental reports by the OGPU-GPU, the Prosecutor's Office, militia, and juridical bodies, all of which incorporated the forms and methods "of influence on the Ukrainian peasantry." In Stalin's well known letter to Kaganovich and Molotov, dated 20 July 1932, about the drafting of the law on the protection of Soviet property and the decree on the collective farm trade, the Soviet leader gave a direct order to the OGPU and its local bodies to place rural areas under strict control and "eliminate all active opponents of the new collective farm order," who are to be sent to a concentration camp. The OGPU leadership was instructed immediately to establish an agentura-informational network aimed at the scrupulous detection of "hostile elements" and the study of the peasants' moods. In Stalin's opinion, the Chekists could launch a mass operation targeting the "class enemy" no earlier than mid-August 1932.<sup>17</sup> On 24 July 1932 Kaganovich wrote to Stalin, informing him that after a meeting held at the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B), the chiefs of the OGPU, headed by Viacheslav Menzhinsky, were summoned to hear a passage from Stalin's letter about the Chekists' main task. The OGPU leadership promised, Kaganovich wrote, that very soon it would develop an appropriate plan of measures and then forward it to Stalin.<sup>18</sup>

The question arises: Why did Stalin initiate a new operation aimed at "the liquidation of counterrevolutionary nests and the rout of kulak groups"? After all, vast numbers of "anti-Soviet elements" had already been eliminated in 1930-1931, when mass deportations were taking place during all-out collec-

14. The conference took place on 6-9 July 1932.

15. *Komunistychna partiia Ukrainy v rezoliutsiakh i rishenniakh z'izdiv, konferentsii i plenumiv TsK*, ed. V. I. Yurchuk *et al.*, vol. 1: (1918-1941) (Kyiv: Polityvdav Ukrainy, 1976), pp. 750-52.

16. *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini*, p. 238.

17. *Stalin i Kaganovich*, pp. 235-36; *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini*, p. 258.

18. *Stalin i Kaganovich*, p. 243.

tivization. These large-scale operations had almost completely “cleansed” the republic of overt and potential “enemies of the Soviet power.”

In late July 1932 the Secret-Political Department of the OGPU, reporting to the highest political leadership of the USSR about the more than 20,000 starving Ukrainian families, notified that between January and July 1932 it had exposed 118 “kulak counterrevolutionary organizations” in the Ukrainian SSR (2,479 people) and 35 groups (562 people) who were accused of “national counterrevolution.” During the reporting period 923 mass protests were recorded. Numerous incidents of peasant unrest, coinciding with departures from collective farms and demands for the issuing of food supplies, were not included in the above tally. The local Chekist apparatus was particularly alarmed by statements made by peasants living in the border *raions* concerning their intentions to cross into neighboring states to seek refuge and food assistance. The OGPU chiefs confirmed that in terms of numbers “of mass anti-Soviet manifestations, Ukraine is in first place.”<sup>19</sup>

One of the memoranda published in the book under review is entitled “About the Organizational-Economic State of Collective Farms according to Materials Studied by the Secret Service on Their Activity for 1931.” Issued by the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR on 29 March 1932, this document, too, confirms that both the peasantry and individual representatives of the local party-Soviet apparatus had an anti-Soviet bent, and that incidents of theft of collective farm property and collective farmers’ refusal to work were on the rise, and so on.<sup>20</sup>

In this author’s opinion, the above-cited facts show that the Soviet leadership had decided to break the resistance of Ukrainian society with the aid of a “Chekist operation.” This operation, which began on 19 November 1932, attained broad sweep.<sup>21</sup> The situation should be analyzed on several planes. First of all, Stalin, who had access to three sources of information (party, Soviet, and OGPU materials), had a sufficiently precise grasp of the agricultural situation in Ukraine (low harvest yields, low level maintenance of agricultural technologies and insufficient material and technical provisions, the peasants’ lack of interest in working on collective farms, idleness and drunkenness of rural administration). He knew for sure that the state grain deliveries would not reach 100-percent completion. Nevertheless, bound by export shipments of grain, he sought, above all, to complete the deliveries and also satisfy the minimal needs of industry, the army, the state apparatus, and the urban population.

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19. *Tragediia sovet'skoi derevni: kollektivizatsiia i raskulachivanie: dokumenty i materialy v 5 tomakh, 1927-1939*, ed. V. Danilov *et al.*, vol. 3 (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2001–), p. 421; *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini*, p. 259.

20. *Rozsekrechena pamiat*, pp. 123-92.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 321.

Second, in possession of OGPU and party memoranda describing peasant moods, Stalin understood that the complete confiscation of grain from the newly established collective farms and independent farmers would spark resistance along the lines of the events that had occurred in 1930.<sup>22</sup> As well, he was certain that the deportations of 1930 and 1931 had eliminated a considerable number of politically active peasants, thereby significantly undercutting the possibility of widespread armed peasant resistance.<sup>23</sup> Finally, the OGPU troops stationed in Ukraine were capable of quickly crushing all manifestations of dissatisfaction, just as they had done so in 1930.

In the critical situation of the approaching famine, the Communist Party leader was more concerned with conduct of the higher party and state leadership of the Ukrainian SSR, and the necessity to force them to fulfill the state plan of grain deliveries. He had a low opinion of the “political maturity” and organizational capabilities of the Ukrainian republic’s top leadership. Stalin’s view of Ukraine was that it was a “Petliurite” and “insurgent” territory. In his well known letter to Kaganovich of 11 September 1932, he directly accuses Stanislav Kosior, the Ukrainian Politburo, and the entire republican party of “Petliurism”: “Also keep in mind that there are many rotten elements, conscious and unconscious Petliurites and, lastly, direct agents of Piłsudski in the Ukrainian Communist Party (500,000, members, ha-ha). As soon as matters worsen, these elements will not waste any time opening up a front inside (and outside) the party, against the party. The worst thing is that the Ukrainian leadership does not perceive these dangers.”<sup>24</sup> As early as July 1932 Stalin wanted to replace Kosior. But in the Soviet leader’s opinion, the only candidate who could carry out his demands was Kaganovich: “Only Kaganovich can replace Kosior. There are no other candidates. [ . . . ] But it is not possible (inexpedient!) to send him to Ukraine right now: we will weaken the Secretariat of the TsK [ . . . ]. As for Chubar, he can be left in place, and we will see how he works.”<sup>25</sup>

In the latter part of 1932, once it had become clear that the Ukrainian SSR was not fulfilling the state grain delivery plan, Stalin first dispatched Molotov to the republic and later, Kaganovich, both of whom in fact controlled the party-state apparatus. In order to increase control over Soviet Ukraine’s GPU apparatus, on 11 August 1932 Stalin proposed appointing Vsevolod Balitsky,

22. See V. Vasyliiev and L. Viola, *Kolektyvizatsiia i selianskyi opir na Ukraini (lystopad 1929-berezen 1930 rr.)* (Vinnytsia: Logos, 1997); O. Hanzha, “Opir selianstva politytsi sutsilnoi kolektyvizatsii v Ukraini,” in *Problemy istorii Ukrainy: fakty, sudzhennia, poshuky: Mizhvid. zb. nauk. prats*, no. 5 (Kyiv: In-t istorii Ukrainy NAN Ukrainy, 2000), pp. 200-15, and elsewhere.

23. Historian Stanislav Kulchitsky calculated that between early 1930 and late 1931, 282,000 peasant households disappeared under various circumstances, including deportations. See *Holod 1932-1933 v Ukraini*, pp. 365-66.

24. *Stalin i Kaganovich*, p. 225.

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 253-54.

the deputy head of the OGPU USSR, to head Ukraine's GPU; his subordinate, Stanislav Redens, was to be the plenipotentiary representative of the OGPU USSR in Ukraine.<sup>26</sup> Balitsky's appointment came into force on 25 November 1932. Stalin, who apparently took pity at Redens's lack of ambition, did not appoint him as Balitsky's deputy. The new head of the Soviet state security agency in the Ukrainian SSR was ordered to report on the work of the Ukrainian GPU organs to the Politburo every twenty days.<sup>27</sup> It goes without saying that Balitsky was to oversee the "Chekist operation," which had already been underway for one week.

Third, along with "counterrevolutionary and kulak elements," the main targets of the wide-scale operation launched by the GPU of Ukraine were party-state leaders, members of collective farm administrations, and rural activists. The GPU informational-analytical documents contained in this collection also reveal the frames of mind and work of the party-Soviet leadership. In their reports, GPU personnel offer typical examples of cases of sabotage of the state grain deliveries, workday advances, concealment of grain and the size of sowing areas, and the refusal to carry out the state grain deliveries. Various memoranda emphasize the "congruence of kulak and counterrevolutionary activists with party-Soviet activists." The document entitled "Summary of Facts about Right-Opportunistic Moods and Counteraction to the State Grain Deliveries on the Part of Members, and Candidate-Members of the Party and the Komsomol during the Period of the State Grain Delivery Campaign," which was prepared by the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR as of 20 November 1932, analyzes the moods among the members of the local apparatus in 199 *raions* (out of 480) in Ukraine. It reveals that 623 leading individuals from the party-Komsomol apparatus objected to the state grain deliveries. Of these, 139 were heads and members of collective farm administrations; 121 were party activists; 90 were responsible officials from *raion* committees of the KP(B)U; 87 were responsible workers; and 83 were secretaries of party centers.

This begs the question: What could several hundred communists do against the half-million-strong republican organization? In Stalin's view, these figures pointed to the existence of "counterrevolutionaries" in the Communist Party of Ukraine, and were an obvious shortcoming in the system of selecting local cadres. The discovery of this number of official representatives of KP(B)U *raion* committees, secretaries of party centers, heads of collective farms, and responsible workers – the Bolsheviks' main bulwark in the countryside – who disagreed with the Kremlin's policies signaled the loss of

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26. *Ibid.*, pp. 273-74.

27. *Lubianka: Stalin i VChK-GPU-OGPU-NKVD, Arkhiv Stalina, Dokumenty vysshikh or-ganov partiinoi i gosudarstvennoi vlasti; Ianvar 1922-dekabr 1936 g.* (Moscow: MFD, 2003), p. 340.

levers of influence on the peasantry and the deceleration of the process of creating agricultural factories and transforming the “petty bourgeois masses” into rural proletarians. To Stalin’s way of thinking, these Chekist statistics were only the tip of the “counterrevolutionary” iceberg.

Yuri Shapoval, the author of the article “The Importance of Newly Discovered Documents of the GPU-NKVD in Gaining a Deeper Understanding of the Famine of 1932-1933,” which is published in the volume under review, also draws attention to Stalin’s concern with the “combat readiness” of local Ukrainian leaders as the main executors of the party’s policies. Shapoval maintains that “they either had to be turned into obedient/merciless promoters of the party line, or suffer harsh punishment.”<sup>28</sup>

According to an operational bulletin concerning the struggle against the “rural counterrevolution,” which was issued by the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR on 5 December 1932, 8,881 people were arrested in November 1932.<sup>29</sup> However, it must be noted that most of these individuals were arrested during the last ten days of that month. An analysis of the “typical” cases cited in the bulletin reveals that 702 administration members, 311 heads of collective farms, and 610 bookkeepers, brigadiers, and other leading individuals were accused either of sabotaging the state grain deliveries, or concealing or “squandering” grain. But a closer examination of the circumstances surrounding these “typical” cases reveals the attempts of leading collective farm officials and collective farmers to secure minimal food supplies necessary for their sheer survival.<sup>30</sup> In the Kremlin leadership’s interpretation, such actions were called “counterrevolution,” and those who carried them out – “rural counterrevolutionaries.”

In the present collection the documents that disclose the results of the operation to rout the “rural counterrevolution” cite only 22 cases of blatant criminal theft, “self-supplying,” and negligence, compared to 60 cases of “petty theft,” 55 cases of “squandering,” and 19 cases of “concealment” of grain, which were committed by “kulaks,” “Petliurites,” and “anti-Soviet elements.”<sup>31</sup> Similar statistics compiled by the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR attest to clear-cut efforts to isolate the political element.

In order to foster the shaping of a unanimous motive among the members and candidate-members of the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B) concerning the crucial need to exert “pressure” on the local party-state apparatus of the Ukrainian SSR, Stalin circulated materials highlighting incidents of “sabotage” of the state grain deliveries. Among the Politburo members were sev-

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28. Yu. Shapoval, “Znachennia novovidnaidenykh dokumentiv DPU-NKVS dlia hlybshoho rozuminnia holodu 1932-1933 rokiv,” in *Rozsekrechena pamiat*, p. 49.

29. *Rozsekrechena pamiat*, p. 357.

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 357-420.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 357.

eral key figures whose destinies were linked to Ukraine, one way or another, dating back to the revolutionary struggle and the Civil War. In Ukraine were “comrades in the struggle” or simply “vassals” of Lazar Kaganovich, Viacheslav Molotov, Konstantin Voroshilov, Stanislav Kosior, Hryhorii Petrovsky, and Vlas Chubar. Despite the fact that the members of the party and state apparatus in Ukraine were well managed, Stalin still had to explain the expediency of conducting a mass operation among them because this matter directly concerned the Ukrainian leaders. They were the ones responsible for selecting cadres, whose task was to implement economic campaigns. On 15 November 1932 the members and candidate-members of the Politburo of the All-Union Communist Party received a report of the OGPU organs’ interrogation of the accountant D. Perov, who was employed at the collective farm “Illich’s Last Testament,” located in the Cossack *stanytsia* of Novotytrivka, Krasnodar *raion*, in connection with the theft of grain, negligence, concealment of sowing areas, the mixing of grain with chaff, and the reporting of inflated number of workdays, and so on. What is worthy of note about this document is not so much the completely typical nature of the interrogation report but the accompanying letter from Stalin, in which he sought to convince his colleagues of the prevalence of these facts and the existence of an “organized source”: “. . . the organized theft of collective farm property and organized cheating of the state on the part of anti-civic elements in the collective farm movement, in the absence of Bolshevik leadership from party organizations.”<sup>32</sup> On 23 December 1932, Stalin once again circulated similar materials among the members of the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B), this time on the situation in Kharkiv and Dnipropetrovsk *oblast*’s.<sup>33</sup> Thus, in addition to crushing the resistance of the starving peasants, one of the chief tasks of the GPU-OGPU operations during the mass famine of 1932-1933 was the exposure and arrests of those members of the party-state apparatus who had voiced doubts about the expediency of the Kremlin’s economic and political steps.

This conclusion may be corroborated by oral history. Recollections of people who survived the Holodomor illustrate some aspects of the conduct of the local apparatus and the Soviet organs of law. Ukrainian historian Valentyna Borysenko discusses this question in her article “The Oral History of the Holodomor.” Thousands of eyewitness testimonies, collected in the past seven decades by Ukrainian and foreign scholars, together with the recently discovered rare journals of the schoolteacher, Oleksandra Radchenko, and the head of a department of the Lenin *raion* committee of the KP(B)U in the city of Kyiv, Dmytro Zavoloka,<sup>34</sup> provide grounds for stating that the Holodomor

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32. *Lubianka*, pp. 336-37.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 809.

34. *Rozsekrechena pamiat*, pp. 538-72.

has become engrained in historical memory. It is remembered not only as a huge tragedy but as a specific policy of the Bolshevik leadership of the Soviet Union, aimed at the destruction of the Ukrainian peasantry. The practical mind of the peasant, engaged in tilling the soil and unfamiliar with the subtleties of “political expediency” and the “victory of the world revolution,” could not come up with any other explanation.

The destruction of the traditional Ukrainian culture during the genocide years is the subject of an article by Olesia Stasiuk. This historian has begun to pursue a promising line of research on collectivization and the Holodomor of the 1930s: the change of traditional social reference points among representatives of the Ukrainian party-state apparatus and rural activists, as well as measures introduced by the leaders of the USSR and Soviet Ukraine, which had an impact on the world perception of the republic’s citizenry. This problem requires an interdisciplinary approach, which also defines the complexity behind developing this important question. Stasiuk’s article is thus an important step in the study of this problem by Ukrainian historians.

Newly published informational and analytical documents of Soviet Ukraine’s state security agencies about “Chekist” operations during the Holodomor of the 1930s open up the possibility of answering the controversial question of the mass executions of citizens who were convicted by courts and extra-judicial proceedings, and to compare these figures with the numbers of individuals who were executed in other Soviet republics. These questions must be answered in order to provide good scholarly evidence that the Holodomor was an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people.

It would appear that in the race to see who can tally the highest number of Holodomor victims, scholars have lost sight of the end goal: the study of the main principles underpinning the Kremlin’s policies toward Soviet Ukraine. In his article, “The Holodomor and Repressions in Ukraine,” which is based on a paper delivered at the international conference, “The Great Famine in Ukraine: The Holodomor and Its Consequences, 1933 to the Present” (held at the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute on 17-18 November 2008) Yuri Shapoval writes that in 1932 the GPU organs of the Ukrainian SSR, together with border guard units and road transport subunits of the GPU-OGPU, arrested 71,574 people, who were later sentenced to capital punishment (death by shooting) by courts and extrajudicial proceedings.<sup>35</sup> These large-scale executions mean that there were more victims than during the “Great Terror” of 1937-1938, when 123,421 people were shot in Ukraine in less than two

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35. Yu. Shapoval, “Holodomor i represii v Ukraini,” *Krytyka*, 12, no. 9. 12 (24) (Dec. 2008): 9.

years.<sup>36</sup> However, in 1937-1938 *oblast'* "troikas", the Special Council of the NKVD USSR, and the "Highest Two-Man Commission" (*Vyshcha dviika*) were all working at full tilt, and operational groups of the Directorate of State Security of the NKVD were functioning in Ukraine's *oblast'*s. Archived criminal cases and minutes of "troika" sessions were stored in various departmental archives, and researchers are now familiar with the lion's share of these documents. As for the large-scale shootings that took place in 1932, not a single report of *oblast'*-based "troikas" has been uncovered, nor were operational GPU groups formed to eliminate such a large number of victims. (The Chekists did not shoot everyone; some people were sent to the camps. Therefore, the number of arrested people must be significantly larger.) With the exception of those documents that have already been published in various compilations, no resolutions of the Politburo of the TsK VKP(B) and the TsK KP(B)U, nor operational orders of the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR and the OGPU of the USSR have been uncovered.

Published data indicate that 2,728 people were shot in the USSR in 1932.<sup>37</sup> This same figure appears in the table entitled "Capital Punishment" for 1932, in a memorandum issued by the Special Department of the MVD USSR about the number of people who were arrested and convicted by the VChK-OGPU-NKVD-MGB of the USSR between 1921 and 1953.<sup>38</sup>

It is very likely that the above-mentioned figure of 71,574 executed people was taken from Oleg Mozokhin's book, *The Right to Repressions*.<sup>39</sup> A comparison of the figures published in various sources and on Mozokhin's website<sup>40</sup> has revealed that one of the graphs in his monograph bears the heading of "VMSZ" (*Vysshaia mera sotsialnoi zashchity*: Highest Degree of Social Protection) instead of "Eliminated following the conclusion of investigative cases." Thus, owing to a simple typographical error, a new figure representing the number of people executed in 1932 was introduced into scholarship.

Nonetheless, the data on the people who were executed as a result of the mass NKVD operations, which have been published in *Declassified Memory*, do not diminish the tragedy that befell the Ukrainian nation. On the contrary, they merely corroborate the Kremlin's "special" attitude to Soviet Ukraine.

36. V. M. Nikolsky, *Repressyvnna diialnist orhaniv derzhavnoi bezpeky SRSR v Ukraini (kinets 1920-kh-1950-ti rr.)*; *Istoryko-statystychnye doslidzhennia* (Donetsk: Donetskyy natsionalnyi un-t, 2003), p. 402.

37. See L. P. Rasskazov, *Karatelnye organy v protsesse formirovaniia i funktsionirovaniia administrativno-komandnoi sistemy v sovetskom gosudarstve* (Ufa: Akademiia MVD, Ufimskaia vysshaia shkola, 1994), p. 387.

38. See *Reabilitatsiia: Kak eto bylo; Mart 1953-mart 1956 gg: Dokumenty Prezidiuma TsK KPSS i drugie materialy* (Moscow: MFD, 2000), pp. 76-77.

39. O. B. Mozokhin, *Pravo na repressii: Vnesudebnye polnomochiia organov gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti (1918-1953)* (Moscow-Zhukovskii: Kuchkovo pole, 2006), pp. 303-04, 307.

40. <http://mozohin.ru/article/a-42.html>

According to cases that were conducted by the organs of the GPU of Soviet Ukraine in connection with the state grain deliveries, between August and November 1932 the judicial organs of the People's Commissariat of Justice of the Ukrainian SSR (NKYu USRR) handed down the death sentence (shooting) to 582 people<sup>41</sup>; an additional 194 people were sentenced to death in December 1932.<sup>42</sup> During the same period (August-November 1932) extra-judicial organs – “troikas” and the Special Council at the Collegium of the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR – sentenced to death 31 individuals,<sup>43</sup> and an additional 122 people in December 1932,<sup>44</sup> bringing the total of Soviet Ukrainian citizens who were shot in 1932 to 929. During the month of December 1932, however, 1,187 cases on 1,502 people were submitted to “troikas” and the Special Council at the Collegium of the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR, while 3,866 cases on 6,746 people were submitted to the courts of the NKYu.<sup>45</sup> Some cases were heard in NKYu courts in December 1932, while others were deferred to January 1933. It is very likely that these executed citizens were included in the statistical data for 1933.

Therefore, the statistics on executed Ukrainian citizens that are reproduced in the present volume are correlated with the number of people who were executed in the entire USSR. At the very least, the former figure comprises one-third of the total number of people executed in the Soviet Union.

These statistics are a weighty argument in scholarly discussions about the Soviet leaders' drafting of a harsh policy toward Soviet Ukraine, which was determined by the republic's economic, political, and geopolitical status. In addition to the social-class factor, at the heart of this policy was “Ukrainian petty bourgeois nationalism.”

Although one can only welcome the publication of this collection of documents, the book is marred by a number of archaeological shortcomings. First of all, the compilers did not adhere to the practice of ordering the documents chronologically. If they were intending to group the documents according to importance, then the documents in the first chapter should have been structured in paragraph form and accompanied by brief introductory articles, or they should have explained the reasons behind their methodology in the foreword.

Second, many of the documents in the collection are accompanied by fragmentary annotations. For example, Vsevolod Balitsky's detailed biographical sketch contrasts with the sketchy entry on Mendel Khataevich, which consists of only three lines. There are no annotations to the entries on

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41. *Rozsekrechena pamiat*, p. 349.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 493.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 348.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 485.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 493.

such key figures of the party-Chekist apparatus as Ivan Akulov, Karl Karlson, Yefym Kryvets, Stanislav Kosior, Georgii Molchanov, Stanislav Redens, Eduard Salyn, and others. Since this book has a sizeable print run and is aimed at the mass reader, such annotations would have been very apropos.

Third, the rules governing the publication of archival documents require the use of square brackets [ . . . ] to indicate that a given document appears in truncated form. At the same time, such document titles should begin with the words “Extract from” or “From a memorandum.”

Another aspect that future compilers of similar publications should keep in mind is the need to resolve the problem of Russian versus Ukrainian abbreviations and acronyms. There is confusion in the use of GPU vs. DPU, OGPU vs. ODPU, and so on. The title of the book, *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini v dokumentakh GPU-NKVD*, contains Russian-language abbreviations. In the various articles in that work, however, the compilers use the Ukrainian abbreviations, DPU and ODPU. One of the proponents of using Russian-language abbreviations for the various Soviet state security services in Ukrainian research on the political history of Soviet Ukraine in the 1920s and 1930s is Yuri Shapoval, who has published a considerable body of works on the history of the Soviet state security services.<sup>46</sup>

These dissonant scholarly approaches are reflected in the newly published *Encyclopedia of the History of Ukraine*, which features Shapoval's articles entitled “VUCHK” and “VChK”<sup>47</sup> and Serhii Kokin's article, “Derzhavne politychne upravlinnia USSR” (The State Political Directorate of the Ukrainian SSR).<sup>48</sup> Ukrainian scholars should long ago have reached a consensus on the use of the names of republican People's Commissariats and state security organs.

These archaeographic shortcomings do not lessen the importance of this collection of documents. By now it has become clear that the main corpus of documents on the Holodomor of 1932-1933 has already been published. Scholars can now devote themselves to analyzing these documents, reconstructing the course of events, developing an insightful scholarly interpretation of the political, economic, and cultural relations between the Kremlin and Soviet Ukraine, and studying the motives underpinning the actions of the Soviet political leadership, and so on. It is to be hoped that future publications on the Holodomor will pave the way for the depoliticization of this scholarly problem, and that the conclusions reached by their authors will help lay to rest all political speculations and the phenomenon of “competing victims.”

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46. Yu. Shapoval, V. Prystaiko, and V. Zolotariov, *ChK-GPU-NKVD v Ukraini: osoby, fakty, dokumenty* (Kyiv: Abrys, 1997) and elsewhere.

47. *Entsyklopediia istorii Ukrainy*, vol. 1 (A-V) (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2003), pp. 667-70.

48. *Entsyklopediia istorii Ukrainy*, vol. 2 (H-D) (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2004), pp. 350-51.

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we are still accepting proposals and actively pursuing submission of additional contributions – so far contributions have been accepted from Sharon Kangisser Cohen (Jerusalem), Donald Kenrick (London), Stephen Smith (USC Shoah Foundation Institute, Los Angeles), Yvonne Robel and Kathrin Herold (University Bremen); poems by Julius Ballin and Charles Adès Fishman; artwork by Marty Kolb; testimonies, reviews, announcements; calendar note (2 Aug 1944: The Liquidation of the Auschwitz *Zigeunerfamilienlager*).

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