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COMMUNIST AREA

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USSR: Nationalities

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KIEV ATTACKS UKRAINIAN "PRO-CHINESE" GROUP

Summary: Harsh attacks against a very special group of Ukrainians have recently appeared in two Soviet Ukrainian dailies. For about a year the group in question has oriented its political activities towards Peking and has most likely been in working contact with some Chinese. For the first time it has been semi-officially confirmed that Peking is broadcasting in Ukrainian to the Ukraine, something that particularly irks the Soviets.

The Western press has registered the fact that numerous articles have recently appeared in Soviet newspapers and magazines dealing with the nationalities policy of the Chinese CP, (1) the destruction of the national autonomy of all minorities in China which do not belong to the Han nationality, the "Sinofication" (kitaizatsia) of all national minorities' languages, organized colonization of the national territories, and so forth. The reason for the increased Soviet press interest in China's nationalities policy has now been tentatively identified: the Soviet leadership is disturbed about the "interference of Chinese communists in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union, in the very area which one could certainly describe as the Soviet system's Achilles heel, namely, nationalities policy.

Two Soviet Ukrainian dailies, Radjanska Ukraina and Robitnycha haseta, recently published harsh attacks on a group of Ukrainians in Canada and in the German Federal Republic who are working together with Peking. In both articles, the attempt is made to "explain" the groups' motives for cooperation with

Peking as follows: the Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists had formerly oriented themselves toward Hitler, later they became fellow travelers of American imperialism, and now they have become followers of Mao. This claim is elaborated upon with the allegation that such cooperation is only made possible by the Chinese Maoists' present embroilment in a deep crisis and the result that the entire People's Republic is approaching total collapse. In short, the bankrupt have found common ground with the bankrupt.

M. Panchuk, a student graduating in history, describes the situation as follows:

The legitimate organs of power in China were dissolved by force, social life was militarized, the country was turned into a giant military base. Mao's group has no positive program for economic construction. The Maoists' economic policies show that they are unable to satisfy the most elementary needs of the people; the contemporary Chinese state has pushed these problems aside. (2)

Another graduating history student, Yuri Rymarenko, also deals with the domestic developments in the People's Republic of China and claims that the cultural revolution destroyed all inter-nationalist elements and accelerated nationalist deviationism. It is precisely this, he says, which improves the possibilities for cooperation between Chinese nationalists and all sorts of nationalist groups abroad:

The nationalist "elite," which is in step with international reaction, welcomed the consequences of the cultural revolution in China. It saw in them a "victory of nationalism over communism," a struggle against internationalism and toward a certain "national face for China." It adopted various arguments from the Chinese propaganda arsenal. The nationalist leaders openly state that "a chance for cooperation is emerging here," that is, between Maoist leaders and Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists, on the basis of an aggressively anti-Soviet platform aimed against the international unity of the workers in the struggle against imperialism. (3)

Chronicle of Cooperation

In both articles the authors attempt to create the impression that the Soviet side is well-informed about the course of cooperation between "bourgeois nationalists" and Peking. In the first phrase, Peking was interested in an exchange of literature. The Ukrainian nationalists, on their

own initiative, sent publications to various institutions in the People's Republic of China, in order to contribute, Rymarenko claims, to Peking's anti-Soviet propaganda. Later, and particularly during 1970, the Chinese representatives bought a quantity of publications from Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists. Rymarenko says:

Chinese propaganda is based on such sources in its lowly efforts to accuse the Soviet Union of pursuing not only "external" but also domestic colonization! On the basis of provocative publications, for example, the Chinese newspaper Heingua makes claims about... the "enslaved peoples of the Soviet Union," and calls for propagation of nationalism among the Soviet peoples. (4)

Rymarenko then reports that in 1970 Mao's representatives conducted talks with the Ukrainian National Council. Their intent was to undertake various joint actions against the Soviet Union. In addition, Rymarenko notes that in June 1970 a so-called "Ukrainian Society for the Study of Asian Problems" was founded in Munich and that a branch was established in Canada. The dialogue between the Ukraine and Peking made possible the publication of an information bulletin in which Chinese articles were reprinted. Rymarenko further writes:

In October of last year, a top-level member of this society visited Peking with the special mission of establishing direct contacts with those circles in the People's Republic of China which specialize in subversive activities against the Soviet Union. At the same time, Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists in New York founded a special group for contacts with representatives of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations. (5)

Chinese Radio Programs in Ukrainian

It has recently been semi-officially confirmed that Peking broadcasts radio programs in the Ukrainian language. As these programs can hardly be heard in Europe, it is to be assumed that they are propaganda broadcasts for the Ukrainians in the border areas. Rymarenko complains that these programs from Peking spread claims about the "enslavement of the peoples" in the Soviet Union. He cites several publications by Ukrainian nationalists in which it is claimed that only the People's Republic of China is in a position to realize the ideals of the October Revolution, including equal rights for all peoples. Panchuk is outraged because, in his opinion, it is precisely the Maoists who have committed treason against the ideals of socialism and have become fellow travelers of international reaction. "The very character of Maoist 'communism' became a tasty bit of bait for the traitors of the Ukrainian people as well." (6)

In both articles the authors seek to pass off the affair as unimportant and to represent the "Ukrainian-Chinese dialogue" in a derogatory manner, presenting it as proof of the collapse of the Chinese communists under Mao Tse-tung into the mires of reaction.

Nevertheless, there appear to be traces of nervousness and anger behind this facade and the tactic of Soviet propaganda is not terribly convincing. The Soviet Union is trying, instead of discussing the accusations, to convince its citizens by means of one-sided propaganda that chauvinism and suppression of national minorities are the main characteristics of only Chinese nationalities policy. The Soviet newspapers have in fact made reference to Chinese preparations for a debate in the United Nations on the state of the nationalities in the Soviet Union.