

# THE Ukrainian Weekly

Published by the Ukrainian National Association Inc., a fraternal non-profit association

Vol. LI

No. 12

THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY

SUNDAY, MARCH 20, 1983

25 cents

## SPECIAL ISSUE: THE GREAT FAMINE IN UKRAINE 1932-33

### Community leaders commemorate famine at multi-ethnic Chicago meeting

by Paul M. Basile and  
Luba V. Toloczko Markewycz

CHICAGO — More than 70 white ethnic, Black, Hispanic and Asian ethnic leaders met at a Chicago Ukrainian restaurant recently to commemorate the man-made Great Famine of 1932-33 that took 7 million Ukrainian lives.

The multi-ethnic coalition met February 15 at Galan's Ukrainian Cafe in the neighborhood known as the Ukrainian Village on Chicago's Near Northwest Side.

The meeting was organized by the Illinois Consultation on Ethnicity in Education and was moderated by Dr. Myron Kuropas, a consultation founder and supreme vice president of the Ukrainian National Association.

"The consultation brings together a diverse group of ethnic leaders who work, in coalitions, to solve problems and support common causes," said Edwin Cudecki, consultation chairperson and director of the Bureau of Foreign Languages for the Chicago Public Schools.

The gathering at Galan's constituted the largest steering committee meeting in the consultation's 12-year history. The guest list included business and community leaders, government officials, artists, scholars, educators, lawyers, and other professionals from Illinois' Black, Chinese, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Jewish, Lithuanian, Mexican, Polish, Puerto Rican and Ukrainian American communities.

Mr. Cudecki called the meeting together so that this group could learn about the Ukrainian American community and commemorate the 50th anniversary of Stalin's man-made famine.

"This is the first time that Ukrainian Americans have reached out to other ethnic leaders to tell what it meant to have this terrible thing happen to us," Dr. Kuropas said.

Dr. Kuropas' program featured the UNA-commissioned film "Helm of Destiny," which traces the growth of the Ukrainian American community and, in part, tells the story of the famine.

Other Ukrainian Americans present at the gathering were Julian Kulas, vice president of Chicago's Ukrainian Congress Committee and attorney for Walter Polovchak; Michael Olshansky, UNA District Committee chairman; Stephen Sambirsky, Ukrainian radio announcer; the Rev. Peter Galadza of St. Volodymyr and Olha Ukrainian Catho-

lic Church; the Rev. Walter Klymchuk of St. Nicholas Cathedral; Stephen Kuropas, honorary member of the UNA Supreme Assembly; and Illinois educator Alexandra Kuropas.

After introducing his fellow Ukrainian Americans, Dr. Kuropas explained Stalin's efforts to crush Ukrainian resistance to his forced collectivization program.

"In the early 1930s, Stalin moved to collectivize the farms of Ukraine in order to finance the industrialization of the Soviet Union. Ukrainian farmers resisted because they didn't want to give away their grain. To break the back of this resistance, Stalin exported (much of the food produced in the region), causing 5 to 7 million Ukrainians to starve to death," said Dr. Kuropas.

The world knew little of this famine at the time and knows even less of it today, according to Dr. Kuropas. "This is the first time, to my knowledge, that many of these ethnic leaders will hear anything about this," he said.

The American press corps in the Soviet Union during the 1930s shared part of the blame for this, according to Dr. Kuropas.

During the 1930s, thousands of American writers and movie stars supported Stalin's regime, having been drawn by its ideologies into overlooking its grim realities, Dr. Kuropas said. Under the sway of this misconception, American journalists conspired with Soviet censors to cover up the horrors of the famine rather than besmirch the reputation of "the great Soviet experiment."

In sharing this story with other ethnic leaders, Chicago's Ukrainian Americans took an important step toward bringing this tragedy to the attention of the world community, according to Mr. Cudecki.

Mr. Cudecki urged his fellow leaders to write letters to John Flis, president of the Ukrainian National Association, indicating that they share in the sorrow of the Ukrainian community and pledging themselves to helping Ukrainian Americans "make the world aware of the great tragedy that befell Ukraine in 1933."

Mr. Cudecki seemed to reflect the sentiment of the other ethnic leaders when he wrote, in his own letter to Mr. Flis, that, "by confronting all Americans with the knowledge of Stalin's man-made famine, Ukrainian Americans are committing an act of faith in

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### ... so that this tragedy will not be forgotten

The horror of millions of people dying of starvation and malnutrition while available food was being exported from Ukraine in 1932 and 1933 will never be forgotten. I am very pleased that The Ukrainian Weekly is devoting a special issue to remembrance of the Great Famine of 50 years ago, so that this tragedy will not be forgotten.

— Sen. Charles H. Percy, chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, in a letter to John O. Flis, supreme president of the Ukrainian National Association.

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This year, Ukrainians throughout the world are observing the 50th anniversary of the Great Famine of 1932-33, Stalin's planned destruction of the Ukrainian nation in which 7 million men, women and children perished. This special issue of The Ukrainian Weekly is dedicated to the solemn anniversary of this Soviet-perpetrated genocide and to the eternal memory of its victims.

We are sending copies of this special issue — which includes a 12-page pull-out section on pages 3-14 — to all U.S. senators and representatives in order to inform them about this holocaust of the Ukrainian nation, and to all Svoboda subscribers in the hope that they will share this special issue with their non-Ukrainian friends and thus make them aware of the Great Famine.

### National committee on Ukraine's Great Famine to solicit funds for memorial observances

JERSEY CITY, N.J. — The financial committee of the National Committee to Commemorate Genocide Victims in Ukraine 1932-33 has announced that \$100,000 will be needed to mark the 50th anniversary of the Soviet-made Great Famine in which 7 million Ukrainians perished.

This conclusion was reached at a meeting of the committee held on Saturday, March 5, at the main office of the Ukrainian National Association. Present were the chairman of the national committee, Prof. Petro Stercho, financial committee chairman Edward Popil, and George Powstenko, Stephen Procyk and Ulana Diachuk, financial committee members.

As reported earlier, the Great Famine commemoration ceremonies will include two main events. The first is scheduled to be held at South Bound Brook, N.J., at St. Andrew's Memorial Ukrainian Orthodox Church on May 15. The second program will be held in Washington on October 2 and will include a manifestation at the Taras Shevchenko Monument, followed by a demonstration and procession to the Soviet Embassy, and later that afternoon, a commemorative concert at the Kennedy Center. A documentary film about the famine is also planned.

The financial committee's goal is to

collect the needed funds through individual contributions as well as from Ukrainian institutions and organizations.

The committee has reported that it is in the process of planning a fund drive, which will soon be announced.

### D.C. action committee on famine established

by D. Korbutiak

WASHINGTON — A public meeting was held on Sunday, February 27, in the parish center of the Ukrainian Catholic National Shrine of the Holy Family to solicit the support of Washington's Ukrainian community in commemorating the 50th anniversary of the greatest tragedy in Ukrainian history — the Great Famine of 1932-33. This Ukrainian holocaust, created by Soviet authorities, claimed the lives of over 7 million victims.

As a result of the meeting, a special Washington Action Committee was elected in order to facilitate preparations for the solemn national observance of the Great Famine anniversary.

The meeting commenced with an

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## Dissident profile

### Vitaliy Shevchenko: scored Stalin's famine

JERSEY CITY, N.J. — When Ukrainian political prisoner Vitaliy Shevchenko was arrested in Kiev almost three years ago, he was charged with, among other offenses, expressing unorthodox opinions in the margins of books by Lenin.

In addition to his marginal jottings in two volumes of Lenin's works, Mr. Shevchenko was forced to account for certain critical remarks made in the 1950s about the 1930s famine in Ukraine resulting from Stalin's forced collectivization of farming and his attempt to break the national consciousness of the peasantry.

Mr. Shevchenko, a 50-year-old graduate of the University of Kiev journalism school, was fired from his job on Soviet Ukrainian radio, it is believed, because of his Ukrainian nationalist sentiments. He wrote for the dissident Ukrainian Herald, an underground newspaper publicizing Ukrainian human-rights issues, which has been suppressed by authorities since its inception in 1970.

Mr. Shevchenko was arrested in the Ukrainian capital on April 14, 1980, for circulating samvydav, privately circulated underground publications. Shortly before his arrest, he had written an article on Czechoslovak politics as seen through Ukrainian eyes. His apartment had been searched a month earlier, and materials were confiscated.

Mr. Shevchenko and another writer, Stepan Khmara, were tried and sentenced in December 1980 for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda" under Article 62 of the Ukrainian Criminal Code. Oleksander Shevchenko (no relation), a journalist also arrested in mid-April, was tried for "slandering the Soviet state," under Article 187-1 of the Ukrainian Criminal Code.

Vitaliy Shevchenko and Mr. Khmara were each sentenced to seven

years in a corrective labor camp to be followed by four years' internal exile, a form of enforced residence. Mr. Shevchenko is currently being held in Camp 36 of the Perm complex in the Russian SFSR, along with the other Mr. Shevchenko and such well-known Ukrainian dissidents as Mykola Rudenko, Vasyl Stus, Oles Berdnyk, Ivan Kandyba, Lev Lukianenko, Oleksiy Tykhy, Myroslav Marynovych and Vasyl Ovsienko.

Although conditions at all Soviet labor camps are characterized by chronic hunger, overwork, inadequate medical treatment and arbitrary deprivation of limited rights to correspondence and family visits, the Perm camps are reported to be among the harshest. Recently, several dissidents in Camp 36, among them Oleksander Shevchenko and Messrs. Rudenko and Marynovych, wrote an open letter to President Ronald Reagan describing the brutal treatment at the camp. They noted that prisoners have been put in detention cells for celebrating Easter, and that others have been denied family visits and letters from abroad.

According to Amnesty International, which has adopted Vitaliy Shevchenko as a prisoner of conscience, little information has been available about his current condition, and letters addressed directly to him have gone unanswered.

The worldwide human-rights agency has been running a campaign for letters on behalf of Mr. Shevchenko's release to be sent to Soviet officials in Moscow as well as to Anatoly Dobrynin, Soviet ambassador to the United States.

Mr. Shevchenko, who is married and has three children, is scheduled to complete his labor-camp sentence in 1987. After that, he will be exiled until 1991.

## Imprisoned dissident's wife subject of slander in Soviet newspaper

JERSEY CITY, N.J. — Svitlana Kyrchenko, wife of imprisoned Ukrainian dissident Yuriy Badzio, was the subject of a sardonic article in the February 10 issue Vechirnyi Kiev, a Soviet paper, which accused her of egoism and getting material support from persons in the West.

The lengthy article, titled "A lady with ambition," appeared on page three of the paper, and charged that Ms. Kyrchenko sought to exploit her husband's imprisonment and the attention it has received in the West for personal gain.

Ms. Kyrchenko's husband, a well-known socialist theoretician, is currently in the fourth year of a seven-year labor-camp term, which will be followed by five years' internal exile, a form of enforced residence. Mr. Badzio, 46, was convicted of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda."

The article describes Ms. Kyrchenko, who at one time worked at the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, as a malcontent who was "enraptured with her own persona" and who wanted to stand out among others. In her quest for

"recognition," she befriended and then married Mr. Badzio after leaving her first husband, whom the paper described as "modest and humble."

In attempting to gain the coveted attention of the West, Ms. Kyrchenko applauded her husband's activities, which the paper said consisted of preparing "slandering libel against the Soviet regime" and other "criminal activities."

After his arrest, the paper said Ms. Kyrchenko "rejoiced" because she and her husband would finally be "recognized in the West."

"This woman of ambition first and foremost cares about herself," the paper said. "She feels she deserves more than broadcasts about her on Radio Liberty, Deutsche Welle or some other voices."

The sarcastic tone of the article, complete with insinuation and snide excoations, is typical of pieces on dissidents which periodically appear in the Soviet press, often as a prelude to arrest. The theme of egoism and ambition as the root of dissent is consistent with Soviet pronouncements implying

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## Political prisoners seek Reagan's aid in urging inspection of Soviet camps

JERSEY CITY, N.J. — Copies of an open letter to President Ronald Reagan written sometime last year by 10 Soviet political prisoners have recently reached the West, reported the External Representation of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group.

The 10, all prisoners in Camp No. 36, part of a vast penal complex in the northern city of Perm in the Russian SFSR, asked Mr. Reagan to help form an international commission to inspect Soviet labor camps.

They said that Soviet abuses of political prisoners are "so widespread that it is no longer merely a question of violations of human rights, but of premeditated inhumanity, of physical and psychological torture, of terrorizing the spirit and exhibiting moral contempt for culture."

The letter was signed by Mykola Rudenko, Oles Shevchenko, Myroslav Marynovych, Viktor Nekipelov, Alexander Ogorodnikov, Henrich Altunian, Antanas Terliatskas, Viktor Niytsou, Norair Grygorian and Vladimir Balakhonov.

Mr. Rudenko, 62, a founding member of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group, was sentenced in 1977 to seven years in a labor camp and five years' internal exile, a form of enforced residence. Mr. Marynovych, another member of the group, was sentenced a year later to an identical sentence. The other Ukrainian, Mr. Shevchenko, was sentenced in 1980, also to 12 years' labor camp and exile.

The other prisoners come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and were involved in different phases of the dissident movement. Mr. Ogorodnikov, 32, was sentenced in 1980 to six years in a labor camp and five years' exile for his religious activities, while Mr. Nekipelov, a 52-year-old novelist and member of the Moscow Helsinki Group, was sentenced the same year to an identical term for his writings.

Mr. Altunian, a 50-year-old electrical engineer from Kharkiv, was sentenced in 1981 to a total of 12 years' imprisonment for possessing unsanctioned literature, while Mr. Niytsou, a 31-year-old Estonian also tried in 1981, is serving a two-year labor term to be followed by two years' exile.

Mr. Terliatskas, a 55-year-old Lithuanian, was tried in 1980 and sentenced to three years in a labor camp to be followed by five years' internal exile. Mr. Balakhonov, 48, a translator, was sentenced in 1973 to 12 years in a labor camp. Details concerning the case of Mr. Grygorian are unavailable.

In the letter, the prisoners cite numerous instances of harassment and brutality in the labor camp. The full text of the letter to the president appears below.

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Mr. President:

It is often difficult for a resident of the West to imagine the atmosphere of lawlessness in which the inmates of Soviet political prison camps exist today. Recently (end of 1981 — first half of 1982) the conditions of our imprisonment have worsened so sharply that we feel compelled to appeal to you. It is probable that this "tightening of the screws," or, as the saying went during the Stalin years, "clamp-down," is equally the result of individual instances in which the regime has disgraced itself (Poland, Afghanistan) and of the general crisis that the system is undergoing. The invariable companions of a tyranny growing decrepit — cruelty and absurdity — today permeate all spheres of our life, all aspects of our prison existence.

On April 18, 1982, the prisoners Myroslav Marynovych, Viktor Nekipelov and Mykola Rudenko were dragged away directly from a humble prison table, at which 14 prisoners had gathered to celebrate Easter with prayer and an Easter meal, and thrown into a punishment cell ("kartser") for half a month as "organizers of a mob." Strange as it may seem, the celebration of Christ's Resurrection was regarded as a gathering of a "mob" that had to be dispersed. It is difficult for us to imagine that there can exist another prison in the world, in which the observance of a religious ritual would be punishable by incarceration in a punishment cell. Even in 1932, the authorities at Stalin's Solovky special-regime camp permitted not only the Easter service, but even the procession with a cross that precedes the Easter divine liturgy.

On February 13, 1982, Rudenko, an invalid of World War II with a severe spinal injury, was deprived of his invalid status for no known reason and thereby declared capable of performing heavy manual labor. We can only assume that this was done because a collection of his poems appeared in the West.

In March of 1982, the prisoner Vladimir Balakhonov was deprived of a visit from his daughter on completely absurd and immoral grounds, namely, his failure to fulfill his work quota. This was to have been his first visit in 10 years. The use of punishment cells as a

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## THE Ukrainian Weekly

FOUNDED 1933

Ukrainian weekly newspaper published by the Ukrainian National Association Inc., a fraternal non-profit association, at 30-Montgomery St., Jersey City, N.J. 07302  
(The Ukrainian Weekly — USPS 570-870)

Also published by the UNA: Svoboda, a Ukrainian-language daily newspaper.

The Weekly and Svoboda:	UNA:
(201) 434-0237, 434-0807	(201) 451-2200
(212) 227-4125	(212) 227-5250
Yearly subscription rate: \$8, UNA members — \$5.	

Postmaster, send address changes to  
THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY  
P.O. Box 346  
Jersey City, N.J. 07303

Editor: Roma Sochan Hadziewicz  
Associate editor: George Bohdan Zarycky  
Assistant editor: Marta Kolomojats

# THE GREAT FAMINE IN UKRAINE 1932-33



## Eyewitness account

### The horror of the famine

The following eyewitness account of the Great Famine was given by Ivan Klymko and recorded by Dmytro Soiovey in 1949.

It was published in "The Golgotha of Ukraine," a 43-page booklet published in 1953 by the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America.

If I were to merely note here that 60 percent of the populace of the Lukashiv Grange starved to death in 1933, the bare figure itself would not give any idea of what truly transpired. Therefore, to give the reader some idea of the horror of those days, I shall by way of example give the case history of the families on our grange. No one among them knew whether he would survive the famine or not. For that matter, neither did I.

VASYL LUCHKO: Back in 1931 he bought half of my house and lived there. He was a member of the kolhosp (collective farm). In 1933 his whole family consisted of five persons: he, his wife, daughter, 11 years old, and two sons, 6 and 4, respectively. His wife, Sanka, was an activist. During the famine she made trips either to Myrhorod or Poltava for food, and sometimes managed to return with some. Vasyll worked in the kolhosp, but gradually, from lack of food, grew too weak to keep on working.

One day, it was either late in March or early in April, when the farms were already being plowed, I noticed that soon after Vasyll had gone to work he returned home. His wife and children were not at home then, as they had gone foraging for food. About an hour and a half later, my niece, 4, came running over and said to me:

"Please take me over to Grandfather Vasyll. They say Mikolka had died and I want to take a look."

Mikolka was the youngest son of Vasyll. Although I had a bad headache, I took her over. Entering the house and opening the door to the room, I was momentarily blinded by the sun shining in from the window opposite us. Holding my niece with my right hand, I reached over with my left hand for the doorknob. Instead I touched something soft. "What's this?" flashed through my mind, and opening my eyes, I raised my head to look. What I saw halted me in my tracks. Hanging from the doorknob by a rope was Vasyll's older boy, 6. His tongue was hanging out, and saliva was dripping down on his chest. In sudden fright at the sight I dashed outside, dragging my niece along with me. The first thought that crossed my mind was that Vasyll had gone crazy and hung his son as a result, and maybe he might murder us also.

Having led the child a safe distance away, I cautiously returned back to the house. Opening the door I called out: "Vasyll! Are you home? Where are you?"

Vasyll came into the room from the adjoining one. I again retreated outside, not knowing what to expect from him. When he appeared on the stoop, I asked him:

"What are you doing Vasyll?"

He replied simply:

"I hung my boy."

"And where's the other one?"

"He's in the storeroom. I hung him."

"Why did you do it?"

"Because I have nothing to eat.

Everytime Sanka comes with some bread she gives it to the children. Now that the two of them are gone, she will have to give me some...But don't say a word about this, Ivan! Please don't say a word about this!..."

I immediately perceived that Vasyll had truly gone insane. What was I to do? Finally I said:

"Listen, Vasyll, don't you dare eat your children. We'll be over soon and bury them. So cut the boys down...Be sure you don't attempt to eat them."

I realized that the family was already a goner, and therefore did not notify the council. To what avail? It would not change anything. I called my brother over and together we dug a grave. Then I called the neighbors (they consisted of five women), and we buried the boys. Since we had no coffins, we just evened out the walls of this improvised grave, put straw on the bottom, laid out the corpses on it, put a board over them, and then shoveled in the earth. Their father just walked around in silence, watching what we were doing.

About two or three days later his wife, Sanka, returned home with the daughter. Coming over to me she angrily asked:

"By what right did you bury my sons in such a fashion? Who allowed you to do that?"

I became alarmed. After all, she used to be an activist, and could cause trouble. So I replied soothingly:

"I was afraid that Vasyll would eat them. We buried them very properly and the people were witnesses to it. And if you want to see them, I'll open up the grave."

I did not tell her, however, that Vasyll had hung the boys. That was his business to tell her, not mine.

Two or three weeks passed by. Warm May days arrived. One morning before dawn, together with Hrytsko Luchka we started out for Reshetilivka. We had in mind going to Kharkiv, in order to buy bread there. None was to be had in Poltava anymore, while in Kharkiv they were selling at staggeringly high prices the so-called "commercial bread."

We had gone some five kilometers toward the railway station when all of a sudden we heard a desperate cry:

We listened intently. It sounded like the wife of Tupkalo, whose house stood about a kilometer and a half from the station.

We started to run in that direction, shouting so that she would know that help was on the way.

We arrived there. It appeared that there were two women and some small children there. In the stable, built alongside the house, there was a cow. Thieves evidently had been trying to get away with it. The woman, hearing the noise they were making, had run into the hallway, climbed inside an old chimney that stood there, climbed up through it to the very top and emerging out on the roof began to cry for help.

Her cries and our shouts had evidently scared the robbers away.

That incident held us up for awhile, so that we missed the train, and had to return home. By this time it was already dawn.

Since Vasyll had not been seen for quite some time, we decided to step in. We knocked on the door, but no one

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## THE Ukrainian Weekly

### Lest we forget

The 12 pages of this special issue of The Weekly are devoted exclusively to the Great Famine in Ukraine, unquestionably the least-known man-made holocaust of modern times. An unbelievable 7 million Ukrainians — men, women and children — starved to death in a little over a year. Many of those who managed to survive did so by subsisting on bark, insects, small animals, pets, carrion. There are many documented cases of mothers eating their children. But what makes the famine truly monstrous, what gives it its sinister criminal dimension, is that it was not caused by drought, pestilence or crop failure, but by decree.

In an effort to break the will of an independent-minded and nationally conscious Ukrainian peasantry, secure collectivization and ensure industrialization, the Soviet regime under Stalin ordered the expropriation of all foodstuffs in the hands of the rural population. All harvested grain was confiscated by 25,000 non-Ukrainians sent in to oversee the operation. The grain was shipped to other areas in the Soviet Union or sold on the international market to finance the government's rapid industrialization policies. Peasants were ordered to turn everything over to the state. Failure to do so was punishable by death. Without food, without grain, without seeds, the peasants began to starve. The famine, then, was politically motivated genocide.

So why, 50 years later, is the famine so little known? How has this horrible atrocity, the murder of 7 million people, escaped the attention of mankind, its conscience and its justice?

When Allied troops liberated the Nazi death camps at Treblinka and Auschwitz, their senses verified that an unspeakable crime had been committed against humanity. The sight of living corpses, the stench of death, the moans of the tormented, the ovens and barbed wire all provided instant confirmation. The enormity of the barbarism, the fact that it was premeditated, mocked all moral and ethical standards, and made retribution not only desirable, but necessary. Testimonies of survivors were recorded, photographs taken, memorials planned. Documentation would forever fix the horror in the minds of men, remind them of the virulence of evil in a nominally civilized world and, it was hoped, preclude a recurrence. Because Nazi Germany was vanquished, it was possible, as was done at Nuremberg, to bring to trial at least some of those responsible for the Holocaust.

In contrast, the Ukrainian tragedy is unknown and unavenged. At the time, the Soviet Union was not a vanquished enemy, but an ally. Ironically, the United States formally recognized the Soviet Union in 1933, the same year that millions were dying of starvation. Because it was a closed society, most Western journalists and government officials were carefully kept away from the countryside and could not see the scale of the tragedy. Comparatively few photographs were printed in the West, and eyewitness accounts were rare. Those journalists who did report on the famine were largely ignored, or labeled reactionary by the many influential intellectuals enamored with the idea of a Marxist revolution. There were those who argued: since we have to live with the Soviets, why rock the boat?

Unfortunately, this line of thinking, despite events in Afghanistan and Poland, has continued to this day. Although the Soviet Union is no longer an ally, it is a nuclear power to be reckoned with. Peaceful co-existence may be an outdated term, but the idea persists.

So why, many may argue, given this reality, dredge up a 50-year-old tragedy and risk further exacerbating U.S.-Soviet relations? Because, like the Nazi Holocaust, the murder of millions is a blot on our collective conscience. It must be recognized, understood, absorbed — regardless of political considerations. A failure to do so would suggest the chilling notion that had the Nazis won the war, the death of 6 million Jews would be little more than a footnote in history. As we read the next few pages about the famine, we should ponder long and hard the real consequences of silence.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** In some of the passages cited in this special issue, the quoted authors use the term "Russia" to mean the entire Soviet Union and the term "Russians" to mean all the people residing within the borders of the USSR. We have left these quotations intact, but we advise our readers to be aware of the possible confusion resulting from this imprecise usage of terms.

# THE GREAT FAMINE IN UKRAINE 1932-33

## America's "Red Decade" and the Great Famine cover-up

by Dr. Myron B. Kuropas

*Dr. Kuropas has served as special assistant for ethnic affairs to President Gerald R. Ford and as a legislative assistant to Sen. Robert Dole (R-Kan.). At present he is supreme vice president of the Ukrainian National Association.*

In 1933, Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany. Before his death in 1945, some 10 million civilians, including 6 million Jews and 4 million Gypsies, Poles, Ukrainians, Byelorussians and other "untermenschen," were slaughtered to fulfill a diabolical dream.<sup>1</sup>

When World War II ended and the full extent of Hitler's horrors was finally revealed, the civilized world demanded justice. Thousands of Nazis and Nazi collaborators were hunted down, tried and executed for crimes against humanity. The criminals were punished, but the Nazi nightmare lingered on in hundreds of books, magazine articles, films and TV docu-dramas. Even today, in 1983, Nazi collaborators are being brought to trial to demonstrate that no matter how long it takes, no matter what the price, genocide shall not go unpunished. It is in remembering that we assure ourselves that the Holocaust shall never again become a policy of national government.

For Ukrainians, however, the Nazi Holocaust is only half of the genocide story. The other half is the Great Famine, a crime orchestrated by Joseph Stalin in the same year Hitler came to power. No one has ever been hunted down for that crime. No one has ever been tried. No one has ever been executed. On the contrary, many of those who willingly and diligently participated in the wanton destruction of some 7 million innocent human beings are alive and well and living in the Soviet Union.

Since the system which initiated the abomination is still very much intact, there is little likelihood that they will ever have to face an international tribunal for their barbarism. Nor is there any reason to believe that Communists have eschewed genocide as one of their strategies. Cambodia and Afghanistan have proven that.

While there is little the free world can do to punish Bolshevik criminals, the past can teach us to be wary of those contemporary religious and intellectual leaders who urge us to "trust" them.<sup>2</sup> One of the forgotten aspects of the Great Famine story is the role played by respected American clergy, diplomats, journalists and writers who, by defending Stalin in 1933, indirectly prolonged his reign of terror. Some were innocent dupes. Others were unconscionable conspirators. Almost all went on to pursue distinguished careers in their chosen professions without so much as a backward glance at the incredible human misery they helped conceal from world view. It is in remembering their actions that we can best assure ourselves that in America at least, genocide shall never again go unnoticed.

### The Red Decade

During the 1930s, the United States found itself in the throes of the worst depression in its history. Banks failed. Businesses collapsed. Factories closed. Homes and farms were repossessed. Large city unemployment reached 40 percent. Bread lines and soup kitchens multiplied. The American dream so

real and vibrant during the 1920s, was shattered.

While America suffered, the radical Left reveled. Exploiting the economic turmoil and uncertainty which plagued the nation, Communists and their fellow travelers pointed to the "success" of the great Soviet experiment. Suddenly, thousands of despairing clerics, college professors, movie stars, poets, writers and other well-known molders of public opinion began to look to Moscow for inspiration and guidance. As millions of jobless war veterans demonstrated in the street and workers "seized" factories in sit-down strikes, the 1930s became what Eugene Lyons has called America's "Red Decade,"<sup>3</sup> a time when romanticized bolshevism represented the future, bankrupt capitalism the past.<sup>4</sup>

In the forefront of the campaign to popularize "the Soviet way" were American intellectuals, correspondents and even government officials who grossly exaggerated Bolshevik achievements, ignored or rationalized myriad failures, and, when necessary, conspired to cover up Bolshevik crimes. Especially impressed were those who traveled to the USSR during the 1930s, almost all of whom, it seems, found something to admire.

Some found a Judaeo-Christian spirit. Sherwood Eddy, an American churchman and YMCA leader, wrote: "The Communist philosophy seeks a new order, a classless society of unbroken brotherhood, what the Hebrew prophets would have called a reign of righteousness on earth."<sup>5</sup> A similar theme was struck by the American Quaker Henry Hodgkin. "As we look at Russia's great experiment in brotherhood," he wrote, "it may seem to us that some dim perception of Jesus' way, all unbeknown, is inspiring it..."<sup>6</sup>

Others discovered a sense of purpose and cohesive values. Corliss and Margaret Lamont concluded that the Soviet people were happy because they were making "constructive sacrifices with a splendid purpose held consciously and continuously in mind" despite

some "stresses and strains" in the system.<sup>6</sup>

Still others found humane prisons. "Soviet justice," wrote Anna Louise Strong, "aims to give the criminal a new environment in which he will begin to act in a normal way as a responsible Soviet citizen. The less confinement the better; the less he feels himself in prison the better...the labor camps have won high reputation throughout the Soviet Union as places where tens of thousands of men have been reclaimed."<sup>7</sup>

The Soviet Union had something for everyone. Liberals found social equality, wise and caring leaders, reconstructed institutions and intellectual stimulation.<sup>8</sup> Rebels found support for their causes: birth control, sexual equality, progressive education, futuristic dancing, Esperanto. "Even hard-boiled capitalists," wrote Lyons, an American correspondent in Moscow, "found the spectacle to their taste: no strikes, no lip, hard work..."<sup>9</sup>

Contributing to the liberal chorus of sycophantic praise for Stalin's new society were American diplomats such as U.S. Ambassador Joseph E. Davies who argued that Stalin was a stubborn democrat who insisted on a constitution which protected basic human rights "even though it hazarded his power and party control."<sup>9</sup>

Like most liberals, Davies never accepted the notion that Stalin's purge trials were staged. "To assume that," he wrote, "...would be to presuppose the creative genius of Shakespeare and the genius of Belasco in stage production."<sup>10</sup> Nor did he believe Stalin — whom he described as "clean-living, modest, retiring" — was personally involved in the elimination of his former colleagues.<sup>11</sup> Even though he had personally met and dined with many of the purge victims, Davies later concluded that their execution was justified because it eliminated Russia's "Fifth Column" which, in keeping with "Hitler's designs upon the Ukraine," had conspired to "dismember the union..."<sup>12</sup>

In the United States, meanwhile, the liberal press was equally enamored of

Stalin. Writing in Soviet Russia Today, a monthly journal, Upton Sinclair, Max Lerner and Robert M. Lovett wrote glowing accounts of Moscow's important role in defending democratic principles.<sup>13</sup> In the words of Prof. Frederick L. Schuman, a charter member of the Soviet defense team:

"The great cleavage between contemporary societies is not between 'capitalism' (democratic or fascist) and 'communism' but between those (whether in Manchester, Moscow, Marseilles or Minneapolis) who believe in the mind and in the government of, by and for the people, and those (whether in Munich, Milan or Mukden) who believe in might and in government of, by and for a self-appointed oligarchy of property and privilege."<sup>14</sup>

For the Nation, Russia was the

(Continued on page 14)

1. See Bohdan Wytwycky, "The Other Holocaust" (Washington: The Novak Report, 1980).
2. See Sydney Lens, "We Must Trust the Russians," Chicago Sun-Times (January 10, 1983). Also see Myron B. Kuropas, "Trust the Russians? C'mon!" Chicago Sun-Times (January 26, 1983).
3. Lens, "Radicalism in America" (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1969), p. 297.
4. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., "The Age of Roosevelt: The Politics of Upheaval," (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1960), pp. 183-185.
5. Cited in Paul Hollander, "Political Pilgrims: Travels of Western Intellectuals to the Soviet Union, China and Cuba, 1928-1978" (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 124.
6. Cited in Ibid., p. 127.
7. Cited in Ibid., pp. 144-145.
8. Cited in Ibid., p. 106.
9. Ibid., p. 106.
10. Cited in Ibid., p. 164.
11. Joseph E. Davies, "Mission to Moscow" (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1941), pp. 191-192.
12. Ibid., p. 262.
13. Frank A. Warren III, "Liberals and Communism: The 'Red Decade' Revisited" (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966), p. 105.
14. Cited in Ibid., p. 109.

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## CHICAGO AMERICAN

CHICAGO, MONDAY, MARCH 4, 1933

SECOND SECTION  
NEWS, FEATURES

# HUNGER, DESPAIR, DEATH IN UKRAINE AGONY





Through the snowdrifts Ukraine tramps this man, working his wife and child. He was torn from them and sent to Siberia in 1930. He walked back 1,000 miles to find that they had starved.

When the struggle, a photograph of a woman, she took this photograph for the Chicago American. She says she had seen her husband die.

Thomas Walker, of the kind of horror that took this photograph for the Chicago American. She says she had seen her husband die.

CONCENTRATION: L. A. O. R. E. ...

... of the Ukraine ...

... of the Ukraine ...

... of the Ukraine ...

### Soviet Starving Tell Own Stories; Jailed for Eating Dogs

STARVATION strikes through the Ukraine ...

... of the Ukraine ...

... of the Ukraine ...

The Chicago American's report on the famine. Note the date: March 4, 1935.

# THE GREAT FAMINE IN UKRAINE 1932-33

## 1932-34 Great Famine: documented view

by Dr. Dana Dalrymple

The article below was originally published in the scholarly journal *Soviet Studies* in January 1964. We serialize it here in *The Weekly* with the permission of the author, an agricultural economist employed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

### PART I

"Food is a weapon."  
— Maxim Litvinov, 1921<sup>1</sup>

#### Introduction

The Soviet Union has made much of its own process of rapid economic development. It has, however, said little of the social costs that were involved. Perhaps the most severe of these was the Great Famine which raged from 1932 to 1934.

Although this famine appears to have resulted in the death of approximately 5 million people — placing it well among the worst famines of all time — it is scarcely known today. The Soviet Union, in fact, has never officially admitted that the famine existed. American and English studies on the USSR occasionally mention a famine in Ukraine but generally provide few or no details. Yet, previous famines in the USSR have been acknowledged by the government and have been well recorded elsewhere. Why the difference?

The answer seems to be that the famine of 1932-34, unlike its predecessors was a man-made disaster. It was an almost direct result of the economic and social policies followed by the Soviet government during its first five-year plan. To carry out its program of rapid industrialization the government felt that it needed to collectivize agriculture quickly. The disruptions growing out of collectivization led to the famine and the death of millions of peasants.

Obviously this is not a point that the Soviet leaders would wish to emphasize. And, in fact, they did such a good job of suppressing knowledge of it that few today know of the famine, and even some otherwise well-informed students of the Soviet Union suggest that the famine was of little consequence.

This paper attempts to clarify the record by presenting a comprehensive and documented view of the man-made famine of 1932-34.

#### Was there a famine?

At the outset it must be admitted that there has been some question as to the existence and magnitude of the famine of 1932-34.

#### A. Conflicting views

There are basically two schools of thought on the famine. On the one hand, there have been those who have admitted to some hunger in the Soviet Union during this period, but no famine. And on the other hand, there is a considerably larger group which has presented evidence of a famine of very substantial magnitude. The Soviet government itself has apparently never acknowledged or even mentioned the famine (with one possible exception)<sup>2</sup> and it has not been directly referred to in Soviet literature until just recently.<sup>3</sup>

Those who did not "see" the famine may be divided into two groups: (1) those who for one reason or another actually did not see it; and (2) those who saw the famine but did not report it.

The first group (1) consists of socialists who were blind to this particular fault in the Soviet program, and/or visiting dignitaries who were given a Potemkin-like tour of the USSR which avoided exposure to the famine. The socialists Beatrice and Sidney Webb, for instance, saw a shortage of food—but no famine as such.<sup>4</sup> But it may have been that they, like M. Herriot, the former prime minister of France, and Sir John Maynard, were shown only what the Russians wanted them to see.

The second group (2), including Walter Duranty of the New York Times and some other newsmen, knew of the famine but avoided referring to it explicitly because of government pressures.

While it was possible for the Soviet leaders to fool some and put pressure on others, it was not possible even for them to completely hide the famine. Thus, we

now have an extensive body of knowledge which makes it quite apparent that a very substantial famine existed.

As William Henry Chamberlin, former long-time Moscow correspondent for the *Christian Science Monitor*, put it on his return to the United States: "To anyone who lived in Russia in 1933 and who kept his eyes and ears open the historicity of the famine is simply not open to question."<sup>5</sup>

His observations were echoed by another veteran Moscow correspondent, Eugene Lyons of the *United Press*: "Inside Russia the matter was not disputed. The famine was accepted as a matter of course in our casual conversation at the hotels and in our homes."<sup>6</sup>

Victor Kravchenko, a former party functionary, concurs that "the famine...was a matter of common knowledge."<sup>7</sup> And Whiting Williams, a former American steel executive who traveled extensively in the USSR during the summer of 1933, goes on to state that among Russians the only argument about the famine was the number of victims.<sup>8</sup>

In this paper we shall follow in detail the testimony of those who saw the famine. In the process we shall show why others did not see the famine, or failed to report it.

#### B. Stages of the famine

The observations of those who saw the famine may be divided into three phases. They were: (1) the spring and summer of 1932; (2) the autumn of 1932 through the summer of 1933; and (3) the autumn of 1933 through the summer of 1934. For ease of presentation, and because famine was most severe during the spring and early summer months, we shall refer to the periods simply as (1) 1932, (2) 1933 and (3) 1934. The famine began to build up in 1932, reached its peak in 1933 and began to taper off in 1934.

#### 1. 1932

According to Isaac Mazepa, former premier of Ukraine, the spring months of 1932 "... marked the beginning of famine in the Ukrainian villages."<sup>9</sup> Another former Russian suggests that famine was raging as early as March 10 — a point which seems to have been confirmed by Duranty and Fainsod.<sup>11</sup>

(Continued on page 12)

1. Cited by H.H. Fisher in "The Famine in Soviet Russia, 1919-1923," Macmillan, New York, 1927, p. 62.

2. In the section on famine in the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, for instance, there is no mention of the 1932-34 period (*Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya*, Moscow, 1952, Vol. II, p. 625). Further, the Lenin Library in Moscow indicates that it has no special studies of "food difficulties" in this period (Letter from I. Bagrov, head of the department, Bibliography and International Work, Lenin State Library, Moscow, March 12, 1963). The possible exception was the trial of the members of the Commissariat of Agriculture. They were charged, as Izvestiya put it, with using their authority "...to create a famine in the country." (*Izvestiya* March 12, 1933, p. 2; cited by Merle Fainsod in "How Russia is Ruled," Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1957, p. 364.)

3. Ivan Stadnyuk, "Liudi ne angely," Neva, Moscow, No. 12, 1962, pp. 3-114. This work is briefly discussed in Section VIII, Postscript.

4. Beatrice and Sidney Webb, "Soviet Communism: A New Civilization," Scribners, New York, 1936, Vol. I, pp. 258-272.

5. William Henry Chamberlin, "Soviet Taboos," Foreign Affairs, April 1935, p. 432.

6. Eugene Lyons, "Assignment in Utopia," Harcourt Brace, New York, 1937, p. 574. (Lyons is now a senior editor of *The Reader's Digest*.)

7. Victor Kravchenko, "I Chose Freedom," Scribners, New York, 1946, p. 111.

8. Whiting Williams, "My Journey Through Famine-Stricken Russia," *Answers* (London), February 24, 1934, p. 28.

9. Isaac Mazepa, "Ukraine Under Bolshevik Rule," Slavonic and East European Review (London), January 1934, p. 343.

10. Dmytro Solovey, "The Golgotha of Ukraine," Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, New York, 1933, p. 20.

11. Walter Duranty, "USSR: The Story of Russia," J.B. Lippincott, New York, 1944, pp. 192-193. Also Merle Fainsod, "Smoresh Under Soviet Rule," Vintage, New York, 1963, pp. 259-262. Also see Carver Wells, "Kapoot," Jarrocks, London, 1933, p. 135.

## THE GREAT FAMINE



This year marks the 50th anniversary of one of history's most horrifying cases of genocide — the Soviet-made Great Famine of 1932-33, in which some 7 million Ukrainians perished.

Relying on news from *Svoboda* and, later, *The Ukrainian Weekly* (which began publication in October 1933), this column hopes to remind and inform Americans and Canadians of this terrible crime against humanity.

By bringing other events worldwide into the picture as well, the column hopes to give a perspective on the state of the world in the years of Ukraine's Great Famine.

### PART V

## June 1932

On June 2, 1932, *Svoboda* reported that, according to *Pravda*, the official newspaper of the Soviet Communist Party, a large portion of the recently harvested crops had spoiled. *Pravda* said the reason for the spoilage was disorganization on Soviet grain farms due to lack of skilled laborers responsible for overseeing the delivery of crops. Half a million tons were wasted and a special commission had been appointed to look into the situation, *Pravda* reported.

On June 6, *Svoboda* reported on news published in a British daily, *The Manchester Guardian*, which had sent its Moscow correspondent to investigate the food situation throughout the Soviet Union and in Ukraine. After traveling through various cities, towns and villages the correspondent confirmed his hunch that provisions were very low throughout the areas.

He reported that it was only through government connections that workers in Leningrad, Moscow and other large cities received the groceries they needed. He noted that the peasants found themselves in a situation much worse than that during the years of the revolution, and not much better than during the 1921-22 famine in Ukraine. The correspondent provided details about the situation in Ukraine: conditions in the villages were so bad that people who lived in Leningrad, Moscow and other large cities sent food parcels to their families and friends in Ukraine in order to save them from starvation.

According to the correspondent, the reason for the catastrophic situation in Ukraine was that collectivization of the peasants' farm land had greatly hampered the sowing and harvesting of grain. What little was produced, was transported across the border or into Moscow and the city's surrounding areas. The peasants suffered the most, he reported.

On June 11, a news item from Berlin was published in *Svoboda* under the headline: "The hunger in Ukraine increases. Ukrainian peasants, the backbone of the Ukrainian nation, go hungry."

The Moscow correspondent of the Berlin paper traveled to Ukraine and described the situation he encountered there: "It is not due either to a locust invasion, or a drought, or war; it is not even the plague that has brought on the hunger of the peasants." He said that the extraordinarily quick pace of the agriculture industry brought on by the collectivization instituted by the Communist government in Ukraine had caused a shortage of food and that Ukrainian peasants ventured into the cities and

(Continued on page 13)

## THE GREAT FAMINE IN UKRAINE 1932-33

# Famine proves potent weapon in Soviet policy

by William Henry Chamberlin

Mr. Chamberlin was the *Christian Science Monitor's* Moscow correspondent for 10 years. In 1934 he was reassigned to the Far East, and upon his departure from the USSR he wrote the following account of the Great Famine in Ukraine. The story appeared in the May 29, 1934, issue of the *Christian Science Monitor*.

Mr. Chamberlin also writes about the famine in his books "Russia's Iron Age" and "The Ukraine: A Submerged Nation."

"The collective farmers this year have passed through a good school. For some, this school was quite ruthless."

This was how President Kalinin, in a speech delivered early last summer, referred to the food situation in Ukraine and the North Caucasus. When the prohibition on travel by foreign correspondents in the rural districts was relaxed in the autumn, I had an opportunity to find out what this "ruthless school" had meant in concrete practice.

I shall never forget a scene which I witnessed in a Ukrainian village named Zhuke, which lies some 15 miles to the north of Poltava. The president of the local collective farm and a state agronomer, or agricultural expert, were accompanying me on visits to a number of peasant houses. So long as my companions chose the houses to be visited I found myself invariably meeting local Communists or "udarniki" (shock brigade workers), with pictures of Lenin, Stalin and Kalinin on the walls and a fairly contented tale of their experiences.

I suddenly picked out a house at random and went into it with my companions. It was a typical Ukrainian peasant hut, with thatched roof, earth floor, benches running around the walls, an oven and a rickety-looking bed as the chief article of furniture. The sole occupant was a girl of 15, huddled up on the bench. She answered a few simple questions briefly, in a flat dull voice.

"Where is your mother?"

"She died of hunger last winter."

"Have you any brothers or sisters?"

"I had four. They all died, too."

"When?"

"Last winter and spring."

"And your father?"

"He is working in the fields."

"Does he belong to the collective farm?"

"No, he is an individual peasant."

So here was one man — his name was Savchenko — whose passive stubbornness defied even Kalinin's "ruthless school," who refused to go into a collective farm, even after almost all the members of his family had perished.

My companions, the president of the collective farm and the state agronomer, had nothing to say. Smooth-tongued officials in Moscow might assure inquiring visitors that there had been no famine, only little food difficulties here and there, due to the wicked machinations of the kulaks. Here on the spot in Zhuke, as in a dozen other Ukrainian and North Caucasian villages which I visited, the evidence of large-scale famine was so overwhelming, was so unanimously confirmed by the peasants that the most "hard-boiled" local officials could say nothing in denial.

... the evidence of large-scale famine was so overwhelming, was so unanimously confirmed by the peasants that the most "hard-boiled" local officials could say nothing in denial.

### Everywhere a tale of famine

Some idea of the scope of the famine, the very existence of which was stubbornly and not unsuccessfully concealed from the outside world by the Soviet authorities, may be gauged from the fact that in three widely separated regions of Ukraine and the North Caucasus which I visited — Poltava and Byelaya Tserkov and Kropotkin in the North Caucasus — mortality, according to the estimates of such responsible local authorities as Soviet and collective farm presidents, ranged around 10 percent. Among individual peasants and in villages far away from the railroad it was often much higher.

I crossed Ukraine from the southeast to the northwest by train, and at every station where I made inquiries the peasants told the same story of major famine during the winter and spring of 1932-33.

If one considers that the population of Ukraine is about 35 million and that of the North Caucasus about 10 million and that credible reports of similar famine came from parts of the country which I did not visit, some regions of the Middle and Lower Volga and Kazakhstan, in Central Asia, it would seem

highly probable that between 4 million and 5 million people over and above the normal mortality rate, lost their lives from hunger and related causes. This is in reality behind the innocuous phrases tolerated by the Soviet censorship, about food stringency, strained food situation, etc.

What lay behind this major human catastrophe? It was very definitely not a result of any natural disaster, such as exceptional drought or flood, because it was the general testimony of the peasants that the harvest of 1932, although not satisfactory, would have left them enough for nourishment, if the state had not swooped down on them with heavy requisitions.

Hidden stocks of grain which the despairing peasants had buried in the ground were dug up and confiscated; where resistance to the state measures

and discouragement, sabotage and counter-revolution and, with the ruthlessness peculiar to self-righteous idealists, they decided to let the famine run its course with the idea that it would teach the peasants a lesson.

Relief was doled out to the collective farms, but on an inadequate scale and so late that many lives had already been lost. The individual peasants were left to shift for themselves; and the much higher mortality rate among the individual peasants proved a most potent argument in favor of joining collective farms.

### War is war, but —

The Soviet government, along with the other powers which adhered to the Kellogg pact, has renounced war as an instrument of national policy. But there are no humanitarian restrictions in the ruthless class war which, in the name of socialism, it has been waging on a considerable part of its own peasant population; and it has employed famine as an instrument of national policy on an unprecedented scale and in an unprecedented way.

At the moment it looks as if the famine method may have succeeded in finally breaking down the peasant resistance to collectivization. In 1921 the peasants were strong enough, acting no less effectively because they had no conscious union or organization, to force the government to give up its requisitioning and to introduce the "NEP," or New Economic Policy, with its security of individual farming and freedom of private trade, by withholding their grain and bringing the towns close to starvation.

Now the tide of revolution has rolled beyond the NEP stage, and in 1933 the Soviet government, quite conscious of what it was doing, was strong enough to wring out of the peasants enough foodstuffs to provide at least minimum rations for the towns and to turn the starvation weapon against the peasants themselves.

was specially strong, as in some stanitsas, or Cossack towns, in the Western Kuban, whole communities were driven from their homes and exiled en masse, to the frozen wastes of Siberia.

### State had its "squeeze"

Unquestionably, the poor harvest of 1932 was attributable in some degree to the apathy and discouragement of the peasants, subjected, as they were at the time, to constant requisitions, at inequitable fixed prices — the state was practically compelled, by the necessity for raising capital for its grandiose, new industrial enterprises, to squeeze out of the peasants a good deal more than it could give them in return — of their grain and other produce by the authorities, and driven against their will into an unfamiliar and distasteful system.

The Communists saw in this apathy

## The horror...

(Continued from page 3)

answered. We looked through the window and saw nothing. We then decided to go around the house and look through a small window over the oven. As usual, the oven window was high, so I leaned over and told Hryts Luchko to climb up on my back and take a look. He clambered up and pushed his face against the window pane. Lying on the oventop he saw Vasyl and his little daughter. Sanka was not at home. She had gone out foraging. Hrytsko knocked on the window and shouted, but got no response. Evidently both were dead.

Both of us then went over to the collective farm activist Peter Lukashenko. Returning with him we forced a window open and climbed inside. Both father and daughter had been dead for quite some time as the odor evidenced.

Peter Lukashenko and Hrytsko Luchko proposed that we dig a hole and bury them. Remembering the unpleasantness I had with Sanka about the boys, I refused.

Four or five days later Vasyl's wife returned. Where she had gone, where she had been, what she had brought back... I do not know. She came hurrying over to me sobbing.

"Come and bury them, Vasyl and my daughter have died."

To which I replied:

"This time bury them yourself, for there is such a stink there that I could not possibly return there!"

Nonetheless I went to dig a grave. All the neighbors were around. They gave Sanka a blanket, and with it she went inside. I don't know how she managed to drag the bodies off the oventop and put them on the blanket, but she did it. Then we, tying cloths around our noses and mouths, dashed inside and grabbing the corners of the blanket dashed outside and threw the corpses into the hole. We quickly filled in the hole, for the stench was unendurable.

Soon after Sanka came over to me and asked whether I would mind if she could remove the iron roof of her half of the house, for she wanted to sell it in order to buy bread.

"Do what you want. But after what has happened in that house, neither my wife nor I will go over to live there anymore," I replied.

I journeyed somewhere then. Sanka ripped the iron roof from her half, with it she bought bread, ate it and died from it... When I had returned there was no one of the Vasyl Luchko family left.

The famine had wiped them all out.



With their husbands and fathers either exiled or executed, mothers and their children were destined to die of hunger.

## THE GREAT FAMINE IN UKRAINE 1932-33

### Eyewitness accounts

The following eyewitness accounts were first published in the second volume of "The Black Deeds of the Kremlin: A White Book," published in 1955 by the Democratic Organization of Ukrainians Formerly Persecuted by the Soviet Regime. The first volume appeared in 1953. In many cases, eyewitnesses used their initials rather than their full names because they feared reprisals against family members still living in Ukraine or Eastern Europe. The acronym NKVD refers to many of the accounts refers to the Soviet secret police as it was known before it became the KGB. The acronym GPU refers to the military intelligence service.

#### Deranged by hunger, mothers eat their children

Andriy Melezhyk recalled this story of a mother eating her child.

Luka Vasylyovych Bondar lived in Bilosivka in the district of Chornoukhy in the region of Poltava. He was 38 years old. He had a wife named Kulina and a 5-year-old daughter named Vaska. Before collectivization he owned five hectares of land, and therefore belonged to the class of poor peasant.

In March of 1933 Luka, although distended with hunger, went away to some distant villages in search of something to eat, and did not return. About a week later his wife Kulina died of starvation and the collective farm brigade removed her body to the cemetery.

After she was interred, the neighbors started wondering what had happened to her daughter Vaska, who was not known to have died. They entered Kulina's house and began to search for the child. In the oven they found a pot containing a boiled liver, heart and lungs. In the warming oven they found a large earthenware bowl filled with fresh salted meat, and in the cellar under a barrel they discovered a small hole in which a child's head, feet and hands were buried. It was the head of Kulina's little daughter, Vaska.

And there is also this horrific story. Nikifor Filimonovich Sviridenko, from the village of Kharkivtsi in the Pereyaslav district was the son of poor people who did not own any land before the revolution. After the revolution Nikifor was given a piece of land, married his Nataalka, and set up housekeeping. He had two small children.

During the winter of 1932-33 the government, conducting its grain-gathering operations, relieved them of their last kernel of grain. Nikifor's relatives, like a great many other families, starved for some time and finally perished.

In February 1933, the neighbors noticed that for two or three days there had been no sign of life in Nikifor's dwelling. Accordingly, three women entered the house through the unlocked door. On the mud floor they saw Nikifor's corpse, while the dishevelled, hunger-distended Nataalka lay nearby. No children were to be seen.

#### Heroic Jewish doctors, risking arrest, treat famine victims

The following was recalled by **Natalia Zolotarevich**. In 1933 the superintendent of the district clinical hospital in Chornoukhy was a Jew named Moisei Davidovych Fishman. He and his wife, Olga Volkova, who was likewise a physician, never lost the milk of human kindness during those difficult years, and, instead of carrying out the orders of the authorities, they courageously ignored them and helped the starving populace.

At that time the authorities had forbidden doctors and hospitals to admit the starving for treatment if the diagnosed illness were "debility from hunger." One could get into a hospital only if one had some other illness. Nevertheless, the hospitals did feed the

The neighbors asked Nataalka how she was feeling, and she answered, "I'm hungry. There's an iron pot on the porch. Bring it in. It has food in it."

One of the women went out to the porch and saw the little fingers of a child protruding from a small pot standing on the floor. She screamed in fright. The other woman came out, and removed the whole tiny hand from the whitish liquid in the pot.

They began to question the woman,

"Where are your children, Nataalka?"

"They're on the porch," replied Nataalka, whose reason had been unbalanced by hunger.

Nikifor and Nataalka had murdered their children and eaten the first one, but had not yet begun on the second. Nikifor was dead, and Nataalka was taken to jail after this, but she also died there three days later.

Proof as to how widespread cannibalism had been in Ukraine at that time can be furnished by such facts as these: in the Lukianovka jail in Kiev they had a separate building for "maneaters." Among the prisoners in the Solovky Islands in 1938 there were 325 cannibals of 1932-1933, of whom 75 were men and 250 women.

J.P. Muzyna, an eyewitness, now residing in Detroit, tells of the case mentioned by W. H. Chamberlin. "I witnessed the discovery of a slaughterhouse of children in Poltava. It was a small building in the center of the city. Right next to it were: railroad cooperative store No. 1, a railroad first-aid station, a pharmacy and a building for the homeless. A band of criminals lured small children, killed them, salted the meat in barrels and sold it. Refuse was dumped into an open sewer, whose banks were overgrown with high weeds, and they floated away. One day thousands gathered here to watch the GPU load a lot of children's clothes, shoes, schoolbags and other things on trucks. They had been stored in the attic, the criminals probably having no way of getting rid of them. All attempts of the GPU to disperse the mob of unfortunate mothers, who had come to look for their lost children were of no avail. They had to resort to a threat of arms."

patients and would not let them die of hunger.

And so Dr. Fishman admitted people distended from hunger to his hospital at every possible opportunity, diagnosed their illness as due to some other cause and slowly restored them to a normal state. For his deeds, Dr. Fishman more than once had unpleasant interviews with the authorities, but being the good, authoritative physician he was, he did what his humane conscience prompted him to do, and defended himself against their attacks.

The memory of these two noble individuals Drs. Fishman and Volkova, will long be cherished in the hearts of those people of the district whom they rescued from the famine.

#### Homeless, starving orphans jam cities in search of food

The plight of children during the famine was particularly pathetic. A foreign observer writes: "It was beyond my comprehension... at Kharkiv I saw a boy, wasted to a skeleton, lying in the middle of the street. A second boy was sitting near a keg of garbage picking egg-shells out of it. They were looking for edible remnants of food or fruit. They perished like wild beasts... When the famine began to mount, the parents in the villages used to take their children into the towns, where they left them in the hope that someone would have pity on them."

Prof. M. M. emphasizes that the NKVD set up a huge concentration camp for children, ("barracks of death" it was called in whispers among the peasants) where about 10,000 children rounded up in the city of Kharkiv were placed. The mortality rate among them reached 40 percent.

Thousands of children came to the

cities alone, without parents or adults, and various stages of nervous and psychic disorders were noticeable among them. Dr. M. M. quotes typical answers given by children put under observation in the psychiatric clinic during the famine. In reply to the question as to what had brought him to the city, a 7-year-old boy said: "Father died, mother swelled up and could not get out of bed. She said to me 'Go and look for bread yourself,' so I came to the city." An 8-year-old boy said: "Father and mother died, some brothers were left, but there was nothing to eat and I ran away from home." A boy, 9 years old, said: "Mother said, 'Save yourself, run to town.' I turned back twice; I could not bear to leave my mother, but she begged and cried, and I finally went for good." Another 8-year-old boy said: "Father and mother were lying all swollen, so I ran away from home." Children were often left lying on sheets near police stations.



Children — victims of the Great Famine in Ukraine in 1932-33.

#### Special trains secretly transport thousands of bodies

This is described by M.D. an engineer who worked on the railroads in the Northern Caucasus.

Early in 1933 from Kavkaz station in the Northern Caucasus, every morning at a fixed hour before dawn two mysterious trains would leave in the direction of Mineralni Vody and Rostov. The trains were empty and consisted of five to 10 freight cars each. Between two and four hours later the trains would return, stop for a certain time at a small way station, and then proceed on a dead-end spur towards a former ballast quarry. While the trains stopped in Kavkaz, or on a side track, all cars were locked, appeared loaded and were closely guarded by the NKVD.

Nobody paid any attention to the mysterious trains at first; I did not either. I worked there temporarily, being still a student of the Moscow Institute of Transportation. But one

day, conductor Kh., who was a Communist, called me quietly and took me to the trains, saying: "I want to show you what is in the cars." He opened the door of one car slightly, I looked in and almost swooned at the sight I saw. It was full of corpses, piled at random. The conductor later told me this story: "The station master had secret orders from his superiors to comply with the request of the local and railroad NKVD and to have ready every dawn two trains of empty freight cars. The crew of the trains was guarded by the NKVD. The trains went out to collect the corpses of peasants who had died from famine, and had been brought to railroad stations from nearby villages. Among the corpses were many persons still alive, who eventually died in the cars. The corpses were buried in the remote section beyond the quarries."

(Continued on page 13)



Corpses of the famine victims are loaded onto wagons and driven out to be buried in mass graves.

## THE GREAT FAMINE IN UKRAINE 1932-33

### Progress report: forthcoming book on collectivization and the famine

by Dr. Robert Conquest

*Dr. Conquest, senior research fellow and scholar-curator of the Russian and East European Collection of the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford University, is working on a book on the collectivization terror and the famine. The following is a progress report on the work, which is jointly funded by the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute and the Ukrainian National Association.*

In physical terms, about a third of the manuscript is now in draft, though not yet assimilated to the general narrative. I expect to have a full draft in the late fall.

The work so far has, of course, been largely one of research, reading and extracting. I was much struck by the sheer bulk of the evidence. Material bearing directly on the famine of 1932-33 is impressively large. And, in addition to what was already available, I have been the fortunate recipient of many letters and documents sent me by a number of Ukrainian correspondents on all aspects of the subject.

It has been necessary to master various diverse fields, in particular the economic side, but also to gain a broad and full understanding of the situation of the peasantry in the centuries preceding the revolution.

Yet the main problem is to consider accurately, to make a balanced assessment of the state of public knowledge of the whole matter in the West — and I mean among educated people. We have to conclude that, generally speaking, not much of it is at present known, or thought about: the most that those outside the circle of students of the Soviet phenomenon tend to know is that Stalin crushed the peasantry and that this involved a famine (and that the collective farm system thus produced is inefficient).

Even among those more closely concerned with study of the Soviet Union the remnants of myths inculcated by E. H. Carr and others persist — in particular the notion that economic rationality was applied by

the Kremlin to solve, in a tyrannical way, the agricultural problem.

Fortunately, within the much smaller circle of economists studying collectivization, there have been in the past 10 or 12 years a number of accomplished experts in economics who have yet had the sense to see the irrationalities involved. Their insights, written in a complex fashion for a professional audience, have yet to be mediated in a general book to the general Western public. This is only part of the subject, of course, yet a significant part.

Neither the expert analyses of the economic side, nor the heartrending documentation of first-hand accounts of the human suffering have so far gained, or at any rate held, the public attention. The whole famine was exposed in the most powerful fashion at the time in the American press. But such is the short memory of the public, and the long-range will to self-deception on the part of certain important formers of Western opinion, that only a history in which the facts are presented in fully assimilable form — and the evidence put forward so clearly and fully as to destroy the credibility of falsification and error — can really and finally win the day in the public arena. That is to say, the book is to be comprehensive, cumulative, readable and objective.

This is a matter both of presentation and of the evidence proper. One example of the way in which the truths we are developing are made irrefutable even to skeptics, is confirmation from Soviet sources. Every time one can produce such it destroys any residual notion in the reader's mind that the account is from one-sided sources.

On the casualty figures, Soviet demographers are implicitly confirming the death rate; on deportations, Communist Party books have published the number of "kulak" families taken to some northern oblasts; on the general results, a number of recent Soviet fiction writers and others have confirmed such things as, for example, that those put in charge in the villages were the local drunks and ne'er-do-wells.

I believe that virtually every assertion or account which might be suspect as "anti-Soviet propaganda" can now be supported by evidence published in Moscow or Kiev. The effect of this on the skeptical Western mind cannot be overestimated. And we are also fortunate, in a different vein, in having an increasing number of first-hand accounts by former 25,000'ers or Komsomol members — for example that of Lev Kopelev.

I may now set down in sketch the development of the actual book.

- My introduction begins with a brief general statement of the holocaust we shall be examining: of the whole Ukraine in 1933 turned into one vast Belsen; of millions of men, women and children dying in their villages, and millions more in exile and labor camp in the Far North; of weed-infested fields and shrunken herds; of ruthless and well-fed party and police officials enforcing the terror.
- I. I open the main narrative at



Frozen corpses at a Kharkiv cemetery.

the beginning of 1927. The peasantry is in reasonably good condition, and the Ukrainian nationality has gained a certain relaxation from Marxist centralism. For the peasant, the sufferings of the past years seem to have ended at last. I then develop the history on which he looks back: the peasant's condition in the time of serfdom; the emancipation; the varieties of land holding; the special situation of the Ukrainian peasant; the Stolypin reforms; the revolution; war communism and the first "requisition famine" in 1921; the peasant victory of the NEP (New Economic Policy).

- II. Next we consider the history and motivations of the other element — the Communist Party. I expound the whole animus of Marxism-Leninism against the peasantry, seen as both intrinsically backward and as irremediably hostile to "socialism" and progress; and at the same time the bulwark of nationalism. I develop the way in which the Marxist view insisted on a "class struggle" in the villages where none naturally existed, and so imposed the dekulakization terror, both dreadful from the point of view of humanity and disastrous economically.

- III. And now, as the peasant prospers, the Communist Party — in spite of a vacillating minority in the leadership — plans to recover the initiative in its unquenched determination to crush his independence. The new wave of "dekulakization" or "dekurkulization" begins. We trace the fallacious economic arguments against a free market in grain; we follow the intraparty struggle; we look at the crash decisions of 1929.

- IV. We turn now to the villages, with scores of individual stories of the kulak executions and deportations, and the great struggle of the first months of 1930, when the peasant won this time not a victory, but at least a temporary stand-off.

- V. We go on to the attack on religion, in both hierarchical and individual village detail, but also as the destruction of the deeper life and culture of the peasantry.

- VI. In 1931-32 the party's grip on the countryside strengthens again. And in 1932-33 comes the massive assault on Ukraine. We show this as a conscious decision to crush the Ukrainian people; first developing the concomitant history of the rise

and destruction of the "national" Communist element, and the ravaging of the cultural institutions and elites — even of the blind bards of the countryside. We turn once more to the villages and to the central scene of the whole book, the terror-famine itself: both the general picture, authenticated by outsiders (and later Soviet accounts), but above all the scores of individual stories, the seizure of the crop, the laying waste of Ukraine and the Kuban (and we look at the special case of Kazakhstan). We readily prove by several approaches the fact, sometimes doubted, that the famine was localized in Ukraine (and a few lesser regions) as a conscious and genocidal decision of Stalin and the Communist leadership. This is, as I have said, the aspect of the whole tragedy which is least understood in the West.

- VII. We turn to the children, rehearsing the history of the "bezpri-zorniy" of the 1920s, and now the new wave of orphans, first starving, then dispersed, with their fate either in OGPU killings or imprisonment in "homes" or assimilation to the criminal world. And, of course, the spiritual degradation of the Pavlik Morozov type is covered.

- VIII. Then, we review how the world saw it. There was sound reporting by many, but the secrecy or disinformation efforts of Moscow was imposed upon the Heretics and other disgraceful dupes, so that, at least among those well-affected to the Soviets, a distorted picture emerged.

- IX. Then we estimate the death-toll, the extent of the massacre, which warrants a separate chapter. I believe it can now be proved beyond criticism that the total excess mortality of the "dekulakization" of 1929-30 and of the famine of 1932-37 must have been around 14 million, including several million children. This figure used to be considered (even by myself) a "high" one, but the evidence seems irresistible.

- X. And so to the aftermath — a view of a Soviet Union with a crippled agriculture, further devastations of Ukraine in the late 1930s and 1940s (with the 1947 famine). Finally there is an assessment of what the cold-blooded destruction of human life means in our understanding of the present Soviet regime and leadership.



Dr. Robert Conquest: author of the soon-to-be-published book on Ukraine's famine of 1932-33.



## THE GREAT FAMINE IN UKRAINE 1932-33

### Profile: James Mace, junior collaborator of Robert Conquest

by George B. Zarycky

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — For Dr. James Mace, who is doing research for Dr. Robert Conquest's upcoming book on the Great Famine in Ukraine in 1932-33, the project has become, in his own words, the culmination of "a historian's dream."

Now in his third year as a post-doctoral fellow at the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, the 31-year-old scholar has been immersed in poring over Ukrainian-language accounts of the famine, as well as Soviet and other sources for pertinent material to document what he calls "a focal point of the Ukrainian national experience." In addition, he has found time to tour Ukrainian communities to lecture on the famine, and put the finishing touches on his own book on national communism in Ukraine, which is due to be published by Harvard in a few months.

But how did a young, non-Ukrainian native of Oklahoma become involved with Ukrainian history and, subsequently, the famine project? According to Dr. Mace, his interest was spawned while he was a long-haired undergraduate at Oklahoma University in the early 1970s. Like many of his compatriots, he was an opponent of America's involvement in Vietnam, and he wanted to learn more about national liberation and anti-imperialist struggles in modern history. This, in turn, led him to study political science, and he quickly gravitated to Soviet and East European studies, learning Russian along the way.

It was in graduate school at the University of Michigan that the Ukrainian connection began to gel. There, he studied with Prof. Roman Szporluk, a Ukrainian author and historian, who spurred his interest in Ukrainian studies. He learned Ukrainian. His doctoral thesis was on national communism in Soviet Ukraine in the 1920s. Although he had heard of the famine while an undergraduate, it was while doing research for his dissertation that Dr. Mace became more familiar with the causes and the aim of the famine, seeing it more clearly as Stalin's attempt to destroy the Ukrainian nation by imposed starvation within the framework of dekulakization.

In Dr. Mace's view, the famine marked the end of a "limited autonomy" in Ukraine, personified in the 1920s by Mykola Skrypnyk, a leader of the Communist Party in Ukraine until his disgrace and subsequent suicide in 1933.

"In the 1920s, Soviet Ukraine was very much like Poland in the early Gomułka years; it was a national Communist regime which was stuck in a balancing act," Dr. Mace said. "On the one hand, you had to keep Moscow happy. On the other hand, you had to at least placate the national aspirations of the local Ukrainian inhabitants, who were four-fifths of the country's population."

By the early 1930s, however, this experiment with Ukrainization was suddenly abandoned with the suppression of the Ukrainian elites, beginning with the purges of Skrypnyk's associates and the destruction of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church and such academic institutions as the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences. That done, Stalin decided to break once and for all the national consciousness of the peasantry. The result was the Great Famine, which was to kill 5 to 7 million Ukrainians.

Dr. Mace's direct involvement in the

Conquest book, jointly sponsored by HURI and the Ukrainian National Association, began shortly after he arrived at the HURI in July 1981. Prof. Omeljan Pritsak, director of the HURI, suggested that he help research the book before embarking on his own work as a post-doctoral fellow. Seizing the opportunity to help publicize what he calls "the crime of the century that nobody's ever heard of" and the chance to work with a scholar of Prof. Conquest's reputation, Dr. Mace agreed to work on the project.

Naturally aware that "an outsider will never be able to completely comprehend what the famine was really like," Dr. Mace is confident that his research will help to objectively depict the scope of the tragedy, and unequivocally show that it was, in fact, a premeditated attempt at genocide.

The main part of his job thus far has been to make available to Prof. Conquest, who does not speak or read Ukrainian, all relevant Ukrainian-language material. The bulk comes from eyewitness accounts, some published and some sent to the HURI in manuscript form.

Typical of the latter category, though better written than most, is an eyewitness account sent from a man in California who writes under the name of Dolat. Explains Dr. Mace: "This was a man who was in his early teens during the famine. In his village, everybody was starving. His family happened to have a cow, so they survived through

graphically you've stepped into a whole different mental universe because it's all a tale of this great revolutionary experience of building socialism." Yet, despite its tendentiousness, elements of truth do emerge.

Dr. Mace cited one official account, published in the 1960s, which contained useful crop figures, and a study on the technical reconstruction of agriculture which had a segment on grain procurement campaigns in the 1930s, policies which created the famine.

Among helpful Western accounts, Dr. Mace singled out Malcolm Muggeridge's recollections of the famine published in the book "Winter in Moscow," and his memoirs, "Chronicles of Wasted Time." He also mentioned the news stories by William Henry Chamberlin of the Christian Science Monitor and the accounts of William Horsly Hunt, a British psychologist who was studying with Pavlov at the time of the famine and managed to meet unofficially with several Soviet functionaries. He later recalled that many of them told him that between 10 and 14 million peasants perished during the Great Famine.

Finally, Dr. Mace said that the Ukrainian press at the time, most notably Svoboda and Dilo, published in Polish-ruled western Ukraine, had daily accounts, as did newspapers in Sweden and Germany. The Germans were concerned about the plight of the USSR's Volga Germans, who, Dr. Mace said, were also targets of famine

society," with its elites, a solid industrial working class and, with the advent of Ukrainization, Ukrainian-language schools, newspapers and other social institutions. The famine was Stalin's way of "dealing a body blow" to this, to "strike a nation," he said.

For this reason, Dr. Mace sees the famine "plays a role in Ukrainian history analogous to the Holocaust in Jewish history," adding that it remains "the national tragedy of Ukraine."

He attributed the lack of public knowledge about the famine in the West to several factors, including timing, the reluctance of some press correspondents, notably from The New York Times, to jeopardize good relations with Kremlin leaders, America's concern with the Depression and resulting social unrest, the rise of fascism in Europe and the intellectual Left's romance with Marxism.

In addition, he pointed out that, unlike the Holocaust, which was verifiable the moment Allied troops liberated the death camps and saw the horrors with their own eyes, there is little hard documentation easily available to the public to prove the famine actually happened — and virtually under the noses of the international community. The sheer magnitude of the crime in a sense precluded its believability, he said.

Dr. Mace admitted that his newfound celebrity status in the Ukrainian community was somewhat "overwhelming," but he quickly added that the Ukrainian community has been "very positive and supportive." His immediate plans for the future include the publication of his book, "Communism and the Dilemmas of National Liberation: National Communism in Soviet Ukraine 1918-1933," which he likened to "having a baby after being pregnant for five years."

He also indicated that he would like to write his own book on the famine from the perspective of his own area of expertise.

"There's never going to be just one book on the famine," he said, adding that he would like to go on studying Eastern Europe, preferably Ukrainian history.

Someday he hopes to teach at a respected university and have "a few good books to my credit" that will be useful to future scholars in Soviet and Ukrainian studies. Judging by his indefatigable energies, his ambition and his love of his subject, Dr. Mace will surely attain most, if not all, of his goals. For now, however, he is satisfied with the challenging task of documenting the unknown "crime of the century."

#### Mace: The famine "plays a role in Ukrainian history analogous to the Holocaust in Jewish history."

the winter and spring almost exclusively on dairy products. But after the snow, they would go around to relatives' houses. One of his in-laws had gone crazy with starvation and had become a cannibal. His aunt had hung herself and the body had decayed so that he saw the body on the floor decapitated; the neck had just rotted through."

Of the numerous published accounts, most of which Dr. Mace said have been largely "ignored by the non-Ukrainian public," he cited "The Black Deeds of the Kremlin: A White Book," as a particularly valuable source of information. Yet, he added that quite often published eyewitness accounts are understandably overstated and dramatic, a fact that has caused many scholars to shy away from them as unobjective.

"You want to put three exclamation points at the end of every sentence," Dr. Mace said in explaining the emotional tenor of many published eyewitness accounts. "You want to have titles that drip blood because you saw people dripping blood."

Soviet sources have also been of "great worth," he said, particularly press accounts that carried the names of villages that were blacklisted, and noted the seizure of grain, denunciations of local officials who hadn't made their grain quotas and acts of "kulak sabotage." Many inadvertently painted a clear picture of the methodical confiscation of grain couched in grain procurement statistics, output figures and population and demographic tables.

Less helpful, but nevertheless revealing, were official Soviet histories of collectivization. Noted Dr. Mace: "When you deal with Soviet historio-

along with the Cossack nations.

Dr. Mace said that his "biggest frustration" in preparing the research was his lack of a thorough knowledge of Ukrainian and its idioms. "I wish I had better fluency of spoken Ukrainian so I could talk to mono-lingual survivors," he said. A language barrier also prevented him from familiarizing himself with articles in Italian and Spanish newspapers of the period, though he added that Prof. Conquest speaks French and has managed to investigate French press reports.

As to the book itself, Dr. Mace said that it is one-third complete, and should be published at the earliest by the end of the year but more likely in early 1984. A publisher has yet to be named, and the final draft should fall between 300 and 400 pages, although it may be longer. The working title is "The Collectivization Terror Famine," but that may yet be changed in the final version, he added.

When asked why he felt the project was important, Dr. Mace said that understanding the famine is an indispensable step in understanding the Soviet Union and how it was created.

"It is also important because it happened," he said. "There is an intrinsic importance to the past. This is particularly important because it not only cost millions of lives, but it marked the destruction of a European nation more numerous than the Poles, and its temporary destruction as a political factor and even as a social entity."

In Dr. Mace's estimation, the famine occurred when Ukraine, long a nation of peasants and priests, was emerging as a modern nation. In his view, Ukraine in the 1920s was "a sociologically complete



Dr. James Mace: Dr. Robert Conquest's junior collaborator on the forthcoming book on the Great Famine.

## THE GREAT FAMINE IN UKRAINE 1932-33

### Ethnic, community leaders on famine

Reprinted below are letters written by ethnic and community leaders to UNA Supreme President John O. Flis on the occasion of the solemn 50th anniversary of the Great Famine. The letters are the result of a February 15 (see story, page 1) meeting organized by the Illinois Consultation on Ethnicity in Education to commemorate this genocide of the Ukrainian nation. It was moderated by Dr. Myron B. Kuropas, UNA supreme vice president.

#### The American Jewish Committee

I wish to join with the many other voices which have expressed their sympathy and understanding as the Ukrainian people mark the 50th anniversary of the suffering and tragic death of millions of their countrymen during the famine they were compelled to endure.

The memories of people who are united by their common recollections helps give strength to their future. As we reach across old barriers to understand and appreciate each other's memories, we can gain new strength from each other and look to a future of greater understanding and solidarity in our concerns for justice for all.

**Maynard I. Wishner**  
national president  
New York

We are reminded at this time that 50 years have passed since the famine of 1933. All free men and women share the sense of sorrow and loss of the Ukrainian people.

On behalf of The American Jewish Committee, I would like to express the hope that our communities will work together toward the day when tragedies of this nature will be non-existent anywhere in the world.

**Marshall L. Zissman**  
president  
Chicago Chapter

#### Assyrian Universal Alliance Foundation

The board of directors, staff and the Assyrian people we serve, of the Assyrian Universal Alliance Foundation wish to extend our most sincere sympathy on the 50th anniversary of the Ukrainian famine of 1933.

As a persecuted ethnic group, we, Assyrians of the Middle East, understand the sense of loss your ethnic group has felt, as well as still feel at this time. It's a shame that 5 to 7 million human lives paid for the Soviets' faltering economy in 1933. What's worse is that this event went by unnoticed by the rest of the world, and could very well happen again, unless the world is made aware.

Therefore, the Assyrian Universal Alliance Foundation has pledged to join with Ukrainian Americans and others to make the world aware of the great human tragedy that befell Ukraine in 1933.

May God continue to watch over the Ukrainians of the United States and those throughout the world. For he is the world's light, in which all of us follow. All of his people will never perish.

**John Yonan**  
executive director  
Chicago

#### Balzegas Museum of Lithuanian Culture

The suffering of the Ukrainian people for centuries under the Russian tsars and now the Russian Communists, is one of the tragedies of mankind. The man-made famine which the Russian Communists perpetrated in Ukraine in 1933, should unite people of the free world to work for freedom for Ukrainians, Lithuanians and other oppressed people of the world who are under the Russian imperialistic rule.

The descendants of East Europeans in America must continuously work to inform their fellow citizens of the realities of life in the USSR. Freedom for the captive nations will be a long-term process: we must keep vigilant, maintaining the spark of freedom for those less fortunate.

If I can be of any help in the future, please call on me.

**Stanley Balzegas Jr.**  
president  
Chicago

#### Festa Italiana

It's incredible that in this so-called enlightened 20th century when man has achieved tremendous technological advances, civilization has not learned to curb its base instincts.

How do we reconcile an era that encompasses medical breakthroughs that eliminate polio and transplant vital organs with a period that has seen the Holocaust, Bangladesh and the systematic starvation of millions in Ukraine.

It is no small wonder that those responsible for this outrage have strived so assiduously to hide this monstrous deed.

We applaud the Ukrainian National Association's efforts to heighten the world's awareness of this appalling atrocity that resulted in a genocidal assault on a proud people.

As an organization of Italian American business and professional men dedicated to serving our less fortunate, we in UNICO join with all Ukrainian Americans in a bond of solidarity so that the ultimate sacrifices of those brave individuals who suffered 50 years ago will have not been lost on the world's conscience.

**Anthony J. Fornelli**  
chairman  
Chicago

### German American National Congress

The German American National Congress sympathizes with the Ukrainian Americans when you recall the terrible fate of Ukrainians 50 years ago, who died of hunger while Stalin confiscated all the grain, which these Ukrainians grew and produced, and used it for purposes foreign and alien to Ukrainians. As German Americans, whose fatherland also still lies divided, we know very well of the humiliations, deprivations and injustices which can be inflicted upon a nation and its peoples.

**Elsbeth M. Seewald**  
national president  
Mount Prospect, Ill.

### Illinois Commission on Human Relations

I pledge today to join with your efforts to publicize the sad commemoration of the 1933 man-made famine which cost the lives of millions in Ukraine.

For too long, silence and cover-ups have allowed the world to ignore tragedies such as this which have shaped the histories of many nations.

That the past is prologue is a fitting phrase as we remember that millions of Ukrainians died so that the Stalin regime could export grain and buy foreign goods and technology from the Western world.

It is urgent that the world know the Ukrainian story as we see once again, throughout the world, the deliberate manipulation of economics to lower standards of living and set people against one another.

It is of special note that the observance of the 1933 famine should occur during Black History Month. There is so much about Ukrainian history that parallels Afro-American history — the massacres, the race riots and the economically induced oppression. Today, many Blacks are among the poor who face a "write-off" of the so-called "underclass" in America.

As the U.S. and other Western nations conclude new trade deals, business and industrial leaders must be sensitized to the possibilities that once again human suffering may be the indirect subsidiary of trade with the Soviets. Already there are reports of slave labor being used to work on the Siberian pipeline.

You work is cut out for you. God bless your efforts.

**Connie Seals**  
former director  
Chicago

### Illinois Consultation on Ethnicity in Education

Along with many of my colleagues in diverse ethnic communities, I am writing to assure you that I will work to make people aware of the great human tragedy that befell Soviet Ukraine 50 years ago this winter.

America is a nation of many nations. Unfortunately, in an effort to enter the mainstream, some groups may have unwittingly sacrificed their greatest treasure, their history. By keeping the past hidden, we deny all Americans access to the lessons that only we can teach.

By confronting all Americans with the memory of Stalin's man-made famine, *Ukrainian Americans are committing an act of faith in themselves and in us.* We recognize our obligation to join with you and your people in sharing this tragic aspect of our history, so that events like the famine never happen again. This is the lesson that we must learn to teach others from your history.

I assure you that the Illinois Consultation will cooperate with Ukrainian Americans in telling the story of the famine.

**Edwin Cudecki**  
chair  
Chicago

### Japanese American Citizens League

As one who was born in a United States concentration camp for Japanese Americans during World War II, I am well aware of how the tragedies of the past are often forgotten or suppressed by the government. It is only through the cooperation of all that the truth can be told in the spirit that such tragedies will not be repeated by any government.

When learning about the man-made Ukrainian famine of 1933, it shocked me to realize that there are still many tragic events that need to be brought to the attention of the public not only to prevent such future occurrences by any tyrannical government but to also memorialize the many millions who died as a result.

I share the sorrow of the Ukrainian community and pledge to work with your organization towards preventing such an event from happening again.

**Ross Harano**  
past governor, Midwest District Council  
Chicago

### Lithuanian American Council Inc.

As you commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Great Famine, we, Lithuanian Americans, join you in your sorrow.

We know very well the horrors initiated by Stalin first in Ukraine and then in Lithuania.

We shall work with you in informing the world of this great human tragedy.

**Kazys Sidlauskas**  
national president  
Chicago

### Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund

May I, together with many other who share my concern, express my sorrow in relation to the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Ukrainian Famine of 1933. This tragic episode in our world's history has been too long kept under wraps.

(Continued on page 11)

## THE GREAT FAMINE IN UKRAINE 1932-33

### Ethnic, community leaders...

(Continued from page 10)

All people concerned with human tragedy not only hope but pledge that they will assure the world that the Ukrainian Famine of 1933 was an event that will never happen again.

**Arthur R. Velasquez**  
member, board of directors  
Chicago

### National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

History continues to remind us of how deadly silence can be to those who would be their brothers' keepers if they but knew of the suffering. Remembrance of the millions who perished in the 1933 man-made famine can bind us together in a worldwide vow — never again, anywhere.

**James H. Lucien**  
executive secretary  
Chicago branch

### The National Center for Urban Ethnic Affairs

At the January 22, 1983, meeting, the board of directors of the National Center for Urban Ethnic Affairs (NCUEA) unanimously resolved:

To support and to urge inter-ethnic solidarity in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the Great Famine in Ukraine. NCUEA urges all to rally support in the face of the unspeakable evil and terrible suffering caused by the Great Famine.

NCUEA resolved that: It is time to call attention to the heretofore neglected, ignored and brazenly denied fact that the Great Famine in Ukraine was caused by the conscious and willful Soviet public policy.

NCUEA exhorts all to remember the 50th anniversary of the "man-made" famine of 1932-33. As we acknowledge the enormity of this demonic atrocity — 6 million dead — we are moved first to weep, then to pray, but finally to proclaim:

never again shall silence entomb cries for justice;  
never again shall a people be sacrificed on the chopping block of public policy;  
never again shall we shatter human solidarity which binds together all people as valued variants of a common humanity.

**John A. Kromkowski**  
president  
Washington

### Polish National Alliance of the U.S. of N.A.

It is certainly a tragedy that there is a blot on the entire world, when Stalin deliberately starved to death 5 to 7 million Ukrainians. We share this sorrow with you. We certainly feel the way you do, that this should be brought out into the world, so that they can understand the cruelty and the inhumane treatment by the leadership of the Soviet Union.

We certainly will join with you and all the others to make the world aware of this great human tragedy that befell Ukraine in 1933.

Please keep me informed.

**Aloysius A. Mazewski**  
president  
Chicago

### State of Illinois, Office of the Governor

On the 50th anniversary of the man-made famine in Ukraine, I join you and all Ukrainian Americans in commemorating this tragedy.

Ukrainians have suffered greatly under Communist rule and it is important that the famine they have endured should not be forgotten, for those who easily forget the tragedies of the past are more easily persuaded to turn a blind eye to the injustices in the future.

Through our perseverance and recognition of past tragedies of this kind, we will help to prevent injustices such as the one in Ukraine from happening again in the world.

**Gov. James R. Thompson**  
Springfield, Ill.

### United Hellenic American Congress

The United Hellenic American Congress, an umbrella organization comprised of some 280 Greek American organizations in the United States, wishes to share in the sense of the loss Ukrainians feel on the anniversary of the man-made famine by the Stalinist regime of Communist Russia in 1933, in which millions of innocent people lost their lives. As president of UHAC, I wish to express our solidarity with Ukrainian Americans on this tragic anniversary and offer our pledge to work with you and other groups in making the world aware of this great human tragedy which befell Ukraine.

As an organization devoted to the promotion of human rights and equality for all people we decry such genocidal events which are all too quickly forgotten by the world, similar to the Armenian and Greek massacres by the Turks, among others. We pledge ourselves to keep alive the memories of these terrible episodes that demonstrate "man's inhumanity to man" so that they would never be repeated again. We conclude by offering our prayers that the future will bring about a free and independent Ukraine.

**Andrew A. Athens**  
president  
Chicago

### Zionist Organization of Chicago

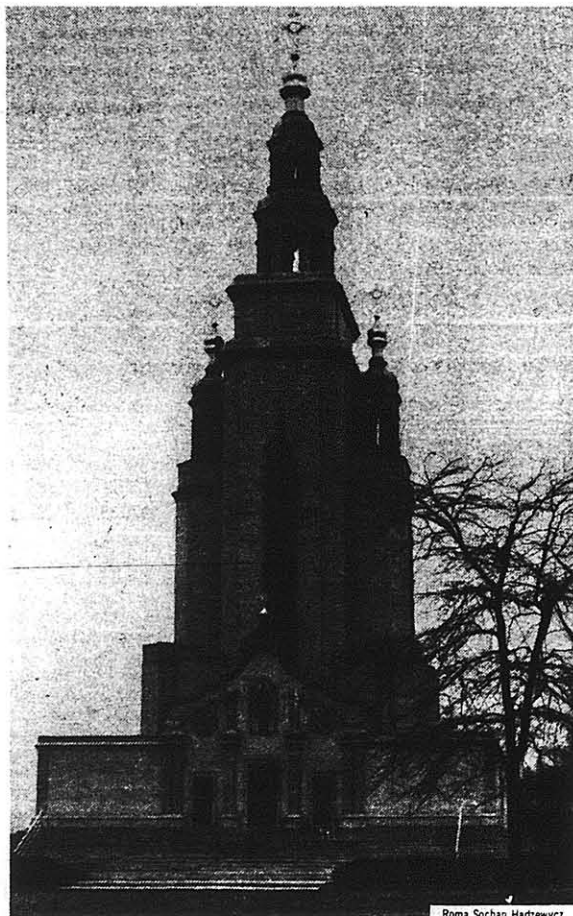
We share the sorrow of Ukrainians throughout the world as they commemorate

the 50th anniversary of the man-made Ukrainian famine of 1933.

We share in the sense of loss Ukrainians feel on the anniversary of this man-made famine and pledge to join with Ukrainian Americans and others to make the world aware of the great human tragedy that befell Ukraine in 1933, so that such events will never happen again.

**Nicholas Reisman**  
president  
Chicago

## St. Andrew's Memorial Church: monument to famine victims



Roma Sochan Hadzewicz

"The memorial church is a very modest cross on the graves of the millions of victims of the Great Famine — the graves that were plowed under by the enemy." These were the words of Archbishop Mstyslav of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church on October 10, 1965, the day of the dedication of St. Andrew's Memorial Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

Located in South Bound Brook, N.J., at the Ukrainian Orthodox Center of St. Andrew, the First-Called Apostle, the church was erected as a monument to those Ukrainians who died in the quest for liberty and national independence for their homeland — and especially to the 7 million victims of Stalin's planned annihilation of the Ukrainian nation, the Great Famine of 1932-33. It is the only monument dedicated to these victims.

The idea of a memorial church — and of the entire Ukrainian Orthodox Center — was conceived by Archbishop Mstyslav, who today, as metropolitan, heads the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. St. Andrew's Church, designed by George Kodak to showcase traditional Ukrainian Church architecture, is the centerpiece of the 100-acre Ukrainian Orthodox Center that houses a seminary, print shop, cemetery, administrative offices, library and the newly built Home of Ukrainian Culture.

Each year on St. Thomas Sunday, or "Providna Nedilia," thousands gather at the center to honor the dead. This year's observances on May 15 are dedicated to solemn observances of the 50th anniversary of the Great Famine. The day's program will include divine liturgy, memorial services, commemorative speeches and a memorial concert program.

IN NEXT WEEK'S WEEKLY: a special feature on St. Andrew's Memorial Church.



# THE GREAT FAMINE IN UKRAINE 1932-33

## 1932-34 Great Famine...

(Continued from page 12)

But even at that, the outlook for the autumn and winter was still not good. One group felt that "...millions of people will die of starvation in the coming winter if help is not forthcoming."<sup>52</sup> This same pessimistic outlook was expressed by Ammende, Hladky and Walker.<sup>53</sup>

Whether the famine actually carried over into 1935 is not known, but certainly the food situation continued to be unfavorable.

### C. Areas and groups affected

We have so far discussed only the existence and timing of the famine. Now we shall turn to a closer examination of the areas and groups most closely afflicted.

The famine was most severe, it seems to be generally conceded, in Ukraine, the North Caucasus (particularly in the Kuban), the middle and lower Volga, and in Kazakhstan. In general the famine was most severe in the grain-growing regions. It was there that collectivization was most complete.

As Schiller put it: "The regions which were the best qualified to bear the collectivization had to suffer the worst under the crude defects of the collectivization policy."<sup>54</sup> Lyons adds that: "Where the force was the greatest, the reaction was the greatest; the tragedy was in direct proportion to the successes."<sup>55</sup> A related problem of these one-crop areas was that they had less livestock than other areas to fall back on for consumption when their grain was expropriated.<sup>56</sup>

The exception to this pattern was Kazakhstan. There nomadic tribes such as the Kirgiz or the Kazakh raised cattle. In the course of collectivization, virtually all the livestock was wiped out.<sup>57</sup> Consequently, the tribe suffered heavy human mortality<sup>58</sup> — perhaps higher than other areas.<sup>59</sup> Due to Kazakhstan's isolation, however, relatively little is known about the progress of the famine.

Scattered famine reports were also noted for Central Asia,<sup>60</sup> White Russia,<sup>61</sup> and to a relatively lesser extent, elsewhere in the USSR.<sup>62</sup>

But even excluding these areas, along with Kazakhstan, the area and the population in the grip of starvation exceeded the famine of 1921.<sup>63</sup>

The famine, as has been suggested, was particularly severe in the rural areas.<sup>64</sup> This was quite the reverse of the usual pattern,<sup>65</sup> but then it was quite an unusual famine. And of those who died in the cities, many, if not most, were refugees from the rural areas who (as in 1921) had fled to town in calculation that things could only be better. They were generally disappointed. There was no relief, and there were not nearly enough jobs available.<sup>66</sup> "The supplies in the shops barely sufficed for the needs of the privileged classes."<sup>67</sup>

Moreover, the famine was even worse for the individual peasant than it was for those who had joined collectives.<sup>68</sup> As a resident of the Caucasus put it in July 1933: "The individual peasants are in especial danger, since they are completely abandoned to their wretched lot, whereas the members of the collective

farms are given some state assistance, though it be at best quite insufficient."<sup>69</sup>

"In this way," Ammende points out "the individual peasants were completely eliminated; either they entered the collective farms in so far as they were allowed to, or they died of starvation."<sup>70</sup>

The individual peasants in these cases, however, were not to be confused with the rich peasants or kulaks. The kulaks, as the Soviets acknowledged, had already largely been liquidated.<sup>71</sup> Rather, as Manning suggests: "The blow of 1933 fell chiefly on the poorer classes..."<sup>72</sup>

From what we have seen then, it would appear that there is little doubt that a severe famine raged in the Soviet Union from 1932 to 1934. Moreover, the famine was particularly severe in the grain-growing areas among the small individual peasants.

52. "Appeal for..." loc. cit.

53. "Wide Starvation in Russia Feared," *The New York Times*, July 1, 1934, p. 13 (also see Ammende, op. cit., pp. 84-101); Emil Hladky, "Russia's Food Supply" (letter), *The New York Times*, October 23, 1934, p. 18; Walker, op. cit. (February 27), p. 14.

54. Otto Schiller, "Die Landwirtschaftspolitik der Sowjets und ihre Ergebnisse," Berlin, 1943, p. 78.

55. Lyons, op. cit., p. 490.

56. F. A. Pearson and Don Paarberg point out that areas that have large livestock numbers seldom suffer from a lack of food because when food is short, the cattle can be slaughtered, thus (a) providing meat and (b) freeing feed for human consumption ("Starvation Truths, Half-Truths, Untruths," Cornell University, College of Agriculture, August 1946, p. 22).

57. Schiller, op. cit., p. 79; Jasny, op. cit., p. 323; Duranty, loc. cit. (March 31).

58. William Henry Chamberlin, "Russia's Iron Age," Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1934, p. 88; Frank Lorimer, "The Population of the Soviet Union: History and Prospects," League of Nations, Geneva, 1946, p. 133; Schiller, loc. cit.; Jasny op. cit., p. 323; Lyons, op. cit., p. 574.

59. Gareth Jones was told in March 1933 by a foreign expert returning from this area that about 20 percent of the population had died of hunger ("Famine in Russia..." loc. cit.). Also see Eugene J. Kulischer, "Europe on the Move," Columbia University Press, New York, 1948, pp. 99-102.

60. Kravchenko, op. cit., p. 111.

61. Lang, op. cit. (April 22).

62. Schiller, op. cit., p. 78.

63. Alexander P. Markoff, "Famine in Russia," Committee for the Relief of Famine, New York, 1934 (cited by David Dallin in "The Soviet Union, From Lenin to Khrushchev," U.S. Government Printing Office, House Document No. 139, 1961, p. 167).

64. Also see W.H. Chamberlin, "The Ordeal of the Russian Peasantry," Foreign Affairs, April 1934, p. 504.

65. Pearson and Paarberg, op. cit., p. 4.

66. Kulischer, op. cit., pp. 98, 103; Ammende, op. cit., pp. 61, 62; Manning, op. cit., pp. 99-100. In fact, during the spring of 1933 factory workers were being laid off (Malcolm Muggeridge, "Russia Revealed," *The Morning Post* (London), June 5, 1933, p. 9).

67. Ammende, op. cit., p. 62.

68. Chamberlin, loc. cit. (April 1934); Berland, loc. cit.

69. "Citizen," loc. cit.

70. Ammende, op. cit., p. 179.

71. *Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya*, Moscow, 1957, Vol. 5, p. 229. Also see Manning, op. cit., p. 102.

72. Manning, *Ibid.*

## June 1932

(Continued from page 5)

towns looking for bread, because in the villages there was none.

Tired and hungry, peasants spent weeks in the towns trying to sell their home-made wares, including woven cloth and even the shirts off their backs in order to obtain money, he reported. The person who sold anything, no matter how small, considered himself a rich man. Once he had these "riches," he embarked upon another mission: finding a morsel of bread to buy for himself and his family.

Bread was sold "on the sly," for six to seven rubles for a three-pound loaf, reported the Berlin newspaper. The bigger loaves went for more. Especially lucky peasants were able to purchase a hunk of salt-meat or a fraction of a pound of ham to go with the bread.

Ten pounds of corn flour sold for 30 rubles, whereas wheat and rye flour were not even available on the black market.

The correspondent reports that even the laborers in towns often went hungry, spending hours in line at meat markets in hopes of getting at least some horse meat or bones that were being discarded. This is how the Ukrainian working masses lived, dying out, and withering away, because of the constant struggle to obtain food and the persistent atmosphere of poverty and misery.

On June 21, *Svoboda* published news on British press reports about Ukraine. British dailies and periodicals had been reporting on the Ukrainian refugees who had escaped to Rumania by way of the Dnister River. On May 25, the *Yorkshire Observer* had published a letter asking whether Great Britain was really so preoccupied with its own matters that it had no time to do something about the shootings that were going on only a few hundred miles away. Responses and comments appeared in the following days in such papers as *The Belfast Telegraph* and the *Sunday Times*.

On June 27, an item datelined Bucharest reported another refugee tragedy on the Ukrainian-Bessarabian border. A family consisting of parents and two children, age 8 and 3, tried to row across the Dnister to the Rumanian side. Soviet guards saw their boat and began shooting. The parents were killed, but somehow, miraculously, the orphaned children made it across to Rumania, where the Rumanian soldiers took care of them.

On June 28, *Svoboda* cited a *Pravda* progress report on the spring planting of grain crops in the Soviet Union. *Pravda* said that only 67 percent of the land had been tilled, and that Ukraine was far behind in its spring sowing.

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### Around the world in June:

In Santiago, Chile, the revolutionary party proclaimed the country a Socialist republic.

The newly re-elected president of Germany, Paul von Hindenburg, signed a decree dismissing his advisor, Heinrich Brüning, and the parliament which helped elect him. Hindenburg appointed Franz von Papen as chancellor in hopes of obtaining support from the right and center parties.

Eamon DeValera, head of the Irish government, ceased talks with Ramsay MacDonald, prime minister of Great Britain, as the English Irish dispute continued.

In Japan, prime minister Makoto Saito, who had replaced the assassinated Ki Inukai, declared that Japan would not fight with the Soviet Union. He stated there would be no more conflict in the Far East.

Siam became a constitutional monarchy when a bloodless coup d'état forced Prajadhipok Rama VII (who reigned in 1925-35) to grant a constitution to the people. The two young leaders of the coup, Pibul Songgram and Pridi Phanomyang, both educated in Europe and influenced by Western ideas, were to dominate Thai politics in the ensuing years.

## Eyewitness...

(Continued from page 7)

### Compassion on a train: passengers collect food to feed hungry

The people themselves assumed an entirely different attitude towards those who suffered from hunger. This is what R.B., an agronomist who traveled through Ukraine from Kiev to Donbas in March of 1933, says on the subject.

Two peasant women boarded our car at the Hrebinka station. They looked frightened, but they got in with their children and stood in the corridor. This was an express train from Shepetivka to Baku, which made only the major stops. For that reason, and also because it had already been filled in Kiev, so far no starving peasants had boarded our car.

Although it was quite crowded, people in our compartment squeezed a little tighter and made room for the new passengers. They came in and sat down, holding their children's hands. They had no baggage, except a very small bundle in the hands of each woman. In reply to our questions they told us with some hesitation that they were going to the Donbas,

where there were some people from their village, and they expected to get bread and possibly work with their aid, but they feared for the fate of their children.

A little boy, about 4 years old, who had been sitting in his mother's lap, now said "Mother, I want something to eat." The woman looked at him with pity and started untying her small bundle, from which she pulled out a piece of something black, resembling bread. She broke it up and divided it among the children.

The passengers now got busy, each pulled something out of his bag and gave it to them.

"Mother, look, real bread," cried the little girl, when she had a piece of standard rationed Soviet bread from one of the passengers. The children scrambled all over each other, as if each wanted the other's piece of bread. Their eyes were glowing, like those of hungry animals.

Somebody remarked that it was not good for them to eat a lot at first. The mothers then held the collected goods in their laps. Tears streamed down their faces; then the children cried, too, and all of the other women in the compartment. Many men turned their faces away, unable to conceal their tears. Some spell had been broken. That which hitherto people could only imagine now confronted them as grim reality.

## THE GREAT FAMINE IN UKRAINE 1932-33

### America's "Red Decade"...

(Continued from page 4)

world's first true democracy and anyone who didn't believe it was "either malicious or ignorant."<sup>15</sup> For the New Republic, communism was "a false bogey."<sup>16</sup> When a group of 140 American intellectuals associated with the Committee for Cultural Freedom included the USSR in its list of countries which deny civil liberties and cultural independence, some 400 liberal Americans — including university presidents, professors and such prominent names as Langston Hughes, Clifford Odets, Richard Wright, Max Weber, Granville Hicks, Louis Untermeyer and James Thurber — signed and agreed to have published an "Open Letter" branding as "Fascists" all those who dared suggest "the fantastic falsehood that the USSR and the totalitarian states are basically alike." Joining the condemnation with pointed editorial comments were the Nation and the New Republic.<sup>17</sup>

### How the press corps concealed a famine

In January 1928, Eugene Lyons, the newly hired correspondent for United Press arrived to take up his duties in Moscow. Although he had never actually joined the Communist Party in America, Lyons came with impeccable Leftist credentials. The son of an imprisoned Jewish laborer on New York's Lower East Side, he joined the Young People's Socialist League in his youth. Beginning his professional career as a writer for various radical publications, Lyons eventually became the editor of Soviet Russia Pictorial, the first popular American magazine about the "wonders" of Soviet life, and a New York correspondent for Tass, the Soviet news bureau.<sup>18</sup>

"My entire social environment in those years," he later wrote, "was Communist and Soviet."<sup>19</sup> If anyone ever went to the Soviet realm with a deep and earnest determination to understand the revolution...it was the newly appointed United Press correspondent... I was not deserting the direct service of the cause for the fleshpots of capitalism," he reasoned, "I was accepting, rather, a post of immense strategic importance in the further service of that cause, and doing so with the wholehearted agreement and understanding of my chiefs in Tass and therefore, presumably, of the Soviet Foreign Office."<sup>20</sup>

As an enthusiastic member of Stalin's defense team, Lyons consistently penned dispatches which glorified the Soviet Union. "Every present-tense difficulty that I was obliged to report," he wrote, "I proceeded to dwarf by posing it against a great future-tense vision."<sup>21</sup>

The longer Lyons remained in the USSR, however, the more disillusioned he became with Soviet reality. Eventually, his reports began to expose the sham of Bolshevik propaganda, and Moscow demanded his recall.

Returning to the United States in 1934,<sup>22</sup> he wrote about his experiences in "Assignment in Utopia," a book published by Harcourt-Brace in 1937. In a chapter titled "The Press Corps Conceals a Famine," Lyons described how he and other American correspondents conspired with Soviet authorities to deny the existence of the world's only human-engineered famine. The most diligent collaborators in the sordid

affair were Walter Duranty, head of The New York Times Moscow bureau, and Louis Fischer, Moscow correspondent for the Nation.

The first reliable report of the catastrophe to reach the outside world was presented by Gareth Jones, an English journalist who visited Ukraine in 1933 and then left the Soviet Union to write about what he had witnessed. When his story broke, the American press corps — whose members had seen pictures of the horror taken by German consular officers in Ukraine — was besieged by their home offices for more information. Angered as much by Jones' scoop as by his unflattering portrayal of Soviet life, a group of American correspondents met with Comrade Konstantine Umansky, the Soviet press censor, to determine how best to handle the story. A statement was drafted after which vodka and "zakuski" were ordered and everyone sat down to celebrate with a smiling Umansky.

The agreed-upon format was followed faithfully by Duranty. "There is no actual starvation," reported The New York Times on March 30, 1933, "but there is widespread mortality from diseases due to malnutrition." When the famine reports persisted over the next few months, Duranty finally admitted "food shortages" but insisted that any report of famine "is today an exaggeration or malignant propaganda."<sup>23</sup>

Duranty, of course, was aware of the situation in Ukraine and confessed as much to The New York Times book critic John Chamberlain, himself a Communist sympathizer. Believing, as he later wrote, that "the Russian Revolution, while admittedly imperfect, needed time to work itself out," Chamberlain was distressed by Duranty's casual admission that "3 million people had died...in what amounted to a man-made famine." What struck him most of all "was the double inequity of Duranty's performance. He was not only heartless about the famine," Chamberlain concluded, "he had betrayed his calling as a journalist by failing to report it."<sup>24</sup>

Fortunately, not all members of the American press corps in Moscow were involved with the cover-up. A notable exception was William Henry Chamberlain, staff correspondent for the Christian Science Monitor, who traveled to Ukraine in the winter of 1933 and reported that "more than 4 million peasants are found to have perished."<sup>25</sup> In a book titled "Russia's Iron Age" published that same year, Chamberlain estimated that some 10 percent of the population had been annihilated by Stalin during the collectivization campaign.<sup>26</sup> In describing his journey to Ukraine, Chamberlain later wrote:

"No one, I am sure, could have made such a trip with an honest desire to learn the truth and escaped the conclusion that the Ukrainian countryside had experienced a gigantic tragedy. What had happened was not hardship, or privation, or distress, or food shortage, to mention the deceptively euphemistic words that were allowed to pass the Soviet censorship, but stark, outright famine, with its victims counted in millions. No one will probably ever know the exact toll of death, because the Soviet government preserved the strictest secrecy about the whole question, officially denied that there was any famine, and rebuffed all attempts to organize relief abroad."<sup>27</sup>

First to provide extensive coverage of the Great Famine in the American press was the Hearst newspaper chain which, unfortunately, placed the event in 1934 rather than 1932-33.<sup>28</sup>

By that time, however, Stalin's American defense team was already busily denying the Chamberlain and Hearst reports. The most outstanding example was Louis Fischer who in the March 13, 1935, issue of the Nation reported that he had visited Ukraine in 1934 and had witnessed no famine. Even though he was aware of it, Fischer made no mention that the famine had occurred a year earlier. Problems with collectivization could not be denied, however. In his book "Soviet Journey," Fischer described the process in the following simple terms:

"History can be cruel...The peasants wanted to destroy collectivization. The government wanted to retain collectivization. The peasants used the best means at their disposal. The government used the best means at their disposal. The government won."<sup>29</sup>

With help from certain members of the American press corps, the Bolsheviks succeeded in their efforts to shield the truth about Ukraine's Great Famine from the world's eyes. Concealing the barbarism until it was ended, they generated doubt, confusion and disbelief. "Years after the event," wrote Lyons in 1937, "when no Russian Communist in his sense any longer concealed the magnitude of the famine — the question whether there had been a famine at all was still being disputed in the outside world!"<sup>30</sup>

### The "need" for a famine

The famine story, however, would not die. Even Time magazine eventually admitted the possibility of 3 million Ukrainians dead.<sup>31</sup> None of this bothered Stalin's American defense team. In a 1933 publication titled "The Great Offensive," Maurice Hindus wrote that if the growing "food shortage" brought "distress and privation" to certain parts of the Soviet Union, the fault was "not of Russia" but of the people. Recalling a conversation he had with an American businessman, Hindus proudly wrote:

"And supposing there is a famine... continued my interlocutor... 'what will happen?'"

"'People will die, of course,' I answered."

"And supposing 3 or 4 million people die."

"'The revolution will go on,'"<sup>32</sup>

If a famine was needed to preserve the revolution, so be it. "Maybe it cost a million lives," wrote Pulitzer Prize novelist Upton Sinclair, "maybe it cost 5 million — but you cannot think intelligently about it unless you ask yourself how many millions it might have cost if the changes had not been made...Some people will say that this looks like condoning wholesale murder. That is not true; it is merely trying to evaluate a revolution. There has never been a great social change in history without killing..."<sup>33</sup>

### The legacy of the Red Decade

Although Svoboda reported on the famine<sup>34</sup> and thousands of Ukrainians took to the streets in New York City, Chicago, Detroit and other cities to protest Stalin's terrorism,<sup>35</sup> the White House remained indifferent. On November 16, 1933, President Franklin D.

Roosevelt formally recognized the legitimacy of the Soviet Union and the Bolshevik regime.

Commenting on America's decision to establish diplomatic relations with the USSR, The Ukrainian Weekly reported that some 8,000 Ukrainians had participated in a New York City march protesting the move and added that while the protest was "not intended to hinder the policies...of the United States government — we Ukrainians are as anxious as anyone else to cooperate with our beloved president" — nevertheless, "we look dubiously upon the value of any benefits which America may obtain from having official relations with a government whose rule is based on direct force alone," a government which is unable "to provide for its subjects even the most ordinary necessities of life, and which has shown itself capable of the most barbaric cruelty, as evidenced by its reign of terror and the present Bolshevik-fostered famine in Ukraine."<sup>36</sup>

Fifty years later, The Ukrainian Weekly is still warning a largely indifferent America about the perils of trusting Soviet Communists. If documentaries such as "The Holocaust," in which the USSR was portrayed as a haven for Jews fleeing Nazi annihilation, and "The Winds of War," in which Stalin was depicted as a tough but benevolent leader whose loyal troops sang his praises in three-part harmony, are any indication of current media perceptions of the Stalinist era, then the legacy of the Red Decade lives on.

The world has been inundated with a plethora of authoritative information regarding Hitler's villainy and has become ever vigilant in its efforts to prevent a repetition of his terror. This is good, but it is not enough. Hitler was not this century's only international barbarian, and it is time we recognized this fact lest we, in our single-minded endeavors to protect ourselves from another Hitler, find ourselves with another Stalin.

15. Cited in *Ibid.*, p. 105.

16. Cited in *Ibid.*, p. 149.

17. Eugene Lyons, "The Red Decade: The Stalinist Penetration of America" (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1941), pp. 342-351.

18. Lyons, "Assignment in Utopia" (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1937), pp. 3-49.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 48.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 197.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 607.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 572-580.

24. John Chamberlain, "A Life With the Printed Word" (Chicago: Regnery, 1982), pp. 54-55.

25. Christian Science Monitor (May 29, 1934).

26. William Henry Chamberlain, "Russia's Iron Age" (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1934), pp. 66-67.

27. Chamberlain, "The Ukraine: A Submerged Nation" (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1944), p. 60.

28. See Chicago American (March 1, March 4 and March 6, 1935).

29. Cited in Lyons, "The Red Decade," p. 118.

30. Lyons, "Assignment in Utopia," pp. 577-578.

31. Time (January 23, 1939).

32. Cited in Hollander, p. 120.

33. Cited in *Ibid.*, p. 162.

34. See Svoboda (February 6, May 25, June 11, July 11, July 14, 1932).

35. See "The Golgotha of Ukraine" (New York: The Ukrainian Congress Committee, 1953), p. 5.

36. The Ukrainian Weekly (November 23, 1933).

## Political prisoners...

(Continued from page 2)

form of persecution is becoming commonplace, a part of our everyday life. After all, anyone can be thrown there for any, even the most insignificant, reason: a button left undone, leaving the work site 10 minutes before the end of the shift (even if the prisoner has met his daily output quota), or even, as happened in the case of the prisoner Alexander Ogorodnikov already serving a term in the punishment cell, for sharing a spoonful of soup with a cellmate who was to have spent the day on bread and water under the conditions of his regime.

Just as frequently and readily we are deprived of what is most precious to us, that is, visits with our relatives. Since visits are allowed not once a week or once a month, but once a year, this constitutes a very harsh punishment indeed. Between February and April 1982, Oles Shevchenko (for celebrating Easter among other reasons), Viktor Niytsoo and others had their visits from relatives cancelled under various ridiculous "pretexts." After traveling thousands of kilometers to the camp, the relatives of Henrich Altunian, Norair Grygorian and Ogorodnikov were turned back and not permitted to meet with the prisoners. In the first instance, there was allegedly no available room for the meeting; Grygorian was placed in the punishment cell on the eve of his expected visit; and Ogorodnikov's wife was told that she could not meet with her husband, because their marriage had been registered only in church.

Repressions and privations stalk us at every step. Our correspondence is subjected to the harshest ideological censorship, our letters are shamelessly confiscated (for this to happen, it is enough for a letter to be deemed "suspicious in content") or they "disappear along the way." Not a single letter from abroad has reached the camp in the last several years. Since those who send letters themselves become "suspicious in content," in general, only letters from family members get through the censor's fine sieve.

The confiscations conducted in the camp are senseless and blasphemous: poems are confiscated from poets, written prayers from believers. The authorities confiscated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from the prisoner Nekipelov as also "suspicious in content." It had been sent to him by his wife in a letter. The Bible and other religious literature is prohibited in the camp and they have been confiscated from prisoners. The hunt for the written word is being carried to such absurd lengths that every scrap of paper is wrenched from our hands, every hand-written line.

## Imprisoned dissident's...

(Continued from page 2)

that non-conformity stems from personal rather than political reasons.

In this regard, the article noted that Ms. Kyrychenko began receiving packages from the West shortly after her husband's arrest, parcels containing "clothes, manufactured goods, tea and even fresh fruit."

With obvious sarcasm, the paper wrote: "Because, you see, where in Kiev could she have gotten these things? Where can you obtain dried apples and plums for compote or jellied fruit? And for free? And from the West, no less!"

The paper also printed the names of some of Ms. Kyrychenko's benefactors in the West, including a woman who, along with her son, was thrown out of the Soviet Union while on a tourist visit to the USSR. The paper said her

There are frequent instances of what might be called ideological revenge. A prisoner's independent stance and his participation in collective protests, especially signing human-rights documents and appeals which might be published in the West, leave him open to a wide range of repressions — up to and including several months of imprisonment in the camp prison or even several years in the special prison in the city of Chistopol. For example, one of the real reasons for incarcerating the prisoner Dan Arenberg in Chistopol prison in September 1981 was his attempt to send a congratulatory telegram (in a perfectly legal manner) to Prime Minister Begin of Israel on the latter's election to his post.

As far as publication abroad is concerned, at this very moment KGB officers are conducting repressions among prisoners in connection with our appeal to you, Mr. President, upon your inauguration. Antanas Terliatskas was warned that he and the other authors of this appeal might receive new prison terms for their action.

Punishments were meted out to all 16 members of the "strike of despair," which took place because the camp authorities refused to call a specialist to examine the critically ill (with acute nephritis) Nekipelov, who was failing rapidly. In the end the prisoners' demand was met and a physician arrived, but at a very high cost to all involved. Ten strikers were placed in the punishment cell, from which three of them — Altunian, Ogorodnikov and Rudenko — were transferred to "cell-type premises" (PKT) in the camp. A month later, Nekipelov was also taken there directly from his hospital bed. The prisoner Yu. Fedorov was transferred back to a special-regimen camp.

The list of similar examples of lawlessness could be continued without end, Mr. President. They are so widespread that it is no longer merely a question of violations of human rights, but of premeditated inhumanity, of physical and psychological torture, of terrorizing the spirit and exhibiting moral contempt for culture.

This forces us to raise an issue which our predecessors have been raising for some 10 to 15 years now, namely, international inspection of Soviet political prison camps. An impartial commission of independent and politically unaffiliated Western humanitarians — writers and lawyers — after visiting the camps of any country, be they in Ulster, South Africa or the Soviet Union, could draw up an authoritative conclusion about the contingent of prisoners here and, consequently, about the moral right of the government of this country to condemn others for using imprisonment to suppress dissent.

Knowing of your resoluteness in the

trip was funded by nationalist elements in the Ukrainian emigre community.

In addition, the paper accused Ms. Kyrychenko of amassing a huge personal fortune, stashed away in "29 bank accounts" totalling "42,000 karbovantsi" (about \$50,000). Most of the money, it said, was in her own private accounts or that of her children, and only one was in her husband's name, because, the article went on, "who knows how long she will be with this husband."

Character assassination in the press is a popular method of harassment and intimidation used by Soviet authorities against dissidents and their families. In September 1982, Vilna Ukraina, a Lviv daily, carried an article which attacked Olena Antoniv Krasivska, the wife of imprisoned dissident Zinoviy Krasivsky. It also accused her of "egoism" and the pursuit of "fame" and material wealth.

defense of freedom and humanity in the world, Mr. President, we appeal to you to support the creation of such a commission. We would like your project "Truth" to include the facts about Soviet political prison camps. By whatever means best suit you — be it the Madrid Conference or in direct talks — you could assist in ridding the world of this cruel foulness. The existence of political prisoners in our enlightened age is as anachronistic as the slave trade. The champions of the primacy of morality in the whole world have long since known that no measures or spheres

of trust can be extended to a country that incarcerates in prisons and camps its political, national, religious and moral opposition.

Very respectfully yours,  
Prisoners of Camp No. 36  
in Kuchino:

Henrich Altunian, Vladimir Balakhonov, Norair Grygorian, Myroslav Marynovych, Viktor Nekipelov, Viktor Niytsoo, Alexander Ogorodnikov, Mykola Rudenko, Antanas Terliatskas, Oles Shevchenko.

## D.C. action...

(Continued from page 1)

invocation by the Rev. Stephen Shawel CSsR, pastor of the Ukrainian Catholic shrine. The meeting was called to order by Ihor Vitkovitsky. The presidium also included Marta Pereyma and Bohdan Kozak, secretary.

Stephen Procyk, public relations chairman of the National Committee to Commemorate Genocide Victims in Ukraine 1932-33, informed those present about the committee's composition and plans. The national committee was initiated by Metropolitan Mstyslav of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the U.S.A. The committee's plans call for the main part of the commemoration to take place in Washington due to the capital's political significance.

The Washington events would include: September hearings in the U.S. Congress on the Great Famine, with eyewitness testimony; a possible panel discussion on this topic; a large demonstration that would culminate in front of the Soviet Embassy; and a memorial concert in the Kennedy Arts Center with performances by various groups and soloists.

Both the demonstration and concert are scheduled for October 2. The National Committee will issue appropriate memoranda to the U.S. government, the U.S. Congress, foreign embassies, the United Nations, the media, universities, libraries and other important institutions to inform them about this Moscow-perpetrated genocide.

In order to carry out these plans, Mr. Procyk continued, the national committee needs the help of the local communities, which have professional ties to American institutions and of those individuals who have a special interest in realizing these goals.

An information office is being established in the St. Sophia Society Building in Washington, and it will be headed by Natalie Sluzar (former White House aide under President Jimmy Carter).

The cost of these commemorative efforts will be substantial, but the

national committee is optimistic that the Ukrainian community will come through with the necessary funds because Great Famine commemorations are very much in line with the interests of the Ukrainian people.

In giving general information on the concert to be held at the Kennedy Center, George Powstenko, national program chairman, emphasized that more detailed information will be forthcoming once negotiations with performers have been completed. He did add that government officials, members of Congress and diplomats will be invited to the concert. A documentary exhibit on the horrors of the Great Famine will be on display in the foyer of the Kennedy Center.

During the discussion that followed, hope was expressed that the UCCA would cooperate with the national committee in order that the entire Ukrainian community rally all of its resources for this important cause. It was also brought up that the national committee should be responsible for generating support and encouraging large numbers of Ukrainians from neighboring states to participate in the Washington demonstration and memorial concert.

Following the discussion, a special Washington Action Committee was elected. Its members are: Andriy Balko, Andriy Bilyk, Rostyslav Chomiak, Victor Cooley, Volodymyr Demchuk, Jurij Dobczansky, Halyna Kochno, Dmytro Korbutiak, Marko Murowany, Ms. Pereyma, Ms. Sluzar, Sonia Sluzar, George Sajewych, Stephen Maksymuk and Mr. Vitkovitsky. This committee will be augmented by those wishing to assist in its efforts. The Action Committee's honorary members include the pastors of the three area Ukrainian Churches: the Revs. Mykola Czurak, Taras Lonchyna and Shawel. The Washington committee will work closely with the national committee in order to bring about the realization of the aforementioned plans.

The meeting was closed with a prayer delivered by the Rev. Czurak of St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

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## Community leaders...

(Continued from page 1)

themselves and in us. We recognize our obligation to join with you and your people in sharing this tragic aspect of your history, so that events like the famine never happen again. This is the lesson that we must learn to teach each other from your history. I assure you that the Illinois Consultation will cooperate with Ukrainian Americans in telling the story of the famine."

With the Soviet Union presently "relocating" tens of thousands of Ukrainians throughout the captive nations, and with Ukrainian patriots being imprisoned in insane asylums for "slandering the Soviet state," Dr. Kuropas said he sees the Great Famine of 1932-33 as anything but a dead issue.

"As the world becomes aware of this horrible act that was done in the name of progress, we hope that it takes into account the people that they are dealing with today," he said. "The system that brought about the Great Famine is still intact."

Ultimately, public awareness of this past tragedy will further the cause of human rights for present-day Ukrainians, according to Stanley Balzekas, president of the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture and chairman of the Ethnic Heritage Preservation Council.

"This is our way of letting people know that the Ukrainian people exist and that they want their freedom," Mr. Balzekas said. "Through gatherings like this, we hope to find more people to support the freedom of Ukraine."

In its 12-year history, the consultation has often brought ethnic leaders together to support human-rights issues of interest to a particular ethnic group.

"That's the whole purpose of the consultation," said Julian Kulas, vice president of Chicago's Ukrainian Congress Committee and secretary of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council. "When the Italian community was concerned about the defamation of their ethnic character, the consultation helped them broaden the discussion into a civil-rights issue. When Greek Americans were concerned about the plight of Greek Cypriot refugees after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, we created a multi-ethnic forum and rally through which they could tell their story to other ethnic groups and the press."

"When the Nazis threatened to march into Skokie, they were opposed by a coalition of ethnic groups, not just the Jewish community, because of consultation action," Mr. Kulas added. "Also, we responded to the request of Black leaders that we help the Haitians by letting the Carter administration know that we were all concerned about the unfair treatment of Haitian refugees."

"Tonight we're gathered together to offer the Ukrainian community our support," Mr. Kulas concluded.

This coalition approach to human-rights issues benefits each ethnic group as well as the society as a whole, according to Maynard Wishner, national president of the American Jewish Committee.

"There's a lesson in it that strengthens the fabric of civic unity," Mr. Wishner said, "and if the society is healthier, the position of each group is strengthened."

Mr. Wishner, one of the founders of the consultation, explained how the organization got its start: "Historically, in this country, new immigrant groups have tended to remain isolated from one another and have operated in the framework of their own concerns," he said. The American Jewish Committee found that, though these groups had real, human concerns, they made few efforts to reach out for support or help from others because they felt that

nobody else really understood or cared.

"We had the notion that ethnicity was a regressive force in America and that this sense of isolation was really fragmenting society," Mr. Wishner continued. "We organized a group of leaders representing different ethnic communities who work well together, feel comfortable with each other, and are willing to come out in support of each other's issues so long as the issue doesn't run afoul of a conflicting policy or widespread opinions in their own communities."

"One of the consultation's strengths lies in the fact that its members can disagree with each other and still walk away friends," said David Roth, Midwest director of the American Jewish Committee's Institute on Pluralism and Group Identity.

Consultation members agree that they gain from their association with each other in many other ways. Through consultation steering committee meetings like the one organized around the 1932-33 Great Famine in Ukraine, ethnic leaders can identify important issues and learn more about each other.

"These meetings give many ethnics an opportunity to express their concerns and be listened to with compassion," Mr. Roth said.

Through these "sharing events," consultation members gain valuable insight into what motivates a particular ethnic group.

"To understand a group, you must understand their sorrows as well as their joys," Dr. Kuropas said. "You can't understand how a Jew feels about Israel until you know about the Holocaust; you can't understand the response of Greek Americans to the Cyprus issue until you know the history of Greek-Turkish relations. You can't understand the Blacks' point of view without understanding slavery and its aftermath."

"All ethnic groups have their wounds and their sorrows: the great tragedies in their history that are very meaningful to them and that, in turn, govern their feelings toward other groups and society," Dr. Kuropas said.

"It is because of acts of oppression like Stalin's man-made famine and the continuing efforts by Soviet leaders to culturally Russify Ukraine, that Ukrainian Americans abhor being called Russians and embrace their mother tongue and culture so closely," Dr. Kuropas explained.

The consultation's ethnic leaders are often surprised by how much they have in common, according to Anthony J. Fornelli, vice chair of the Chicago Plan Commission and former president of UNICO, America's largest Italian fraternal organization.

"In getting together like this, we realize that our problems aren't unique to our community, that they transcend ethnic barriers," Mr. Fornelli said. "All

of us have found similarities in history, outlook and goals."

One can easily see why Mr. Balzekas, a Lithuanian American, and Mr. Cudecki, a Polish American, would find common cause in the Ukrainian plight: the Soviet regime also subjugates their homelands. What reasons, though, would some of the other ethnic leaders have for coming to the aid of Ukrainian Americans?

In his letter to the Ukrainian National Association, Ross Harano, former Midwest district governor of the Japanese American Citizens League, noted that: "As one who was born in a United States concentration camp for Japanese Americans during World War II, I am well aware of how tragedies of the past are often forgotten or suppressed by the government."

Paul Gibson, special assistant for minority affairs to Illinois Gov. Jim Thompson, saw similar parallels in Black American history.

"The Black community must also learn how to counter the misconceptions that others have of them," Mr. Gibson said. "The lack of information about the Ukrainian famine is akin to the perception that Blacks played no important role in American history."

Connie Seals, former director of the Illinois Commission on Human Relations, expanded upon this in her letter to Mr. Flis, writing: "There is so much about Ukrainian history that parallels Afro-American history—the massacres, the race riots, and the economically induced oppression."

Elsewhere in her letter, Ms. Seals placed the Ukrainian issue in a broader con-

temporary context: "It is urgent that the world know the Ukrainian story as we see once again, throughout the world, the deliberate manipulation of economics to lower standards of living and set people against one another."

As these and other consultation "ethnic diplomats" take the story of the Ukrainian tragedy to the larger American society as well as their own communities, the power of the coalition goes with them.

"When a group of leaders works well together and responds to each other's issues, this presents a positive role model to each of their constituencies," Mr. Wishner said.

"A Ukrainian issue will have a greater impact if it's brought to the attention of the public by Italian, Mexican and Greek Americans as well as by Ukrainian Americans," Mr. Fornelli added.

In addition to public advocacy, the letters to Mr. Flis, and letters and articles sent to ethnic media, Dr. Kuropas hopes to call more attention to the Great Famine by making it a part of school history curricula and convincing the mass media to tell the story. This has proved to be a difficult task.

"For a variety of reasons, neither the American academic nor journalistic communities have been sensitive to Ukraine and its aspirations. Ukrainian Americans have been fighting an uphill battle to change this for many years," Dr. Kuropas said. "With the help of other ethnic leaders, we hope to make more headway. The UNA-produced film 'Helm of Destiny' will help us tremendously in telling the Ukrainian American story."



Lisa Pearson McMorrey

Myron B. Kuropas, UNA supreme vice president; Maynard Wishner, national president of the American Jewish Committee; the Rev. Walter Klymchuk, pastor of St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral; and Edwin Cudecki, chairman of the Illinois Consultation on Ethnicity in Education; are seen above at a Chicago ethnic leaders' meeting devoted to the Great Famine.



David Roth, Midwest director of the American Jewish Committee's Institute on Pluralism and Group Identity, and Ross Harano of the Japanese American Citizens League.



Dr. Myron B. Kuropas and Ed Marciniak, chairman of the board of directors of the National Center for Urban Ethnic Affairs.