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AN ANNIVERSARY WITH HYPOCRISY

50 YEARS OF THE WEST UKRAINIAN CP

Summary: In February of this year the 50th anniversary of the West Ukrainian CP was celebrated. In many newspapers and journals, articles appeared on this occasion. If one compares these documents with those which appeared on the same subject at the beginning of the 1960's, the following point becomes obvious: in line with the present neo-Stalinist custom, nothing is being said about which prisons and which battle fields contributed to the diminishing of the leadership ranks of the West Ukrainian CP. The historical truth tells us that hundreds of leading politicians of the West Ukrainian CP were murdered in three waves in the Soviet Union. In 1963 these victims of Stalinist terror were rehabilitated, and an official resolution to this effect appeared in the theoretical organ of the CPSU, Kommunist. This document is no longer cited, and the Party bureaucracy wants to prevent the youth from discovering anything about the tragic end of the heroes of the class conflict who are now being remembered in the anniversary celebration.

In the theoretical organ of the Ukrainian CP, Komunist Ukrainy, an article appeared on the 50 year anniversary of the existence of the West Ukrainian CP (KPZU). It has the character of a directive on the manner in which the anniversary is to be celebrated. The article is signed by two authors, yet the lines themselves reveal just how little discussion and consultation went into the working out of what is said and not said on this occasion. "Say nothing about the victims of Stalinist terror" is the theme which is valid for the manner in which Party history has recently been written.

Especially in the case of the KPZU, the neo-Stalinist theoreticians are confronted with a special problem: the history of the international communist movement contains only three cases where, in the 1930's, parties which were located outside the borders of the USSR were decapitated -- in the true sense of the word -- by Stalinist terror: the Polish CP, the Western Belorussian CP, and the West Ukrainian CP. The latter two Party organizations had an autonomous status within the Polish CP, which caused their fates to run parallel.

Historical Background

Following a resolution of the presidium of the Comintern, the Polish CP was dissolved in 1937. Stalin claimed that this party was saturated with agents and provocateurs and in their control. Documentation appearing in the West informs one of the events of the time. During the session of the Comintern presidium, at which the resolution was passed, the Soviet-Ukrainian politician and diplomat D. Manuilskiy delivered a speech in which he explained the following:

Comrades, I am forced to uncover an affair which is so dark, dirty and unbelievable that you have probably never heard anything similar. In 1920, as our glorious Red Army neared the gates of Warsaw, a 700-man strong Polish regiment appeared. We received these people with full joy, as many of them were friends of the Soviets and even Bolsheviks. Many Polish soldiers had entered the Red Army as officers and political commissars, a number of them received important posts in the Soviet state administration. It is clear that, because of the special conditions under which the regiment appeared, we had faith in those Poles. We never reviewed the background of these 700 men. Therefore, just as our enemies planned, we were caught in the trap. (1)

On this basis, the Polish Communists in the Soviet Union were totally destroyed in a second wave of terror -- the first had already wracked ruin in 1934.

The other two parties mentioned were automatically dissolved along with the Polish CP. After Stalin's death, the Communist Party of Poland was at first rehabilitated, while the rehabilitation of the other two created a number of difficulties. Both had been active in Poland, yet they had worked closely with the national movements in the Belorussian CP and the Ukrainian CP. The Western Belorussian Communists supported the "Natsdemovshchina"

(1) Arvo Tuominen, Le campane die Cremlino, Stockholm, 1958.
p 203 - 207.

-- a movement which was closely connected to the national renaissance of the Belorussian people after the October Revolution. The Western Ukrainian Communists, on the other hand, supported the group around M. Shumskiy, which held positions approaching national communism. The Soviet Party bureaucracy found itself in the touchy position of rehabilitating the Communist Parties of Western Belorussia and the Western Ukraine without rehabilitating at the same time the Belorussian "Natsdemovshchina" and the Ukrainian "Shumskismus." Both opposition groups are still considered in the Soviet Union today as deviations from Marxism-Leninism.

Following dramatic disagreements among various powers within the Ukrainian CP and the support of a large group of former members and functionaries of the KPZU who had fled to Poland and been active there, the leadership of the CPSU decided to rehabilitate the Party completely. In 1963, a declaration on this issue appeared in the theoretical organ of the CPSU, Kommunist. (2) It contained a long list of the victims of Stalinist terror from the end of the 1920's to the middle of the 1930's. The manipulation that Khrushchev undertook in the preparation of these documents is obvious: not Stalin, but rather Kaganovich, is supposed to have started the provocation in the first place.

In the meantime, many documents have appeared in newspapers, journals and books which clearly show the scope of the destruction of the cadres of the KPZU. But all that belongs to the past now. Today, the history of the CPZU is being written differently.

"A Party True to Lenin and the Battle"

The above sub-head in Komunist Ukrainy is the motto of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the KPZU. (3) According to the article, it became more and more a mass party under the leadership of the CPSU (B), or of the CP (B) of the Ukraine; it was ideologically and organizationally strengthened and gained authority within the proletarian masses in the cities and the country. The Second Congress of the Party in 1925 is seen as a decisive event in the life of the Party, where its Bolshevization succeeded and the ideas of Marxism-Leninism became its basis. At that time, Kaganovich "reigned," and that which was earlier referred to as his "intrigues" is now called "Bolshevism."

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- (2) "Za pravil'noe osveshchenie istorii Kommunisticheskoi Partii Zapadnoi Ukrainii" in Kommunist, No. 10/1963.
- (3) V. Zamlynsky, A. Jaroshenko, "Z istorii Komunistichnoy partii Zachidnoy Ukrainy" in Komunist Ukrainy, No. 2/1969.

From this time on date the internal battles which finally in 1928 led to the resolution of the Comintern to ban the splinter group under Vasykyv and Turianskiy from the party. Both were later lured to the Soviet Union and shot there. In the above-mentioned declaration of 1963, they were, together with the other victims of Stalinist terror, rehabilitated. In Komunist Ukrainy, however, they no longer appear on the list of the leaders of the KPZU who are today being celebrated.

Experience shows that such a policy of silence rarely brings success. And in this case, the policy of the CPSU is especially short-sighted. Thousands of Ukrainian citizens were witness to the destruction and the secret tactics of the leadership could lead to a loss of confidence in it.

The whole affair becomes even more embarrassing because many Polish Communists were members of this party, and are well informed about the fate of their leaders. Gomulka is among those who know what happened in the 1930's. In addition, the largest archives on the Communist Party of the Western Ukraine are located in the Institute for Party History of the CC of the Polish United Workers' Party.

"A Party True to Lenin and the Battle"

The above sub-head in Komunist Ukrainy is the motto of the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the KPZU. (3) According to the article, it became more and more a mass party under the leadership of the CPSU (U), "for of the CP (B) of the Ukraine; it was ideologically and organizationally strengthened and gained authority within the proletarian masses in the cities and the country. The Second Congress of the Party in 1929 is seen as a decisive event in the life of the Party, where its Bolshevization succeeded and the ideas of Marxism-Leninism became its basis. At that time, Karavovych "reigned", and that which was earlier referred to as his "intrigue" is now called "Bolshevism."

- (1) "As pravil'no osvicheniya istorii Komunisticheskoi Partii Zakhidno Ukrainy" in Komunist, No. 10/1963.
- (2) V. Zamiatynsky, A. Jarmoshenko, "3 istorii Komunisticheskoi partii Zakhidno Ukrainy" in Komunist Ukrainy, No. 2/1963.