

**THE  
FORCED  
FAMINE  
IN UKRAINE  
1932-1933**

**CURRICULUM  
AND RESOURCE GUIDE  
FOR EDUCATORS**

***TEACHER'S CURRICULUM GUIDE***

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## THE FORCED FAMINE IN UKRAINE: A Teacher's Curriculum Guide

### Rationale

During the winter of 1932/1933, some seven million Ukrainians living in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) perished of starvation. They died during a famine engineered by the Soviet government which had three major objectives in that part of its expanding empire:

1. To annihilate a significant portion of that segment of the Ukrainian population which had vociferously and openly resisted increasingly oppressive Soviet rule.
2. To terrorize the surviving Ukrainian population into submission to Soviet totalitarianism.
3. To provide monies for Soviet industrial expansion from the sale of expropriated Ukrainian wheat and other foodstuffs to the rest of the world.

Just as the Jewish Holocaust is not simply a "Jewish issue," but has universal implications, the Forced Famine in Ukraine is more than a "Ukrainian issue." The Holocaust is an example of genocide perpetrated by an overtly racist, fascist regime which had as its avowed purpose the annihilation of the Jewish people. The Forced Famine in Ukraine is an example of genocide perpetrated by a communist regime which, while calling itself internationalist, was contaminated by Russian chauvinism. For Russian communists, Ukrainian ethno-cultural self-assertion was a threat both to the primacy of Russian culture in Soviet affairs and to the centralization of all authority in the hands of Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin.

Although this genocide is one of the greatest crimes ever perpetrated against a single nation, the West is hardly aware of it ever having taken place. This is so for two reasons: 1) there exists a general dearth of public awareness regarding the Soviet Union, its history, its people, and the way the government operates; 2) The Forced Famine in Ukraine was denied by Soviet officials and covered up by some influential correspondents from the West.

If we are ever to comprehend genocide in all of its dimensions, it is imperative that this sordid chapter in the history of man's inhumanity to man be brought to light, especially since the system under which this tragedy occurred still exists, structurally unchanged from the 1930's.

### Goals

- To comprehend the historical events which precipitated Ukrainian resistance to Russian and Soviet domination.
- To understand the factors which led to the Forced Famine and its impact on the Ukrainian people.
- To examine the reasons behind the lack of information regarding the Ukrainian Forced Famine in the West.
- To appreciate the nature of Soviet disinformation.
- To identify contemporary events which are similar to the Ukrainian Forced Famine.

**Behavioral Objectives**

The student --

Describes how the Grand Duchy of Muscovy became the Russian empire.

Describes how the Soviet Union inherited the Russian empire and the methods it has used to expand and maintain its territorial size.

Describes how and when Ukraine became part of the Russian and the Soviet empires.

Describes Ukrainian resistance to Russian and Soviet rule and Stalin's use of famine as a weapon of national subjugation.

Explains how and why western correspondents attempted to cover up the Forced Famine in Ukraine as part of the Soviet disinformation campaign.

Compares and contrasts Joseph Stalin's Ukrainian Forced Famine to Adolf Hitler's Jewish Holocaust and other instances of genocide.

Lists other instances of genocide perpetrated or inspired by the Soviet Union.

**Content Outline**

- I. Russia and the Soviet Union
  - A. Russian Imperialism (1147 - 1917)
    - 1. The Grand Duchy of Muscovy
    - 2. Russia's growth as an imperialist state
    - 3. The Russian Revolution
  - B. Soviet Imperialism (1918 - 1986)
    - 1. The birth of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
    - 2. The growth of Soviet totalitarianism
    - 3. Soviet expansion
- II. Ukraine and Its People
  - A. Early History
    - 1. Kievan Rus (988 - 1550)
    - 2. The Cossack republic (1550 - 1775)
  - B. The rise and fall of the Ukrainian National Republic (1918 - 1921)
- III. Soviet Policy and the Forced Famine (1921 - 1939)
  - A. The Ukrainianization campaign
  - B. Stalin's Forced Famine
- IV. The Famine Press Cover-Up
  - A. Walter Duranty of the New York Times
  - B. Louis Fischer of The Nation
- V. Soviet Disinformation Today
- VI. Ukraine in Recent Times (1940 - 1986)
- VII. Food As a Political Weapon
  - A. Cambodia
  - B. Ethiopia
  - C. Afghanistan

## RUSSIA AND THE SOVIET UNION

Russian history began with the founding of Moscow in 1147. By 1300, Moscow was the seat of the Grand Duchy of Muscovy, a state of some 18,500 square miles. Ruled by a series of ambitious granddukes, Muscovy began expanding its borders in all directions, conquering a variety of ethnically different people in the process. By 1500, Muscovy, whose people were called Muscovites, included an area of some 772,000 square miles.

Muscovy continued to conquer and subjugate other peoples in much the same way that the ancient Romans had done. By 1700, Muscovy was an empire that encompassed an area of 5,600,000 square miles. Muscovy's rulers began to call themselves "czars", the Russian word for caesar or emperor. Czar Peter I changed the name of the empire from Muscovy to "Russia" to convince the world that his empire was heir to the ancient Rus' empire which once included large sections of Ukraine, Byelorussia, Muscovy and a small part of Poland.

Russia's rulers never hesitated in their efforts to expand their empire. They fought all of their neighbors in an effort to conquer more land. By 1900, the Russian empire extended from the Black Sea in the south to the Baltic Sea in the north, and from the Vistula River in the west to the Pacific Ocean in the east. It was the world's largest empire totaling some 8,571,400 square miles in size. Russian aggression during the last five centuries devoured forty-six distinct peoples speaking sixty-one different languages.

The czarist government conducted its first modern census in 1897. Of the 126 million inhabitants living in the Russian empire at the time, only 51 million (41%) were ethnic Russians. The non-Russian majority was considered to be foreigners and were often denied any means of self-expression in their native languages. The government was officially designated an autocracy, meaning that absolute authority resided in the person of the czar whose authority was not limited by a constitution. Without a constitution, or set of fundamental laws independent of the ruler's will, individuals had no legal rights other than those which the ruler saw fit to grant. People living in the Russian empire could not criticize the government; they had to pay high taxes; those who were inducted into the military had to serve for twenty years. With education generally reserved for the privileged few, most people could neither read or write. Only in 1905, when a popular revolt shook the regime to its foundation, did the czar "grant" his subjects a limited form of representation. When it became evident that most of those elected to the newly created legislative assembly (Duma) were not always voting according to government wishes, the czar restricted voting privileges to the affluent class whose loyalty to royal policies was assured.

In an effort to assimilate the Ukrainian population, the czarist government initiated a "Russification" campaign. This was no easy task because the Ukrainian people wanted to retain their religious and national identities. To accomplish its objective, the government often discriminated against a separate Ukrainian identity by calling Ukrainians "Little Russians," forbidding the publication of Ukrainian books and periodicals, and jailing Ukrainian leaders who advocated greater freedom and autonomy for their people.

By 1917, the peoples of Russia had had enough of czarist despotism. They staged a revolution and the authoritarian rule of Czar Nicholas II was replaced by a democratically constituted government headed by Alexander Kerensky. Soon after the Russian revolution began, the conquered peoples of Armenia,

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<sup>1</sup>William G. Bray, Russian Frontiers: From Muscovy to Khrushchev (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc. 1963) pp. 11 - 75. For a more detailed history of Russia see Jesse D. Clarkson, A History of Russia (New York: Random House, 1961) and George Vernadsky, A History of Russia (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954). For an historical overview of the growth of Muscovite imperialism, see Harold Lamb, The March of Muscovy (New York: Bantam Books, 1966).

Azerbaijan, Byelorussia, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Ukraine declared their independence. The Russian empire was beginning to crumble.

A representative Russian government based on democratic principles was short-lived, however. Within a year, a small, well-organized group of communists headed by Vladimir I. Lenin overthrew Kerensky's government and re-established authoritarian rule over Russia. Following in the footsteps of their czarist predecessors, Lenin's Red Army invaded and recaptured Armenia, Azerbaijan, Byelorussia, and Ukraine. Promising to grant full national rights to each of the conquered nations (including the right to secede) Moscow established the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), forcibly incorporating the re-conquered peoples into a Russian orbit. Although all of the Soviet republics were supposedly equal, it was the Russian republic that dominated Soviet affairs from the beginning.<sup>2</sup>

During the 1920's, Lenin and his followers attempted to pacify their minorities by granting them certain national and civil rights. When the various national groups started to push for more rights, however, the Communist government changed its approach and began to centralize its control. According to Hannah Arendt, the USSR was a totalitarian state by the time Stalin had consolidated his power in 1929.<sup>1</sup>

During the 1930's, Stalin initiated a reign of terror in the Soviet Union that was unlike any the world had ever seen. All opposition to Soviet rule was ruthlessly suppressed. Millions of Soviet citizens were sent to Siberia for the slightest offense, often without trial. Millions were shot or simply disappeared. No one was safe from Stalin's unpredictable will. University professors, teachers, army generals, farmers, journalists, even Stalin's closest revolutionary associates, were executed simply because Stalin or his secret police decided they were "enemies of the state."<sup>4</sup>

In 1939, Stalin signed an agreement with Germany's Adolf Hitler, another totalitarian dictator, and the two of them invaded Poland. Stalin annexed the eastern third of Poland, populated mainly by Ukrainians and Byelorussians, after a bogus "plebiscite" in which the results were predetermined. A year later, the Soviet Union invaded and annexed Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania claiming that their people wanted to become part of the USSR. By 1960, the Soviet empire included an area of 8,650,060 square miles. In addition, the Soviet Union controlled most of eastern Europe including Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland.

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<sup>1</sup>Bray, pp. 82 - 96; Also see Basil Dmytryshyn, USSR: A Concise History (New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1965), pp. 38 - 86; V. I. Kozlov, National'nosti SSR: Ethnodemograficheskii Obzor (Moscow: Finansy i Statistika, 1982) p. 38.

<sup>1</sup>Dmytryshyn, pp. 113 - 153; Hannah Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism (New York: Harcourt Brace Javanovich, 1973), p. 411.

<sup>4</sup>Dmytryshyn, pp. 155 - 207; Also see Robert Conquest, The Great Terror: Stalin's Purges of the Thirties (New York: Collier Book, 1968).

## UKRAINE AND ITS PEOPLE

Ukrainian history began in the 9th century with the rise of the city of Kiev as the center of an empire that came to be called Kievan Rus'. In 988, the people of Kievan Rus', then ruled by Volodymyr the Great (Prince Vladimir), adopted Christianity as the state religion.

Kievan Rus' began to decline soon after Kiev was sacked by the Mongols in 1240. Descendants of the Kievan royal house, however, continued to rule various duchies within the former empire. Three separate Slavonic peoples emerged from the Rus' empire – the Byelorus' (Byelorussians), the Muscovites (Russians) and the Rus'-Ukrainians.

Following the decline of Kiev, the center of Rus'-Ukrainian life shifted to the southwestern provinces of Galicia and Volynia. A second Rus' state emerged when Galicia and Volynia were united during the 12th century. In the 14th century, Galicia was annexed by Poland while Volynia came under Lithuanian rule.

A third Ukrainian state was created in the 17th century by the Cossacks, a group of military adventurers who had established a series of autonomous forts along the Dnieper River. The Cossacks, who elected all of their "hetmans" (commanders in-chief), eventually freed most of Ukraine from Polish rule and began to create a republic. An ill-fated military alliance with Muscovy, however, resulted in a gradual take-over by the Muscovites. Poland quickly came to terms with Muscovy and the two nations partitioned Ukraine along the Dnieper River. The Cossacks attempted to free themselves of Russian rule in 1709 by allying themselves with the Swedes and attacking Muscovy. The Muscovites were victorious and from that day forward began to call themselves "Rus-sians." In 1775, Czarina Catherine II destroyed the famed Zaporozhian Fort, the last bastion of Cossack independence in Ukraine.

Ukrainian aspirations for freedom did not die, however. All through the 18th and 19th centuries writers and poets like Taras Shevchenko kept eastern Ukrainian hopes alive by writing about the glories of the past and urging Ukrainians to "cast off your chains." Soon after Polish Ukraine was annexed by Austria, a similar national literary tradition emerged there.

The czarist Russian regime was overthrown in 1917 and eastern Ukrainians established the Ukrainian National Republic. On January 22, 1918, following the Communist takeover of Russia, the Ukrainian people declared their independence from Russia. At about the same time, the Austro-Hungarian empire collapsed and a Republic of Western Ukraine was created. On January 22, 1919, the two Ukrainian republics formally united during imposing ceremonies in Kiev, the national capital.

Ukraine was able to maintain its independence for three years against overwhelming odds. Poland wanted to annex Galicia and invaded from the west. The Communists wanted eastern Ukraine and invaded from the east. A czarist Russian army, still hoping to retrieve "all of Russia," invaded Ukraine from the south. The Communists eventually defeated the Poles, the czarist Russians, and the Ukrainians. Soviet Russia signed a peace treaty with Poland which partitioned Ukraine once again. Moscow received eastern Ukraine while Poland annexed eastern Galicia and Volynia. The Soviets grabbed the latter two provinces soon after the Hitler-Stalin invasion of Poland in 1939.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Myron B. Kuropas, The Ukrainians in America (Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1972) pp. 7 - 32.

## SOVIET POLICY AND THE FORCED FAMINE

Ukraine was formally incorporated into the USSR as the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (UkSSR) in 1922. The Communists were aware that resistance to their regime was deep and widespread. To pacify the Ukrainian people and to gain control, Moscow initially permitted a great deal of local autonomy to exist in the UkSSR. The newly established Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the new All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, non-Communist national institutions of great importance, were both permitted to continue their work until the end of the 1920's.

All of this changed once Stalin came to power. Stalin wanted to consolidate the new Communist empire and to strengthen its industrial base. Ukrainian national aspirations were a barrier to those ends because even Ukrainian Communists opposed exploitation by Moscow. In Stalin's eyes, Ukraine, the largest of the non-Russian republics, would have to be subdued. Thus, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church was placed under the jurisdiction of the Communist controlled Russian Orthodox Church. Ukrainian bishops, priests and thousands of Christian lay leaders were sent to Siberian labor camps, the so-called "Gulag". Hundreds of thousands, possibly over a million, of Ukraine's intellectual leaders - writers, university professors, scientists, journalists -- were liquidated in purges ordered by Stalin. Not even loyal Ukrainian Communists were exempt from Stalin's terror. By 1939, practically the entire (98%) of Ukraine's Communist leadership had been liquidated.

Hardest hit by Stalin's policies were Ukraine's independent landowners, the so-called "kulaks" (Kurkuly in Ukrainian). Never precisely defined, a kulak was a member of the alleged "upper stratum" of landowners but in reality anyone who owned a little land, even as little as 25 acres, came to be labeled a kulak. Stalin ordered that all private farms would have to be collectivized. During the process, according to Soviet sources, which are no doubt on the conservative side, some 200,000 Ukrainian families were "de-kulakized" or dispossessed of all land. By the summer of 1932, 69.5% of all Ukrainian farm families and 80% of all farm land had been forcibly collectivized.

Stalin decided to eliminate Ukraine's independent farmers for three reasons: 1) they represented the last bulwark of resistance to totalitarian Russian control; 2) the USSR was in desperate need of foreign capital to build more factories and the best way to obtain that capital was to increase agricultural exports from Ukraine, once known as "the breadbasket of Europe"; 3) the fastest way to increase agricultural exports was to expropriate land through a process of farm collectivization and to assign procurement quotas to each Soviet republic. During the collectivization process, Ukrainian farmers resisted vigorously, often violently, especially when the GPU (secret police) and militia forced them to turn their land over to the government. Thousands of farmers were killed and millions more were deported to Siberia to be replaced by more trustworthy workers.<sup>1</sup>

To increase exports and to break the back of remaining resistance, Moscow imposed grain procurement quotas on Ukraine that were 2.3 times the amount of grain marketed during the best year prior to collectivization. Laws were passed declaring all collective farm property "sacred and inviolate." Anyone who was caught hoarding food was subject to execution as an "enemy of the people" or, in extenuating circumstances, imprisonment for not less than 10 years.<sup>2</sup> To make sure the new laws were

<sup>1</sup>Myron B. Kuropas, The Ukrainians in America (Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Company, 1972) pp. 32 - 36. Also see James E. Mace, Communism and the Dilemmas of National Liberation: National Communism in Soviet Ukraine, 1918 - 1933 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983); Hryhory Kostyuk, Stalinist Rule in the Ukraine: A Study of the Decade of Mass Terror (London: Atlantic Books, 1960) p. 129.

<sup>2</sup>James Mace, "The Man-Made Famine of 1932 - 1933; What Happened and Why", The Great Famine in Ukraine: The Unknown Holocaust (Jersey City: Ukrainian National Association, 1983) p. 29.



strictly enforced, special "commissions" and "brigades" were dispatched to the countryside. In the words of one Sovietologist:

The work of these special "commissions" and "brigades" was marked by the utmost severity. They entered the villages and made the most thorough searches of the houses and barns of every peasant. They dug up the earth and broke into the walls of buildings and stoves in which the peasants tried to hide their last handfuls of food. They even in places took specimens of fecal matter from the toilets in an effort to learn by analysis whether the peasants had stolen government property and were eating grain.<sup>1</sup>

Stalin succeeded in achieving his goals. The grain harvest of 1932 was greater than in 1931, providing more monies for industrial expansion. The cost to Ukraine, however, was catastrophic. Grain procurements continued even though it was clear to Soviet officials that more and more people were going hungry in the Ukrainian countryside. The result was inevitable. A famine, the magnitude of which staggers the imagination, struck Ukraine and still the Soviet government failed to provide relief. Detailed and documented descriptions of the horrors which prevailed in the rural areas of Soviet Ukraine have been presented by Ukrainian eye-witnesses, Congressional reports, and various newspaper accounts. Thomas Walker, an American journalist who traveled in Ukraine during the famine, left us an especially graphic account of the situation in one rural area.

About twenty miles south of Kiev, I came upon a village that was practically extinct by starvation. There had been fifteen houses in this village and a population of forty-odd persons.

Every dog and cat had been eaten.

The horses and oxen had all been appropriated by the Bolsheviks to stock the collective farms.

In one hut they were cooking a mess that defied analysis. There were bones, pig-weed, skin, and what looked like a boot top in this pot. The way the remaining half dozen inhabitants eagerly watched this slimy mess showed the state of their hunger.

One boy of about 15 years, whose face and arms and legs were simply tightly drawn skin over bones, had a stomach that was swollen to twice its normal size. He was an orphan; his father had died of starvation a month before and he showed me the body. The boy had covered the body with straw, there being no shovels in the village since the last raid of the GPU.

He stated his mother had gone away one day searching for food and had not returned.

This boy wanted to die -- he suffered intensely with his swollen stomach and was the only one of the group who showed no interest in the pot that was being prepared.<sup>4</sup>

The Soviet government has preserved the greatest secrecy concerning the exact number of persons who perished in Ukraine during the Forced Famine but an analysis of recently revealed Soviet census data comparing 1939 with 1926 figures suggests that no fewer than ten million men, women, and children perished.<sup>3</sup> According to American Sovietologists and other experts on the Stalin era, the famine need never have occurred.

Despite the meager harvest, the peasants could have pulled through without starvation if there had been substantial abatement of the requisition of grain and foodstuffs. But the requisitions were

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<sup>1</sup>Clarence Manning, Ukraine Under the Soviets (New York: Bookman Associates, 1953) p. 97.

<sup>4</sup>The Chicago American (March 6, 1935).

<sup>3</sup>Anton Antonov-Ovseyenko, The Time of Stalin: A Portrait of Tyranny (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1981) p. 65.

intensified rather than relaxed; the government was determined to "teach the peasants a lesson" by the grim method of starvation . . ."<sup>6</sup>

By the beginning of the winter all the grain, including the seed grain of the farms in Ukraine, had been seized by the government. The peasants lived on the last remaining potatoes, killed their last remaining livestock, they slaughtered cats and dogs, ate nettles and linden leaves. The acorns were all gone by January, and people began to starve. By March no food at all remained, and they died. The children died first, mostly the younger children, followed by the older people, then usually men before the women, and finally everyone else.<sup>7</sup>

According to one Soviet expert who had access to Soviet statistics, the forced collectivization campaign, the liquidation of the kulaks, and the Forced Famine precipitated the untimely death of some twenty-two million men, women, and children in the USSR.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>William Henry Chamberlin, The Ukraine: A Submerged Nation (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1944) pp. 59-60.

<sup>7</sup>Robert Conquest, et. al., The Man-Made Famine in Ukraine (Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1984) p. 4.

<sup>8</sup>Anton Antonov-Ovseyenko, p. 65.

## THE FAMINE PRESS COVER-UP

During the 1930's, the United States was in the throes of the Great Depression. Banks and businesses collapsed. Factories closed. Homes and farms were repossessed because their owners couldn't keep up with their bank loan payments. Unemployment reached 40% in the large cities where soup kitchens and bread lines were common.

It was during this period of doubt and uncertainty that some Americans came to believe that communism was superior to capitalism, a message the Soviet Union had been promoting since its inception. In a well orchestrated program of disinformation, Moscow projected the image that the Soviet Union was a "worker's paradise" where laborers were members of a privileged class and unemployment was unthinkable. Unaware of the true state of affairs in the USSR (Soviet press censorship was very strict), thousands of despairing clerics, college professors, poets, movie stars, writers, journalists, and other molders of American public opinion turned to Moscow for guidance and inspiration. It was an era one American journalist labeled as America's "Red Decade," a time when romanticized communism represented the future, bankrupt capitalism the past. Strong supporters of the "Soviet way" were two correspondents stationed in Moscow during the 1930's, Walter Duranty of the New York Times and Louis Fischer of The Nation. Both were determined to present the USSR in the best possible light.

The first reliable report of the Forced Famine to reach the outside world was presented by Gareth Jones, a British journalist who visited Ukraine in 1933 and left the USSR to write about what he had seen. When his story broke, the American press corps — many of whose members had seen the pictures of the famine horrors taken by German consular officers earlier — were besieged by their home offices to verify Jones' findings. Some consulted with the Soviet press censor to determine how to best handle the story.<sup>1</sup>

Commenting on the British "scare story" being repeated by the American press, Duranty admitted that mismanagement on some collective farms "made a mess of Soviet food production" but added that "you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs." After describing an exhaustive inquiry with all of his sources, Duranty wrote:

There is a serious food shortage . . . There is no actual starvation or deaths from starvation but there is widespread mortality from diseases due to malnutrition.<sup>2</sup>

Earlier, Duranty had written that food shortages were the result of peasant resistance to collectivization. The situation would not have been serious, he argues, if world food prices hadn't fallen. This "forced the Soviet Union to increase the exportation of foodstuffs at a time when the shoe was beginning to pinch and the distribution of the food at home would have corrected many difficulties."<sup>3</sup> Commenting on Duranty's role in covering up the Forced Food Famine, Malcolm Muggeridge, Moscow correspondent for the Manchester Guardian during the 1930's, recently declared: "Duranty was the villain of the whole thing . . . It is difficult for me to see how it could have been otherwise that in some sense he was not in the regime's power."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Myron B. Kuropas, "America's 'Red Decade' and the Great Famine Cover-Up", The Great Famine in Ukraine: The Unknown Holocaust, pp. 39-44.

<sup>2</sup>"Russians Hungry But Not Starving", The New York Times (March 31, 1933).

<sup>3</sup>New York Times (November 26, 1932).

<sup>4</sup>Interview with B. Nahaylo, Robertsbridge, England, March 1, 1983.

Malcolm Muggeridge wrote the truth about the Forced Famine as did Christian Science Monitor staff correspondent William Henry Chamberlin who traveled in Ukraine during the winter of 1933 and reported that some "4 million peasants are found to have perished . . ." Reflecting on his trip, Chamberlin 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 Soviet censorship, but stark, outright famine, with its victims counted in millions . . ."<sup>6</sup>

Extensive coverage of the Forced Famine was also provided by the Hearst newspaper chain. Unfortunately, the tragedy was misreported as having taken place in 1934 rather than 1933. Responding to the series, Louis Fischer wrote that he had been in Ukraine in 1934 and had witnessed no famine. Although Fischer was aware of the famine having taken place a year earlier, he never mentioned it in his article.<sup>7</sup> He admitted "food shortages" in Ukraine but attributed them to drought, adding: "Had it not been for collectivization, the extended drought would have wrought much havoc in the grain-growing areas."<sup>8</sup> As for the use of force by Soviet authorities, Fischer saw no problem. "All governments are based on force," he argued. "The question is only of the degree of force, who administers it, and for what purpose."<sup>9</sup> In his book, Soviet Journey, Fischer applied his theory of civil rule to the Soviet collectivization campaign.

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 its disposal. The government won.<sup>10</sup>

The New Republic repeated the notion that collectivization was a spectacular success<sup>11</sup> and added that if there were any food shortages in Ukraine, they were the result of sabotage by Ukrainian separatists.<sup>12</sup>

Thus, with the help of some members of the American press, the USSR succeeded in its effort to shield the truth about the Forced Famine from the world's eyes. "Years after the event," wrote one journalist in 1937, "when no Russian Communist in his senses 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>13</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Christian Science Monitor (May 29, 1934).

<sup>7</sup>Chamberlin, p. 60.

<sup>8</sup>The Nation (March 13, 1935).

<sup>9</sup>The Nation (October 31, 1934).

<sup>10</sup>The Nation (January 31, 1934).

<sup>11</sup>Cited in Eugene Lyons, The Red Decade: Stalinist Penetration of America (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1941) p. 118.

<sup>12</sup>The New Republic (May 10, 1933).

<sup>13</sup>The New Republic (April 11, 1934).

<sup>14</sup>Eugene Lyons, Assignment in Utopia (New York: Harcourt: Bruce & Co., 1937) pp. 577 - 578. For a more detailed account of the role of the New York Times in the famine cover-up see Marco Carynnyk, "The Famine the 'Times' Couldn't Find", Commentary (November, 1983) pp. 32 - 40.

## UKRAINE IN RECENT TIMES

Ukrainian suffering did not end with the famine. When Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, the Ukrainian people bore the brunt of the devastation which followed. Ukrainians were designated "untermenschen" (subhuman) by Hitler and his followers. Before they retreated from Ukraine in 1944, the Nazis exterminated 3,898,457 civilians (including 900,000 Jews) and sent some 2,240,000 Ukrainians to work as slave laborers in Germany.<sup>1</sup>

Despite Nazi oppression, millions of Ukrainians fled Ukraine with the Germans rather than live under Soviet rule. When the war ended, they were designated "displaced persons" by the United States and other western nations. Stalin, however, demanded they be returned to the USSR, by force, if necessary. Many Ukrainians returned voluntarily, believing Soviet promises of a better life. Some were forcibly repatriated with the help of the United States army. Almost all returnees were sent directly to the labor camps of Siberia by Stalin, never to see Ukraine again.<sup>2</sup>

Stalin died in 1953, and life in Ukraine improved slightly when Nikita Khrushchev became the Soviet premier. During the last twenty years, however, the Soviet Union has gradually returned to its centuries-old policy of Russification and suppression. Ukrainian dissidents protesting human and national rights violations have been arrested and sentenced to long terms in labor camps. The lid has been replaced on all free expression. The Ukrainian Catholic Church has been outlawed and most Orthodox Churches are either closed or serving as atheism museums. Few Ukrainians are allowed to emigrate and travel within the Soviet bloc is restricted. Members of the Communist party and their families are the new privileged class, enjoying separate stores, separate hospitals, and special schools. Ukrainians are still not masters of their own land.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Myron B. Kuropas, "One More Calamity," U. S. News and World Report (May 26, 1986).

<sup>2</sup>Mark R. Elliot, Pawns of Yalta: Soviet Refugees and America's Role in Their Repatriation (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1982).

<sup>3</sup>Bohdan Krawchenko, Social Change and National Consciousness in Twentieth Century Ukraine (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985) pp. 171-258.

## FOOD AS A POLITICAL WEAPON

The genocide by starvation initiated by Stalin in Ukraine during the 1930's has had many Communist imitators in recent years.

Cambodia was taken over by the Communists in 1975. During the next three years the government of Pol Pot was responsible for the death of two to four million Cambodians through a program of planned execution and forced starvation.<sup>1</sup>

Ethiopia was taken over by a Communist regime in 1974. Within the last five years thousands, perhaps millions of people, mostly Eritreans seeking independence, were allowed to starve to death while the government spent millions of dollars on military armaments.<sup>2</sup>

Afghanistan was invaded by the Soviet Union in 1979. Unable to subdue the Afghan countryside, the Soviets began a program of genocidal suppression which included "killing of the civilian support population, terrorizing and driving of the survivors, and creating famine conditions."<sup>3</sup>

As in the past, the western press has paid relatively little attention to these horrors and when they have, as in the case of Ethiopia, the Communist regime's culpability was hardly mentioned. In Ethiopia, the press reported drought as the major cause.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The Twentieth Century: An Almanac, edited by Robert H. Ferrell, (New York: World Almanac Publications, 1985) pp. 435 - 436. Also see Paul Johnson, Modern Times: The World from the Twenties to the Eighties (New York: Harper & Row, 1983) pp. 654 - 656.

<sup>2</sup>"Murder by Hunger", Wall Street Journal (January 10, 1985).

<sup>3</sup>Allen K. Jones, "Afghan Refugees: Five Years Later" (Washington: U. S. Committee for Refugees, 1984).

<sup>4</sup>"Human Element, Not Drought Causes Famine," U. S. News and World Report (February 23, 1985).

## **SUGGESTED STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

Discuss the Russian Revolution. How was it different from the American Revolution?

Compare and contrast Soviet minority policies with those of Czarist Russia.

Discuss the rise and fall of the Ukrainian National Republic. Why was Ukrainian independence so brief? Do Ukrainians still want freedom from Russian domination? How do you know?

Contrast Soviet behavior in Ukraine during the 1920's to that of the 1930's. Why were there differences?

Review human behavior during a famine using survivor's accounts as well as reports by observers. Are there any commonalities?

Compare Stalin's Forced Famine against Ukrainians to Hitler's Holocaust against the Jews. What are the similarities? What are the differences?

Compare the Forced Famine in Ukraine with the Irish Potato Famine.

Write an essay about other famines in world history and compare them to the Forced Famine in Ukraine.

Trace the growth of Soviet imperialism since World War II and the steps taken by the free world to contain it.

Compare and contrast the British empire with the Soviet Russian empire. How and why have the British behaved differently in recent years than the Russians?

Discuss America's "Red Decade." What were the consequences for American foreign policy development?

List the methods developed by Stalin to suppress opposition in the Soviet empire. Which of them are still being used in other Communist countries? What techniques are being used by current Soviet leaders to suppress dissent?

Discuss the nature of disinformation. What can citizens in a free society do to combat it?

Discuss what we as citizens of a free society can do to prevent forced famines and genocides in the future?

## VOCABULARY

annex

assimilate

atheist

authoritarian

collectivization

Communist

despotism

dictator

disinformation

displaced person

dissident

expropriation

fellow traveler

genocide

GPU

Gulag

KGB

Komsomol

kulak

nation

nationality

repatriation

revolution

samizdat

slave labor camp

totalitarian



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**Films/Videos**

Harvest of Despair: The 1932 - 33 Famine in Ukraine. Produced by The Ukrainian Famine Research Committee with the assistance of the National Film Board of Canada. Directed by Slavko Nowytski, this 55 minute film has won numerous first place awards for documentary presentation at film festivals throughout the world. Available for purchase or rental from the Ukrainian Famine Research Committee, St. Vladimir's Institute, 620 Spadina Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2H4 (416) 923 - 3318.

10 Million Victims. Ukraine 1933 - The Unknown Holocaust. Directed by Claude Caron with the assistance of researcher-consultant Taras Hukalo, this 30 minute film is available in four languages: English, Ukrainian, Russian, and French. For further information contact Taras Hukalo, 7068 13th Avenue, Montreal, Quebec H2A 2X3 (514) 721 - 3992.

Both of the films listed above are available as VHS or Beta video cassettes.

***STUDENT HANDOUTS***



## Commemoration of the Great Famine in the Ukraine

*By the President of the United States of America*

### A Proclamation

The Ukrainian famine of 1932-1933 was a tragic chapter in the history of the Ukraine, all the more so because it was not the result of disasters of nature, but was artificially induced as a deliberate policy.

The leaders of the Soviet Union, although fully aware of the famine in the Ukraine and having complete control of food supplies within its borders, nevertheless failed to take relief measures to check the famine or to alleviate the catastrophic conditions resulting from it. In complete disregard of international opinion, they ignored the appeals of international organizations and other nations.

More than seven million Ukrainians, and millions of others, died as the consequence of this callous act, which was part of a deliberate policy aimed at crushing the political, cultural, and human rights of the Ukrainian and other peoples by whatever means possible. The devastation of these years continues to leave its mark on the Ukrainian people and has retarded their economic, social, and political development to an enormous extent.

In making this a special day to honor those who were victims of this famine, we Americans are afforded as well another opportunity to honor our own system of government and the freedoms we enjoy and our commitment to the right to self-determination and liberty for all the peoples of the world. In so doing, let us also reaffirm our faith in the spirit and resilience of the Ukrainian people and condemn the system that has caused them so much suffering over the years.

The Congress, by House Concurrent Resolution 111, has urged the President to issue a proclamation in mournful commemoration of the great famine in the Ukraine during 1933.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate Sunday, November 4, 1984, as a Day of Commemoration of the Great Famine in the Ukraine in 1933.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and ninth.

*Ronald Reagan*

***RUSSIAN IMPERIALISM***

## RUSSIAN IMPERIALISM

"Modern Russia grew from the principality of Muscovy after Mongol control of Russia began to ebb in the fifteenth century . . . At the time, the small principality of Muscovy, an area around Moscow which grew into the great Russian empire, launched its march of expansion under the rule of Ivan III (the Great), and hungrily devoured nation after nation and race after race."

"It has been difficult for the Western mind to comprehend the Russian philosophy of making constant conquests against her neighbors a way of life . . . It is of note here that Russia's pattern of first pretending to be a friend in order later to destroy the country befriended commenced with her first conquest and continues today . . . Russian aggression during the last five centuries has devoured forty-six distinct races speaking sixty-one different languages, and her appetite remains unquenched."

"So it has been through the centuries -- Russia's success in acquiring the territory of others has ebbed and flowed, but her insatiable hunger to acquire the property of her neighbor remains. This territorial hunger can be compared to the farmer who, when queried as to why he was acquiring so much land, said: 'I don't want much land, I just want that which joins my farm.' So it is with Russia -- she just wants the territory adjoining her."

"While the Russian government has changed from a monarchy to a Communist state, Russian goals of world dominion remain unchanged. In fact, the Soviets have been better able to realize those imperialistic goals under the commissars than under the tsars."

William G. Bray, Russian Frontiers: From Muscovy to Khrushchev (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963), pp. 11-28.

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"It has been estimated that the growth of the Russian Empire between the end of the fifteenth and the end of the nineteenth century proceeded at the rate of 130 square kilometers or fifty square miles a day."

"One of the anomalies of pre-1917 Russia was the fact that although, to quote one observer, 'the Russian Empire, Great Russian in its origin, ceased being such in its ethnic composition,' the state, with some exceptions, continued to be treated constitutionally and administratively as a nationally homogeneous unit. The principle of autocracy, preserved in all its essentials until the Revolution of 1905, did not permit . . . the recognition of separate historic or national territories within the state in which the monarch's authority would be less absolute or rest on a legally different basis from that which he exercised at home."

Richard Pipes, The Formation of the Soviet Union: Communism and Nationalism, 1917 - 1923 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), pp. 1-7.

***SOVIET IMPERIALISM***



## SOVIET IMPERIALISM

“Today we think of Russia’s territorial aggression as a result of Communism instead of regarding Communism as a weapon being used to assist in her historic imperialistic aggression.”

William G. Bray, Russian Frontiers: From Muscovy to Khrushchev (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963), p. 27.

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“The Soviet Union is not a country like others, but almost a continent, where Europe and Asia meet. And it is not a nation so much as an empire . . . it is not a state of workers and peasants it claims to be . . . it is primarily a state of nations.”

“More than a hundred nations and nationalities lie within its borders, speaking more than a hundred languages, with all that keeps them apart: history, race traditions, religions . . . A tormented history, comprising invasions, wars, and patient reconquests over the centuries has fashioned this indefinable mass of completely different people . . . Today the descendants of the conquerors and conquered live side by side. All, according to their passports, are Soviet citizens, children of the Workers’ Revolution of 1917.”

“According to history, the Empire of the czars was a ‘prison of the peoples’ and Lenin opened it. But history is never quite that simple . . . The Soviet federation in 1952 was a real empire, one in which the preeminence of the Russian people was justified -- as in the colonial empires of the past -- by a superior civilization and the progress toward which it led its subjects. The ‘prison of the peoples’ no longer existed. But the federation was a perfectly unegalitarian community, where the ‘elder brother’ dominated and sought to assimilate others.

“Another trait shared by all Soviet leaders has been the belief that the only solution to the national problem lies in eliminating national differences. Only the methods have changed.”

Helene Carrere d’Encausse, Decline of an Empire: The Soviet Socialist Republics in Revolt (New York: Newsweek, 1979) pp. 11, 13, 46.

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“The nationality problem occupies a unique place in internal Soviet politics. The Soviet Union is the only major power where the dominant nationality barely has a majority . . . Why does national sentiment survive among the Soviet nationalities? Why do Soviet authorities have to stress continuously the desirability of the ethnic minorities ‘drawing together (sblizheniye)’? To this question there are many answers, the most obvious of which is that under conditions prevailing in the USSR - where one nationality comprises more than half of the population and controls, to boot, the state and its economy - ‘drawing together’ means nothing else but Russification.”

Richard Pipes, “Introduction: The Nationality Problem,” Handbook of Major Soviet Nationalities, Zev Katz, ed., (New York: Macmillan, 1975), pp. 1, 3.

ETHNIC GROUPS IN THE USSR WITH A POPULATION  
OF 500,000 OR MORE IN 1979

Russians	137,397,000
Ukrainians	42,347,000
Uzbeks	12,456,000
Byelorussians	9,463,000
Kazakhs	6,556,000
Tatars	6,317,000
Azerbaijanians	5,477,000
Armenians	4,151,000
Georgians	3,571,000
Moldavians	2,968,000
Tajiks	2,898,000
Lithuanians	2,851,000
Turkmens	2,028,000
Germans	1,936,000
Kirghiz	1,906,000
Jews	1,811,000
Daghestan nationalities (include a variety of distinct nationalities)	1,657,000
Latvians	1,439,000
Bashkirs	1,371,000
Mordvinians	1,192,000
Poles	1,151,000
Estonians	1,020,000
Chechens	756,000
Urduks	714,000
Mari	622,000
Ossets	542,000

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***STALIN'S FORCED FAMINE***

## THE TERROR-FAMINE IN PERSPECTIVE

Robert Conquest\*

The Soviet assault on the peasantry, and on the Ukrainian nation, in 1930 - 1933 was one of the largest and most devastating events in modern history. It was a tremendous human tragedy -- with many more dead than in all countries together in World War I. It was a major economic disaster. And it was a social "revolution from above", as Stalin put it, which wholly transformed a major country.

Yet these events have not to this day been fully registered in Western consciousness. There is a general knowledge here that some sort of catastrophe struck, or may have struck, the Soviet countryside, but little more. This minimum has percolated over the decades, from eyewitnesses and victims; and more recently from the fact that almost every work by the many talented Soviet writers who have come (or whose unofficial writings have come) to the West has at least a passing reference to the rural terror and its hideous consequences, taking for granted events which to them are part of a known background.

But the events are both complex and unfamiliar to westerners. The very concept of a peasant is strange to American and British ears. The Ukrainian nationality, subjugated to be merely part of the Russian Empire for a century and a half, enjoying only a few years of precarious and interrupted independence after the revolution, and then again becoming merely part of the USSR, does not declare itself to the Western observer as the Polish or even the Latvian nations are able to. Even the Communist Party, its ideology and its motivations, is for us an alien and not easily understood phenomenon.

The facts of the assault on the peasantry, and on the Ukrainian nationality, are complex. Essentially, it was a threefold blow. Dekulakization meant the deportation of millions of peasants. Collectivization meant the herding of the rest of them into collective farms. And in 1932 - 1933, the collectivized peasantry of the Ukraine and adjacent regions was crushed in a special operation by the seizure of the whole grain crop and the starvation of the villages. We see no single, and simply describable and assimilable, event, but a complicated sequence.

Most important of all, a great effort was put into denying or concealing the facts. Right from the start, when the truth came out from a variety of sources, the Stalinist assertion of a different story confused the issue: and some Western journalists and scholars were duped or suborned into supporting the Stalinist version. Nor have the Soviet authorities yet admitted the facts. A recent novel published in the USSR briefly describes the terror-famine, and later notes "in not a single textbook in contemporary history will you find the merest reference to 1933, the year marked by a terrible tragedy".

Lenin had devised, for a Marxist analysis of village life, a division of the peasantry into "kulaks", "middle peasants", and "poor peasants" plus a "village proletariat". This implied a "class struggle" in the village which in fact failed to occur, but was thereupon imposed by the representative of the cities. The most lethal invention was the "kulak". This word -- "fist" -- had in reality been used to label a very small class of village moneylenders, all of whom had disappeared by 1918. Lenin transferred it to the richer peasantry. These too were wiped out by 1920. The term was then used of the more prosperous survivors.

From 1918 the attempt was made to abolish the market, and get grain by forced requisition. By 1921, peasant resistance, expressed in widespread -- indeed almost universal -- peasant risings had brought the regime to the point of collapse and Lenin, with the "New Economic Policy", (NEP), restored the market system. The ruined peasants who then worked indefatigably to restore their fortunes, thereby saved the country: but the more they prospered, the more they were regarded as "kulaks" by Party ideologists.

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\*Robert Conquest is the author of The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror Famine (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986)

The Party hated the kulak as the main obstacle to socialism. In reality, as is often admitted in party literature, the middle peasants and even the poor peasants almost always took the same line. But party doctrine required a "class enemy". No actual definition of the kulak was ever made: or rather a number of contradicting definitions appeared.

After the peasantry had restored the economy, Stalin felt strong enough to strike at the kulak. During the winter of 1929 - 1930, almost ten million kulaks -- men, women and children -- were deported to the arctic. These supposedly "rich exploiters" owned around \$150 worth of property. A typical kulak would have something like 12 acres, a cow, a horse, ten sheep, a hog and about 20 chickens on a farm supporting four people.

The kulak category was later broadened to include "subkulaks" who were not kulaks by party definition, except that they shared kulak "attitudes."

In the villages, teams headed by Communists from the cities, supported by GPU men (secret police) held violent denunciation sessions to meet their quota of kulaks. Even now these latter were often defended by poor villagers, who themselves were then labeled "subkulaks."


Some 100,000 kulaks were shot. The remainder (except for the very old who were left to their own devices) were evicted from their homes, and marched to the nearest railway. Huge line of peasants converged on the trains which took two to three thousand people in cattle trucks, on journeys lasting a week or longer, to the arctic. In the unheated trucks, deaths, particularly of infants, was common. On detraining, they might spend some time crammed starving into the confiscated churches of Archangel or Vologda, or go straight to their destinations -- typically being marched for several days to a clearing in the forest and told to make their own homes. About three million died in the early stages, predominantly young children. The survivors either had to create farms in the frozen wilderness, or were sent to work on such projects as the Baltic-White Sea Canal, on which about 300,000 died (and which was never of any use).

The kulaks and subkulaks, of course, included all the natural leaders of the peasantry, especially those resistant to the new collectivization. After their removal, the bulk of the remaining peasants were forced into the collective farms.

There was much resistance. Sporadic armed risings involving whole districts took place, especially in the Ukraine and the North Caucasus. But scythes and shotguns could not prevail against the armed forces of the GPU. They were ruthlessly suppressed. But so was more peaceful resistance.

The only peasant tactic which had a measure of success was the astonishing "women's rebellions": peasant women would prevent confiscation of their cows, and the authorities were often at a loss as to how to cope. The peasants' main reaction, however, was to slaughter the cattle. In a few months, over 40% of the country's cattle and 65% of the sheep had gone. Stalin's policy lay in ruins. Like Lenin, in March 1930 he made a tactical retreat. Peasants were now allowed to leave the collective farms. 16 million families had been collectivized. Within a few weeks, 9 million left.

But they were not allowed their land back. They were given rough ground at the edge of the ploughland. Then heavy taxes were imposed on them. A huge new wave of dekulakization removed the more recalcitrant. And over the next two years, the bulk of the land was again collectivized. The system was inefficient from the start, and the countryside soon presented, as Soviet Nobel Prize novelist Boris Pasternak described it, "such inhuman, unimaginable misery, such a terrible disaster, that it began to seem almost abstract, it would not fit within the bounds of consciousness."



The collective farm system, still the Soviet Union's agricultural mainstay, was an economic disaster. Even in the 1950s, the new mechanized farms were admitted to be producing less than the pre-World War I moujik with his wooden plough . . . A schematic idea had failed, at enormous human and other cost.

Dekulakization and collectivization were virtually complete by mid-1932. It was now that Moscow launched the third and most lethal of its assaults -- the terror-famine against the peasants of Ukraine and some neighboring areas, in particular the largely Ukrainian Kuban.

Soviet Academician Sakharov refers to Stalin's "Ukrainophobia". But it was not an irrational Ukrainophobia. In the free elections of November, 1917, Ukraine had voted overwhelmingly for the national parties. The Bolsheviks got only 10% of the vote, and that mainly in Russified industrial centers. Over the next few years, independent Ukrainian governments rose and fell. Twice Bolshevik governments were established by Russian troops, but only on the third attempt was the country finally subdued. The first two efforts had made virtually no concession to nationalism. The view of Lenin and his subordinates was that Ukrainian was merely a peasant dialect. It was only after bitter experience that it was seen that Ukraine could not be mastered without some recognition of its national feeling.

Just as the peasants were temporarily placated by the New Economic Policy, so with the Ukrainian nation. Over the next eight or nine years, Ukrainian culture was allowed to flourish, and high officials and supporters of the former independent Ukrainian government were given posts. But there were always Moscow's complaints and apprehensions about the national tendencies thus encouraged. Thus, starting in 1929, a violent mass purge was initiated first of non-Communist, then of Communist cultural and political figures. During the years that followed, some 200 of the 240 published authors in Ukraine were shot or died in camps, together with a wide swathe of all other intellectuals, from agronomists to language specialists.

But in Stalin's view "the national problem is in essence a peasant problem". The decapitation of the Ukrainian culture was now accompanied by a blow at its body, the peasant bulk of the nation. The peasantry of Ukraine and contiguous areas had also been the foremost in resisting collectivization. They were thus as it were, a double target. Stalin's Secret Police Chief in the Ukraine, Balitsky, spoke of a "double blow" at the nationalists and the kulaks.

The Ukrainian countryside had already, in 1931 - 32, suffered grain requisitions which left it on the point of famine. In July 1932 Stalin issued the decisive decree: 6.6 million tons of grain were now to be delivered. The figure was far beyond possibility. Ukrainian Communist leaders protested, but were ordered to obey. As Soviet novelist Vasily Grossman puts it, "the decree required that the peasants of Ukraine, the Don and the Kuban be put to death by starvation, put to death along with their little children."

By November 1, 41 % of the delivery plan had been fulfilled, and there was nothing left in the villages. There were again protests from leading Ukrainian Communists who told Stalin that famine was raging. They were rebuffed and ordered to find the grain. "Brigades" with crowbars searched the peasants' houses and yards. A little hidden grain was sometimes found, the peasant then being shot or sent to labor camp, but in general the villages were now living on all sorts of marginal edibles -- cats and dogs, buckwheat, chaff, nettles, worms, ground bark.

The borders between the Ukraine and Russia were blocked by police posts which prevented bread being brought back. About a third of Ukraine itself was officially blockaded so that not merely bread, but no supplies of any sort, could enter. In the Ukrainian cities a small ration was issued, but in the countryside nothing at all.

The cities were barred to the peasants by guard posts. Even so, when the last food had gone, many peasants managed to crawl to city centers. It was forbidden to feed them, or treat them medically, and they either died on the spot or were removed in twice weekly roundups.

Back in the countryside, while any strength remained, families would come to the railway lines in the hope of being thrown a crust. Arthur Koestler\*, who was then in Kharkiv, describes this: "the stations were lined with begging peasants with swollen hands and feet, the women holding up to the carriage windows horrible infants with enormous wobbling heads, stick-like limbs and swollen pointed bellies . . ."

They returned to die in the villages. It is not our purpose to harrow you any further, but you need only envisage famine scenes as in the world today, with a single difference -- that no aid or relief organizations were present trying to alleviate things. Indeed, it was illegal -- even in the villages! -- to suggest that famine was taking place.

Infants like those described by Koestler were particularly vulnerable and many died. Children of 7 or 8 often also died, either at home or rounded up into special centers and given some, largely inadequate food. But many, after their parents died, joined the wandering bands of the "Homeless Ones" and lived by petty pilfering. Others, indoctrinated in Party's "Pioneers" organization, were used by the authorities to help harrass the peasants. Some became much publicized heroes by denouncing their own parents.

One of the most moving descriptions of the famine is by Vasily Grossman, a Soviet Jewish writer, whom we have already quoted. His mother was killed at Auschwitz, and he himself wrote the first documentary description of the Nazi death camps The Hell of Treblinka, and was joint editor of the Soviet section of the Black Book on Nazi atrocities (never published in the Soviet Union). He gives us, in his novel Forever Flowing, the most harrowing description and indictment of Stalin's slaughter of the Ukrainian peasantry, and quite explicitly makes the parallel with Hitler, adding that in the Stalinist case it was a matter of Soviet people killing Soviet children. And the death roll was indeed on the Hitlerite scale.

A census taken in January 1937 was suppressed and the census board were shot as (in the words of an official communique) "a serpent's nest of traitors in the apparatus of Soviet statistics"; they had, Pravda stated, "exerted themselves to diminish the population of the Soviet Union".

During Khrushchev's time a later head of the Census Board wrote sardonically that the State Planning Commission had been very incompetent in its population predictions, having forecast 180.7 million for 1937 when the real total was 164 million. This enormous discrepancy can be reduced to about 11 + million for various reasons (for example, children unborn owing to prematurely dead parents). Of this, the famine deaths seem to have been about 7 million -- 5 million in Ukraine, 1 million in the Kuban and North Caucasus, 1 million in the Don and lower Volga. 3 + million had already died during dekulakization, and about 1 million (out of some 4 million) Kazakhs had perished as a result of the banning of their nomad life and resettlement on desert "farms." To this 11 + million we must add some 3 - million for the peasants in labor camps during the 1937 census (many of whom perished there later) for a reasonable estimate of approximately 14½ million victims of the entire anti-peasant and anti-Ukraine campaign. The total dead in all countries during World War 1 was under 9 million.

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\*Arthur Koestler is a Hungarian-born British writer whose novel Darkness at Noon analyzed the psychology of victims of Stalin's 1930s purges.

There have been many useful books, usually of a specialist nature, about one aspect or another of the Stalinist revolution in the countryside, and many individual testimonies have also appeared; but there has not previously been a general history covering the whole phenomenon.

Yet the material only needed to be brought together. We have literally hundreds of first hand accounts, from victims and from officials, from foreign communists and from journalists: that is, first hand observers. We have official material, both from the early 1930s and from the Khrushchev period, which strongly indicates much of the truth. And we have fiction, from the orthodox Sholokhov in the 1930s, through novels published in the USSR in Khrushchev's time and even in the early 1980s, to say nothing of samizdat and emigre work, in which the events are presented in only slightly dramatized form.

All of them tell, or contribute to, the same story. Every point made here can be overwhelmingly documented. Soviet history, and therefore the Soviet Union today -- and so the world today -- cannot be properly understood without a full knowledge of such major determining events as those described above.

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Excerpted from Congressional testimony presented before the United States Ukraine Famine Commission in Washington, D. C. on October 8, 1986.

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## THE ORGANIZED PREPARATION OF THE FAMINE

The famine and the deaths from hunger in the villages of Ukraine were very well known to Moscow in the spring of 1932.\* Under normal circumstances the Soviet government and the Communist party would have been prepared to prevent the repetition of a similar catastrophe in the ensuing years of 1932 - 33. The government and the party could have done so, but this was not their plan; Moscow had foreseen an increased sharpening in the struggle with the peasantry for grain, and had, therefore, prepared well in advance all their organizational efforts to promote an artificial famine...

The following was done to accomplish the desired results:

- (1) Plans for grain-collections were prepared for Ukraine, in spite of the actual state of the harvest yield and of the food requirements of the population. Thus, a determined effort was made to strip the peasantry of all grain.
- (2) A special effort was issued to expropriate the entire village economy, including that of the smallest peasant. The peasants were forbidden under pain of death, to utilize the products of their toil, regardless of whether they belonged to a collective farm or not.
- (3) A special law was enacted to establish a commercial blockade of the Ukrainian villages in most of the regions of Ukraine.
- (4) Special laws were enacted to bind all toilers, workers and peasants to specific places of employment. A passport system was established to prevent the peasants from seeking employment outside their village, thus depriving them of the right to produce food from other sources.
- (5) Ukraine as a whole, and especially the Ukrainian peasantry, was placed under a special transportation blockade, thus depriving the population of opportunities to travel in quest of food.
- (6) The authorities made strenuous efforts to conceal the existence of the famine in Ukraine, not only from the outside world, but also from other national groups in the U. S. S. R.

The summer of 1932 in Ukraine was notable for the sharp conflict between the authorities and peasants for bread. The government tried to get as much food out of Ukraine as possible; the peasants, on the other hand, did everything in their power to prevent this and to keep as much as possible for themselves.

Some of the collective workers, individual farmers, and collective farms completed their quotas in full. But, in general, the majority of Ukrainian peasants did not fulfill the plan and used all possible means to evade it.

The government then embarked upon forcible collection of food from the collective farms, collective farmers, and individual peasants who had not given up their quotas. According to the central directives, it was proposed that every village should, depending on its size, be divided into a number of subdivision (hamlets, etc.) and to each of these a special brigade was attached, whose task it was to complete the plan of collection.

As a rule such a brigade consisted of a member of the presidium of the village soviet or a party representative, and two or three local "activists" (this latter group would include former red partisans, former hoboes, ex-convicts and such), and there would also be an additional member from the board of the local cooperative stores. Depending on local conditions the composition of the brigade would sometimes differ; if the quotas were large and poorly executed, they would include a larger number of party representatives from the regional, district or central offices. Quite often teachers, students, clerks

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\*After the 1931 harvest, outbreaks of starvation occurred in a number of regions in Ukraine.

from village and district offices would be compelled to join. The groundwork of the organization of such brigades was laid in 1930 and 1931 and they were constantly improved upon. As a rule the man in charge would be an outsider, a special functionary dispatched from the county, region, or capital. Every brigade had at least one "specialist" charged with uncovering hidden foodstuffs with the aid of a large sharp-pointed steel prong.

These brigades went from house to house, day after day, looking for hidden food. They searched homes, attics, cellars and all farm buildings, barns, stables, pens, and stacks. They would measure the thickness of the wall under the oven, to find if there was grain concealed in the foundation. They knocked on floors and walls and whenever the sound was dull they would pry the place open. Sometimes whole walls were pulled down, ovens wrecked, and the last grain taken away when anything was found. The collection was characterized by acts of wanton destruction and extreme cruelty. Every brigade had its headquarters, manned by a special staff. Peasants were hauled to headquarters and there subjected to all-night interrogations with beatings, water-treatment, and semi-naked confinement in cold cells. At that time, many instances of torture were noted.

The methods employed were many and varied. A former scientist of Kharkiv University, C. R. (who is now in the United States) received the following description of an action from his father, a local peasant of Lysiache, Karliv county near Poltava: "My son-in-law did not join the collective, so in the fall of 1932 a production-tax of 100 poods (1 pood = approximately 36 lbs.) of grain was levied on him. He paid this in full. Then, just before Christmas, an additional 200 poods was levied. He did not have the 200, he did not even have 20, so he was threatened with jail for failing to pay. He sold a cow, a horse, and some clothes, bought the necessary 200 poods and paid the tax. Then in February, 1933, the local authorities notified him that he had to surrender another 300 poods. He refused to pay this third assessment, because he had nothing left and was himself starving. A commission then came to his house to look for food. Of course they did not find anything except a little bag of inferior grain and a pot of beans, which they took. The only thing he had left was a sack of potatoes. This last food went fast, and then . . ."

Local activists who took part in the search for food for confiscation naturally by-passed their own homes, and thus succeeded in keeping some small reserves for themselves. The emissaries sent down to collect grain from the larger centers then changed their method of operation so that brigade members would not work in their own villages. When working among strangers they would be more thorough and not let one house get by without search. This explains why even many activists died as a result of famine in the spring of 1933. Their food had also been taken away from them.

Eyewitnesses from all parts of Ukraine tell similar stories about food collections conducted in the fall of 1932 and the spring of 1933. "All edible products were requisitioned" -- village of Zorich, Orzich county, Poltava region. "They took away everything that could be eaten" -- village of Veprik, Hadyach county, Sumy region. "All bread was requisitioned, and even peas, down to the last kilogram" -- village of Uspenivka, Khmiliw county, Mikolayiv region. "They took grain, potatoes, and beets almost to the last kilogram" -- village of Sofievka, Nove-Mirhorod county, Odessa region. "Everything, literally everything was taken, they did not leave one kilogram of bread" -- village of Strizavka, Rzhyshev county, Kiev region.

There are known cases where, in the winter of 1932 - 33, commissions charged with confiscating grain from the peasants examined human fecal matter in order to establish what the people were eating, because although people were swearing that they had nothing to eat, yet they were still alive! People who, in this manner were proved to have been consuming grain bread had to flee in order to escape persecution.

Conditions under which the plans for grain collection were being executed in 1932 can best be illustrated by the fact that the single Pavlohrad county near Dnipropetrovsk, consisting of 37 village soviets and 87

collective farms, had a team of 200 collectors sent down from the country party committee, and almost a like number from the county Komsomol committee.

Assuming conservatively that other sections of Ukraine were visited by only half the proportionate number of collectors as the Pavlohrad county, their total number all over Ukraine would reach well-nigh 100,000 men, and this does not include special emissaries from county and regional centers, whose number was steadily growing in connection with collection "difficulties" and a general deterioration of the political-economic situation . . .

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Taken from: S. O. Pidhainy, Editor-in-Chief. The Black Deeds of the Kremlin: A White Book, Volume 2, The Great Famine in Ukraine in 1932 - 33 (Detroit: DOBRUS, Globe Press, 1955) pp. 433 - 434; 34 - 37.

## THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT WAS TO BLAME

William H. Chamberlin

Of the historic responsibility of the Soviet government for the Famine of 1932 - 1933 there can be no reasonable doubt. In contrast to its policy in 1921 - 1922, it stifled any appeal for foreign aid by denying the very fact of the Famine and by refusing to foreign journalists the right to travel in the Famine regions until it was all over. Famine was quite deliberately employed as an instrument of national policy, as the last means of breaking the resistance of the peasantry to the new system where they are divorced from personal ownership of the land and obliged to work under conditions which the state may dictate to them and deliver up whatever that state may demand from them.

"The collective farmers this year have passed through a good school. For some this school was quite ruthless." In this cryptic understatement President Kalinin summed up the situation in Ukraine and the North Caucasus, from the Soviet standpoint. The unnumbered new graves in the richest Soviet agricultural regions mark the passing of those who did not survive the ordeal, who were victims of this "ruthless school."

The Soviet government could easily have averted the Famine from its own resources if it had desired to do so. A complete cessation of the export of foodstuffs in 1932 or the diversion of a small amount of foreign currency to the purchase of grain and provisions would have achieved this end. The Soviet attitude was pretty adequately summed up by Mr. Mezhev, President of the Poltava Soviet, who said to me: "To have imported grain would have been injurious to our prestige. To have let the peasants keep their grain would have encouraged them to go on producing little."

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William H. Chamberlin. Russia's Iron Age (London, 1935), p. 89. The author, a journalist, was originally pro-Soviet. He was one of the few westerners who personally toured Ukraine during the Famine.

## FAMINE AND NATIONALISM IN SOVIET UKRAINE: POSTSCRIPT

James E. Mace

... By the time the 1936 Soviet Constitution was adopted, the Soviet Union had become a state in which the administrative competence of its constituent republics had been sharply reduced and that of the Union greatly enlarged.\* The ideology of Soviet patriotism dominated by Russian culture and centralism was in no small part a legacy of the Ukrainian famine. While the suppression of national self-assertion and the introduction of centralization were principal features of overall Soviet policy in the 1930's, the Ukrainians, as the largest and most self-assertive non-Russian nation, seemed to be singled out for special treatment. Only they had to suffer the loss of several million villagers to starvations in an artificially contrived famine. Placed in this context, the famine of 1933 makes sense as one of a series of policies designed to neutralize Ukrainians as a political factor, indeed, as a social organism in the Soviet Union. These policies entailed the destruction of the spiritual and cultural elites of Ukraine and the subordination of the Ukrainian structures to central ones; the destruction of the officially sanctioned Ukrainian Communist political leadership as a distinct force in Soviet politics (almost all of these who turned on Skrypnyk\*\* perished as well in the 1937 - 38 purges); the abandonment of Ukrainization and the gradual abolition of structures designed to prevent the assimilation of Ukrainians entering Russified urban and industrial environments; and a body blow against the main constituency of Ukrainian nationalism -- the peasantry. In sum, one cannot understand the famine without understanding the turnabout in Soviet nationalities policy -- from seeking to foster to seeking to absorb national cultures. By the same token, one cannot understand how this policy was imposed without reference to the famine. The famine must therefore be understood within the context of an attempt to impose a final solution on the "Ukrainian problem" as it had hitherto existed.

Nevertheless, the Soviet state never solved its "Ukrainian problem," which still haunts Soviet leaders. Stalin himself helped to undermine his policy by annexing Ukrainian territories from Poland, Romania, and Czechoslovakia during World War II. Western Ukraine never went through such devastation as the famine and related repressions of the 1930's, and it was inevitable that the traditional cross-fertilization of ideas between Western and Eastern Ukraine would flourish when the two parts became united. In the 1960's a dissident movement arose that included Ukrainians from all Ukrainian territories and combined demands for national and human rights, while even the Soviet Ukrainian government under Petro Shelest edged a little further away from Moscow for a brief moment. Shelest was removed and the dissidents were arrested. Yet, after the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, a Helsinki Monitoring Group, similar to and connected with counterparts in other parts of the Soviet Union, was formed in Kiev. Attempts to abolish the Ukrainian national churches have succeeded only in changing the official affiliation -- not the spiritual essence -- of Ukrainian Christianity.\*\*\*

Only a few years ago there were Western scholars who argued that the USSR would assimilate the Ukrainians in a relatively brief period of time. No one makes such predictions today. It is difficult to see

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\*The process of increasing Union competence at the expense of Republic authority is traced by V. Sadovsky, *National Policy of the Soviets in Ukraine.* Works of the Ukrainian Scientific Institute, Vol. 39 (Warsaw, 1937), pp. 102 - 16.

\*\*Mykola Skrypnyk, Ukrainian Party leader in the late 1920's and early 1930's, promoted the policy of Ukrainization, which had consisted in the official sponsorship of Ukrainian culture by the Soviet state in an attempt to give the Russian-imposed UkSSR a veneer of national legitimacy.

\*\*\*The USSR banned the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in 1930 and the Uniate Catholic Church in 1946. One measure of the continued strength of the Ukrainian Catholics is the fact that the region of their tradition dominance, Western Ukraine, now contains one-fourth of all officially sanctioned Orthodox parishes in the USSR, which are kept open only to prevent a greater portion of the population from attending underground Uniate churches.

how the problem of the Soviet Union's non-Russian nations, having defied the most brutal attempts at solution, can ever be solved to the government's satisfaction.

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Taken from: James E. Mace. "Famine and Nationalism in Soviet Ukraine" in Problems of Communism, May - June 1984, pp. 49 - 50.

**EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS**

## FAMINE TESTIMONY OF VARVARA DIBERT

In 1932 and 1933 Kiev seemed like a paradise to nearby villagers who had been stripped of all they had by the Soviet government. And no wonder: some villages were dying out completely, except for those who still had the courage and strength to flee. There were cases where mothers had gone mad and killed a child to feed the rest of the family. So thousands of villagers flocked to the city of Kiev. Many of the weak ones sat or lay down by buildings or fences, most never to get up again. Trucks, driven by policemen or Communist Youth League members mobilized for that purpose, went around picking up bodies or carrying those still alive somewhere outside the city limits. It was especially terrible to see mothers whose faces had turned black from hunger with children whose little faces had wrinkled up like baked apples, children who could no longer cry, but only squeal, moving their lips in an attempt to find sustenance where there was none. People sought salvation and found death. I saw these things as I walked to work through the Haymarket on Pidvil'na Street near the Golden Gates and Volodymyr Street.

No one in Kiev had the right to allow even their closest relatives to stay the night in their residences. One had to go to the building manager with a certificate and get it stamped with a date indicating the length of stay. For more villagers, particularly the men and boys, such certificates were not easy to get. Single women and girls were more fortunate. Sometimes they were able to get jobs as servants for party people and thereby acquire union cards, even without residency certificates. Later they could even attend evening courses and get permanent jobs. This was sometimes done not only by villagers but also by women of the intelligentsia who had been denied employment because their husbands had been arrested as so-called enemies of the people or because of their own "nonproletarian" class origins. I knew of four such cases of the latter from among my own relatives, and my aunt in this way saved six women, two of whom had already begun to swell up from hunger.

Townpeople tried in every possible way to help relatives who were living in the countryside, but it was not easy. Workers and officials in Kiev received ration cards, but the rations were so small that even some of them began to swell and even die. Only those allowed to use the so-called "closed distribution points" were able to get as much food as they needed. They had enough of everything. They were members of special organizations and the party, but not even all party members were so fortunate. Civil servants got 400 grams of bread per day and another 200 grams for each dependent. Factory workers got 500 grams per day, while workers at military factories got 800. Some millet, sugar, and fat was also given out. Today some people may say that 400 grams per day does not constitute a famine, but this is because we have other things to eat besides bread and don't need as much of it. And in those days, what mother would eat her ration if she saw her starving child looking pitifully at her. In 1933 the so-called "commercial bread" appeared in Kiev. You could buy a kilo for two-and-a-half rubles. They would only let you buy one kilo a day, and the lines for this bread were so long that not every working person could wait so long. The police would take villagers from these lines, load them on trucks, and take them out of the city.

The so-called Torgsin (acronym for "trade with foreigners") appeared. For gold you could get all sorts of food and drygoods there. But how was one to get gold? Once my husband brought home a certificate and said he could buy some food with it at the Torgsin. When I stared at him in amazement, he opened his mouth, and I saw he had steel fillings instead of gold ones.

Ever since the revolution Kiev had been full of orphans from age six to fifteen. Although the government set up orphanages, the number of homeless orphans continued to grow, especially when dekulakization started and later when the famine began. Near the house where I lived was a large building. The government converted this building into a so-called "collector" for homeless children caught on the streets, and who, after sanitary inspection, were sent to orphanages. When leaving my home, I would often see how trucks would pull up there and the police would take out the filthy.



bedraggled children who had been caught on the streets. A guard stood at the entrance and no one was permitted inside. During the winter of 1932 - 33, I saw five or six times how in the early morning they took out of the building the bodies of half-naked children, covered them with filthy tarpaulins, and piled them onto trucks. Going as far as Artem Street, I would hear a loudspeaker (at that time there was one on every corner) blare out how children lived in horrible conditions in capitalist countries and what a wonderful life they led in our own Socialist Fatherland.

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Congressional testimony presented before the United States Ukraine Famine Commission in Washington D. C., October 8, 1986.

## FAMINE TESTIMONY OF TATIANA PAWLICHKA

In 1932, I was ten years old, and I remember well what happened in my native village in the Kiev region. In the spring of that year, we had virtually no seed. The communists had taken all the grain, and although they saw that we were weak and hungry, they came and searched for more grain. My mother had stashed away some corn that had already sprouted, but they found that, too, and took it. What we did manage to sow, the starving people pulled up out of the ground and ate.

In the villages and on the collective farms (our village had two collectives), a lot of land lay fallow, because people had nothing to sow, and there wasn't enough manpower to do the sowing. Most people couldn't walk, and those few who could had no strength. When, at harvest time, there weren't enough local people to harvest the grain, others were sent in to help on the collectives. These people spoke Russian, and they were given provisions.

After the harvest, the villagers tried to go out in the field to look for gleanings, and the communists would arrest them and shoot at them, and send them to Siberia. My aunt, Tatiana Rudenko, was taken away. They said she had stolen the property of the collective farm.

That summer, the vegetables couldn't even ripen -- people pulled them out of the ground -- still green -- and ate them. People ate leaves, nettles, milkweed, sedges. By autumn, no one had any chickens or cattle. Here and there, someone had a few potatoes or beets. People coming in from other villages told the very same story. They would travel all over trying to get food. They would fall by the roadside, and none of us could do anything to help. Before the ground froze, they were just left lying there dead, in the snow; or, if they died in the house, they were dragged out to the cattle-shed, and they would lie there frozen until spring. There was no one to dig graves.

All the train stations were overflowing with starving, dying people. Everyone wanted to go to Russia (the RSFSR) because it was said that there was no famine there. Very few (of those who left) returned. They all perished on the way. They weren't allowed into Russia and were turned back at the border. Those who somehow managed to get into Russia could save themselves.

In February of 1933, there were so few children left that the schools were closed. By this time, there wasn't a cat, dog, or sparrow in the village. In that month, my cousin Mykhailo Rudenko died; a month later my aunt Nastia Klymenko and her son, my cousin Ivan, died, as well as my classmate, Dokia Klymenko.

There was cannibalism in our village. On my farmstead, an 18 year-old boy, Danylo Hukhlib, died, and his mother and younger sisters and brothers cut him up and ate him. The communists came and took them away, and we never saw them again. People said they took them a little ways off and shot them right away -- the little ones and the older ones together.

At the time, I remember, I had heavy, swollen legs. My sister, Tamara, had a large, swollen stomach, and her neck was long and thin like a bird's neck. People didn't look like people -- they were more like starving ghosts.

The ground thawed, and they began to take the dead to the ravine in ox carts. The air was filled with the ubiquitous odor of decomposing bodies. The wind carried this odor far and wide. It was thus over all of Ukraine.

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Testimony presented before the United States Ukraine Famine Commission in Washington D. C., October 8, 1986.

## FAMINE TESTIMONY OF SVIATOSLAV KARAVANSKY

From my childhood years I remember that from 1929, the beginning of industrialization and collectivization, our family and all of the people of Odessa, suffered a great shortage of food. Buttermilk, milk, sugar, and even bread disappeared from the stores. In the period 1929 - 30 the whole city turned to the rationing system. The entire population lived on rations. The portions that were handed out continued to decrease, and in the winter of 1933, I, as a dependent, received 200 grams (seven ounces) of black bread per day. My mother, brother, and sister received the same ration. Bread was, and still is, the main source of nourishment for the Soviet population. For comparison, let's consider the daily ration of the Soviet soldier. The soldiers of the Red Army received at that time one kilogram (36 ounces) of bread per day. The entire city of Odessa lived on rations which were insufficient for healthy people, but which kept it from starving. The rural population was not subject to rationing, and it perished. People in the villages could not receive any help from their relatives in towns because the city population was hungry too. It should be mentioned that the closing of churches preceded the great famine. So, the organizers of the famine took into consideration the major role played by the church in dealing with national disasters like the famine. It is known that during the famine of 1921 in Ukraine, churches aided the starving people. During 1932 - 33, the churches did not function, and the clergy were sent to labor camps, which, in reality, were death camps.

Our family lived in downtown Odessa, and I attended school there. I never saw starving people downtown, but many of the latter were seen on the outskirts of the city. Odessa was a port where foreign sailors and businessmen could always be found, so the authorities took measures not to allow peasants to reach the downtown area. But everyone in Odessa knew that there was a horrible shortage of food in the villages. People swelled from hunger and died. In the school which I attended from September 1932 to May 1933, the teacher told us that the kulaks (or kurkuls) were responsible for all the temporary difficulties of the Soviet socialist economy.

My father was employed in the Odessa ship yard, and I heard from adults that a lot of foreign ships in the docks were waiting their turn to be loaded with grain from Odessa grain elevators. My parents wondered how it was possible that such great quantities of food were being exported while the village population was starving. To ask questions about this was dangerous. If a child asked about these things in school, the teachers assumed that he had been taught by his parents, who were thus placed in danger. So, my parents were very careful about telling me not to ask any questions in school, and not to reveal anywhere what was discussed in the family.

The entire population was terrorized by the arrests and trials which culminated in 1932 - 33. In those years so-called "torgsins" were opened in Odessa. In "torgsins" anyone could buy for gold and foreign currency all the food that otherwise was distributed through the rationing systems. Many people who had small golden crosses or wedding rings brought them to "torgsins." Once my mother went to a "torgsin" as well. She brought back a loaf of black bread, turning the day into a holiday for the entire family. There were rumours in Odessa that people were being arrested for selling human sausage in the market place. There was a saying that the sausage makers "had been shot." Such accounts were not published in the newspapers, which only praised the wisdom of the party and the great leader, Stalin.

In 1934, my father, as a ship yard employee, got a free ticket for an Odessa-Batumi cruise on the Black Sea. Traveling to Batumi on the liner, he observed that a large number of Ukrainian peasants had migrated to Georgia where there was no food shortage and no famine.

The famine in Ukraine was over, but those who survived fled from Ukraine. I know that in the local schools in the village of Rossosha near Proskurov (now Khmelnytsky) there was no first year class for the 1940 - 41 school year because the birth rate in 1933 had been zero. In 1953 - 54, the Soviet navy also experienced shortages of healthy servicemen because of the zero birthrate in 1933 in Ukraine. The

requirement for service in the navy were reduced because otherwise it was impossible to recruit the necessary numbers of sailors. I received this information from a navy officer who had served a ten year term in Mordovia. In 1970, my wife and I met a woman in the village of Tarussa (Kaluga region) who spoke with a strong Ukrainian accent. She told us that she was born near Kiev. In 1933, she had fled from her native village because of the famine and had found shelter in Tarussa where she later married and settled down, thereby escaping death while her entire family died of starvation.

Since the revolution the majority of the Ukrainian population evidenced hostility toward the Soviet occupation. The artificial famine deepened the hostility. It is believed that half of the entire prison population in the Gulag were Ukrainians. The memory of the famine was especially vivid for the national and human rights Ukrainian dissidents of the 1960's and 70's. The founder of the Ukrainian Helsinki monitoring group, Mykola Rudenko, wrote a poem about the famine entitled "The Cross". References to the famine are present in the works of Vasyl' Stus', Oles' Berdnyk, and others.

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Congressional testimony presented before the United States Ukraine Famine Commission in Washington D. C., October 8, 1986.

## FAMINE TESTIMONY OF POLIKARP KYBKALO

The spring of 1933 was the most horrible and tragic moment in the history of the Ukrainian people. In the fall of 1932 and the early winter of 1933 the Russian Communist government had taken away the entire grain crops and all food produce from the Ukrainian farmers in order to bring them into submission and obedient servitude in the collective farms.

In the collective farms of my native district, which numbered 672 people, 164 died that fatal spring of 1933. Actually this collective farm suffered little compared with all the surrounding places, for to induce the farmers to remain there, they were given 300 grams of bread per person baked from all kinds of chaff and some liquid concoction cooked from refuse. But there were villages and hamlets where not a single person remained alive -- for instance, in the large village of Chernychyna, in the Neforoshchanske county, which stretched for two and a half miles, though I do not recall its population, and the hamlet Rybky, of the Sukho-Mayachka village administration, where the population of 60 died.

Here is one of the many incidents of the famine. In my native village there was a stallion kept for breeding mares. He was well fed, receiving 13 pounds of oats daily, but for some unknown reason he suddenly died. This happened at the end of May, 1933. This district administration forbade the stallion to be buried until a special commission arrived and held an inquest.

The dead stallion lay in the open for three days and began to decay. A guard was appointed to shield it from the starving people who would have eaten the meat. On the fourth day the commission arrived and having completed the investigation, ordered the stallion to be buried.

No sooner was that done and the commission gone, then like an avalanche, the people descended on the dead, decaying stallion and in an instant nothing was left of him. Violent arguments ensued because some had grabbed more than their share.

A spectacle I shall never forget was when a 16-year-old boy, who, besides his stepmother was the only survivor in the family, swollen from starvation, crawled up to the place where the dead stallion had been and finding a hoof, snatched it in both hands and gnawed furiously. The boy was never seen again and nonofficial rumors circulated that he had been eaten by his stepmother.

It was forbidden for people to leave their villages. GPU guards blocked all roads and railways. Any food that the farmers happened to be carrying was taken away from them. For picking a stray head of wheat or a frozen potato or beet left in the field a person was sentenced to ten years in prison or concentration camp, according to the ruling passed by the government August 7, 1932.

Thousands of corpses littered the streets, byways and buildings. Deaths occurred at such a rate that the government could not keep up with burying the corpses.

During all this time there was not the slightest sign of any famine in the neighboring Russian territory. The Soviet press never mentioned the famine in Ukraine but on the contrary even printed misleading propaganda about "flowering Ukraine" and her great achievements in industry and collectivization.

To cover up its bloody crime the Soviet government warned all doctors not to state the true cause of death on death certificates. Instead, they stated that a prevalent digestive ailment was the cause.

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Taken from: S. O. Pidhainy, Editor-in-Chief. The Black Deeds of the Kremlin: A White Book. Volume 2, The Great Famine in Ukraine in 1932 - 1933 (Detroit: Globe Press, DOBRUS, 1955), pp. 566 - 567.

***THE FAMINE PRESS COVER-UP***

## THE FAMINE PRESS COVER-UP

"The failure of Western newspapers to do all that they could to inform their readers about conditions in Russia was never more apparent than during the Soviet famine of the early 1930's. Although the home newspapers were aware of the travel restrictions placed on their correspondents at the start of 1933, there was no outcry from them. Moreover, while there were clues enough even before the travel ban that conditions were not satisfactory in the countryside and that there might be a food shortage, only the most conservative newspapers in the West gave the early reports of famine the attention they deserved. It was almost as if the Western press itself was willing to accept a role in the famine cover-up.

The New York Times' role in this dismal press coverage of the Soviet Union seems to have been especially onerous. While the Times was (and is) widely regarded as one of the world's best newspapers, its reputation for accuracy and fairness was clearly not deserved in the case of its coverage of the Soviet Union between 1917 and 1933."

James William Crowl, Angels in Stalin's Paradise: Western Reporters in Soviet Russia, 1917 to 1937, A Case Study of Louis Fischer and Walter Duranty (Washington, D. C.: University Press of America, 1982), p. 198.

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"Americans who suppose that editors are inclined to cheer their correspondents in the fearless pursuit of truth have a naively idyllic view of modern journalism. They forget that the principal commodity of the newspaper is news, not truth, and the two do not always coincide."

Interview with Eugene Lyons, July 17, 1972. Cited in Angels in Stalin's Paradise, op. cit., pp. 197 - 198.

**MASSES IN SOVIET LOOK TO FUTURE**

Walter Duranty

Enemies and foreign critics can say what they please. Weaklings and despondents at home may groan under the burden, but the youth and strength of the Russian people is essentially at one with the Kremlin's program, believes it worthwhile and supports it, however hard be the sledding."

Taken from: "Masses in Soviet Look to Future," New York Times (December 19, 1932).

**RUSSIANS HUNGRY BUT NOT STARVING**

Walter Duranty

There is no actual starvation or deaths from starvation, but there is wide-spread mortality from diseases due to malnutrition.

Taken from: "Russians Hungry But Not Starving," New York Times (March 31, 1933).

**BIG UKRAINE CROP TAXES HARVESTERS**

Walter Duranty

This visitor has just completed a 200-mile trip through the heart of Ukraine and can say positively that the harvest is splendid and all talk of famine now is ridiculous.

Everywhere one goes and with everyone with whom one talks -- from Communists and officials to local peasants -- it is the same story: "Now we will be all right, now we are assured for the winter, now we have more grain that can easily be harvested."

This "now" is significant. It contrasts with "then" -- last winter -- which, they will tell you, "was hard." Hard it was and the correspondent saw empty houses that bear witness -- people ran away to find work and food elsewhere.

The populace from babies to old folks, looks healthy and well nourished . . .

Taken from: Walter Duranty. "Big Ukraine Crop Taxes Harvesters," New York Times (September 18, 1933).

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"Whatever Stalin's apologists may say, 1932 was a year of famine in Russia, with all the signs of peasant distress which I had seen in 1921; the mass migration of destitute peasants from the countryside to the towns and cities; epidemics of typhus and other diseases of malnutrition; great influx of beggars into Moscow and Leningrad."

Walter Duranty. Stalin and Co.: The Politburo -- The Men Who Run Russia (New York: William Sloane Associates, Inc., 1949), p. 78.



**THE ISSUE OF RESPONSIBILITY:  
THE PEASANTS WERE TO BLAME**

Louis Fischer

The peasants brought the calamity upon themselves. Yet one can understand what prompted this suicidal action. The Bolsheviks had launched the ambitious Five Year Plan. It had to be financial. It was to cost something like forty-two billion rubles. That colossal sum had to come from within the country, for foreign nations refused loans and gave limited credits at usurious rates. The workers and the peasants had to pay. The worker paid in the form of reduced consumption goods. The peasant paid in the form of huge taxes. In many cases, the government took thirty, even fifty, indeed even sixty percent of his crop. Without such high-handed measures, the city could not have been industrialized quickly and foreign obligations could not have been met. But the result was that the peasant said: What is the use of plowing, planting and harvesting when the authorities seize a large part of my crop? The peasants accordingly sabotaged -- and had nothing to eat.

It was a terrible lesson at a terrific cost. History can be cruel. The Bolsheviks were carrying out a major policy on which the strength and character of their regime depended. The peasants were reacting as normal human beings would. Let no one minimize the sadness of the phenomenon. But from the larger point of view the effect was the final entrenchment of collectivization. The peasantry will never again undertake passive resistance. And the Bolsheviks -- one hopes -- have learned that they must not compel the peasantry to attempt such resistance.

In the final analysis, the 1932 famine was a concomitant of the last battle between private capitalism and socialism in Russia. 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 its disposal. The government won.

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Taken from: Louis Fischer. Soviet Journey (New York, 1953), p. 172. The author, a journalist, sympathized with the Soviets in the 1930s.

***SOVIET DISINFORMATION TODAY***

## SOVIET STATEMENTS CONCERNING THE FORCED FAMINE

"The socialist reconstruction of the village was a complex process. Along with indubitable achievements . . . serious mistakes and distortions in applying the Party's policy of collective farm collectivization had already come to light . . . Peasants were, not infrequently, forced to enter collective farms under the threat of being "dispossessed as kulaks," deprived of electoral rights and so on . . ."

"Mistakes in collectivization greatly damaged the collective farm movement and the building of socialism in general; a rupture in the alliance between the working class and the mass of the peasantry threatened."

Taken from: History of the USSR (Moscow, 1977), Vol. 2, p. 211.

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"In 1931 - 32 there was a temporary decline in agricultural production. It is associated with the tremendous difficulties associated with collectivization. The Soviet state was forced to implement collectivization at the same time it was carrying out socialist industrialization. Because it invested most of its funds into large-scale industry and defense, it did not have adequate funds for socialist agriculture. Lack of agricultural machinery, great losses of livestock, and primitive agricultural methods prevented the attainment of the rich harvests which had been planned. In addition, the poor labor discipline in many collective farms led to the loss and illegal sale of bread . . . This forced the State to raise projected procurements (of bread) which had a negative impact on the economic condition of the collective farms."

Taken from: History of the Ukrainian SSR (Kiev, 1977), Vol. 6, p. 235. This indirect mention of the Famine is the only remark about the Famine in the entire eight volume history.

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"Recent stories in the Western news media try to create an impression that there was an artificially created famine in the Ukraine in 1932 - 33 because Ukrainian farmers, allegedly, resisted collective farming.

Indeed, the situation in Ukraine as well as in other parts of the USSR in 1932 was quite difficult. Yet it was not as critical as it is portrayed in the West. And, of course, it was not because somebody wanted to make it bad, but because of a number of reasons, drought being the major one."

"The masters of the new anti-Soviet campaign (regarding the Famine) . . . tend to concentrate on the emotional side of the story, overplaying human suffering . . . Of course, many families were badly affected, some did suffer, especially those whose husbands and sons were murdered by Kulak bandits. Some villages felt a terrible strain after their grain reserves were burned, or cattle poisoned (by the Kulaks). Nevertheless, the whole picture in the Ukraine was not of a near collapse with a smell of a nation-wide tragedy as it is portrayed by the most zealous anti-Soviet writers in the media of Canada. On the contrary, the atmosphere of vigorous work and unparalleled enthusiasm prevailed . . ."

Taken from: News Release, Press Office of the USSR Embassy in Canada, April 28, 1983.

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"The representative of the United States had repeated fabrications about an alleged famine which was supposed to have occurred in the Ukrainian SSR fifty years previously. In that connection, we wish to . . . point out that the slander has been perpetrated by the Ukrainian nationalist bourgeoisie . . . They later moved to the United States and, in order to justify their presence in that country, had circulated the lie about the famine. In any case, there was famine in the United States."

Taken from: Statement by Ivan Khmil, representative of Soviet Ukraine at the United Nations, on October 19, 1983.

## SOVIET DISINFORMATION TECHNIQUES

"In practicing what it calls disinformation, the Soviet Union had for years sponsored grand deceptions calculated to mislead, confound, or inflame foreign opinion . . . The Russians define disinformation as 'the dissemination of false and provocative information.' As practiced by the KGB, disinformation is far more complex than the definition implies. It entails the distribution of forged or fabricated documents, letters, manuscripts, and photographs; the propagation of misleading or malicious rumors and erroneous intelligence by agents; the duping of visitors to the Soviet Union; and physical acts committed for psychological effect."

John Barron, KGB: The Secret Work of Soviet Secret Agents (New York: Bantam Books, 1974), pp. 223 - 225.

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"Leaders in the Kremlin clearly view overt and covert propaganda and political influence techniques as important means to achieve their goals. This is not surprising, in view of the origins and the mode of development of the Soviet political system. In their seizure of power the Bolsheviks relied largely on a combination of propaganda and other political measures, together with armed force, to bring down the provisional government. Once Bolshevik power was consolidated, these techniques were institutionalized as adjuncts to traditional instruments of statecraft."

Richard H. Schultz and Roy Goodson, Dezinformatsia: Active Measures in Soviet Strategy (New York: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1984) p. 184.

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"Espionage is an expanding international game and, in recent years, disinformation and other active measures have also been expanded. With more than sixty years of experience and more than 20,000 operatives stationed in Moscow and almost all capitals of the world, the First Main Directorate of the KGB is today the largest and most aggressive intelligence service in the world . . . Communist countries consider disinformation, like propaganda, a powerful political instrument. Soviet block propagandistic disinformation is systematically polluting international relations with massive dosages of distorted or totally false messages to influence public opinion. The messages usually play upon existing political conflicts and cultural prejudices and try to convince the public that the United States is directly or indirectly responsible."

Ladislav Bittman, The KGB and Soviet Disinformation: An Insider's View (New York: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1985), pp. 217 - 218.

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"The scope and scale of disinformation activity by communist regimes is virtually unlimited. There are no legal or political obstacles to disinformation operations. A police state with its centralized authority, its total control over resources, its untrammelled ability to execute maneuvers and sudden shifts in policy, and its immunity from the pressures of organized public opinion, offers tremendous advantages for disinformation operations as compared with a democratic system."

Anatoliy Golitsyn, New Lies for Old: The Communist Strategy of Deception and Disinformation (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1984), p. 8.

***UKRAINE IN RECENT TIMES***

## UKRAINE IN RECENT TIMES

'It is Europe's invisible nation. With a population of nearly fifty million, a territory comparable in size to that of France, and a history of dogged resistance to foreign rule, it dimly exists on the fringes of Western consciousness . . . As Richard Pipes has observed, 'With fifty million people, 86 percent of them (as of 1970) Ukrainian speaking, the Ukraine is potentially a major European state. Its separation would not only deprive Russia of an important source of food and industrial products, but also cut it off from the Black Sea and Balkans . . .'

In its own way, the Soviet leadership also recognized the decisive role of the Ukrainians, who historically have been well represented in leading party posts. Official lip service is paid to the Ukrainian SSR as an 'autonomous republic' . . .

The U. S. government, likewise, acknowledges the political significance of the Ukrainian factor. A consulate will soon open in Kiev, providing the U. S. with an important source for information about party, state, and dissident developments in Ukraine. The Voice of America and Radio Liberty broadcast a substantial roster of programs in Ukrainian into the Ukrainian SSR. Their surveys indicated that a higher proportion of Ukrainians tune in to these broadcasts than Soviet Russians to Russian broadcasts . . .

During World War II the Ukraine -- its population caught in the vise between two totalitarian regimes -- lost nearly six million people, four million of them civilians, including nearly one million Ukrainian Jews . . . Trapped in an insular, totalitarian society without access to information about the true nature of Hitler's rule, and disbelieving the propaganda of a Soviet government which had lied to them repeatedly (and only one year earlier had trumpeted the Nazis as the USSR's allies), Ukrainian perceptions of Nazism were at best confused and uninformed. Moreover, some Ukrainian nationalists had welcomed the Nazis because they wrongly viewed the German invasion as an opportunity to establish their own independent state. Hitler's intentions were far different: nationalists who declared an independent state in 1941 were quickly rounded up and imprisoned in concentration camps. Others fled into the underground and participated in the creation of a Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) to fight both the Nazis and the Red Army. At its height UPA had some 40,000 guerillas who by 1943 controlled a liberated zone of 50,000 square kilometers and two million inhabitants. Yet the struggle of the UPA is virtually unknown in the West . . .

. . . In the postwar period, a substantial number of Ukrainian nationalists waged an armed struggle against Communist rule until 1950, in the mistaken belief that it was only a matter of time before the Western democracies would be forced into an inevitable war with Soviet totalitarianism. The longstanding resistance would not have been possible without the support of large segments of the Ukrainian population. As their reward, more than half a million Ukrainians were deported to Siberia after the war.

But Ukrainian quiescence was short-lived. The 1960's and 1970's saw the emergence of a new Ukrainian democratic dissident movement. Artists, writers, and scholars joined in testing the limits of official tolerance to independent thought. An extensive underground samvyday (self-published) literature emerged. Yet even this largely cultural expression of national identity proved too much for the Soviet authorities. A generation of Ukraine's more talented writers and artists soon found itself behind bars or in the gulag.

Resistance to Moscow also manifested itself within the Ukrainian Communist elite. Discontented Ukrainian officials publicly began calling the extensive recentralization of economic power in the early Brezhnev years 'a very grave mistake . . . (that) should have not been allowed in a socialist economy.'

It would be difficult to overstate Soviet success in keeping the Ukrainian question invisible in the West. The problem, however, is that little has been done in the West to counter the Soviet line. For starters, there is Western reporting, which is both Moscow-centered in the extreme and ever fond of

simplification. To this day, the New York Times style manual persists in regarding 'Russia' and the 'Soviet Union' as interchangeable. Sovietologists and Western pundits often fall into this trap. The effect is doubly harmful: it identifies totalitarian policies with the Russian nation and obscures the colonial nature of the Soviet empire."

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Excerpted from Adrian Karatnycky, "The Ukrainian Option," The American Spectator (August, 1986).

### TERRITORY

"The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic occupies an area of 233,089 square miles, larger than France or any European country (excluding the RSFSR) . . .

The Ukraine is rich in minerals, including iron, manganese, chromite, titanium, lead-zinc, aluminum, mercury, and nickel. It has large reserves of hard coal, brown coal, petroleum, and natural gas."

### ECONOMY

"The Ukraine has been one of the most important economic areas of prerevolutionary Russia and the USSR. In 1913 it provided over 20% of the output of large-scale industry, 78.2% of the coal, 57.7% of the steel, and over two-thirds of the iron ore . . . In 1970, with 3% of the area and 19% of the population of the USSR, the Ukraine produced one third of the total USSR coal output, 48% of the pig iron, 40% of the steel, and 57% of the iron ore . . . 19% of all Soviet grain, 59% of the sugar beets, and 28% of the vegetables."

### LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION

"Together with Russia and Belorussian, Ukrainian belongs to the eastern group of Slavic languages . .

In the school year 1971 - 1972 there were over 27,500 general education schools in the Ukraine: in 4,700, Russian was the language of instruction; in 122, Rumanian or Moldavian; in 68, Hungarian; in a few others, Polish . . . This leaves a balance of 22,200 Ukrainian language schools. Twenty years earlier, in 1950 - 1951, there were 2,836 Russian language schools and close to 28,000 Ukrainian."

### DEMOGRAPHY

"Ethnic Ukrainians made up 76.8% of the Ukraine's population in 1959 and 74.9% in 1970. Russian population increased from 16.9% to 19.4% in the same period . . . In 1970, 55% of the population of Ukraine lived in urban areas, up from 46% in 1959.

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Roman Szporluk, "The Ukraine and the Ukrainians," Handbook of Major Soviet Nationalities, Zev Katz, ed. (New York: The Free Press, 1975), pp. 21 - 48.

# Comparison of Ukraine and Other Countries

	Area (square miles)	Population
Ukraine	233,089	50,800,000
France	212,918	52,655,802
Poland	120,750	35,061,450
Italy	116,313	56,243,935
Yugoslavia	98,766	22,690,000
Germany, West	95,936	61,638,000
Greece	50,944	9,706,687
England	50,333	46,220,955
Hungary	35,919	10,709,463
Czechoslovakia	49,371	15,283,095
Austria	32,375	7,555,338
Ireland (Eire)	26,600	3,443,405
Lithuania	25,174	3,129,000
Denmark	16,629	5,119,000
Switzerland	15,941	6,365,960
Netherlands (Holland)	14,140	14,315,000
Belgium	11,781	9,848,647
Israel	7,992	4,033,000
Lebanon	3,949	2,685,000

Ukraine is the largest country in Europe by territory and is in fourth place for population after West Germany, Italy and France. The Russian Republic and Turkey are both larger in territory but they are in Europe and Asia.

It would be possible to put such countries as England, Ireland, Lithuania, Hungary, Austria, Denmark, Switzerland, Belgium, Israel, Liechtenstein, Monaco and San Marino inside the territory of Ukraine and still have 10,000 square miles left over.

The above statistics are based on the 1984 Webster's New Geographical Dictionary, except for Ukraine's population.





***FOOD AS A POLITICAL WEAPON***

## FOOD AS A POLITICAL WEAPON

"The Ethiopian Regime's cynical manipulation of Western generosity should have come as no surprise to aid donors. From the first days of his rise to power, Lt. Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam has shown himself utterly ruthless in destroying opponents and not averse to personal violence . . .

For two years the Mengistu government hid the famine from the world. But after the lavish celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Ethiopian revolution -- at a cost of \$100 million -- the government threw open the doors of the country to the Western press . . .

As Western food and medical aid flooded in, the Soviets sent arms. Grain rotted on docks and in warehouses, because the only trucks available belonged to the army, which did not consider food transport for the starving a priority. Wheat ships were made to wait several days at anchor while Soviet freighters unloaded tanks, ammunition, and cement. Ethiopian authorities even brazenly demanded that the United States pay for the rental of government-owned vehicles to distribute the \$100 million of emergency aid that it had sent to Addis . . .

If Americans were naive in their response to the Marxist government's call for help, so, too, were Doctors Without Borders. We had eagerly accepted the Ethiopians' sudden invitation to join the struggle against famine . . .

Last December we were ordered out of Ethiopia. Armed militiamen burst into our compounds, seized our equipment and menaced our volunteers. Some of our employees were beaten, and our trucks, medicines, and food stores confiscated. We left Ethiopia branded as enemies of the revolution. The regime spoke the truth. The atrocities committed in the name of Mengistu's master plan did make us enemies of the revolution . . . Today, I am certain that at least half of the deaths in Ethiopia must be attributed directly or indirectly to its own government."

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Excerpted from Dr. Rony Brauman, "Famine Aid: Were We Duped?", The Reader's Digest (October, 1986). Dr. Brauman is a 36-year-old French physician who directs Doctors Without Borders (Medicins Sans Frontieres), a nonprofit, humanitarian group that offers help and healing throughout the world.