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Introduction

The Documents section is divided into subsections containing Soviet, British, German, Italian, Polish, Ukrainian Galician, European, American, and Ukrainian diaspora documents.

The first subsection begins with Soviet government and Communist Party documents. Their generally matter-of-fact bureaucratic tone stands in shocking contrast to the accounts of extreme human suffering elsewhere in the *Reader*. Yet these documents are a more terrible indictment of the Stalin regime's policy than any overt denunciation. In the words of the perpetrators themselves, they show to what lengths the regime was prepared to go in order to "knock sense" into the Ukrainian peasantry, as Stanislav Kosior expressed it. The Soviet leaders focus relentlessly on compelling Ukrainian officials, functionaries, and peasants to meet the grain-procurement quotas assigned to them and take "measures to strengthen grain procurement," no matter what the human cost, and on eliminating resistance to that goal by whatever means necessary.

The first document is a letter of August 1931 from Stalin to his lieutenant Lazar Kaganovich. It shows Stalin to have been well aware that excessive grain requisitions could lead to famine. The GPU document of 28 December 1931 shows that grain-procurement quotas were widely recognized as excessive and unrealistic, likely to result in the depletion of seed stock and famine. Nevertheless, the CP(B)U resolution of 29 December 1931 (in effect, a dictate from Stalin's envoy Viacheslav Molotov) enjoins the Ukrainian communist leadership to extort ever more grain from an already famished peasantry.

A letter from a young Russian worker to the newspaper *Izvestiia* (sent before 31 March 1932) tells of hungry Ukrainian peasants flooding into Russia's neighboring Central Black Earth province in search of food in early 1932. This is followed by a memorandum from the USSR deputy commissar of agriculture dated 3 May 1932. On the basis of a fact-finding visit to one Ukrainian raion, he describes the catastrophic conditions, including starvation, the mass exodus of the most capable farmers, and the loss of more than half the draft animals.

The two letters from the Ukrainian communist leaders Hryhorii Petrovsky and Vlas Chubar, sent to Stalin in June 1932, are particularly important. Both write of the existence of famine, asking for assistance and a reduction of the grain-procurement quota for Ukraine. It is here that Stalin's animus against Ukraine and the Ukrainian leadership starts to become apparent. In a letter to Kaganovich written soon afterward, he expresses displeasure with these entreaties, stating his intention to take a hard line against Ukraine's leadership. The resolution of 7 August 1932 goes further, authorizing draconian measures, even summary execution of anyone caught gleaning, of "stealing" even a minuscule amount of grain.

This exchange of letters took place on the eve of an important conference of the Communist Party of Ukraine on 6–7 July 1932 to which Stalin sent his emissaries Molotov and Kaganovich (see their correspondence of 2 and 6 July 1932 with Stalin). Mykola Skrypnyk's speech at that conference shows that this prominent Ukrainian communist leader bent dutifully to the will of the Party's central authorities, even as he mentioned a case of famine that he had witnessed. The OGPU report of late July 1932 reveals the extent of the agricultural catastrophe, including cases of starvation, cannibalism, and suicide. The report notes the strength of resistance in Ukraine and the formation of anti-Soviet insurgent groups, including those of a national character.

Stalin's letter to Kaganovich of 11 August 1932 deserves special attention. The Soviet leader vents his dissatisfaction with Ukraine's leaders and suggests that they be replaced by his trusted lieutenants. Importantly, he twice expresses fear of losing Ukraine and associates that possibility, as well as resistance to grain-procurement quotas, with Ukrainian nationalism and Polish efforts to promote the secession of the Ukrainian SSR. Stalin exhorts Kaganovich to turn Ukraine into "a fortress of the USSR, a real model republic, within the shortest possible time." This was a green light for repressive measures against the peasants and the Ukrainian leaders alike. Ukrainians clearly understood that Stalin's policies were anti-Ukrainian, as evidenced by a secret-police report of 10 September 1932 on the attempt of two young scholars at the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences to inform Ukraine's foremost historian, Mykhailo Hrushevsky, of the famine. They believed that the famine was directed against Ukraine and its people—"to break the Ukrainian nation once and for all as the only national force capable of serious resistance."

As the crisis deepened in the autumn of 1932 and it became clear to the Soviet leadership that Ukraine would fall far short of its grain-procurement quota, Stalin appointed Molotov and Kaganovich to head special commissions (see the document of 22 October) to extort even more grain from Ukraine and the Ukrainian-populated North Caucasus. One result of Molotov's involvement was the CP(B)U resolution of 18 November reaffirming procurement policies and the instituted bans, fines, and punishments for noncompliance on collective and individual farms. The CC AUCP(B) resolution of 14 December 1932 sanctioned purges of Party organizations in Ukraine and the Kuban and ordered a complete rollback of policies promoting the use of the Ukrainian language, known as Ukrainization, in the Kuban region, and a partial rollback in Ukraine. This resolution also authorized the deportation of the entire Kuban Cossack settlement of Poltava and its repopulation with reliable elements from the Red Army. On 15 December Ukrainization was halted in other parts of the USSR outside Ukraine. Other documents of late November and December 1932 show that the Soviet leadership was becoming increasingly concerned with political and nationalist (in Soviet parlance, "Petliurite") resistance in conjunction with the deepening crisis and the deteriorating food situation. It responded by closing loopholes, making threats, increasing repression, and continuing to take food from an already famished and plundered countryside.

In early 1933 the Soviet leadership continued its punitive measures. The Kremlin Politburo resolution of 1 January, based on a telegram from Stalin to the Ukrainian leadership dated the same day, threatened Ukraine's farmers "who stubbornly insist on misappropriating and concealing grain" with application of the draconian resolution of 7 August 1932. In his speech of 11 January to the Central Committee of the AUCP(B), Stalin blamed peasant resistance to grain collection on collective-farm leaders who had come under the sway of anti-Soviet elements, including Ukrainian nationalists (Petliurites), and authorized further repressive measures against them.

Two other brutal measures followed in January. First, an order of 22 January authorized barring peasants from Ukraine and the North Caucasus from searching for food in areas where it was available, such as central Russia and Belarus. Second, a resolution of the Central Committee of the AUCP(B) dated 24 January made Stalin's trusted lieutenant and opponent of Ukrainization Pavel Postyshev second secretary of the CP(B)U (effectively, Stalin's plenipotentiary in Ukraine). The resolution signaled the start of purges of Ukrainian communists, whom *Pravda* accused in an editorial of 10 March of engaging in "distortions of Leninist nationality policy in

Ukraine” and of “underestimating the unbreakable link between the national and peasant questions.”

A GPU report of 12 March 1933 shows that the secret police was fully aware of the extent of death from starvation. The memorandum of the CC CP(B)U to the CC AUCP(B), dated 15 March and signed by the Ukrainian Party’s first secretary, Stanislav Kosior, is particularly cynical. Kosior admits to widespread famine but attributes it to “poor management and an unacceptable attitude toward the public good (losses, stealing, and waste of grain).” The peasants, he claims, are no longer blaming the famine on grain requisitions by the authorities but on “themselves for poor work, for not safeguarding grain, for allowing it to be pilfered.” Even so, Kosior concludes, “starvation has not yet knocked sense into the heads of a great many collective farmers.”

Another speech by Kosior, delivered in November 1933 at a CP(B)U plenum, blames the problems in the agricultural sector on Ukrainian communists who neglect the dangers of Ukrainian nationalism. He links kulaks with Ukrainian nationalists, treating them as almost identical enemies of Soviet rule. Skrypnyk, who had committed suicide earlier that year in protest against the Kremlin’s policies, is condemned. The resolution adopted at the plenum links the social and class struggle with the struggle against Ukrainian nationalism, now identified as “the principal danger” in Ukraine. The resolution marked a subtle but important shift toward establishing the Soviet state on a Russian national foundation: in the 1920s, Russian chauvinism had been designated the greatest danger to the Party and Soviet society.

The subsection of Soviet documents ends with excerpts from three speeches—by Postyshev, Kosior, and Stalin—delivered at the Seventeenth Congress of the AUCP(B), dubbed “the Congress of Victors,” in January 1934. Postyshev emphasizes the link between class-based anti-Soviet activities and Ukrainian nationalism, reminding delegates that “the Ukrainian kulak underwent a lengthy schooling in struggle against Soviet power, for in Ukraine the civil war was especially fierce and lengthy, given that political banditry was in control of Ukraine for an especially long period.” This passage indicates the Soviet leadership’s recognition that the Ukrainian peasantry’s fierce resistance to Soviet power in the years 1919–24, often under the national banner, might be reviving. Kosior dwells on Ukrainian nationalism not only in society but in the CP(B)U itself, which, he claims, “played an exceptional role in creating and intensifying the lag in agriculture.” Referring to Stalin’s view of the interconnectedness of the class and nationality questions in Ukraine, Kosior notes that “the national flag plays an exceedingly important role for the class enemy. Moreover, the predominant coloring of the class enemy, with which he masks himself, is above all the national flag, nationalist clothing.” Finally, Stalin reaffirms the designation of nationalism as “the chief danger” in Ukraine and denounces it as a danger to the Soviet state.

The next subsection contains five documents from the British Foreign Office. The first is a report by the agricultural expert Andrew Cairns on his trip to Ukraine and the North Caucasus in the late spring and early summer of 1932. This is followed by a brief report on conditions in the Kuban and in Ukraine. The next item is a report from the German agricultural expert Otto Schiller on his trip to the North Caucasus in the spring of 1933. Schiller describes famine conditions, expulsions, deportation of the Kuban Cossacks, and Young Communist confiscations of hidden stores of grain. The fourth document contains a report by William Strang, a counsellor at the British embassy in Moscow, on famine conditions in Ukraine in the summer of 1933 and mass deaths from starvation. In the fifth item, Strang forwards the *New York Times*

correspondent Walter Duranty's description of his trip to Ukraine and the North Caucasus in the late summer of 1933. In contrast to his published articles, in which he downplayed the famine, Duranty here estimates population loss in Ukraine at four to five million and comments that "Ukraine had been bled white." He estimates total losses in the Soviet Union at ten million.

The two documents from the German Foreign Office are of particular interest for their analysis of the nationality question in relation to the famine. The first specifically discusses "The Ukrainian Question," noting the commonly held view in Ukraine that the government had brought the famine about "to force the Ukrainians to their knees." The report concludes that Ukraine is now guided by "Great Russian communist chauvinism." The second document is a report on a trip through Ukraine in 1936. The author begins with the startling assertion that "Ukrainian Ukraine has been destroyed." He estimates human losses at six million. Of particular interest are his descriptions of Russification and of the chauvinist attitudes of Russians and Russian speakers he met in Kyiv. He concludes that "the Ukrainian people's moral spine was broken in the terrible years of 1932 and 1933."

Italian Foreign Office documents follow the German reports. The first report of April 1933 describes the limitations on peasant mobility and the consequences for blacklisted villages in the North Caucasus. The second report, "The Famine and the Ukrainian Question," was written by the Italian consul in Kharkiv in May 1933. He argues that the famine was "contrived" in order to "teach the peasants a lesson" and concludes: "The current disaster will bring about a preponderantly Russian colonization of Ukraine. It will transform its ethnographic character. In a future time, perhaps very soon, one will no longer be able to speak of a Ukraine, or a Ukrainian people, and thus not even of a Ukrainian problem, because Ukraine will become a *de facto* Russian region." His report of 19 July 1933 relays an apocryphal but deeply symbolic account of Skrypnyk on his deathbed telling Postyshev that the greatest danger to communism is Russian imperialism. The last Italian document is a letter from the consul in Odesa, who writes: "The persecutions conducted against the Ukrainian intellectuals...the suicide of Skrypnyk...the withholding of the grain reserves from the peasants...[have] turned Ukraine...into the site of an unprecedented famine, which according to reliable evidence has sent 7,000,000 people to their deaths; all of these things betoken the Moscow Government's intention to use every means at their disposal to crush every last vestige of Ukrainian nationalism."

The next subsection of documents comes from Polish Foreign Ministry and Intelligence Service offices. In a document of 8 May 1933 the consul in Kharkiv reports on economic policy and the resultant famine as seen through the prism of the nationality question. He notes that ruthless grain collections "stripp[ed] bare the Ukrainian countryside" and calls the famine a result of the Kremlin's "predatory management," concluding that "the economic policy of the central government with regard to Ukraine has been much more ruthless and predatory than toward the neighboring provinces of the RSFSR, with the sole exception of the North Caucasus." The same consul, reporting on a car trip from Kharkiv to Moscow on 5 May, describes the stark difference in conditions in the Ukrainian and Russian countryside as akin to crossing "from the land of the Soviets into Western Europe."

The report of the Polish journalist Berson on his conversation with Karl Radek, Stalin's adviser and envoy on Polish affairs, shows that Soviet propaganda is prepared to equate or link any expression of concern over the famine with sympathy for or collaboration with Nazi Germany and its foreign-policy objectives. A document of 6 November 1933 contains an excerpt from a report by the Polish ambassador in Turkey on a conversation with Stalin's confidant

Kliment Voroshilov. While official Soviet rhetoric trumpeted the equality of nations in the USSR, Voroshilov's remarks clearly indicate that the Soviet leadership was anti-Ukrainian. Commenting in the wake of an attack by a Ukrainian nationalist on the Soviet consulate in Lviv in Polish-ruled western Ukraine, he told the Polish ambassador that Poland was lenient with Ukrainians, whereas "in Soviet Russia they are kept on a tight leash."

An article of 10 October 1933 in a bulletin intended for diplomats, *Poland and the Outside World*, notes that the Communist Party has taken control of Ukraine by breaking the resistance of the peasantry and destroying "the decentralizing nationalist tendencies of the Ukrainian intelligentsia." Reporting on 6 January 1934, the Polish consul in Kharkiv analyzes the reversal of Bolshevik nationality policy in Ukraine, stressing that this suits the Soviet leadership's long-term goal of making the USSR a great power: "[T]hey are becoming more and more great-power politicians, strengthening their regime and the borders of their state, sacrificing to that end the ideals hitherto upheld by the Communist International." Finally, a letter from a Polish student notes that the famine has produced antipathy toward the Soviet state and promoted Ukrainian nationalist and separatist tendencies.

The next subsection of documents focuses on reaction to the famine by Ukrainian organizations and non-governmental bodies outside the Soviet Union, including the Polish-ruled province of Galicia. An appeal by leaders of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, headed by Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky, characterizes the Soviet state-run economy as a "cannibalistic system of state capitalism." The signatories accuse the Soviet leadership of abandoning religion, suppressing liberty, turning free farmer-citizens into slaves and starving them. Another declaration is signed by the most influential western Ukrainian political and civic leaders, who claim that the Soviet authorities intend to exterminate Ukrainians and Ukrainian national life. An appeal by Cardinal Innitzer of Vienna calls on non-governmental and religious organizations to create an inter-faith committee to organize famine relief. This is followed by a letter from Margery Ashby, a feminist leader, on behalf of the international coordinating body of the worldwide feminist movement—the Liaison Committee of Women's International Organizations—to Johan Mowinckel, president of the League of Nations. The letter urges Mowinckel, who was also Norway's prime minister, to raise the famine as an issue at a meeting of the League's Council in order to press for "League action in any form which you may think wise."

In their letter to Prime Minister R. B. Bennett of Canada, the leaders of the Ukrainian National Council, an umbrella group uniting Ukrainian organizations in that country, accuse the Kremlin authorities of systematically starving the population of Soviet Ukraine. In their memorandum to President Franklin Roosevelt opposing the recognition of the USSR by the United States, the president of the United Ukrainian Organizations of the United States and several other Ukrainian civic leaders conclude: "We are firmly convinced that the famine in Ukraine is not the result of poor crops or drought, but on the contrary, is a result of the political and cultural conflict between Ukrainian nationalistic aspirations and Moscow's imperialistic and centralizing designs.... The famine is the culmination of that unremitting and ferocious persecution of the Ukrainian people by [the] Moscow dictatorship." There follows a draft resolution of the U.S. House of Representatives sponsored by Congressman Hamilton Fish. The document accuses the Soviet central government of being aware of the famine and of having complete control of food supplies but failing to take relief measures. Instead, the regime used

famine “as a means of reducing the Ukrainian population and destroying the Ukrainian political, cultural, and national rights.”

The final subsection contains official Soviet denials of the famine. In his letter of 3 February 1934 to U.S. Congressman Herman Koplemann, the Soviet counsellor B. Skvirsky writes that the death rate in Soviet Ukraine was the lowest of the seven constituent republics comprising the Soviet Union. Skvirsky makes reference to articles by Duranty. The last official, and quite lengthy, denial was issued by the Soviet embassy in Ottawa on 28 April 1983. It is reproduced here in its entirety.

Soviet Government, Communist Party, and Secret Police Documents

Letter from Stalin to Kaganovich on grain-procurement policy and famine in Georgia. In *The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence 1931–36* (2003). Excerpts, pp. 53–54.

[Later than 11 August 1931]

Greetings, Comrade Kaganovich....

6) It is now clear to me that Kartvelishvili and the secretariat of the Georgian CC, with their reckless “grain-procurements policy,” have brought a number of districts in western Georgia to the point of famine. They do not understand that the Ukrainian methods of grain procurement, which are necessary and expedient in grain-surplus districts, are unsuitable and damaging in grain-deficit districts, which have no industrial proletariat whatsoever to boot....

From a summary report by the UkrSSR GPU “On the Course of Grain Procurement in Ukraine.” In *Tragediia sovetskoi derevni* (2001). Excerpts, pp. 218–19, 221–23. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

28 December 1931

Top Secret

Since September, the course of grain procurement in Ukraine has been characterized by systematic nonfulfillment of the plan.

If in July and August the monthly quotas were fulfilled with some surpluses, in the following months there was a sharp decline....

In September, 62.6 percent of the monthly quota was met.

In October, 53.9 percent of the monthly quota was met.

In November, 43.5 percent of the monthly quota was met,

As of 1 December, 74.1 percent of this year’s plan was fulfilled....

This year’s grain-procurement campaign is taking place in the context of widely held opinions that the plans are unrealistic and cannot be fulfilled....

In many villages, despite their not fulfilling the plan, not only the village councils but also a number of representatives of raion organizations, succumbing to prevailing references to the absence of grain, have completely stopped working on grain procurement....

In Berdiansk raion (formerly the Mariupol district), where 76.9 percent of the grain-procurement plan had been fulfilled by 20 December...the [p]lenipotentiary...of the

R[ai]on] E[xecutive] C[ommittee], Shcherbyna, announced in conversations with workers that “We will not fulfill the grain-procurement [quota], as the plan is unrealistic. We already see that there is not enough grain for the peasants.”....

Reports coming in during the most recent period from individual counties tell us that in the course of fulfilling the grain-procurement [plan], some collective farms have delivered part of their seed grain.

In Novo-Ukraina raion (Steppe Region), the Pishchanobrody village council forced four collective farms to give up almost all their seed stocks in order to fulfill the plan....

As a result of such unsatisfactory planning, some collective farms delivered, along with their marketable grain, the portion that should have remained for distribution [as payment in kind] for workdays. The surrender of a substantial portion of the above-mentioned seed stocks has already produced some threat of a lack of grain for personal consumption on those collective farms....

In the village of Voronivka in Novo-Ukraina raion, a group of collective farmers presented themselves to the collective-farm administration and declared: “We will not go to work until you give us bread. Stop fooling us: we will not go to work hungry.”....

In the village of Moskalivka in Vovchansk raion, a group of up to sixty collective farmers, mostly women, presented themselves in orderly fashion to the village council and demanded that bread be distributed. There were shouts: “Give us bread, we’re hungry.”

Vice Chairman, GPU, UkrSSR, [Karl] Karlson

Resolution of the Politburo of the CC CP(B)U “On Measures to Intensify Grain Procurement.” In *Tragediia sovetskoi derevni* (2001). Excerpts, pp. 227–28. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

29 December 1931

The Politburo of the CC CP(B)U, having heard and considered the report of the representative of the CC AUCP(B), Comrade [Viacheslav] Molotov, acknowledges that the complete fulfillment of the grain-procurement plan established for Ukraine (510 million poods) is absolutely necessary and dictated to the USSR by the overall political and, particularly, the international situation.

Further to this, the Politburo of the CC CP(B)U affirms that, notwithstanding the complete feasibility of fulfilling the grain-procurement plan established for Ukraine, progress toward its fulfillment is so unsatisfactory that it threatens the collapse of a significant portion of the Bolshevik organizations of the UkrSSR in one of the decisive sectors of socialist construction....

1. The CC [CP(B)U] demands that Party, Soviet, and Komsomol organizations immediately mobilize all forces and organizations of collective farmers, especially the vanguard [elements], to fulfill as soon as possible the current year’s grain-procurement plan, for which the CC declares January to be a month of intensive struggle to complete the grain procurements.

Telegram from the secretary of the Zinovivsk [Kirovohrad] City Committee, AUCP(B) [sic], Mikheenko, to V. M. Molotov on the course of grain procurement. In *Tragediia sovetskoi derevni* (2001). Excerpts, pp. 239–41. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

1 January 1932

For delivery in a sealed packet

Kharkiv, CC CP(B)U to Comrade Molotov

Copy: Comrade Stroganov

Resolution of the bureau of the Zinovivsk committee of the CC CP(B)U of 31 December on the course of grain procurement, based on the resolution of the CC CP(B)U of 29 December 1931 and directives of Comrade Molotov...:

5. To oblige all authorized officials of the city Party committee, in the course of three days, to ensure the removal for grain procurement of all basic seed stocks held for spring sowing from those collective farms that have not fulfilled the grain-procurement plan...the removal of the seed stocks to be used as a means of educating every collective farmer and elevating his sense of responsibility for the welfare of the collective farm and the fulfillment by the collective farm of its obligations toward the proletarian state;
6. During the removal of seed stocks, to oblige all authorized officials of the city Party committee and secretaries of collective-farm Party cells to intensify their political work among the masses even more in order to mobilize [the return of] squandered and stolen grain, taking into account that this is required both to fulfill the annual grain-procurement plan and to secure seed-stock material for spring sowing....

Secretary of the City Party Committee, Mikheenko

Political summary of unpublished letters from the “Reading Office” of the newspaper *Izvestiia TsIK SSSR i VTsIK* (News of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR and of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee) for February–March 1932. In *Tragediia sovetskoi derevni* (2001). Excerpt, p. 312. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

[Not before 31 March 1932]

Not for publication....

Novyi Oskol raion, Central Black Earth Region, village of Lobovka, Nikolaev village council, Ivan Litvinov:

Every day whole caravans of hungry Ukrainian peasants—collective and individual farmers—ride the length and breadth of our raion. For any piece of bread they give up all their belongings, such as shoes, clothing, and anything else they might have with them. When asked why they are hungry, they reply: “Our harvest was good, but Soviet power ‘procured’ our grain, carrying through to us its plans and tasks to the point where we were left without a pound of grain.” When they are asked who is responsible for this, they reply: “Soviet power, which took

away our grain to the last kernel, condemning us to hunger and poverty—worse than under serfdom.”

I am a worker, a member of the Komsomol since 1928, and I am astonished: can it be that Ukraine would hunger during a good harvest? We also have collective farms, and there is enough bread, so why is there such a situation precisely in the Central Black Earth Region? I am bringing this phenomenon to the attention of *Izvestiia* because the “hungry caravans,” wherever they go, bring panic and spread hostile talk against Soviet power.

Internal memorandum from the Deputy People’s Commissar of Agriculture of the USSR, A. V. Grinevich, to the People’s Commissar of Agriculture of the USSR, A. Ya. Yakovlev, on the situation in Zinovivsk [Kirovohrad] raion, Ukrainian SSR. In *Tragediia sovetskoi derevni* (2001). Excerpts, pp. 363–65. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

3 May 1932

Top Secret

To the People’s Commissar of Agriculture of the USSR, Comrade Yakovlev....

1. Zinovivsk raion is 98 percent collectivized. As a result of the past production year, the collective farmers, on the basis of information from seventy collective farms, received on average 76 kg of grain per person, and that was to be their nourishment for the whole year. There were a number of cases of swelling from hunger. At present, according to information received from workers in the county and the observations that I have had occasion to make in the villages, there is almost no grain on the collective farms. By March there were many in the raion who were starving....
2. Since 1 January 1932, according to information from village councils, 28.3 thousand persons (out of a population of 100 thousand) have left the raion, and it is the adult inhabitants, the healthier ones, who are leaving....
3. As of 1 July 1931, according to agricultural tax records, there were 18,908 horses. According to census records, as of 1 February 1932 there were 11,934 horses. According to information from the village councils, as of 25 April 9,026 horses were left, that is, in less than a year more than 50 percent of the stock of horses has disappeared. Moreover, of the remaining horses, no less than 50 percent should be removed from work very soon, as working them will soon lead to the demise of that portion because of their extreme exhaustion....

Deputy People’s Commissar of Agriculture of the USSR, Grinevich

Letter from Hryhorii Petrovsky to Molotov and Stalin on the grave food situation and famine in the Ukrainian SSR. In *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 33–36.

10 June 1932

During the sowing campaign in Pryluky, Lokhvytsia, Varva, Chernukhy, Pyriatyn, and Mala Divytsia raions, I came face to face, so to speak, with the village....

We knew beforehand that fulfilling state grain procurements in Ukraine would be difficult, but what I have seen in the countryside indicates that we have greatly overdone it.... I was in many raion villages and saw a considerable part of the countryside engulfed in famine. There are not many, but there are people swollen from starvation, mainly poor peasants and even middle farmers.... At large meetings in villages, I am cursed furiously; old women cry, and men sometimes do so as well. At times, criticism of the situation created goes very deep: "Why did they create an artificial famine? After all, we had a harvest. Why did they take away the seed grain? That did not happen even under the old regime. Why should Ukrainians make difficult journeys for grain to non-grain-producing areas? Why is grain not being brought here?" And so on....

...In response to the desperate cry for relief [in the form of] seed grain and grain for food, I promised something with regard to seed grain but told the farmers to find seed in their own regions.... Mass thefts are occurring in the villages because of the famine, mainly of poultry: they steal chickens, ducks, take potato scraps, and butcher calves and cows during the night and eat them.

Right now, the men are sowing millet and buckwheat. The days for sowing millet are ending, but not for buckwheat, and the villagers are expecting it from us.... There will be insufficient sowing in these raions compared to last year's area. There is still a month or a month and a half before the new crop. This means that famine will intensify. Therefore, I am asking you directly: Would it not be possible to send relief to the Ukrainian countryside in the amount of two, or, if worse comes to worst, one and a half million poods of grain?....

Because of the general famine, as you know, villagers have started flocking to the Dno station, the Central Black Earth Oblast, Belarus, and the North Caucasus. In some cases, two-thirds of all men have left their villages in search of grain.... Naturally, there is mayhem at the stations and in transports.... Tickets are not being issued to villagers, or are being issued in very limited numbers. Peasants have asked me: Why are trips for grain prohibited?....

...In closing, I once again request that you consider all methods and resources available to provide urgent food relief in the form of grain to the Ukrainian countryside and to supply buckwheat for sowing as quickly as possible in order to make up for what has not been sown.

H[ryhorii] Petrovsky

Letter from Vlas Chubar to Molotov and Stalin on agricultural affairs in the Ukrainian SSR. In *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 36–38.

10 June 1932

In two trips (with a small break), I spent fifteen days in the hardest-hit raions and villages of Kyiv and Vinnytsia oblasts.... [T]he main facts in all these raions and villages are similar enough that some general conclusions can be made....

...Along with the general weakness of the state grain-procurement plan, caused primarily by lower harvests across Ukraine and colossal losses during harvesting...a system of requisitioning of all grain, including seed reserves, from private farmers was introduced, and almost everything of value was confiscated from collective farms. Even if collective farms met their plan targets, they received an extra second and often third [grain quota target]. In many cases, grain issued to collective farmers as advance payment for work was confiscated by

brigades for state grain procurement. As a result, the majority of collective farms in those raions were left without grain, without animal feed concentrate for livestock, without food for the disabled, for teachers, etc....

Cases of malnutrition and starvation were noted in December and January both among private farmers (particularly those whose farms and belongings were sold for failing to meet grain targets) and among collective farmers, especially those with large families.... In March and April there were tens and hundreds of malnourished, starving, and swollen people dying of hunger in every village; children abandoned by their parents and orphans appeared....

In addition to grain procurements, the same methods were applied to potato and, especially, meat procurements....

The proper functioning of agriculture has been impaired in the Ukrainian SSR over such a large area that special adjustments are required to state grain and meat procurement targets and other agricultural goals....

V[las] Chubar

Resolution of a joint meeting of the Bureau of the Poltava City Committee of the CP(B)U and the City Party Control Commission at a closed session on the speech by CP(B)U member Poltavets containing a declaration on the famine and the oppression of peasants and workers in the Ukrainian SSR. In *Holod-henotsyd 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraïni* (2005). Excerpts, pp. 94–95, 97. Translated by Maksym Motorenko and Bohdan Klid.

11 June 1932

Having discussed the information of the Party commission (Comrades Rohal, Hrekov, Ahranovych) on the nature and circumstances of the anti-Party and anti-Soviet statement of Poltavets, a Party member since 1929, at a closed session of the Party Center of the Institute of Meat Technology, following discussion of the restricted letter of the Oblast Committee of 16/V–1932 and the explanation of Poltavets himself, the Joint Meeting of the C[ity] P[arty] C[ommittee] and the Presidium of the C[ity] C[ontrol] C[omission] finds:

1. The speech by Poltavets, which contained the following assertions:
 - a) “The center and its representatives are to blame for deviations in Party policy during grain procurements”; “someone named [Mykola Nestorovych] Demchenko came to Poltava, hammered with his fist on the table, and ordered us to fulfill the grain-procurement plan, but they blame the lower strata [of the Party for this].”
 - b) “Socialism has been built in Russia, but in Ukraine there is famine.”
 - c) “Not only people eat white bread in Leningrad and Moscow; they even feed horses with white bread, but in Ukraine and in Poltava there is famine.”
 - d) “All the peasantry is against socialism.”....

There are cases of kulak and Ukrainian national chauvinist provocative activities against the Party and its central and local authorities, with unprecedented slander of general Party policy and of the successful construction of socialism. Poltavets’s outrageous anti-Party and anti-Soviet statement reflects the resistance of the defeated and generally liquidated—on the basis of total collectivization—but not yet completely eliminated enraged Ukrainian kulak....

Accordingly, the CPC bureau and the Presidium of the CCC resolve:

1. To expel Poltavets, Party member since 1929, a middle peasant, FROM THE RANKS

OF THE PARTY AND FROM STUDY AT THE INSTITUTE as a kulak agent....

Secretary of the CPC, Malii
Head of the CC, Kuliashov....

Letter from Stalin to Kaganovich on appeals from Ukrainian SSR leaders to the CC AUCP(B). In *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine* (2008). Excerpt, p. 40.

15 June 1932

...I did not like the letters from Chubar and Petrovsky.¹ The former spouts “self-criticism” in order to secure millions more poods of bread from Moscow; the latter is feigning sainthood, claiming victimization by the “CC AUCP directive” in order to reduce grain-procurement levels. Neither one nor the other is acceptable. Chubar is mistaken if he thinks that self-criticism is required for securing outside “help” and not for mobilizing forces and resources in Ukraine. In my opinion, Ukraine has been given more than enough....

Regards,
J. Stalin

Resolution of the Politburo of the CP(B)U on sending a telegram to the CC AUCP(B) about the provision of food aid to Ukraine. In *Holod 1932–1933 rokiv na Ukraïni* (1990), p. 183. Translated by Maksym Motorenko and Bohdan Klid.

17 June 1932

To send the following telegram to the CC AUCP(B), addressed to Comrades Kaganovich and Molotov: “[Vlas] Chubar, on the instructions of the CC CP(B)U, initiated a request to send food aid to Ukraine for regions in difficult circumstances. We urgently request an additional 600,000 poods [of grain], in addition to the 220,000 poods of food aid already assigned for beet cultivation.”

Letter from Stalin to Kaganovich and Molotov on organizing the 1932 grain-procurement campaign. In *The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence 1931–36* (2003). Excerpts, pp. 138–39.

To Kaganovich and Molotov (for members of the Politburo)

...The principal error of our grain-procurement work last year, especially in the Ukraine and the Urals, was that the grain-procurement plan was allocated among districts and collective farms and was carried out not in an organized manner but spontaneously, based on the equalizing “principle,” it was carried out mechanically, without taking account of the situation in each individual district, on each individual collective farm. This mechanical equalizing approach to the matter has resulted in glaring absurdities, so that a number of fertile districts in the Ukraine, despite a fairly good harvest, have found themselves in a state of impoverishment and famine.... The results of these errors are now having an effect on the sowing situation, especially in the Ukraine, and several tens of thousands of Ukrainian collective farmers are still traveling around

¹1 The letters of 10 June 1932 from Petrovsky and Chubar. See documents 7 and 8 in this section.

the entire European part of the USSR and are demoralizing our collective farms with their complaints and whining.

What must be done to avoid repeating last year's errors?

The districts and collective farms must get a revised plan, but revised with reference to the distinctive features of each district and each collective farm rather than in a mechanical and equalizing manner. Since the present condition of our organizations does not allow for absolutely precise record of these features, we should add an extra 4–5 percent to the plan in order to cover inevitable errors in the records and fulfill the plan itself at any cost....

J. Stalin, 18 June 1932

Telegram from the AUCP(B) and the CPC USSR to the CC CP(B)U and the CPC UkrSSR on ensuring the fulfillment of grain requisitions by collective farms and individual peasant homesteads. In *Holod 1932–1933 rokiv na Ukraïni* (1990), pp. 186–87. Translated by Maksym Motorenko and Bohdan Klid.

21 June 1932

Two addresses: Kharkiv, CC CP(B)U, [Stanislav] Kosior

Copy: CPC, [Vlas] Chubar

In accordance with the resolution of the CPC and CC of 20 and 21 June, the CPC USSR and the CC AUCP(B) propose that you ensure at all costs:

First. The delivery, in fulfillment of the annual grain requisition, by collective farms and individual peasant homesteads according to Ukraine's allocated obligations: 14,500,000 poods in July; 72,400,000 poods in August; 71,200,000 poods in September....

Second.... No manner of evasion should be allowed under any circumstances for collective farms and individual peasant homesteads with regard to grain procurement or for grain delivery by state farms, or for the delivery schedules established for your region according to the resolutions of 20 and 21 June.

Molotov, Stalin

Resolution of the Politburo of the CC AUCP(B) on sending food aid to Ukraine. In *Holod 1932–1933 rokiv na Ukraïni* (1990), p. 190. Translated by Maksym Motorenko and Bohdan Klid.

23 June 1932

Do not go beyond the resolutions already adopted by the CC, and do not undertake additional grain deliveries to Ukraine.

Letter from Stalin to Kaganovich and Molotov commenting on the leadership of the Ukrainian SSR. In *The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence 1931–36* (2003). Excerpts, p. 152.

2 [July 1932]

To Kaganovich, Molotov.

1) Give the most serious attention to the Ukraine. [Vlas] Chubar's corruptness and opportunistic essence and [Stanislav] Kosior's rotten diplomacy (with regard to the CC of the VKP) and criminally frivolous attitude toward his job will eventually ruin the Ukraine. These comrades are not up to the challenge of leading the Ukraine today. If you go to the Ukrainian conference (I insist on it), take every measure in order to improve the functionaries' mood, isolate the whining and depraved diplomats (no matter who they are!) and ensure genuinely Bolshevik decisions by the conference. I have formed the impression (probably even the conviction) that we will have to remove both of them from the Ukraine—Chubar and Kosior. Maybe I am mistaken. But you have an opportunity to check this situation at the conference.

Regards, J. Stalin

Letter from Kaganovich to Stalin on the participation of Kaganovich and Molotov in the All-Ukrainian Party Conference. In *The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence 1931–36* (2003). Excerpts, pp. 152–54.

2 [July 1932]

Greetings, Comrade Stalin...

2) We have sent you the draft resolution on the grain-procurement and harvest campaign. I think it conforms with your standpoint, and our speeches at the conference also fully adhere to your counsel that we direct the main thrust against the Ukrainian demobilizers...

...At their conference [in the Ukraine] they will discuss only one topic: agriculture. We will have to use specific examples to develop the question of the leadership's being out of touch with agriculture and the uneven distribution of grain procurements, due to a lack of familiarity with the districts, which has led to unhappy consequences...

Regards. Yours, L. Kaganovich

Telegram from Molotov and Kaganovich to Stalin on the need to remain silent about the true situation in the Ukrainian SSR. In *Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraïni* (2007), p. 232. Translated by Maksym Motorenko and Bohdan Klid.

6 July 1932

To Com[rade] Stalin

Criticism should be undertaken at the Ukrainian conference of the work of the CC CP(B)U, whose shortcomings have brought about a difficult situation in some regions. The question arises of how this should be explained in the press. In order not to give fodder to the foreign press, we deem it necessary to expound on this criticism in our press in moderate tones, without printing facts about the situation in the bad regions.

Please relay your opinion to Kharkiv.

Molotov, Kaganovich

Letter from Molotov and Kaganovich to Stalin on the Ukrainian Party Conference and grain-procurement plan. In *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 42–43.

6 July 1932

To Comrade Stalin

Today we discussed the draft of the resolution and the conference with the Politburo CC CP(B)U. We said the draft resolution was unacceptable in its weak criticism of CC CP(B)U leaders for affairs in the countryside.... All Politburo members, including [Mykola] Skrypnyk, spoke for reducing the plan....

We categorically rejected a revision of the plan.... We think that the resolution should express dissatisfaction with the CC CP(B)U for affairs in the countryside in the last while. Please provide your thoughts.²

Molotov, Kaganovich

Mykola Skrypnyk, “III Vseukraïns'ka partiina konferentsiia. Obhovorennia dopovidi tov. Kosiora. Promova tov. M. O. Skrypnyka” (III All-Ukrainian Party Conference. Discussion of Comrade [Stanislav] Kosior’s Speech. Comrade M. O. Skrypnyk’s Speech,” *Visti VUTsVK* (News of the All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee), 11 July 1932. Excerpts, pp. 5–6. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

...[I]n speaking about the situation in which Ukraine finds itself, we cannot allow for any underestimation of that which exists.... That which exists is a consequence of our struggle, our leadership, our ability to organize the class struggle, and that is why we cannot by any means downplay the difficulties and cover up the failures that exist here. Is it worthwhile to engage in equilibration and downplay the failures in the sowing of spring crops, grain, and so on? This is not acceptable. We need to know the situation as it exists. We need to know that we have a huge, shameful failure, that in the sowing of spring grains we have a huge failure; the same applies, in general, to the sowing of winter and spring crops.

Also, we absolutely cannot downplay the food situation that exists in some districts. We cannot downplay the very difficult situations on some collective farms and in a number of districts....

We have to say straightforwardly that the situation is difficult. We had failures in the grain-procurement campaign last year; we fell short by 70 million poods; we have failures in the food situation in a whole series of collective farms and villages in a whole row of districts....

What is the reason for our current failures, our current situation?....

Since January I have driven through more than thirty districts and many dozens of collective farms, state farms, and Machine-Tractor Stations, and I say firmly that this question of the reason behind the current state of affairs stands before each of us.

And so, I heard the following answer in certain localities. I was in a district where there are great food difficulties: this was in Moldavia, the Okniansk district, the village of Novo-Krasne: “The reason is that everything was swept away from us with a broom, a “leftist” deviation; they clamped down and crushed us.” That is the reason they give for this situation. In

²The following day Stalin agreed to an expression of dissatisfaction with the work of CC CP(B)U leaders.

other words, this explanation goes: “The communists are at fault for the nonfulfillment of the grain-procurement plan, for the poor food situation; the communists took the grain, and that is why there is no grain to live on; that is why there is a difficult food situation; that is why there is famine in certain localities.” This same village of Novo-Krasne is an example of certain social roots of that explanation.... I saw the fields of that village in the condition in which they were. And when I came and heard that supposedly the communists were responsible for the difficult situation, I said: “This is not true; this is a lie, a shameful kulak lie, because I saw the fields; I saw the fallen grain growing there; that there were certainly more than six, considerably more than eight poods sown there. Grain was poorly harvested there, and that spoke for the causes of the present state of affairs. If the whole harvest had been properly gathered in this village, there would have been enough for the complete fulfillment of the grain-procurement plan; there would have been enough for food until the next harvest; and there would even have been a surplus for sale.

The Party has given us directives. The XVI Party Conference and the Politburo of the CC AUCP(B) have clearly indicated that the main task before us is that of strengthening the organization and management of the collective farms....

The main cause of our failures lies in not fulfilling the tasks of our Party with regard to strengthening the management of the collective farms....

Now, in the harvesting campaign, we will again have a savage class struggle, and again the kulak will go to battle under the slogan: don't break your backs, be sure to take care of yourself, take [grain] for yourself, do not be concerned about the general good, put whatever you can in your own pocket, hide it in a pit. That is why the harvesting campaign stands before us as the most important campaign. In the class struggle, organizing the broad masses of millions of collective farmers and the poor and middle peasants for battle means, on the one hand, defeating the kulak, destroying him and finishing him off, and, on the other hand, ensuring that we leave our failures behind and further guarantee the broad socialist development of our country....

Addendum to special report of the OGPU Secret Political Division on the anti-collective farm movement and famine in Belarus, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and individual regions of the USSR. In *Tragediia sovetskoi derevni* (2001). Excerpts, pp. 420–21. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

[Not before 20 July 1932]....

The spring sowing campaign in Ukraine proceeded in extremely tense circumstances (failures in gathering seed stocks, a difficult situation with fodder and draught animals, extremely slow tempos and poor quality of repair work, and acute difficulties with food supplies). Difficulties with food supplies affected 127 raions and the whole territory of the A[utonomous] M[oldavian] SSR, where the number of starving families was more than twenty thousand. In these raions, numerous instances were observed of eating surrogates and carrion, swelling, and death from starvation. In some raions, cases of cannibalism and suicide owing to hunger were registered. These incidents had a negative effect on the tempo and quality of spring sowing....

As of 20 May, in 21 raions alone, 116,000 people left in unorganized fashion, compared to 11,900 as of 15 February.... In some raions, up to 50 percent of the population has left to search for food.

As a rule, departures from the collective farms have been accompanied by the sorting out and division of property, animals, and agricultural equipment.... In the first ten days of July 70 disturbances were observed in connection with the sorting out of property and animals. Up to 200–300 people took part in some of the disturbances. The decline in labor discipline on collective farms affected by [the mass] departures is striking. On 150 collective farms selected here, as many as 30 to 70 percent [of the collective farmers] are not showing up for work.

Kulaks and anti-Soviet elements have noticeably increased their activities. Ukraine stands in first place when it comes to mass anti-Soviet incidents.

In the period from 1 January to 15 July 1932, 923 mass actions were registered in the UkrSSR. A whole series of disturbances accompanying the [mass] departures from the collective farms are not counted here. Noteworthy are the disturbances caused by food shortages, which are accompanied in some cases by demonstrative declarations by the mobs about leaving for Romania and on heading for the banks of the Dnister [River] to request assistance from the Romanians....

From 1 January to 1 July 1932, 118 kulak counterrevolutionary organizations, with an overall number of 2,479 participants, were uncovered. Besides this, 35 national c[ounter]r[evolutionary] groups with 562 participants were uncovered. In the main, the counterrevolutionary organizations are of an insurgent character, and their practical activity is characterized by the recruitment of insurgent cadres and preparations for an armed uprising.

Resolution “On Safekeeping Property of State Enterprises, Collective Farms and Cooperatives and Strengthening Public (Socialist) Property.”³ In *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 46–47.

7 August 1932

II

- 1) Make all property belonging to collective farms and cooperatives (harvests in the fields, public reserves, livestock, cooperative stock and stores, etc.) equivalent to state property and fully strengthen the protection of this property against theft.
- 2) Use judicial repressions of the highest degree as measures of social protection against theft of collective farm and cooperative property: execution by shooting and confiscation of all property, commutable under mitigating circumstances to ten years' imprisonment with confiscation of all property.

Amnesty cannot be granted to criminals sentenced in cases involving theft of collective farm and cooperative property....

Head, USSR Central Executive Committee, M[ikhail] Kalinin
Head, Council of People's Commissars, V[iacheslav] Molotov (Skriabin)
Secretary, USSR Central Executive Committee, A[vel] Yenukidze

³ This law made collective farm property equal to state property and provided extremely severe punitive measures for encroaching on the harvest. In popular lore, this resolution became known as the “law of five ears of wheat.”

Letter from Stalin to Kaganovich on changing the Ukrainian SSR leadership. In *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 47–49.

11 August 1932....

3) The main issue now is Ukraine. Matters in Ukraine are currently extremely bad. Bad from the standpoint of the Party line. They say that, in two oblasts of Ukraine (Kyiv and Dnipropetrovsk, I believe), nearly 50 raion Party committees have spoken out against the grain-procurement plan as unrealistic. They say the matter is no better in other raion committees. What does this look like? This is not a Party but a parliament, a caricature of a parliament. Instead of directing the raions, [Stanislav] Kosior is always waffling between CC AUCP directives and the demands of raion committees, and now he has waffled himself to the end. Lenin was right when he said that a person who lacks the courage to go against the flow at the right moment cannot be a real Bolshevik leader. Bad from the standpoint of the Soviet line. [Vlas] Chubar is no leader. Bad from the standpoint of the GPU. [Stanislav] Redens is incapable of leading the battle against counterrevolution in such a large and unique republic as Ukraine.

If we do not correct the situation in Ukraine immediately, we could lose Ukraine.... Also keep in mind that within the Communist Party of Ukraine (500,000 members, ha, ha) there is no lack (yes, no lack!) of rotten elements, active and latent Petliurites and direct agents of [Józef] Piłsudski. As soon as the situation gets worse, these elements will not hesitate to open a front within (and outside) the Party, against the Party. Worst of all, the Ukrainian leadership does not see these dangers.

Things cannot continue this way any longer.

It is necessary:

a) to remove Kosior from Ukraine and replace him with you [Kaganovich]. You will retain the post of secretary of the CC AUCP(B);

b) after this, transfer [Vsevolod] Balytsky to Ukraine as chairman of the Ukrainian GPU...and he will remain deputy chairman of the [All-Union] OGPU; make Redens deputy to Balytsky in Ukraine;

c) in a few months, replace Chubar with another comrade....

d) Set yourself the goal of turning Ukraine into a fortress of the USSR, a real model republic, within the shortest possible time. Do not spare money for this purpose.

Without these and similar measures (economic and political strengthening of Ukraine, starting with the raions along the border, etc.), I repeat once again, we may lose Ukraine.

What do you think in this matter?

This requires attention as soon as possible, immediately after [your] arrival in Moscow.

Regards, J. Stalin....

Letter from the leadership of the Secret Political Division of the GPU Ukrainian SSR to the head of the SPD OGPU, Georgii Molchanov, on an attempt by Ukrainian scholars to inform the historian Mykhailo Hrushevsky about the famine in the Ukrainian SSR. In *Rozsekrechena pam'iat'* (2007). Excerpts, pp. 291–92. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

10 September 1932

PERSONAL

To the Head of the SPD OGPU
Comrade [Georgii] Molchanov
Moscow

We hereby inform you that at the behest of the Special Division of the OGPU an agent of the Secret Political Division of the Kyiv Oblast Department of the GPU has left...for Moscow.

Before leaving Kyiv, [the agent] spoke with students close to M. S. HRUSHEVSKY, the scholarly associates of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences [Vasyl] DENYSENKO and [Sylvestr] HLUSHKO, informing them that he would be going to Moscow for several days to study materials related to his scholarly work.

DENYSENKO and HLUSHKO entrusted me...to convey the following to HRUSHEVSKY: "Upon my question of what to convey to the old man, DENYSENKO said the following:...

6) As to the political situation, say that a real famine prevails in Ukraine, that entire villages and districts are dying out; emphasize especially the horrific death rate among children. Explain this as a policy intended to break the Ukrainian nation once and for all as the only national force capable of serious resistance [to the regime]. Some will die, while others will be scattered across the endless expanses of Russia."

[The agent] promised to pass on all this....

ACTING HEAD, SPD GPU UkrSSR [Boris] KOZELSKY

ACTING HEAD, SECOND DEPARTMENT, SPD [Sergei] PUSTOVOITOV

Resolution of the Politburo of the CC AUCP(B) on grain procurement in Ukraine and the North Caucasus.⁴ In *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine* (2008). Excerpts, p. 53.

22 October 1932

In order to strengthen grain procurement, dispatch for two ten-day periods:

- a) Comrade Molotov to Ukraine....
- b) Comrade Kaganovich to the N[orth] Caucasus....

Resolution of the Politburo of the CC CP(B)U on measures to strengthen grain procurement. In *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine* (2008). Excerpts, p. 55–60.

18 November 1932

III. On Grain Procurements from Collective Farms

On collective farm reserves

⁴ Distrustful of local leaders, Stalin dispatched his emissaries to these major grain-producing areas. Using wide-ranging repressions, they managed to extort all grain and food reserves, resulting in millions of deaths.

In accordance with the resolution of the CC AUCP(B) stating that “the fulfillment of the grain-procurement plan is the highest-priority mission for collective farms, state farms, MTS [machine-tractor stations], and private farmers,” the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine expressly points out to all Party organizations in Ukraine that the full delivery of grain-procurement plans is the principal duty of all collective farms and MTS to the Party and the working class, the highest-priority task to which all other collective-farm tasks are subordinate, including the formation of various collective-farm reserves: seed grain, fodder, food supplies, and others.

In accordance with the above, the CC CP(B)U instructs Party organizations that...

2. A ban be instituted immediately on expending any reserves in kind stored on collective farms that are unsatisfactorily fulfilling grain-procurement plans....

3. Raion executive committees be authorized to transfer to grain-procurement reserves all reserves in kind accumulated by collective farms that are most unsatisfactorily fulfilling grain-procurement plans.

4. Where seed-grain reserves are concerned, paragraph 3 be implemented only with the prior consent of oblast executive committees with regard to every individual collective farm....

On in-kind advances and combating abuses on collective farms

1. Upon receipt of this decree, the distribution of any in-kind grain advances to all collective farms unsatisfactorily fulfilling grain-procurement plans shall be discontinued....

3. The seizure of grain stolen from collective and state farms during crop harvesting, threshing, transportation, storage, etc. by collective and private farmers...shall be organized immediately in all raions....

4. On collective farms unsatisfactorily fulfilling grain-procurement plans, all grain harvested by collective farmers from their home garden plots shall be counted as their in-kind payment for workdays; any excess grain issued to them shall be collected toward grain procurements.

5. Fines shall be levied on those collective farms that permitted the stealing of grain and are maliciously undermining grain-procurement plans in the form of additional meat-procurement targets: they are to supply a 15-month quota of meat from both collectivized and privately owned livestock....

On measures to combat kulak influence on collective farms and in village Party organizations

For the purposes of overcoming kulak resistance and the fulfillment of grain-procurement plans, the CC CP(B)U resolves the following:

1. Collective farms that are most maliciously sabotaging state grain-procurement plans shall be blacklisted.

The following measures shall be imposed upon blacklisted collective farms:

a) Immediate suspension of delivery of goods and of cooperative and state commerce in these villages and the removal of all available goods from cooperative stores;

b) Full prohibition of collective-farm commerce both for collective farms and collective farmers and for private farmers....

IV. On Grain Procurement from Private Farmers

1. Fines shall be levied on those private farmers who are maliciously undermining grain-procurement plans...in the form of an additional meat-procurement target amounting to a 15-month quota of meat....

...[V]illage councils shall establish deadlines and amounts of fines for each household within the limits of 15-month meat and one-year potato quotas....

The imposition of fines shall not release the farms from their duty of complete fulfillment of the grain-procurement plan....

3. Seed-grain and foodstuff loans given to private farmers by collective farms in their raions shall be collected immediately, without recourse to appeal....

4. Brigades consisting of collective-farm activists shall be organized...to assist in the complete fulfillment of grain-procurement plans by the private farming sector.

By 1 December, no fewer than 1,100 of these collective-farmer brigades shall be organized throughout Ukraine....

“Pro robotu z kolhospnym aktyvom. Postanova TsK KP(b)U vid 18 lystopada 1932” (On Work with Collective-Farm Activists. Resolution of the CC CP(B)U of 18 November 1932,” *Komunist (Kharkiv)*, 20 November 1932, p. 1. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

...Under current conditions, the principal and basic task of collective-farm activists is the struggle with the kulak, with Petliurism and other counterrevolutionary elements that undermine the fulfillment of the grain-procurement plan, and rendering active assistance to the Party and the working class in fulfilling the established grain-procurement plan and strengthening of the collective farms on this basis....

CC CP(B)U

“Postanova TsK i TsKK KP(b)U vid 18 lystopada 1932” (Resolution of the CC and CCC CP(B)U of 18 November 1932), *Komunist (Kharkiv)*, 21 November 1932, p. 1. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

Given that in a number of village Party organizations, especially in the grain-procurement period, a coalescence has been uncovered of whole groups of communists and individual leaders of Party centers with kulakdom, Petliurism, and so on, which is turning those communists and Party organizations into de facto agents of the class enemy and is visible proof of the complete break of those centers and communists with the poor and middle strata of the collective-farm masses, the CC and CCC CP(B)U resolve to conduct an immediate purge of a number of village Party organizations that are openly sabotaging the fulfillment of the grain-procurement plan and undermining trust in the Party in the ranks of the workers....

CC and CCC CP(B)U

From a speech by Lazar Kaganovich at a joint meeting of the enlarged bureau of the North Caucasus Territorial Committee of the AUCP(B) and the bureau of the city committee and activists of Rostov-on-the-Don. In *Komandyry velykoho holodu* (2001). Excerpts, pp. 286–89, 291–92. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

23 November 1932

Tasks of the North Caucasus Bolsheviks in the struggle for grain and for the strengthening of collective farms....

At the end of October the CC AUCP(B) sent a group of its representatives to the North Caucasus, including members of the CC and the CCC, having established it as their main task, together with the Party's territorial committee, to draw up and put into effect "measures to crush sabotage in sowing and grain procurement organized by counterrevolutionary kulak elements in the Kuban."....

What brought forth this decision of the CC? As of 25 October, only 56 million poods of grain had been collected throughout the territory, as against 128 million poods collected by the same date last year....

Three *stanitsy* [settlements] of the Kuban—Novo-Rozhdestvenskaia, Medvedovskaia, and Temirgoevskaia—were blacklisted.... All goods were taken out of the blacklisted *stanitsy* and transferred to districts and *stanitsy* that were doing well in fulfilling the plan for sowing and procurements.... About 25–30 percent of the staff have already been purged from the ranks of the *stanitsa* organizations. The purge revealed great corruption in the Party organizations consisting of hostile class elements (kulaks and their agents, formerly active White Guardists, and others).... We will deport those purged from the Party beyond the borders of the territory to the northern oblasts as traitors to the working class and as politically dangerous.

In ten districts of the Kuban, delivery of goods to cooperative and state stores was halted, and in another ten districts that most shamefully failed in sowing and procurements, in addition to stopping deliveries, all goods were removed. Residents of the blacklisted *stanitsy* were warned that in the event sabotage continued in sowing and grain procurements, they would be deported beyond the borders of the territory to the northern oblasts, and these *stanitsy* would be settled by conscientious collective farmers....

We had materials available in the CC concerning protest actions of a number of communists and administrators of collective farms against grain procurements, of underground meetings of communists convoked in the *stanitsy* for collusion on how best to mislead the state and hide grain....

First of all, concerning individual peasant households....

How can this refusal of sowing and procurements be explained? It is undoubtedly the result of sabotage tactics organized by kulak elements....

In the village, especially in the Kuban, representatives of the kulaks still remain.... They are: first, some of the kulaks who were not deported; second, prosperous farmers developing into kulaks and closely associated with them; third, those who have escaped from exile and are hiding with their relatives, and sometimes also with "bleeding-heart" Party members who have a membership card in their pocket but are in fact traitors to the working class. And, finally, representatives of the bourgeois, White Guard, and Cossack intelligentsia.... Some of the Petliurists who moved from Ukraine in the spring joined this intelligentsia.

They carry on counterrevolutionary agitation....

Here is one example of counterrevolutionary activity by kulak elements in the Poltava *stanitsa* of the Slaviansk district.

A counterrevolutionary kulak White Guard organization was uncovered in this *stanitsa*. It was associated with the former *stanitsa* ataman Omelchenko, a member of the Kuban Rada and one of the most active White Guard émigrés. Having penetrated the state economic apparatus

with the aim of undermining it, the organization engaged in wrecking in the collective farms and organized the sabotage of grain procurements and sowing.

Operations bulletin of the GPU Ukrainian SSR on matters concerning the exposure of anti-collective farm groups and grain procurements. In *Rozsekrechena pam'iat'* (2007). Excerpts, pp. 430–31. Translated by Maksym Motorenko and Bohdan Klid.

6 December 1932

TOP SECRET

An effective blow against anti-Soviet groups within collective farms is continuing at a rapid rate.

The c[ounter]r[evolutionary] activities of uncovered and liquidated groups on collective farms consisted essentially in disrupting the main agricultural campaigns, especially of grain procurement; in squandering, hiding, and stealing grain; and in anti-collective farm and anti-Soviet agitation.

In addition, some anti-collective farm groups were involved in insurgent agitation.

The overwhelming majority of liquidated groups in the collective farms were strongly influenced by kulaks and other counterrevolutionaries, especially Petliurite elements that corrupted the collective farms, most notably their administrative apparatus....

This bulletin takes account of 55 internal collective-farm and anti-Soviet groups from 42 regions of five oblasts: 290 members of these groups were arrested, including 28 chairmen of collective farms.

Resolution of the CC AUCP(B) and CPC USSR on grain procurements in Ukraine, the North Caucasus, and the Western Oblast. In *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 65–68.

14 December 1932

...[T]he CC AUCP(B) and the CPC USSR resolve the following:

1. The CC CP(B)U and the CPC Ukrainian SSR, on the personal responsibility of Comrades [Stanislav] Kosior and [Vlas] Chubar, shall fully complete the grain and sunflower seed procurement plans by the end of January 1933.
2. The North Caucasus regional Party and executive committees, on the personal responsibility of Comrades Sheboldaev and Larin, shall fully complete the procurement plan for grain by 10-15 January 1933 and for sunflower seeds by the end of January 1933....
4. In view of extremely poor efforts and the absence of revolutionary vigilance in a number of local Party organizations in Ukraine and the North Caucasus, a significant number of raions have been infiltrated by counterrevolutionary elements: kulaks, former officers, Petliurites, supporters of the Kuban Rada, and so on. They have managed to find their way into collective farms as directors and other influential administration members.... They have succeeded in infiltrating village councils, land-management bodies, and cooperative societies and are now trying to direct the work of these organizations against the interests of the proletarian state and Party policy, as well as trying to organize a counterrevolutionary movement and sabotage of grain procurements and sowing campaigns. The CC AUCP(B) and CPC USSR order the CC CP(B)U, the North Caucasus regional Party and executive committees, and the CPC of Ukraine resolutely to root

out these counterrevolutionary elements by means of arrest and long-term imprisonment in concentration camps, without stopping short of capital punishment for the most malicious elements.

5. The CC and CPC inform all Party and state organizations of the Soviet Union that the worst enemies of the Party, the working class, and the collective-farm peasantry are the saboteurs of grain procurement who have Party membership cards in their pockets.... The CC and CPC order appropriate structures to apply severe repressive measures against these traitors and enemies of Soviet rule and collective farms, who still carry Party membership cards in their pockets: five- to ten-year terms of imprisonment in concentration camps and, under certain circumstances, execution by shooting.

6. The CC and CPC point out that instead of the correct Bolshevik implementation of nationality policy, Ukrainization was carried out mechanically in a number of raions of Ukraine.... This made it easier for bourgeois-nationalist elements, Petliurites and others to create their legal façades and counterrevolutionary cells and organizations.

7. The CC and CPC particularly point out to the Party and executive committees of the North Caucasus region that the irresponsible, anti-Bolshevik “Ukrainization” of nearly half the raions in the North Caucasus did not correspond to the cultural interests of the population. It was carried out with a complete lack of supervision and...provided the enemies of Soviet rule with legal façades for organizing resistance to the measures and tasks of Soviet authorities by kulaks, [tsarist] officers, reemigrating Cossacks, members of the Kuban Rada, etc.

In order to crush resistance to grain procurement by kulak elements and their “Party” and non-Party flunkeys, the CC and CPC USSR resolve the following:

a) To relocate the entire population of the Poltava *stanitsa* (North Caucasus) as the most counterrevolutionary to the northern oblasts of the USSR in the shortest time possible.... [T]o populate this *stanitsa* with conscientious collective farmers who are Red Army soldiers.... [T]o transfer all lands, winter crops, buildings, inventory, and livestock from the farmers being expelled to these settlers....

b) To prosecute and sentence traitors to the Party who were arrested in Ukraine for organizing the sabotage of grain procurement to terms of 5–10 years’ imprisonment in concentration camps: former raion secretaries, chairmen of executive committees, directors of land-management bodies, and chairmen of raion associations of collective farms....

c) To exile all “communists” expelled from the Party for sabotaging grain procurement and sowing campaigns to the northern oblasts on the same basis as kulaks.

To propose that the CC CP(B)U and CPC of Ukraine pay serious attention to the proper implementation of Ukrainization; to eliminate its mechanical implementation; to expel Petliurites and other bourgeois-nationalist elements from Party and state organizations....

e) Immediately to change the language used in state and cooperative agencies in the North Caucasus, as well as all newspapers and magazines in the “Ukrainized” raions, from Ukrainian to Russian, which is more understandable to Kuban residents. Also, to prepare to change the language of school instruction to Russian by autumn. The CC and CPC order the regional Party and executive committees immediately to investigate and improve the staffing of schools in “Ukrainized” raions....

Chairman, CPC USSR, V[iacheslav] Molotov (Skriabin)

Secretary, CC AUCP(B), J[oseph] Stalin

Resolution of the CC AUCP(B) and CPC USSR on Ukrainization in the Far Eastern Region, Kazakhstan, Central Asia, the Central Black Earth Oblast, and other areas. In *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine* (2008), pp. 68–69.

15 December 1932

The CC AUCP(B) and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR resolutely condemn the statements and suggestions made by individual Ukrainian comrades on the mandatory Ukrainization of entire areas of the USSR (for example, the DVK [Far Eastern Region], Central Asia, the Central Black Earth Oblast, and so on). Statements of this nature only play into the hands of bourgeois nationalists who, having been chased out of Ukraine as harmful elements, are emerging in newly Ukrainized areas to continue their demoralizing work.

The regional Party and executive committees of the DVK, the oblast Party and executive committees of the Central Black Earth Oblast, the Kazakh regional Party committee, and the [regional] Council of People's Commissars are immediately to discontinue Ukrainization in their regions, change all Ukrainized newspapers, printed materials, and publications to the Russian language and, by autumn 1933, to prepare the transfer of schools and instruction to the Russian language.

Secretary, CC AUCP(B), J[oseph] Stalin
Chairman, CPC USSR, V[iacheslav] Molotov (Skriabin)

Resolution of the CC AUCP(B) and CPC USSR on grain procurement in Ukraine, 19 December 1932. In *Holod 1932–1933 rokiv na Ukraïni* (1990), p. 295. Translated by Maksym Motorenko and Bohdan Klid.

- 1) The CC AUCP(B) and CPC USSR consider that unless a radical breakthrough in grain procurements is immediately organized in the Dnipropetrovsk, Odesa, and Kharkiv oblasts, Ukraine will be unable to fulfill even the twice-reduced plan that is obviously failing because of the frivolous attitude of Ukrainian workers toward the tasks assigned them by the Party and the government.
- 2) The CC AUCP(B) and CPC USSR charge Comrades [Lazar] Kaganovich and [Pavel] Postyshev immediately to depart for Ukraine to assist the CC CP(B)U and the CPC of Ukraine; as well as to spend time in the key oblasts of Ukraine as specially authorized by the CC AUCP(B) and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, sharing the work with [Stanislav] Kosior, [Vlas] Chubar, and [Mendel] Khataevich, and to adopt all necessary measures of an organizational and administrative nature in order to fulfill the grain-procurement plan.

Secretary of the CC: J[oseph] Stalin
Chairman of the CPC USSR: V[iacheslav] Molotov

Telegram from Kaganovich to Stalin on the need to cancel the CC CP(B)U resolution of 18 November 1932. In *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine* (2008). Excerpts, p. 70.

22 December 1932

...[T]he resolution of the Politburo of the CC CP(B)U...of November 18 is still in effect....

Although this directive begins with the statement that fulfillment of the grain-procurement plan is the top priority, it nevertheless provides grounds for permitting the creation of all sorts of reserves on collective farms that have failed to fulfill the grain-procurement plan....

The very raising of the issue of creating and securing reserves, as well as prohibiting the transfer of seed reserves to grain procurement, provides the legal grounds and basis for entrenching the established view that the plan cannot be fulfilled, although this is not said openly.... [W]e are convinced that this “preoccupation” with reserves, including seed reserves, is seriously hampering and undermining the entire grain-procurement plan. These views are being reinforced by the resolution of the CC CP(B)U dated 18 November.

For these reasons we consider it necessary to cancel this resolution as well....

[Lazar] Kaganovich, [Mikhail Aleksandrovich] Chernov

Memorandum from Comrade [Vsevolod] Balytsky (Ukraine) to CC AUCP(B) Comrade Stalin. In *Narodna viina* (2011). Excerpts, pp. 230, 233. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

The uncovering of counterrevolutionary organizations and groups establishes:

1. The existence of a broadly ramified Polish-Petliurite insurgent underground encompassing 67 raions of Ukraine, according to incomplete data.
2. The contamination of collective farms, state farms, MTS [Machine-Tractor Stations], MTM [Machine-Tractor Workshops] by Petliurite, kulak, White Guardist and anti-Soviet elements who were actively carrying on seditious activity in the collective farms, misappropriating, squandering and deliberately destroying grain, draft animals, and livestock.
3. The activity of the national-chauvinist part of the Ukrainian intelligentsia, which, in a number of instances, ideologically and organizationally formed and headed the uncovered counterrevolutionary insurgent organizations.
4. The seditious activity of traitors with Party [membership] cards, not only by way of sabotaging and conducting subversive activity to prevent the fulfillment of grain procurements, but, as has been determined in many cases of uncovered insurgency, they are organizers and leaders of counterrevolutionary groups.

In 20 days of December 12,178 persons were arrested.

Of these: 4,204 persons for [belonging to] insurgent c[ounter]-r[evolutionary] organizations. For ruining and sabotaging grain procurements [as members of] 995 liquidated groups. 3,044 persons as kulaks, those subject to firmly established quotas, and those concealing grain....

At the present time we are continuing our work of destroying insurgent organizations and [their] cells, of uncovering and liquidating organizational centers.

The entire Chekist apparatus has been mobilized to render the utmost assistance to Party organizations in fulfilling grain procurements, and a decisive operational blow is being struck at all saboteurs and their lackeys, speculators, and other counterrevolutionary elements who are working against the fulfillment of the grain-procurement plan.

Specially Authorized Operative of the OGPU in Ukraine
V[sevolod] Balytsky

23 December 1932

Telegram of 28 December 1932 from Joseph Stalin to members of the CC and Presidium of the CCC AUCP(B), other Communist Party and OGPU bodies. In *Narodna viina* (2011). Excerpt, p. 234. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

Top secret....

To all members of the CC and the Presidium of the CCC AUCP(B), all secretaries of oblast and provincial committees and national CCs, all Party members of Collegiums of the People's Commissariat of Agriculture and the People's Commissariat of State Farms, and all authorized representatives of the OGPU.

The following are being distributed for your information: a) a memorandum from C[omrade] [Efim Georgievich] Evdokimov (North Caucasus) on wrecking in the system of state grain farms; b) a memorandum from C[omrade] [Vsevolod] Balytsky (Ukraine) on the Petliurite organization in Ukraine, which has set as its goal the conducting of sabotage of grain procurements and the preparation of peasant uprisings to separate Ukraine from the USSR and reestablish capitalism. In view of the importance of the documents being distributed, it is recommended that they be treated with serious attention.

Secretary of the CC J[oseph] Stalin

Letter from the CC CP(B)U on the mandatory delivery of all collective-farm grain reserves, including sowing seed, to fulfill the grain-procurement plan. In *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine* (2008). Excerpts, p. 71.

To: Secretaries of Party raion and oblast committees, persons authorized by the CP(B)U
24 December 1932....

1. All collective farms that failed to fulfill the grain-procurement plan have five days to deliver all collective-farm reserves without exception, including sowing seeds, in order to fulfill grain-procurement quotas.
2. Everyone resisting this measure, including communists, shall be arrested and tried.
3. Warn all collective-farm heads that if any hidden reserves, stores, and the like are found after the set date, the chairmen and other guilty parties will be brought before the courts and severely punished....

[Stanislav] Kosior
Stroganov
Aleksiev

Letter from the CC CP(B)U to oblast and raion Party committees on collecting all available reserves for grain procurement. In *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 73–74.

29 December 1932....

...[T]he CC AUCP(B) has canceled the CC CP(B)U resolution of 18 November on the nonshipment of seed reserves as a decision that weakened our positions in the battle for grain.

The CC CP(B)U orders those collective farms that have not fulfilled the grain-procurement plan immediately to hand over all available reserves, including so-called sowing seed, in the course of five to six days for the fulfillment of the grain-procurement plan....

Any delay in handing over these reserves will be considered by the CC to be sabotage of grain procurement by raion leaders and will be subject to commensurate measures.

Secretary, CC CP(B)U, S[tanislav] Kosior

Resolution of the Politburo of the CC AUCP(B) on grain procurement in Ukraine. In *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine* (2008). Excerpts, p. 77.

1 January 1933

The CC CP(B)U and CPC UkrSSR shall widely inform village councils, collective farms, collective farmers, and toiling private farmers that....

b) Those collective farms, collective farmers, and private farmers who stubbornly insist on misappropriating and concealing grain will be subject to the strictest punitive measures provided by the USSR Central Executive Committee resolution of 7 August 1932 “On the safekeeping of property of state enterprises, collective farms, and cooperatives and strengthening public (socialist) property.”

Secretary, CC AUCP(B), J[oseph] Stalin

Joseph Stalin, “O rabote v derevne. Rech' tov. Stalina na Ob"edinennom plenumе TsK i TsKK VKP(b), 11 ianvaria 1933 goda” (On Work in the Countryside: Speech Delivered on 11 January 1933 at a Joint Plenum of the CC and CCC of the AUCP[B]),” *Pravda*, 17 January 1933, p. 1. Modified English translation from Stalin, *Works*, vol. 13, 1930–January 1934 (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1954). Excerpts, pp. 220–24, 226–37.

...What was the main defect in our work in the countryside during the past year, 1932?

The main defect was that our grain procurements in 1932 were accompanied by greater difficulties than in the previous year, in 1931.

This was by no means due to the bad state of the harvest; for in 1932 our harvest was not worse but better than in the preceding year....

What was the matter? What are the reasons for this defect in our work? How is this disparity to be explained?

1) It is to be explained, in the first place, by the fact that our comrades in the localities, our Party workers in the countryside, failed to take into account the new situation created in the countryside by the authorization of collective-farm trade in grain.... There is no need to prove that this circumstance was bound to give rise among the peasants to a certain reluctance to deliver their grain to the state....

But the unfortunate thing is that our Party workers in the countryside, at all events many of them, failed to understand this simple and natural thing.... Instead of speeding up grain procurements, they began to speed up the formation of all sorts of funds on the collective farms, thus encouraging the grain producers in their reluctance to fulfill their obligations to the state....

...[F]or the first commandment is—fulfill the plan for grain procurements; the second commandment is—get the seed stored; and only after these conditions have been fulfilled may collective-farm trade in grain be begun and developed....

2) The second reason for the defects in our work in the countryside is that our comrades in the localities—and not only those comrades—have failed to understand the change that has taken place in the conditions of our work in the countryside as a result of the predominant position acquired by the collective farms in the principal grain-growing areas....

...[T]he prime responsibility for conducting the farm has now been transferred from the individual peasants to the leadership of the collective farm, to the leading group of the collective farm.... And what does this mean? It means that the Party...must now take over the direction of the collective farms, assume responsibility for the work, and help the collective farmers to develop their farms on the basis of science and technology....

The transition from individual farming to collective farming should have led...to an intensification of Communist leadership on the collective farms. In fact, however, what has happened in a number of cases is that the Communists have been quite out of it, and the collective farms have been run by former White officers, former Petliurists, and enemies of the workers and peasants generally....

3) The third reason for the defects...is that many of our comrades...failed to understand that, in spite of being a socialist form of economy, the collective farms by themselves are yet far from being guaranteed against all sorts of dangers and against the penetration of all sorts of counter-revolutionary elements into their leadership; that they are not guaranteed against the possibility that under certain circumstances anti-Soviet elements may use the collective farms for their own ends.

The collective farm is a socialist form of *economic* organisation, just as the Soviets are a socialist form of *political* organisation.... But collective farms and Soviets are only a *form* of organisation—a socialist form, it is true, but only a *form* of organisation for all that. Everything depends upon the *content* that is put into this form....

Collective farms, as a socialist form of economic organisation, may perform miracles of economic construction if they are headed by real revolutionaries, Bolsheviks, Communists. On the other hand, collective farms may for a certain period become a shield for all sorts of counter-revolutionary acts if these collective farms are run by Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, Petliura officers and other White Guards, former Denikinists and Kolchakites. Moreover, it must be borne in mind that the collective farms, as a form of organisation, not only are not guaranteed against the penetration of anti-Soviet elements, but, at first, even provide

certain facilities which enable counter-revolutionaries to take advantage of them temporarily.... Hence, it is not only a matter of the collective farms themselves as a socialist form of organisation; it is primarily a matter of the content that is put into this form; it is primarily a matter of *who* stands at the head of the collective farms and *who* leads them....

...[I]t is precisely because some of our Communists have not understood this simple thing that we now have a situation where a number of collective farms are managed by well-camouflaged anti-Soviet elements who organise wrecking and sabotage in them.

4) The fourth reason for the defects in our work in the countryside is the inability of a number of our comrades in the localities to reorganise the front of the struggle against the kulaks; their failure to understand that the face of the class enemy has changed of late, that the tactics of the class enemy in the countryside have changed, and that we must change our tactics accordingly if we are to achieve success....

...The present-day kulaks and kulak agents, the present-day anti-Soviet elements in the countryside... will never say, "Down with the collective farms!" They are "in favour" of collective farms. But inside the collective farms they carry on sabotage and wrecking work that certainly does the collective farms no good. They will never say, "Down with grain procurements!" They are "in favour" of grain procurements. They "only" resort to demagoguery and demand that the collective farm should reserve a fund for the needs of livestock-raising three times as large as that actually required; that the collective farm should set aside an insurance fund three times as large as that actually required; that the collective farm should provide from six to ten pounds of bread per working member per day for public catering, etc. Of course, after such "funds" have been formed and such grants for public catering made, after such rascally demagoguery, the economic strength of the collective farms is bound to be undermined, and there is little left for grain procurements....

...The kulaks have been defeated, but they are far from having been crushed yet.... [C]ollective farms can be either Bolshevik *or* anti-Soviet. And if certain collective farms are not being led by us, that means that they are being led by anti-Soviet elements. There can be no doubt about that.

5) Finally, there is one other reason for the defects in our work in the countryside. This consists in underestimating the role and responsibility of Communists in the work of collective-farm development, in underestimating the role and responsibility of Communists in the matter of grain procurements. In speaking of the difficulties of grain procurement, Communists usually throw the responsibility upon the peasants, claiming that the peasants are to blame for everything. But that is absolutely untrue, and certainly unjust. The peasants are not to blame at all. If we are to speak of responsibility and blame, then the responsibility falls wholly upon the Communists, and we Communists alone are to blame for all this....

Order from the CPC USSR and CC AUCP(B) on preventing the mass flight of starving villagers in search of food. In *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 85–86.

22 January 1933

The CC AUCP and the CPC USSR have received reports on the mass flight of peasants "for bread" to the Central Black Earth Oblast, the Volga region, the Moscow Oblast, the Western Oblast, and Belarus. The CC AUCP and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR do not doubt that this flight of villagers, like the exodus from Ukraine last year, have been organized

by enemies of Soviet rule.... Last year the Party, Soviet, and Cheka [secret police] agencies of Ukraine missed that counterrevolutionary undertaking by the enemies of Soviet rule. Last year's mistakes cannot be repeated this year.

First. The CC AUCP and the CPC USSR order the Regional Council, the Executive Council, and the Official OGPU Representative in the North Caucasus to prevent the mass flight of peasants from the North Caucasus to other regions and entry into the region from Ukraine.

Second. The CC AUCP and the CPC USSR order the CC CP(B)U, the CPC Ukrainian SSR, [Vsevolod] Balytsky, and [Stanislav] Redens to prevent the mass flight of peasants from Ukraine to other regions and entry into Ukraine from the North Caucasus.

Third. The CC AUCP and the CPC USSR order the Official Representatives of the OGPU in the Moscow Oblast, the Central Black Earth Oblast, the Western Oblast, Belarus, and the Lower Volga and Middle Volga regions to arrest "peasants" fleeing north from Ukraine and the North Caucasus and, after the filtration of counterrevolutionary elements, to return the rest to their places of residence....

Chairman, CPC USSR, V. M. Molotov
Secretary, CC AUCP(B), J[oseph] Stalin

Resolution of the Politburo of the CC AUCP(B) on strengthening the CP(B)U Central Committee and oblast organizations. In *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine (2008)*. Excerpts, pp. 88–89.

24 January 1933

The CC AUCP(B) considers it to be established fact that the Party organizations of Ukraine have failed to perform the tasks assigned to them by the Party in organizing grain procurement and fulfilling the grain-delivery plan....

The CC AUCP(B) considers that the Odesa, Dnipropetrovsk, and Kharkiv oblasts are the critical ones for deciding the fate of Ukraine's agriculture and that they must be secured in the first instance.

The CC AUCP(B) resolves to:

1) Appoint CC AUCP(B) Secretary Comrade [Pavel] Postyshev [to the posts of] Second Secretary of the CC CP(B)U and First Secretary of the Kharkiv oblast Party committee.

2) Appoint Comrade [Mendel] Khataevich First Secretary of the Dnipropetrovsk oblast Party committee while retaining him as one of the secretaries of the CC CP(B)U.

Appoint Comrade [Mikhail] Razumov First Secretary of the Odesa oblast Party committee.⁵

Relieve Comrades Maiorov, Stroganov, and Terekhov of their duties....

From a draft report of the GPU Ukrainian SSR on the progress of repressive operations in the countryside from November 1932 to January 1933. In *Rozsekrechena pam'iat'* (2007). Excerpts, pp. 502–3. Translated by Maksym Motorenko and Bohdan Klid.

⁵ The decision regarding Razumov was canceled; Evgenii Veger (1899–1938) was confirmed as First Secretary of the Odesa oblast committee of the CP(B)U.

[Early February 1933]....

As a result of intensifying operative pressure by the organs of the GPU between November and January with the aim of suppressing the activity of organized c[ounter]r[evolutionary] elements on the collective farms, 1,208 groups inside collective farms were uncovered and liquidated and, among these, 6,682 people were arrested.

These groups, according to the basic nature of their activities, are classified as follows:

Kulak insurgent and other c[ounter]r[evolutionary] organizations and groups.....	71
National c[ounter]r[evolutionary] groups.....	2
Theft and squandering of grain.....	757
Theft of other socialist property.....	97
Sabotage of grain procurements.....	105
Wrecking on collective farms.....	65
Resistance to grain procurements.....	119
Other anti-Soviet groups.....	99.....

In the process of grain procurement, it also became glaringly apparent that there was organized sabotage on the part of some deviant communists in deference to kulaks, Petliurites, and other counterrevolutionary elements corrupting the Soviet and collective-farm apparatus.

Active resistance to grain delivery was noted on the part of the leadership of village councils, Party cells, collective-farm and district organizations. In particular, attempts were noted on the part of some “communists” to disrupt the removal of seed grain for the fulfillment of grain requisitions from collective farms that maliciously did not fulfill their grain-procurement plans....

From operational order no. 2, GPU Ukrainian SSR, on the need to liquidate the insurgent underground before beginning sowing. In *Rozsekrechena pam'iat'* (2007). Excerpts, pp. 511–12. Translated by Maksym Motorenko and Bohdan Klid.

13 February 1933....

Top Secret....

Kharkiv

The organized sabotage of grain procurement and autumn sowing; organized mass theft on collective and state farms; terror against the staunchest and most steadfast communists and village activists; the transfer of dozens of Petliurite emissaries in the fall of last year; the distribution of counterrevolutionary Petliurite leaflets, especially on the Right Bank; and the analysis of secret-service materials **indicated the undoubted existence of an organized counterrevolutionary insurgent underground in Ukraine associated with foreign powers and foreign intelligence services, mainly with the Polish general staff....**

For the purpose of immediately breaking up and exposing the c[ounter]r[evolutionary] underground, a Shock Operative Group was organized in the GPU Ukrainian SSR. During this period it successfully undertook a series of operations and exposed a counterrevolutionary underground in Ukraine that spanned up to 200 districts, about 30 railway stations and depots, and a number of places in border zones....

An analysis of cases liquidated in this period indicates that we were faced here with an integral, thoroughly developed plan for the organization of an armed insurrection in Ukraine by spring 1933 for the purpose of overthrowing Soviet rule and establishing a capitalist state, the

so-called “Independent Ukrainian Republic.”....

Special Plenipotentiary in Ukraine
Vice Chairman, OGPU
V[sevolod] Balytsky

Stanislav Kosior, “Ob oshibkakh i nedochetakh v organizatsii khlebozagotovok na Ukraine” (On Errors and Shortcomings in Organizing Grain Procurements in Ukraine), *Pravda*, 15 February 1933. Excerpts, p. 3. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

...I now want to focus on our concrete errors directly related to that which Com[rade] Stalin revealed in his speech—the errors and shortcomings in organizing grain procurements in Ukraine....

...[I]n essence, only in November did we actually begin to rouse the Party organization for grain procurement. Until November there were very widespread illusions and easygoing attitudes to the effect that one way or another grain would be procured; that the plan, after all the reductions that we received, would be fulfilled....

...[T]he theft of grain, the squandering of grain, as it is delicately described, was very widespread during this year’s grain harvest.... But what is especially characteristic, testifying to the existence of easygoing attitudes and absence of Bolshevik vigilance, is that approximately until November that mass incidence of theft and squandering of grain was not uncovered....

New forms of struggle against grain procurements by our class enemy were overlooked. As before, the class enemy was “sought” outside the collective farm, but he, having made his way into the collective farm in such positions as inventory keeper, accountant, vice chairman, and so on, organized thievery, provided cover for and facilitated the theft and squandering of grain.... [A]ll this was hidden from us by all kinds of pious signs, such as the establishment of various funds for public catering, and so on....

When you come to a district for grain procurements, they begin to take reports out of every pocket for you, statistics about low yields compiled more often than not by hostile elements that have wormed their way into the collective farms, land divisions, and Machine-Tractor Stations. But in these reports you will not find one word about the harvest that was in the field, that was squandered, stolen, hidden. Our comrades...unable to make head or tail of the falsified figures supplied to them, sometimes become kulak advocates, defenders of those numbers. In countless examples it has been shown that this arithmetic is kulak arithmetic, that according to it we not only would not receive the quantity of grain that was procured but would not procure even half of it. In the hands of hostile elements, false figures and inflated balances became a cover for thievery, for the pilfering of grain on a massive scale....

...In order to procure grain it is necessary that every leading official and every communist be imbued with distrust toward false, juggled figures. It is necessary, by means of concrete facts—and there more than enough of them—to reveal to the collective farmers the true essence of kulak arithmetic....

It is clear that where there was no pressure from our side: where class vigilance was dulled among our comrades, the kulak, the class enemy, was active. In a number of districts quite a few collective farms turned out to be under the influence if not in the hands of kulaks, Petliurites, Makhnovites, and other elements.... This took place because, as a result of

complacency, the absence of Bolshevik vigilance and perspicacity, our work became so unsatisfactory that even in good districts kulaks and wreckers managed to worm their way into the leadership of a number of collective farms and organize the sabotage of grain procurements....

We did not uncover these facts in time and did not firmly grasp the reins so as to correct the mistakes of Party organizations in a timely fashion and promptly reorient their work according to the new situation in the countryside. The CC AUCP(B) and Comrade Stalin gave us a number of clear and precise directives in that regard at the appropriate time....

The legacy of last year's mistakes hung over us; the fear of going to extremes, of squeezing too hard was dominant in the districts, and in a number of instances it turned into total inactivity and opportunistic neglect....

At the plenum Comrade Stalin said that the new situation in the countryside created by the appearance of collective-farm trade in grain required that Party organizations speed up and intensify the tempo of grain procurement from the very first days of the harvest.... Instead of directly and firmly facing the collective and individual farmers with their primary obligation of fulfilling the plan, instead of speeding up grain procurement from the very beginning of the harvest, they did not take the appropriate measures, lost time, and did not take the offensive in the most critical period of grain procurement....

... We let matters slip from our grasp and caused irreparable harm to grain procurements—the main task that we were obliged to fulfill, come what may....

If we are to speak about grain procurements themselves, about the methods adopted, about means of putting pressure on weak points, then here as well there were very serious shortcomings this year.

I should first of all recall the attitudes prevailing at the start of the grain procurements...and through June–September. What were those attitudes made up of? Of whining that the plan was difficult, that the plan given was incorrect, and so on.... We spoke about this more than once with district workers of Odesa and Dnipropetrovsk [oblasts]; we posed the question more than once and with great seriousness and were obliged to take severe measures with regard to some leading district workers but, even so, we must frankly admit that we did not bring this matter to an end. We did not strike hard at hidden, masked attitudes; at those who were saying in various quarters that nothing would come of the plan, that one should wait, that it might be reduced, and so on. And at the same time there were discussions that served to demobilize and disarm Party organizations. These demobilizing attitudes in localities can also be explained by the fact that when they were making preparations for grain procurements, they were engaged in conversations about plan reductions, hoping for an easy plan, and raising the expectations of collective farmers in that regard. And then, when the plan was announced; when in Odesa [oblast], for instance, where the harvest was considerably better than last year's, a plan was announced that was greater than last year's, the oblast and district leadership was unable to counteract these attitudes and break these demobilizing attitudes even in the course of the entire campaign....

And finally, the last question, which also played by no means the least role in the unsatisfactory fulfillment of the grain-procurement plan, and which also showed that we allowed a serious error here—I have in mind the policy of the creation of so-called seed funds in Ukraine for storage prior to the fulfillment of the grain-procurement plan.

What is the essence of the question? It is clear that the fulfillment of the grain-procurement plan is the primary obligation of every collective farm. And if in the countryside an opportunist, an agent of the class enemy, comes forward and declares: first of all for me and later, what remains, for the state, then it is easy to figure out this line. Every communist will reject such an obviously opportunistic line; here it is immediately clear that this is not our line but one prompted by the class enemy, even though there were such “communists” among us who themselves defended this line. But there was a second line, similar in its essence, that brought us great harm: it was explained in large measure by the fear of repeating the mistakes of the previous year. It consisted in the policy of creating and storing so-called seed funds while not fulfilling the grain-procurement plan. We stored seed funds, declaring them untouchable....

What was the harm in the policy of untouchable funds? The harm consisted in demoting the interests of the state to second place, and, as a result, our comrades in the districts, instead of turning things around, guaranteeing the fulfillment of grain procurements first and foremost, retreated before the funds. This policy of creating and storing funds prior to the fulfillment of the grain-procurement plan clearly weakened our positions with regard to fulfilling the grain-procurement plan, created plausible cover for saboteurs, and strengthened resistance to grain procurements. Indeed, this policy disoriented the district and village workers, demobilizing them with regard to organizing grain procurements.

In essence, on the one hand we struggled against the kulak and struggled to fulfill the grain-procurement plan, while on the other hand, in the main question—that grain had to be delivered to the state first of all, and funds created afterward—we took the wrong position and found ourselves in the falsest of situations....

I must say directly that we failed to fulfill the plan, notwithstanding all opportunities to fulfill it; we failed because we did not work satisfactorily.

“Vyshe znamia proletarskogo internatsionalizma!” (Raise Higher the Banner of Proletarian Internationalism!). Lead editorial in *Pravda*, 10 March 1933, p. 1. Excerpts. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

...The growing strength of the Soviet Union is encountering desperate resistance on the part of the shattered counterrevolutionary bourgeois-kulak nationalist groups, which is inevitably being reflected within the Party. On the front of national and cultural development as well, the class enemy, having suffered a resounding defeat in open battle, is now trying in other ways, by other means to throw his last forces, desperate evil and hatred, against us. From open methods of struggle he has turned to camouflaged methods, not encountering determined resistance on the part of local Party and Soviet organizations in a number of instances....

There can be no doubt that in the current period of class struggle and the liquidation of the kulak, local nationalist deviationists, screened by the false national flag, are essentially defending the last positions of the defeated and economically shattered bourgeois-kulak nationalist elements, playing into the hands of the international imperialists, into the hands of the interventionists.

The counterrevolutionary activities of all sorts of chauvinists and deviationists with regard to the nationality question are facilitated and, in a number of instances, made possible primarily by the insufficient revolutionary vigilance and occasional crude errors of local Party

and Soviet organizations. . . . [L]ocal Party and Soviet organizations have not understood the new tactics and new maneuvers of the remnants of the shattered kulaks and have found themselves captive to local nationalist elements and those deviating in their direction.

And then, finally, do we not find testimony to the same effect in outrageous instances of the crudest distortions of Leninist nationality policy in Ukraine? Here, in a number of raions, as a result of the dulling of class vigilance, of not understanding the new maneuvers of the remnants of the shattered classes and underestimating the unbreakable link between the national and peasant questions, there has been a significant weakening of the struggle against deviations in the nationality question. In some raions the nationality policy of the Party was carried out mechanically, without taking account of concrete particularities, without the necessary educational work and necessary controls, without giving enough attention to training Bolshevik cadres. All this, obviously, played into the hands of the bourgeois-kulak and Petliurite elements, making it easier for them to enter into the Soviet apparatus, collective farms, etc.

The class enemy is desperately resisting the victorious building of socialism, also directing his weapons against Leninist nationality policy.

The task of Party organizations, especially in Ukraine, Belarus, Central Asia, Kazakhstan and other national republics and oblasts, as well as the local press, lies in the timely exposure of the new tactics and machinations of class enemies, in tearing off their masks and showing the masses the true counterrevolutionary face of the bourgeois-kulak nationalist elements, deviationists, and those reconciled to them. . . .

Report from the GPU Ukrainian SSR on problems with food supplies and raions of Ukraine affected by famine. In *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 100–102.

12 March 1933

According to data reported in February and March, problems with food supplies were registered in 738 population centers of 139 raions, where 11,067 families are starving.

Among the starving, 17,308 people are suffering from acute illnesses owing to malnutrition.

In the same period, 2,487 people died of hunger.

The largest number of famine cases was registered at the end of February and at the beginning of March. In some places this phenomenon has grown massive in scale. . . .

Dnipropetrovsk and Kyiv oblasts and the Moldavian ASSR are most affected by food-supply problems. The number of starving families afflicted by disease and mortality is particularly striking in Dnipropetrovsk oblast.

Collective farmers prevail among the starving. . . .

Starving families eat various food substitutes (corn cobs and stalks, millet pods, dried straw, herbs, rotten watermelons and beetroots, potato peelings, acacia pods, etc.) as food. Incidents of eating the flesh of cats, dogs, and dead horses have been registered.

Twenty-eight incidents of cannibalism have been registered. . . .

Deputy Head, Ukrainian SSR GPU
Secret Political Department, Aleksandrovsky

From a memorandum of the CC CP(B)U to the CC AUCP(B) on progress in preparing spring sowing, some reasons for the difficult food situation in a number of oblasts and raions of the republic, and measures to aid the starving. In *Holod 1932–1933 rokiv na Ukraïni* (1990). Excerpts, pp. 441–44. Translated by Maksym Motorenko and Bohdan Klid.

15 March 1933....

At the present time, along with reports from all oblasts about preparations for sowing, we are receiving reports about the difficult food situation with demands for assistance.

1. Food situation

If in the last year there was silence about the difficult situation in the raions, this year it is the opposite—in every possible way they are trying to overemphasize the worst cases, to collect figures and generalize them. In a great many reports the true purpose of the information is apparent—to obtain assistance from the CC....

The reports available to the CC CP(B)U from the oblast committees and through the GPU on the scale of famine are extremely contradictory....

Information coming in from various sources indicates that the gravest situation is indisputably the one that has developed in Dnipropetrovsk oblast. It must be said that it is precisely from there that we receive most information about famine, deaths, and so on, while, for instance, there is very little information for Odesa oblast, and, if one were to judge only from reports, then Odesa oblast would have to be considered the most fortunate oblast of all. In fact, of course, that is far from being the case.... Out of 49 raions of Dnipropetrovsk oblast, 21 raions are considered to be in dire straits. Kyiv oblast, where 31 raions are considered to be in exceptionally difficult condition, is in second place as to the number of reports concerning starvation. Here we obviously have a very serious recurrence of the starvation that occurred last year on quite a large scale. Further, according to the number of affected raions, we have Vinnytsia [oblast]—17; the Donbas—11 raions; Odesa—14; Kharkiv—9 raions. Altogether, according to GPU registers, 103 raions are affected in Ukraine. But all these data on the number of raions hardly represent the true state of affairs.... Compared to last year, with regard to affected raions, as well as collective farms, we get a much more varied picture. Here the raions with the most dilapidated collective farms and poor management practices are obviously most affected. Most of the starving are those who had few workdays or none at all, especially those with large families, as well as individual farmers. So-called “returnees,” who roamed somewhere with their families during this time and are now returning to their villages and collective farms in significant numbers, are in especially difficult straits.... A significant number of the starving are members of collective farms who earned plenty of workdays but received very little grain in hand. In such raions 75–80 percent of grain issued was allotted for public catering. What is more, it is certainly the good members of collective farms, especially those with large families, who suffered relatively more because of public catering. There were cases when issued bread was taken back. There are also cases in which a great many collective farmers and individual farmers hid grain under the influence of panic and starved at the same time.... The main reason for the famine stands out more prominently and sharply before the masses this year: poor management and an unacceptable attitude toward the public good (losses, stealing, and waste of grain). For in most of the starving raions a negligible amount of grain was taken for procurement, and it is by no means possible to say that “grain was taken.”.... Why are people starving in Kyiv oblast, where we took hardly any grain from the major raions for the procurement plan? There was a serious nonfulfillment of the

spring crop-sowing plan and a huge loss of winter crops in those raions. And that which was gathered was eaten in public catering—as much as one wanted—and pilfered by those who did not work.... Comrades who have been to the localities say that now there is hardly any talk in the Kyiv region to the effect that “grain was taken” and that people blame themselves for poor work, for not safeguarding grain, for allowing it to be pilfered. In this regard, there is undoubtedly a certain about-face among the masses on the collective farms that manifests itself in their attitude toward those who did not work.

But this is not by any means understood everywhere and by all collective farmers. An exodus from the village took on huge proportions despite measures taken to prevent it. The fact that starvation has not yet knocked sense into the heads of a great many collective farmers is shown by the unsatisfactory preparations for sowing precisely in the most troublesome raions....

There is a need for food aid not only in grain but also other products, vegetables, potatoes, meat, fats, and so on....

Certainly, at the beginning of sowing, extra food assistance will be required for Kyiv oblast, the Donbas, the Moldavian ASSR, and the Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, and Vinnytsia oblasts.

S[tanislav] Kosior

Report of the All-Union Resettlement Committee on resettling collective farmers to Ukraine (with table). In *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 121–22.

29 December
1933 Express.
Secret.

To: Head of GULAG OGPU, Comrade Berman

The All-Union Resettlement Committee of the CPC USSR...reports that the proposed resettlement plan has been fulfilled by 104.76 percent. In total...117,149 persons...have been relocated....

Deputy Chairman, All-Union Resettlement Committee, CPC USSR Rud

Summary Data on Echelons of Resettlers Sent to Ukraine as of 28 December 1933

Source Oblast	Destination Oblast	Number Households
Gorky	Odesa	2,120
Ivanov	Donetsk	3,527
Belarusian SSR	Odesa	4,630
Central Black Earth Oblast	Kharkiv	4,800
Western	Dnipropetrovsk	6,679

S. V. Kosior, “Results and Immediate Tasks of the National Policy in the Ukraine: Report by Comrade S. V. Kosior to the Joint Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine, November, 1933.” In *Soviet Ukraine Today* (1934). Excerpts, pp. 34, 72–74.

...The transition to the policy of mass collectivization, the liquidation of the kulaks as a class, and the severe intensification of the class struggle which it entailed could not but activate the nationalist elements. It should never have been forgotten that in the Ukraine in particular, in nine cases out of ten, the struggle of every form of counter-revolution is waged under nationalist slogans, is camouflaged by the nationalist flag, the most cunning, the most harmful and the most despicable flag.

We did not bear this in mind sufficiently in our work; we overlooked the nationalist danger, we did not mobilize ourselves against it, did not rouse the Party to the struggle against it.

In the new situation which arose as a result of the final and irrevocable victory of the collective farm system, and of the almost complete liquidation in the main of the kulaks as a class, the remnants of the defeated class enemy began to adopt new tactics in the fight against the Soviet governments—tactics of “quiet sapping.” Camouflaged in all ways, they wormed their way into our factories, our Soviet farms, machine and tractor stations, collective farms, and even into our Party organizations. Several sections of the cultural and economic construction in the rural districts were captured by the kulak, Petliura, nationalist elements. It must be admitted that we, the Communist Party of the Ukraine and its Central Committee, did not in time discover the new methods of struggle the class enemy was adopting in the villages or the manner in which he penetrated into our apparatus....

We must on no account forget that the remnants of the defeated kulaks are becoming active and are being welded together by the Ukrainian nationalists, by the remnants of the former Ukrainian petty-bourgeois parties abroad, which do their mercenary work first for one and then for another capitalist country.

We must discover and unmask before the toilers of the Ukraine all these foul and despicable traitors to the Ukrainian people—the Ukrainian nationalists of all shades.

During the last few years the nationalist elements have been able to penetrate into our institutions in considerable numbers, to place their own people in these institutions, to organize sabotage and wrecking, and to pursue their counter-revolutionary aims under the flag of Ukrainization. Whole counter-revolutionary, nationalist nests were formed in the People’s Commissariat of Education, of Agriculture, of Justice, in the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, the Ukrainian Institute of Marxism-Leninism, the Agricultural Academy, the Shevchenko Institute, etc. More than that, it became particularly clear during the Party purging that in several districts, nationalist elements had wormed their way into the leadership of the district Party organizations as well.

How was it that the enemy succeeded in getting round us....

In this connection we must most particularly emphasize the role of [Mykola] Skrypnyk [Skrypnyk]. He, to a certain extent, was the centre of attraction for the different nationalist elements; he acted as a sort of shield for them....

“The Results and Immediate Tasks of the National Policy in the Ukraine. Resolution Adopted by the Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of the Communist Party of the Ukraine on the Report of Comrade S. V. Kosior (November 22, 1933).” In *Soviet Ukraine Today* (1934). Excerpts, pp. 102, 105, 107–11.

...Our Party’s adoption of the policy of mass collectivization and the liquidation of the kulaks as a class and the uprooting of the last remnants of capitalism encountered the desperate resistance of the bourgeois nationalist elements, particularly of the Ukrainian kulaks and their agents in the Party.

Forced out of their production base, the bourgeois-kulak elements continued the struggle against the Soviet government and the Communist Party by adopting in the changed situation, the new tactics of quiet sapping, and thus penetrated into our factories and government offices, Soviet farms, machine and tractor stations, collective farms, and even Party organizations, and tried to disrupt them from within....

However, the Communist Party of the Ukraine overlooked and did not in time expose the intensified penetration of Ukrainian national elements, the remnants of the defeated class enemy, into the leading bodies of the collective farms, machine and tractor stations, of various Soviet land departments, and cultural organizations, and even into the Party itself, for the purpose of carrying on their wrecking and counter-revolutionary sabotage of the Party and the Soviet government....

Owing to the relaxation of the Bolshevik struggle against Ukrainian nationalism, the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of the Ukraine and its Central Committee, which several years ago successfully smashed [Oleksandr] Shumsky-ism, recently overlooked the formation of a new nationalist deviation in the ranks of the Party led by N. A. Skrypnik [Mykola Skrypnyk]....

The nationalist deviation of Skrypnik and the trend that he led facilitated the work of the Ukrainian nationalist[s] that was directed towards separating the Ukraine from the Soviet Union and towards converting it into a colony of Polish fascism or German imperialism....

The decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union of December 14, 1932, and that of January 24, 1933, served as the beginning of serious self-criticism in the ranks of the Communist Party of the Ukraine and of the rectification of the mistakes committed in the leadership of agriculture as well as in the practical pursuit of the national policy....

This Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of the Communist Party of the Ukraine sets before the Communist Party of the Ukraine the following main tasks in the sphere of national policy....

As hitherto, Great Russian chauvinism is the principal danger confronting the whole of the Soviet Union and the whole of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. But this does not in the least contradict the fact that in certain republics of the U.S.S.R., particularly in the Ukraine at the present moment, the principal danger is local Ukrainian nationalism, which has joined with the imperialist interventionists....

To offer determined resistance to all attempts to break or to relax the ties between the Ukraine and the Soviet Union, to strengthen these ties...such are the most important tasks of the Party in the Ukraine.

J. V. Stalin, “Report to the Seventeenth Party Congress on the Work of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.),” 26 January 1934. In Stalin, *Works*, vol. 13 (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1955). Excerpts, pp. 368–70.

...It should be observed that the survivals of capitalism in people’s minds are much more tenacious in the sphere of the national question than in any other sphere. They are more tenacious because they are able to disguise themselves well in national costume. Many think that [Mykola] Skrypnyk’s fall from grace was an individual case, an exception to the rule. This is not true. The fall from grace of Skrypnyk and his group in the Ukraine is not an exception. Similar aberrations are observed among certain comrades in other national republics as well.

What is the deviation towards nationalism—regardless whether it is a matter of the deviation towards Great-Russian nationalism or the deviation towards local nationalism?... The deviation towards nationalism reflects the attempts of “one’s own,” “national” bourgeoisie to undermine the Soviet system and to restore capitalism. The source of both these deviations, as you see, is the same. It is a *departure* from Leninist internationalism. If you want to keep both deviations under fire, then aim primarily against this source, against those who depart from internationalism—regardless whether it is a matter of the deviation towards local nationalism or the deviation towards Great-Russian nationalism. (*Stormy applause.*)

There is a controversy as to which deviation represents the chief danger: the deviation towards Great-Russian nationalism, or the deviation towards local nationalism. Under present conditions, this is a formal and, therefore, a pointless controversy. It would be foolish to attempt to give ready-made recipes suitable for all times and for all conditions as regards the chief and the lesser danger. Such recipes do not exist. The chief danger is the deviation against which we have ceased to fight, thereby allowing it to grow into a danger to the state. (*Prolonged applause.*)

In the Ukraine, only very recently, the deviation towards Ukrainian nationalism did not represent the chief danger; but when the fight against it ceased and it was allowed to grow to such an extent that it linked up with the interventionists, this deviation became the chief danger. The question as to which is the chief danger in the sphere of the national question is determined not by futile, formal controversies, but by a Marxist analysis of the situation at the given moment, and by a study of the mistakes that have been committed in this sphere....

Pavel Postyshev, Speech delivered at the Seventeenth Congress of the AUCP(B), 27 January 1934. In *XVII s'ezd Vsesoiuznoi Kommunisticheskoi partii (b)* (1934). Excerpts, pp. 65–67, 69, 71. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

...Comrades, the full power and full significance of the day-to-day leadership of the CC AUCP(B) and of Comrade Stalin personally are particularly apparent in the example of the correction of errors and blunders in the work of the CP(B)U.

You are well aware that in the period 1931–33 the CP(B)U committed gross errors and blunders in the management of agriculture and in carrying out the Leninist nationality policy of the Party in Ukraine....

What were the root causes of all these errors, blunders, and failures?....

The CP(B)U did not take into account all the distinctive characteristics of the class struggle in Ukraine and the peculiarities of the internal situation in the CP(B)U.

What are those characteristics?....

The first characteristic is that in Ukraine the class enemy masks his activity against socialist construction with the nationalist banner and chauvinist slogans.

The second characteristic is that the Ukrainian kulak underwent a lengthy schooling in struggle against Soviet power, for in Ukraine the civil war was especially fierce and lengthy, given that political banditry was in control of Ukraine for an especially long period.

The third characteristic is that splinter groups of various counterrevolutionary organizations and parties settled in Ukraine more than elsewhere, being attracted to Ukraine on account of its proximity to western borders.

The fourth characteristic is that Ukraine proves to be an object of attraction to various interventionist centers and finds itself under their especially diligent observation.

And, finally, the fifth characteristic is that the deviationists in the CP(B)U in all-Party questions usually allied and continue to ally themselves with the nationalist elements in their ranks, with the deviationists on the nationality question....

The CP(B)U should have crushed the nationalist elements, increased substantially the vigilance of all Party organizations in relation to those forms and methods of struggle that the class enemy has used and continues to use in Ukraine, mobilized the Party organizations even more in the spirit of intolerance toward the slightest manifestations of opportunism and nationalist deviations in particular, secured all important sectors of work in the city and especially in the countryside with reliable Bolsheviki, and, most important of all, more firmly adjusted methods of Bolshevik leadership according to the new situation and the directives of Comrade Stalin on the new tasks.

Unfortunately, the CP(B)U did not draw all those conclusions in full measure. There lies the explanation of its errors and failures both in agriculture and in carrying out Leninist nationality policy in Ukraine....

In those years of failure we had a situation in which Ukraine's agricultural capacity increased consistently, but the grain-procurement situation, the best indicator of the state of agriculture and class struggle in the village, deteriorated from one year to the next....

What was the grain-procurement situation in 1931? If by December 1930 Ukraine fulfilled its grain-procurement plan, by December 1931 only 74 percent was fulfilled; grain procurement stretched into May [1932], and only 90 percent was fulfilled in the rural sector....

If we look at the grain-procurement plan for 1932, the picture looks even worse than in 1931. Instead of 400 million poods procured by December 1930, and 380 million by December 1931, by December 1932 only 195 million poods were procured....

The question arises: What was the matter?....

This can be explained, first of all, by the lack of Bolshevik vigilance, by the failure to hone Party organizations and conduct due struggle with the class enemy.

It is to be explained, secondly, by the fact that the CP(B)U's methods of work and leadership in agriculture were inappropriate to the new situation and new tasks of developing collectives....

What solved the problem of overcoming the breakdown in Ukrainian agriculture?

The problem was solved above all by the day-to-day management of the CC AUCP(B) and of Comrade Stalin personally and by the tremendous material and technical assistance provided to Ukraine by the CC AUCP(B). The problem was solved, secondly, by the Bolsheviks of Ukraine giving battle—decisive battle—to the class enemy. The problem was solved, thirdly, by the Bolsheviks of Ukraine radically reforming the methods of managing agriculture according to the historic directives of Comrade Stalin at the January plenum of the CC and CCC and by the subsequent day-to-day directives of the CC AUCP(B) and Comrade Stalin personally....

As you know, the CP(B)U also committed extremely serious errors and blunders in carrying out Leninist nationality policy.

Where did these errors and blunders lie?

The error lay, first of all, in overlooking the activities of the nationalist counterrevolution, notwithstanding such serious signals as the trial of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine in 1929 and the Ukrainian National Center affair in 1931.

The error lay, secondly, in overlooking the escalation of [Mykola] Skrypnyk's particular nationalist errors into a system of national-opportunistic views, into a nationalist deviation, which took place roughly in 1930–31.

You see, therefore, that the roots of these errors lie in the failure of the CP(B)U to draw all the necessary conclusions from the directives of Comrade Stalin at the Sixteenth Congress of our Party concerning the threat of the activation of nationalist elements, the threat of the revival of deviations on the nationality question in connection with the full-scale advance of socialism on all fronts and the increasing acuteness of class struggle in the country....

The decisions of the CC AUCP(B) of 14 December [1932] and 24 January [1933] roused the CP(B)U to battle to correct the errors and blunders in carrying out the Party's nationality policy in Ukraine.

The past year was the year of the defeat of the nationalist counterrevolution, the uncovering and defeat of the nationalist deviation headed by Skrypnyk, and the exertion of great creative effort in the sphere of the development of Soviet Ukrainian culture....

Stanislav Kosior, Speech delivered at the Seventeenth Congress of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik), 30 January 1934. In *XVII S"ezd Vsesoiuznoi Kommunisticheskoi partii (b)* (1934). Excerpts, pp. 197–99. Translated by Maksym Motorenko and Bohdan Klid.

...The period from the Sixteenth to the Seventeenth Congress is distinguished particularly by the fact that in the course of it the Party achieved tremendous victories, achieved them in fierce class struggle against the remnants of the capitalist elements....

...[I]n this period the CC AUCP(B) paid exceptional attention to the task of directing socialist construction in Ukraine.... The situation was extremely complicated. The completion of total collectivization and the liquidation on that basis of the kulaks as a class required increased attention and better management of collective farms, which was absolutely necessary in that period, when the collective farms became the decisive force in the countryside, when there was need for an even more decisive struggle with the remnants of the defeated kulaks and all kinds of counterrevolutionary elements that were attempting to demolish the collective farms from within and to corrupt them. And it turned out that at this very moment there was a lack of vigilance among us in the CP(B)U....

Only after the historic speech of Comrade Stalin at the January plenum of the CC and the CCC, following the severe criticism of our errors by Comrade Stalin—the errors of our leadership; after his Bolshevik instructions, extraordinary in their strength and simplicity, on how to get out of the situation that had developed and how to conduct our further work—only then did the true reorganization of our work begin. To that end the CC AUCP(B) had to take additional measures in relation to Ukraine. I have in mind the resolution of 24 January 1933—the resolution on strengthening the leadership of the CP(B)U and the main oblasts of Ukraine by sending to us entire ranks of first-rate workers....

The example of Ukraine gives only a partial but nevertheless a quite striking illustration of the titanic work carried out by the Central Committee and of the results we had all across the Soviet Union. All this bears witness to the highest quality of leadership. Here, again and again, we want to speak of the role of Comrade Stalin....

When referring to Ukraine, we cannot but dwell on the nationalist deviation in the CP(B)U, which played an exceptional role in creating and intensifying the lag in agriculture. We cannot but say that after the Sixteenth Congress the CP(B)U did not conduct a decisive struggle against nationalist deviations. Here, Comrade Stalin was absolutely correct in pointing this out. In Ukraine, where the class situation is the most complicated, where the activities of the remnants of the defeated class enemy attain the highest level of acuteness, the national flag plays an exceedingly important role for the class enemy. Moreover, the predominant coloring of the class enemy, with which he masks himself, is above all the national flag, nationalist clothing....

Only in 1933, under the direct control of the CC AUCP(B), of Comrade Stalin, according to his instructions, did we conduct a struggle in Ukraine to unmask the nationalist deviation of the CP(B)U, a struggle with counterrevolutionary nationalist elements, with nationalism in general....

...And the fact that we destroyed nationalism, and the fact that we took up work in the countryside properly, determined our successes in 1933....

British Foreign Office Documents

“Mr. Cairns’ Investigations in Soviet Union.” Andrew Cairns to E. M. H. Lloyd, 3 August 1932. In *The Foreign Office and the Famine* (1988). Excerpts, pp. 104–9, 111.

Dear Lloyd,

I left Moscow on June 15th and returned July 30th. During my six weeks absence I saw a good sample of the Ukraine, Crimea and Northern Caucasus....

...At a station close to the Ukrainian border the peasants I spoke to in the bazaar all cursed collectivisation... Every station had its crowd—from scores to several hundred, depending on the size of the town—of rag-clad hungry peasants, some begging for bread, many waiting, mostly in vain, for tickets, many climbing on to the steps or joining the crowds on the roof of each car, all filthy and miserable and not a trace of a smile anywhere.... I did not see a single good crop until we got very close to Kiev. The autumn sown crops were generally badly winter-killed, spindly, weedy and short, and the spring sown crops were choked by weeds. But all crops were of good colour, indicating that they had ample moisture.... At the depot in Kiev many people asked for bread.

In the morning of June 17th, I went for a walk and soon came across a small street bazaar.... I finally got one woman alone and made her stop talking and answer my questions. She said there was practically no bread because the Government had collected so much grain and exported it to England and Italy; that the collective farms around Kiev were very bad; that all the members were hungry and many were leaving; she had left her village with many others because she could not get food and that some were dying of starvation; she had a job in Kiev but it was impossible to keep from being hungry as she could not buy much food with her small salary....

...While climbing up a very steep hill to get a good look at the beautiful Dnieper [Dnipro] River, I came across two women pulling what at first I thought was dandelions or young leeks for greens, but upon examination it turned out to be tender grass. I asked them what they were going to do with the grass and they said "make soup." They were third category workers and got only 125 roubles per month and only 200 grammes of bread per day.... On the way back to my hotel I saw a horrible sight—a man dying on the street. He was apparently insane as he was going through all the motions of eating and rubbing his stomach with apparent satisfaction.... Further on I took advantage of a foreigner's privilege and took my place at the head of a long queue.... Outside the store were swarms of people.... I asked several people why things were so dear, and, seeing I did not understand a word of Ukrainian, they pulled in their cheeks, pretended to vomit, drew their finger's across their throat, and said, in Russian, "Kushat' nyet, nichevo nyet" (there is nothing to eat, nothing at all)....

[T]he next day, June 18th....

In the evening I found one of the largest bazaars in Kiev and had a most interesting time. Men's soft leather top boots, 300 roubles; ladies' split leather shoes, 120 roubles; a few small squares of sugar at 2/3 of a rouble each; butter 10 roubles per pound; eggs 6 roubles for 10; very small tins of fish 7 roubles; old scabby potatoes 1 rouble, and very small new ones 1½ roubles per pound; bread 10½ roubles per loaf; a policeman offering a pair of completely worn out top boots for 5 roubles; pigs feet 4 for 10 roubles; and scores of men and children, with badly swollen tummies, in rags, asleep on the ground (while flies by the thousand crawled over them) or begging or picking up scraps of vegetables and fish scales to eat. A terrific rain storm broke and I had to stand under a roof for 2 hours, during which time many people crowded around to try and make me understand them. Many of them were quite young, and nearly all were town workers. They were unanimous that things had never been so bad, that nearly everybody was hungry, that the peasants would not work, because they were all hungry, and were moving into the towns by the thousands, that less than 80% of the crop had been sown by collective farms and that the individual peasants had eaten their seed.... On my way home I stopped to give coins to 3 small girls (they were all nearly dead with hunger and the smallest one certainly could not have lived more than a few days longer) and a crowd gathered around to tell me there were many such children in Russia....

June 20th....

...On the way home I saw a truck load of rye meal being unloaded into a big bakery. The men carrying the bags told me the meal would cost over 100 roubles a pood in the bazaar. As usual, a crowd soon gathered around and all agreed that conditions were very bad, that people were hungry because there was no bread or anything else, that the peasants were not working so there would be less bread next winter, and that the collective farms were in a very bad condition. One man followed me all the way back to the hotel. He said he was a second category worker and got 180 roubles per month and 525 grammes of bread per day, that first category workers got

600 grammes of bread per day and street car conductors only 400 and absolutely nothing else. What surprised me most in Kiev was not what the people said (although conditions there seemed to be worse than in any place I visited in the next five weeks), but that they should all—young middle-aged and old alike—be unanimous and that none of them seemed to care what they said or who heard them, even the police and G.P.U....

“Situation in Soviet Union.” Sir Edmund Ovey (Moscow) to the Foreign Office, 5 March 1933. In *The Foreign Office and the Famine* (1988). Excerpt, p. 215.

Conditions in Kuban have been described to me by recent English visitor as appalling and as resembling an armed camp in a desert—no work no grain no cattle no draught horses, only idle peasants or soldiers. Another correspondent who had visited Kuban was strongly dissuaded from visiting the Ukraine where conditions are apparently as bad although apathy is greater. In fact all correspondents have now been “advised” by the press department of Commissariat for Foreign Affairs to remain in Moscow. Expulsions and arrests are the order of the day and this morning names of forty officials arrested for agricultural sabotage have been published in the press....

“Conditions in Northern Caucasus in Spring of 1933.” Report by Otto Schiller, German Agricultural Attaché in Moscow, 23 May 1933. Forwarded to Anthony Eden by the Duchess of Atholl, July 1933. In *The Foreign Office and the Famine* (1988). Excerpts, pp. 258–59, 262–63.

In the spring of 1933 I visited the following districts of the Northern Caucasus: The Kuban Province (Kubanskaya Oblast) from Kropotkino to Krasnodar; the Districts of Stavropol and Armavir; and the Povolye territories up to Salska-Bieloglina—a stretch, altogether of 1,200 kilometres by car.

The chief problem of North Caucasian agriculture is the famine, which since the late Autumn of 1932 has reached appalling dimensions. This time, in contrast to the preceding year, it is not only a matter of semi-starvation which then caused a fall in the productivity of labour, and of morale. It has reached the point of actual death from starvation, thanks to which, in whole districts, the population is rapidly disappearing, and agricultural activity, therefore, at an almost complete standstill.

There are two factors which are simultaneously causing the diminution in the population of the Northern Caucasus, now so clearly apparent. Firstly, the measures for the deportation and transplanting of large masses of the population, carried out on a large scale since last Autumn in connection with the State grain collection, and the fight against Kulak sabotage (a fight which is still proceeding), and secondly the extinction of the population through famine, now in full swing.

The policy of expulsion and deportation was put into force principally against the Cossacks of the Kuban Territory. The Kuban Cossacks by tradition and mentality were the most resolute antagonists of agricultural collectivism.... During last Autumn they exercised passive, and also, in some cases active, resistance to the measures of the Government.... The greater part of that particular Cossack population was forcibly uprooted from their villages and deported to

the Ural territories, thus practically annihilated. The Cossack population remaining in their native districts was considerably thinned through famine....

Populations have diminished, not only in those villages against which measures of expulsion and other punitive measures have been applied, but in almost all the villages visited by me during my journey....

The famine is not so much the result of last year's failure of crops as of the brutal campaign of State Grain Collection....

A distinctive feature of this famine is that the authorities have not acknowledged and do not now acknowledge that famine exists. They even officially deny it.... [A]t present no foreign help is possible. And the Soviet Government itself does nothing. I was told of many cases when sufferers, swollen from famine, implored help from the village soviets, only to be told that they should eat the bread which they had got hidden away, and that no famine at all existed. In fact the authorities explain the present situation by insisting that there is no lack of grain, that the peasants hide it....

There is no doubt that last Spring grain was concealed in many cases. *The Government at that time formed special permanent committees of Komsomoltsy* (young Communists, male and female) *who, carrying iron rods, went prodding the soil in the peasant courtyards, thus revealing large quantities of grain.* These Committees still continue to visit the villages in many places seeking freshly dug spots which might prove to be hiding places for grain....

...It may very well be that the extermination of the Cossack population was advantageous and desirable to the Soviet Government....

“Conditions in Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.” William Strang (Moscow) to Sir John Simon, 17 July 1933. In *The Foreign Office and the Famine* (1988). Excerpts, pp. 255–56.

Moscow, July 17, 1933

Sir,

It is hardly necessary to confirm the notorious fact that on the eve of the harvest conditions of semi-famine still continue to obtain over large areas of the Soviet Union. Unauthorised estimates of the number of people who have died, either directly or indirectly, from malnutrition in the past year vary up to as much as the fantastic figure of 10 million. It is, I think, quite impossible to guess what the figure may be. I am told by a member of the German Embassy that in the German Agricultural Concession in the North Caucasus, five men have been employed in gathering and burying the corpses of peasants who have come in from outside this oasis of plenty in search of food and have died. One of the erectors employed by Metropolitan-Vickers in the Ukraine says that people died of starvation in the block of apartments in which he lived, one of them outside his door. He says that he refused to believe the stories he heard of conditions in the villages outside and walked out to see for himself; he found, as he had been told, that some villages were completely deserted, the population having died or fled, and that corpses were lying about the houses and streets. His Majesty's consul in Moscow is occasionally visited by Canadians of Russian origin settled in the Ukraine who tell him the same dreary, if less lurid, story of want, hopelessness and desolation.

2. Great indignation has been expressed in the Soviet press at the establishment of a fund in Germany for the assistance of starving Germans in the Soviet Union, and the columns of the Moscow newspapers are full of resolutions from collective farms and other organisations in the

Volga and other regions inhabited by colonists of German race, protesting against these stories of starvation as “Fascist lies” and inviting unemployed Germans from the Reich to come and see for themselves or to send their children to the Volga collective farms to be fed and educated. It is, of course, true that there are prosperous and productive collective farms in the Volga German Republic and that a part of the population has enough to eat, but it is also true, as we know from Volga German servants of the Embassy, that the conditions prevalent in the Ukraine also obtain, to a milder degree and less widely perhaps, in the Volga German Republic....

“Tour by Mr. W. Duranty in North Caucasus and the Ukraine.” William Strang (Moscow) to Sir John Simon, 26 September 1933. In *The Foreign Office and the Famine* (1988). Excerpts, pp. 309–13.

Moscow, September 26, 1933

Sir,

...I have the honour to inform you that Mr. Walter Duranty, the Moscow correspondent of the *New York Times*, returned to Moscow a few days ago after a ten days’ trip in the North Caucasus and the Ukraine....

According to Mr. Duranty, the population of the North Caucasus and the Lower Volga has decreased in the past year by 3 million, and the population of the Ukraine by 4–5 million. Estimates that he had heard from other foreigners living in the Ukraine were that approximately half the population had moved either into the towns or into more prosperous districts....

From Rostov Mr. Duranty went to Kharkov, and on the way he noticed that large quantities of grain were in evidence at the railway stations, of which a large proportion was lying in the open air. Conditions in Kharkov were worse than in Rostov. There was less to eat, and the people had evidently been on very short commons.... During the year the death rate in Kharkov was, he thought, not more than 10 per cent above the normal. Numerous peasants, however, who had come into the towns had died off like flies....

...The Ukraine had been bled white. The population was exhausted, and if the peasants were “double-crossed” by the Government again no one could say what would happen. It was all very well, Mr. Duranty said, to call the U.S.S.R. a pacific country. It had to be, for, if a war occurred within the next five years, before the peasants had had time to forget the winter of 1932 and the spring of 1933, it would be impossible to mobilise the peasants....

According Mr. Duranty, Postyshev is the real force in the Ukraine. He and his “boys” in the political departments now run the country....

Mr. Duranty thinks it quite possible that as many as 10 million people may have died directly or indirectly from lack of food in the Soviet Union during the past year....

William Strang

German Foreign Office Documents

German Consulate, Kyiv, 15 January 1934, “Politischer Jahresbericht 1933” (Political Report for 1933). In *Holodomor v Ukraïni 1932–1933 rokiv* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 172–82, 187–88. Translated by Alexander J. Motyl.

The Internal Political Situation

The internal political situation in the jurisdictional area [*Amtsbezirk*] was characterized by famine, which, according to cautious estimates, took some 2.5 million lives from among the approximately 12 million inhabitants of the provinces of Kyiv, Chernihiv, and Vinnytsia. The condition and mood of the population were, like the measures of the Party and administrative agencies, decisively influenced by the catastrophe.... Hunger and want created a condition of despair not only among peasants; the workers, who are politically more important to the Soviet authorities, are deeply embittered as a result of bad food conditions, delayed and inadequate payment [of wages], and all kinds of privations in general. After all the disappointments, villagers no longer believed government promises that state organs would not demand more grain than already established in quotas at the beginning of the year and would not tolerate alternative plans from local authorities. Often the population even desired a worsening of the catastrophe, which they hoped might soon lead to the downfall of Bolshevik rule.

When, in order to guarantee the harvest, state authorities wanted and needed to squeeze enormous labor efforts out of people in this physically and spiritually weakened condition, the solution of this task could only be attempted by force. It was applied in the villages first and foremost by the “political sections” in the Machine-Tractor Stations, which thereby performed undeniable services for Soviet power.... In the cities, tens of thousands of workers and other inhabitants had to take part “voluntarily” in the harvest, without regard for their responsibilities at work and their suitability and under terrible housing and food conditions; they were received with suspicion and rejection by the peasants. Refusal led to loss of job or to denial of passport and thus to resettlement. Such a feudal system necessarily produced an intensification of anti-Soviet attitudes, which, in addition to a generally growing anti-Semitism, led to many acts of violence by the peasants, who went so far as to set on fire the living quarters of the urban agricultural workers....

The Party

If the Soviet authorities have finally succeeded in gathering the grain they need for their purposes, despite great difficulties and at the cost of destroying countless lives, that is due to the vigor with which the Party has asserted its will in its own ranks and thus also in all state agencies....

Only extraordinary measures could mobilize the internally weakened Party and state apparatus for the grain battle. This happened as a result of further developing the competitive and shock-brigade systems, sending thousands of tested Party members to the countryside, establishing the already mentioned “political sections,” and above all ruthlessly weeding out elements considered unreliable. This vigorous approach was a clear warning to the majority of Party members. Fear of punishment and defamation, more than persuasion and conscience, was the cause of a more serious execution of their duties. Many officials, including just the chairmen of some 130 raion executive committees and city councils in the jurisdictional area, were administratively removed from their positions as a result of professional lapses or “opportunistic” behavior, and some were arrested. By the same token, the purge of the Party has been conducted since the beginning of the year with constantly growing vigor. Falling victim to it in the jurisdictional area were some 120 secretaries of raion Party committees, i.e., 60 percent of the total, and about 70 chairmen of raion control commissions....

Further evidence of the fall in confidence in the Communist Party is the large contraction of the young communist movement, whose membership in Kyiv fell from 9,600 in 1928 to 2,600 in the year under report....

The Ukrainian Question

The development of the Ukrainian question during the year under report can also be evaluated only in relation to the famine. As a result of this catastrophe, for which the people hold Moscow's policies responsible, the old chasm between Ukrainians aspiring to independence and the unitary leanings of Moscow must naturally have become greater. Characteristic of the population's mood is the widespread view that the Soviet government promoted the expansion of the famine so as to force the Ukrainians to their knees. The frequently heard cynical comment made by individual communists—"We do not fear the hungry; it is the well-fed who are dangerous to us!"—has contributed to strengthening this feeling, even if it hardly corresponds to the view of the Party leadership.

Moscow has recognized the tenseness of the situation and has even artificially increased it by the claim of German and Polish attempts at separating Ukraine. Even so, it is true that the prospect of liberation appeared to Ukrainians to be closer after the change in Germany [Hitler's accession to power]. These hopes, newly revived without German involvement, were politically dangerous to the Soviet state. In addition, the Communist Party of Ukraine had not only failed in the execution of agrarian policy but also lacked the vigor demanded by Moscow in the struggle against Ukrainian tendencies—defined as chauvinist—in its own ranks and in the country. The supreme Party leadership was not mistaken in seeing fruitful soil for Ukrainian national development in the difficult economic and food situation.

The man who was supposed to eliminate these dangers was [Pavel] Postyshev, Stalin's confidant, sent to Kharkiv with unlimited powers. As a result of the already mentioned measures within the Party, he produced the preconditions for an assault on the Ukrainian front. The signal was the removal of Education Commissar [Mykola] Skrypnyk, who had long been a representative of an emphatically Ukrainian communist orientation. He was followed by high officials in the central apparatus in Kharkiv and by leading personalities in the provinces. In the jurisdictional area professors of the Academy of Sciences and of Kyiv University, directors of the Institute of Linguistics and the Kyiv Film School [*Lehrkombinat*], school directors, many employees of the "education front," and officials lost their positions and sometimes their freedom. They were all accused of working on behalf of the counterrevolution by promoting Ukrainian chauvinism—be it in language, scholarship, or literature, or be it in administrative regulations. Secret organizations with supposed ties to "German and Polish fascism" were uncovered in ways that enabled the GPU [secret police] to demonstrate once again its talent for constructing highly treasonous intrigues. With regard to the jurisdictional area, only the head of cultural propaganda in Chernihiv province, Skarbek, was named by [Stanislav] Kosior in a speech to the CC and the CCC of the Communist Party of Ukraine. He [Skarbek] is supposed to have admitted to being the head of the "Polish Military Organization" in Soviet Ukraine for more than ten years. Revelations of so-called organizations must be regarded with skepticism. They serve above all as a deterrent against *any* Ukrainian tendency and remind the people of the intensified vigilance of the GPU. A new phase in the struggle against Ukrainianism has begun with the well-known November resolutions of the supreme Party leadership in Kharkiv. While they also mention the danger of "Great Russian chauvinism" in addition to "Ukrainian

chauvinism,” this should be regarded as only a theoretical concession to the Ukrainian masses. In reality, a continually intensifying “Great Russian communist chauvinism” is the current rule for Soviet policy in Ukraine....

Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, one may state that in the jurisdictional area the Soviet government had to deal with extraordinary difficulties and that serious manifestations of crisis are still present in all internal political spheres. Nevertheless, there is currently no evidence that this situation represents an immediate danger to the survival of the system, at least as long as the workers can be protected from immediate hunger. All in all, a vigorous and ruthless state leadership, which is still strong enough to assert its will in decisive moments, and an intact GPU stand opposed to a passive and unorganized popular mass that—as much as it may reject and even hate the Bolsheviks—has neither the strength nor the will to fight. It therefore seems to be true that the communist cynics with the above-mentioned saying—“We do not fear the hungry; it is the well-fed who are dangerous to us!”—are at present not incorrect in their evaluation of the people, at least in the countryside....

German Consulate, Kyiv, May 1936, “Bericht auf Grund von persönlichen Eindrücken bei einer mehrwöchigen Reise durch die Ukraine: Ukrainische Ukraine?” (A Report Based on Personal Impressions from a Multi-week Trip through Ukraine: Ukrainian Ukraine?). In *Holodomor v Ukraïni 1932–1933 rokiv* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 326–28. Translated by Alexander J. Motyl.

Ukrainian Ukraine has been destroyed. According to approximate estimates, *one-fifth* of its 30-million population, or about 6 million, died from famine in 1932–33. The people were now sufficiently weak to suffer the final blows of Moscow’s centralism: the elimination of the hitherto obligatory Ukrainian-language examination for officials and administrators, the “reorganization” of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, the “purge” of higher education, the destruction of millions of books and other printed materials of the pre-Postyshev era that, “in their insolence and openness as uniquely nationalist products, filled libraries and bookstores for many years and thereby infused individual groups of workers and collective farmers with the poison of chauvinism” (Postyshev), the “inclusion of tested Bolshevik elements in all spheres” (Postyshev), and the construction of a “Ukrainian Soviet culture.”

What is the situation in Ukraine today, now that Stalin’s prefect has already had two and one-half years for the “construction of a Ukrainian Soviet culture”? Here are several examples: I am standing at the counter of the Main Telegraph Office of the city of Kyiv. I request a telegraph form. I receive a printed form in the Ukrainian language. I write something (drafted for me for this purpose in the German consulate) in Ukrainian on the form. The woman at the counter gives me a blank look. “This sort of thing” is unacceptable. I excuse myself hypocritically and in Russian. I am a foreigner and had assumed that it was better to use the “national language” in Kyiv. “One speaks Russian in the Soviet Union,” the woman comrade instructs me. I take another form and write something in German. After checking with the boss, the *German* telegram is accepted....

I have the opportunity to visit the highest foreign-policy official of Ukraine. He speaks no Ukrainian. In the People’s Commissariat of Ukraine, as I learn from him, Russian is spoken.

In the cities one hears almost nothing but Russian. Whoever speaks Ukrainian thereby shows that he is from the countryside and is backward.

Neither in Kyiv, nor in Stalino [Donetsk], nor in Kharkiv could I acquire a Russian-Ukrainian or Ukrainian-Russian dictionary. "This sort of thing" is no longer available.

The Ukrainian press is rarely bought. Russian newspapers are snapped up completely. There is no Ukrainian literature. There is hardly a Ukrainian book that is not a translation from the Russian. There are no longer any Ukrainian history books.

The signs on the streets and in the offices are in Ukrainian. But the man who sits behind the door bearing a Ukrainian sign rarely speaks Ukrainian. Only Jews speak both Russian and Ukrainian with their notorious accent. In the Stalino city council I saw that an official, to whom a little old woman had made her request in Ukrainian, did not even understand the petitioner, despite the closeness of the languages.

I visited schools in various places. The impression is everywhere the same. The schools mostly consist of parallel classes. Class A has Russian as the language of instruction; class B has Ukrainian as the language of instruction. Parents may choose the language of instruction for their children. Completely Ukrainian schools are very rare, as Ukrainians also frequently send their children to Russian schools. The sections with Russian as language of instruction devote 5 hours per week to Russian-language instruction and 3 to Ukrainian. The Ukrainian section has 5 hours per week of Ukrainian-language instruction and 3 hours of Russian-language instruction. This parallel system is intentionally constructed to enable Russian to dominate as the children's conversational language. Moreover, the teachers in the Ukrainian section are primarily Russians, and in the Russian section they are often Ukrainians. I made this observation in 6 of 8 schools that I visited. The writing abilities of the pupils in the Ukrainian classes are noticeably bad.... Hardly a child completes school with adequate knowledge of Ukrainian orthography. The closeness of the languages [Ukrainian and Russian] usually results in a horrible gibberish.... That the majority of even the urban Ukrainian population still chooses the Ukrainian language of instruction for their children, despite obvious discrimination against Ukrainian, shows how deeply rooted the consciousness of linguistic and cultural specificity still is in the people. Lectures in the universities of Kyiv and Kharkiv and in the higher educational institutions of Stalino are almost exclusively in Russian....

A future, just historiography will perhaps one day establish that the Ukrainian people's moral spine was broken in the terrible years of 1932 and 1933, certainly for decades, perhaps forever. Although the Ukrainian folk song has been "rehabilitated" today thanks to Postyshev's mercy, although the Ukrainian opera today appears with Ukrainian performances in Moscow, and although dancers in Ukrainian folk costumes again appear today in Moscow film theatres, this is nothing but a grotesque parody of Ukraine's fate.

Italian Foreign Office Documents

Report by the Novorossiisk royal vice consul, L. Sircana, 8 April 1933. "Re: Developments in the agricultural season." In *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine, 1932–1933* (1988). Excerpts, p. 417. Original text in *Lettere da Kharkov*, ed. Andrea Graziosi (Turin, 1991), pp. 157–64.

Vice-Consulate of Italy
Novorossiisk (U.S.S.R.)

April 8, 1933–Year XI

Ref. No. 223/24

Reference: Telex No. 549/11 of February 1, 1932/X.

Royal Embassy of Italy, Moscow and copy to the Royal Consulate of Italy, Tbilisi (224/44)

Re: *Developments in the agricultural season*

Dear Ambassador:

I should like to refer once again to the situation in the Northern Caucasus....

...[T]he appointment in the Northern Caucasus of a special committee invested with unlimited powers to resolve the situation by force and at whatever cost, shows just how serious things have become.

The main measures adopted by the committee may be summarized as follows:

the peasants have been prohibited from leaving their farms or villages (serfdom!?). In practical terms, this fastening to the land is obtained by suspending sales of rail tickets (tickets can only be obtained by submitting a special permit from the political authorities, who of course systematically refuse to give these to the peasants); by not admitting peasants at offices and factories, etc., and by expelling them from the cities; by seizing the products which the peasants have been trying to bring onto the markets, and keeping them out of the markets themselves;

the registration of entire villages or collective farms on the “blackboard,” followed by severe penalties; for example: suspension of any laying in of stock; the withdrawal of goods, however few, already available at the co-operatives; an absolute ban on leaving the boundaries of one’s village or farm; searches and seizures of products; expulsion *en masse* from the territory of the Northern Caucasus of all or part of the population, unless they show an immediate change of heart;

the holding of summary trials in three days flat, with no chance of appeal, and sentencing to maximum penalties, which may be increased at the court’s discretion.

These three groups themselves bear eloquent testimony to the desperate struggle to which the once fertile lands of the Northern Caucasus are now playing host....

Report by the Kharkiv consulate royal consul, Sergio Gradenigo, 31 May 1933, “Re: The Famine and the Ukrainian Question.” In *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine, 1932–1933* (1988). Excerpts, pp. 424–25, 427. Original text in *Lettere da Kharkov*, ed. Andrea Graziosi (Turin, 1991), pp. 168–74.

Royal Consulate of Italy
Kharkiv

May 31, 1933

Ref. No. 474/106

Embassy of Italy, Moscow

Re: The Famine and the Ukrainian Question

The famine continues to wreak havoc among the people, and one simply cannot fathom how the world can remain so indifferent to such a catastrophe and how the international press, which is so quick to bring international condemnation upon Germany for its so-called 'atrocious persecution of the Jews,' can stand quietly by in the presence of this massacre organized by the Soviet government, in which the Jews play such a major role, albeit not the leading one.

For there is no doubt: 1) that this famine is primarily caused by a contrived scarcity designed 'to teach the peasants a lesson,' and 2) that there is not one Jew among the famine victims; on the contrary, they are fat and well fed under the fraternal wing of the GPU.

The 'ethnographic material' must be changed, cynically stated one Jew who is a high ranking official in the local GPU. One can already foresee the final fate of this 'ethnographic material,' which is destined for replacement....

Through barbaric requisitions...the Moscow government has effectively engineered not so much a scarcity...but rather a complete absence of every means of subsistence throughout the Ukrainian countryside, Kuban, and the Middle Volga.

Three considerations can be taken into account as having dictated such a policy:

- 1) the peasantry's passive resistance to collectivized agriculture;
- 2) the conviction that the 'ethnographic material' can never be reduced to an integral communist prototype;
- 3) the necessity or expediency, more or less openly acknowledged, of denationalizing those regions in which Ukrainian or German consciousness have reawakened, threatening possible political difficulties in the future, and where, for the sake of the unity of the empire, it is better that a preponderantly Russian population reside....

This calamity, which is claiming millions of lives, is destroying the infancy of an entire nation and is really affecting only Ukraine, Kuban, and the Central Volga. Elsewhere it is felt much less or not at all....

In conclusion: The current disaster will bring about a preponderantly Russian colonization of Ukraine. It will transform its ethnographic character. In a future time, perhaps very soon, one will no longer be able to speak of a Ukraine, or a Ukrainian people, and thus not even of a Ukrainian problem, because Ukraine will become a *de facto* Russian region.

Sincerely yours,
The Royal Consul, Gradenigo

Report by the Kharkiv consulate royal consul, Sergio Gradenigo, 10 July 1933, "Re: The Famine and the Sanitation Situation." In *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine, 1932–1933* (1988). Excerpts, pp. 439–40. Original text in *Lettere da Kharkov*, ed. Andrea Graziosi (Turin, 1991), pp. 189–91.

Royal Consulate of Italy
Kharkiv

July 10, 1933

Ref. No. 570/74

Royal Embassy of Italy, Moscow
and for the information of the
Royal Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Re: The Famine and the Sanitation Situation

Today Ukraine presents one of the saddest of portraits. Except for regions that are in the immediate vicinity of cities...and the major cities themselves, the country has fallen victim to famine, typhus, dysentery, supposedly even cholera, and finally the plague....

When last year the possibility of famine first presented itself, the government became preoccupied with the political situation that would emerge from it and, faithful to Lenin's doctrine that famines provoke revolutions, had taken action. It is now possible to explain why some of the measures have been adopted. The danger of a revolution or, better, counterrevolution because of hunger could be serious only in the large industrial centers. Thus it was necessary to think first of them and supply them as best possible.... [T]he countryside was less threatening and could thus be left to its fate.... [N]ow one can explain the reason for the revival of passports and the exclusion of hundreds of thousands of people...outside the 50 km. (or 100 km. for Moscow) so as to facilitate the task of supplying the major centers and to prevent any uprisings or even protests. The purge of the Party is connected with the food situation, or rather with the feared prospective reaction to the famine.

This famine has destroyed half the rural population of Ukraine.

This explains the savagery with which all the peasants are inexorably picked up by the police (I have observed that the urban population, out of an obscure sense of defensiveness, deliberately promote hatred, or an unconquerable desire to tyrannize, willingly collaborate with this peasant hunt...and this explains why doctors have been given orders not to treat peasants who show up in town)....

The doctors are forbidden to mention typhus and deaths from starvation, nor can they even collect those observations which would be of great interest to them from a scientific point of view....

Very frequent is the phenomenon of hallucinations, in which people see their children only as animals, kill them, and eat them. Later some, having recuperated with proper food, do not remember wanting to eat their children and deny even being able to think of such a thing....

Sincerely yours,
The Royal Consul
Gradenigo

Report by the Kharkiv consulate royal consul, Sergio Gradenigo, 19 July 1933, "Re: After the Suicide of Mykola Skrypnyk." In *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine, 1932–1933* (1988). Excerpts, pp. 446–47.

Royal Consulate of Italy
Kharkiv, U.S.S.R.

Kharkiv, July 19, 1933–XI

Confidential
Ref. No. 608/88

Royal Embassy of Italy, Moscow
and for the information of the
Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome

Re: After the Suicide of Mykola Skrypnyk.

I can now add the following details on the death of the above-specified individual....

The dying man was carried to the university clinic, where he regained consciousness during the blood transfusion. He told [Pavel] Postyshev, who had come by, that the real danger for Communism lay in Russian imperialism, which was on the rise....

Proceeding at all speed at present is the reform of Ukrainian spelling (it has been stripped of the vocative which Russian, unlike Ukrainian, does not have). In government offices the Russian language is once again being used, in correspondence as well as in verbal dealings between employees....

[W]e can only conclude that the Ukrainian people are about to go into an eclipse, which could well turn out to be a night without end, because Russian imperialism, with its present tender mercies (i.e., tender communist mercies), is capable of wiping a nation—nay, a civilization—right off the face of the earth if we aren't very careful.

Sincerely yours,
The Royal Consul

Letter from the royal consul general in Odesa to the Italian ambassador in Moscow, 19 February 1934. In *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine, 1932–1933* (1988). Excerpts, p. 475.

Royal Consulate of Italy
Odesa

February 19, 1934—XII

Confidential
Ref. No. 262/42

Dear Ambassador:....

It has also been clear for quite some time that the Moscow Government intends to settle the Ukrainian problem once and for all.

The persecutions conducted against the Ukrainian intellectuals accused of sympathizing with their colleagues and brothers in Galicia and Poland; the suicide of [Mykola] Skrypnyk, the Ukrainian Commissar for Public Education; the incarceration of numerous Germans accused of sympathizing with the Ukrainians; the withholding of the grain reserves from the peasants, which has turned Ukraine over the spring of last year into the site of an unprecedented famine, which according to reliable evidence has sent 7,000,000 people to their deaths; all of these things

betoken the Moscow Government's intention to use every means at their disposal to crush every last vestige of Ukrainian nationalism....

Ukraine used to be the sole major population center endowed with some degree of ethnic, linguistic and historical cohesiveness that was resisting Moscow's centralization program. This obstacle may now be said to have been overcome.

Sincerely yours,
The Royal Consul General

Polish Foreign Office and Intelligence Service Documents

Report on the nationality question in the U[kr.]SSR prepared by the head of the consulate general in Kharkiv for a consular meeting in Moscow. In *Holodomor 1932–1933* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 251, 264, 276. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

Secret

The nationality question in Soviet Ukraine as of I.V.1933....

The economic exploitation of Ukraine by the central authorities is most glaringly apparent in the agricultural sector. Ukraine has always been and still remains the most important producer of grain in the Soviet Union, which always provided produce for export or to serve the needs of cities and regions with shortages in the country. For this reason, according to the general line of Soviet rural policy, forced collectivization has begun there as well, and there it has also fallen hardest on the shoulders of the peasants. Nowhere else, with the sole exception of the North Caucasus, has "grain procurement" been carried out with such ruthlessness and, indeed, constituted de facto confiscation of almost all the farmers' produce.

The frequent warnings and protests of local officials had no effect, for the central authorities, citing the interests and needs of the state as a whole, ruthlessly continued the policy of stripping bare the Ukrainian countryside. Any disobedience to the directives of the central authorities, or even criticism on the part of local government, which understood the danger of that policy, was mercilessly punished and characterized as giving in to the influence of kulak ideology.

The result of this predatory management was a great famine in the spring of 1932, which, after a brief respite in the autumn of last year, resumed last winter and continues to this day. The ruin and destitution of the Ukrainian village cannot easily be described; moreover, it is telling that this condition does not apply to southern Russia as such, but specifically to Ukraine, for, on crossing the northern border of the U[kr.]SSR, the picture changes quite radically. In the Central Black Earth Province, which differs little from Ukraine in climate and economy, the condition of the peasantry is incomparably better. This attests that the economic policy of the central government with regard to Ukraine has been much more ruthless and predatory than toward the neighboring provinces of the RSFSR, with the sole exception of the North Caucasus....

Reported by: J. Karszo-Siedlewski

Kharkiv, 8 May 1933

Description of a car trip to Moscow by the head of the Polish consulate general in Kharkiv. In *Holodomor 1932–1933* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 294–95. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

Kharkiv, 31 May 1933

To the Ambassador of the R[epublic] of P[oland] in Moscow...

On 5 May at 11:30 I left the Consulate General in Kharkiv in a Buick automobile for a consular meeting in Moscow, where I reached the building of the Embassy of the R[epublic] of P[oland] the next day at 14:30...

What struck me most in the whole journey was the difference in the appearance of the villages and fields of Ukraine as compared with the neighbouring CB-EO (Central Black Earth Oblast), or even the infertile area near Moscow. The Ukrainian villages are in an obvious state of decline, standing empty, abandoned, and destitute. Cottages are half-ruined, often with roofs torn off; new dwellings are nowhere to be found; children and elders look like skeletons; livestock is nowhere to be seen. There is something growing on barely one-fifth of the cultivated fields; only about two-fifths have been plowed; the remaining two-fifths lie fallow. Although this is prime time for spring work in the fields, one sees very few people working, and still fewer tractors; sowing is conducted in the most primitive manner, mainly by hand.

Finding myself immediately afterward in the CB-EO (mainly in the area of Kursk and Orel), I felt as if I had crossed from the land of the Soviets into Western Europe. There were considerably more plowed and sown fields; the villages were cleaner and more orderly, the cottages kept in good repair, and the people relatively better off. Cattle could be seen grazing and, especially in the Orel region, there were plenty of sheep...

Head of the Consulate General
(J. Karszo-Siedlewski)

Letter from a correspondent of PAT (Polish Telegraph Agency) to the editor in chief of *Gazeta Polska* concerning unofficial conversations with Karl Radek and the prohibition on admitting foreign correspondents to Ukraine. In *Holodomor 1932–1933* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 296–98. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

Moscow, 1.VI.33

Dear Mr. Minister....

[Y]esterday I saw [Karl] Radek..., who touched on the Ukrainian problem, declaring that “any activity of yours on that territory will be commented on by us as deliberate or unconscious carrying out of German plans in the East.”....

Immediately after your departure, the press division of Narkomindel [People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs], in the form of my “initial request” of fifteen months ago,

forbade my entry into Ukraine. [Konstantin] Umansky gave me clearly to understand that this is a confidential instruction of the GPU applicable to all correspondents....

Jan Otmar Berson

Article in the bulletin *Polska a Zagranica* (Poland and the Outside World), 10 October 1933, about the pacification of Ukraine by the Soviet authorities. In *Holodomor 1932–1933* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 396–98. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

...According to the latest information obtained from reliable sources, the situation in Ukraine can now be seen as basically under control.

This is due to a combination of two factors: the decisive and consistent policy of the Communist Party, which has unscrupulously managed to break the passive resistance of the countryside and shatter the decentralizing nationalist tendencies of the Ukrainian intelligentsia, and the unexpectedly favorable yield of this year's harvest. It is another matter at what great cost this victory was achieved—considering the deaths of at least 5,000,000 people and the devastation of the Ukrainian village, whose residents fled en masse to the cities or other Soviet republics—so that there is now talk of the need to settle certain parts of Ukraine with people from other, less fertile parts of the USSR....

From the political viewpoint, what should be emphasized in the situation in Ukraine is the growth in the power of [Pavel] Postyshev, Stalin's second deputy in the Secretariat of the CC of the Party, who has become the de facto dictator of Ukraine.

The CC CP(B)U adopted a resolution on 25 September asserting that the Commissariat of Agriculture [equivalent to the ministry of agriculture] and the district agricultural administrations did no real work on the organization of agriculture and did not manage it; hence it has resolved to dismiss a number of people.... The agricultural academies in Kharkiv and Kyiv have been closed down, inasmuch as most of the professors have been dismissed and many of them arrested on charges of harmful anti-state activities.

The above-mentioned arrests, like those still going on in other Ukrainian institutions, are related to Postyshev's consistent effort aimed at the total destruction of the Ukrainian intelligentsia that supports nationalist ideas. It should be emphasized that among those arrested there are quite a few Ukrainians from Eastern Little Poland [Galician Ukraine]....

Report of the vice consul in Kyiv on Bolshevik policy toward the Polish minority in Ukraine. In *Holodomor 1932–1933* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 404–5, 407, 409–12. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

13 October [1933]

CONFIDENTIAL

To the ambassador of the R[epublic of] P[oland]
in Moscow

Re: Nationality policy in Ukraine with regard to the Polish minority

The course of official nationality policy with regard to the Polish minority found its expression at the all-Ukrainian meeting of Polish newspaper editors that took place in Kyiv this summer.... R. Maksymowski, the editor of *Trybuna Radziecka* [Soviet Tribune], also attended this gathering as the main speaker. J[ózef] Teodor, the head of the nationality section of the Kharkiv government, participated on behalf of the government, [as did] the head of the so-called Kultprop [Department of Culture and Propaganda], Kilerog, from the CC CP(B)U....

Kilerog...emphasized in the course of his speech that dangerous tendencies had been uncovered within the bosom of the CP(B)U: they were exaggerating the significance of nationality questions and creating a theory of so-called “national Bolshevism.” In his opinion, these tendencies belonged to the category of initiatives that had served to promote a challenge to the integrity of the USSR.... The current leadership recognized in time the rise of dangerous deviations and is undertaking a struggle with all that was harmful and showing solicitude for all that was hitherto oppressed. In particular, attention will be paid to the Polish minority, which was especially wronged by the former leadership of the C[ommissariat] of P[eople’s] Education....

The editor of *Trybuna Radziecka*, R. Maksymowski, characterized the situation in the sphere of nationality affairs as follows:

“This gathering of Polish editors is proof of the special attention that the leadership of the CP(B)U is devoting to the Polish problem, and it is closely related to the declaration of struggle against Petliurism, Ukrainian nationalism, and its allies in Polish circles.”....

In his speech, J. Teodor condemned the principle of assigning children to schools of the nationality into which they were born without regard to the language that the child actually speaks as “unlawful” and as directed against the Russian minority in Ukraine, having as its goal the “robbing” of children who would undoubtedly choose a Russian school....

After such harsh criticism of the results of nationality policy practiced in Ukraine to date, one might have hoped that the new authorities in the Commissariat of Education would make every effort to eliminate the noted errors and help create firm foundations for developing the cultural life of the Polish minority. Information received from the field and from the Polish press, however, completely contradicts this supposition....

In the sphere of economic policy, the tactic of the Soviet authorities...aims at the breakup and destruction of the Polish minority in Ukraine.... On the Polish collective farms, almost all of which fulfilled their “grain procurement” quotas in timely fashion, only husks of grain remained for distribution [among the collective farmers]. The high level of assigned quotas, as well as the obligatory quantity of vegetables to be sown, [both] invariably detrimental to Polish collective farms as compared to Ukrainian ones, deserve special emphasis. This leads to the frequent incidence of peasants leaving Polish collectives for Ukrainian ones.

“Individual farmers” find themselves in especially difficult circumstances. Here, as a rule, the “grain procurement” quota exceeds the entire annual yield [of the farm]....

Individuals unable to fulfill the “grain procurement” plan are accused of political sabotage and “kulak” tendencies....

Dozens of families alleged to be “kulaks” have been expelled from their homes and villages and, with winter approaching, find themselves in a tragic situation, stripped completely of reserves of food and clothing. Their situation, as compared with that of previous years, is worsened by the fact that they are unable to seek salvation in the cities (the passport system): they are condemned to death by starvation....

The overall nationality policy in Ukraine can be defined as a function of the growing internal strength of the Soviet state and its military might, as well as its international situation. As these factors gain strength, nationality policy in Ukraine, still outwardly cloaked in liberal slogans, is in fact becoming more ruthless in its predatory instincts.

If we are concerned with shedding light on the tactic used with regard to the Polish population, then, in my opinion, that tactic was never the same throughout the existence of the [Soviet] Union. Its first stage consisted in the notion of creating here, beyond the borders of the R[epublic] of P[oland], a strong Polish center organized along communist lines. This center had two tasks to fulfill: 1) It was to become a tool of communist propaganda for the entire Polish population.... [and] also serve as proof of the liberal policy of the [Soviet] Union in the treatment of its minorities.... 2) The creation on the Soviet side of a kind of Piedmont for the Polish communist movement and the organization of Polish revolutionary cadres that would ignite and direct the communist revolution in Poland....

After a few years of effort, these concepts proved illusory....

A new concept has therefore been adopted: with regard to the revolutionary movement in Poland, it accepts the premise that its focus must be within Poland, while the role of the Soviets is to be strictly limited to supporting that movement. Accordingly, in the understanding of authoritative Soviet officials, the Polish minority in Ukraine is completely bereft of its initial importance....

Every reason for maintaining the distinctness of the Polish national minority has therefore disappeared....

And now we are witnesses to the process of the destruction of that distinctness, carried out by way of physical and economic ruination.

Piotr Kurnicki
Vice Consul, R[epublic of] P[oland]

A conversation between the Polish ambassador in Ankara and Kliment Voroshilov: his surprise that “Poland is so lenient with the Ukrainians...in Soviet Russia Ukrainians are kept on a tight leash.” In *Holodomor 1932–1933* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 680–81. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

6 November [193]3

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs....

I had the opportunity to converse with Voroshilov at a reception at the Soviet embassy.... He made reference, with some irritation, to the Ukrainians, and to the fact that in Lviv there had been a murderous assault on the Soviet consulate. In this connection, he expressed surprise that Poland is so lenient with the Ukrainians and has not dealt with them severely enough, inasmuch as in Soviet Russia they are kept on a tight leash....

Ambassador of the R[epublic of] P[oland]
Jerzy Potocki

Excerpt of a report from Napoleon Nalewajko to Jerzy Niebrzycki about the situation prevailing in Ukraine. In *Pomór w "Raju Bolszewickim"* (2009). Excerpts, pp. 131, 134. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

18.XI.[19]33.

My Dear One!....

... There is no situation from which the Bolsheviks cannot manage to gain an advantage for themselves. The secret of their behavior, in my opinion, lies above all in their total disregard for the means used and the sacrifices whereby they achieve their goals.

So it is that they have managed to take advantage of this year's famine in Ukraine.

I assert most categorically that by taking advantage of the peasant's hunger alone, they have managed, by flinging him scraps as to a hungry dog, to force him to carry out a whole range of agricultural work and then compel that same peasant to express his appreciation to them for their humanitarian provision of the food that he lacked. Through the use of systematic terror they have managed to break the mass of peasants to such an extent that despite the tragic experience of the past year they have obtained the fulfillment of the entire grain-procurement plan, again confiscating almost the entire harvest. All this has been accomplished by throwing huge cadres of newly trained communists who, in the first place, had no connection with the local populace or were influenced to such a degree by theoretical conclusions that they became almost fanatics, carrying out any and all instructions while closing their eyes to all the effects on the populace....

N. Nalewajko [pseudonym of Piotr Kurnicki, Polish vice consul in Kyiv]

Note of the head of the Polish consulate general in Kharkiv on the reasons for the reversal of Bolshevik policy in Ukraine. In *Hołodomor 1932–1933* (2008). Excerpts, pp. 495–97. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

Kharkiv, 6 January 1934

Top Secret

...[L]ast November's resolutions of the plenum of the CC CP(B)U, as well as the mass persecutions and arrests still taking place, can neither be understood nor justified by the threat of the Ukrainian national movement. In the most recent period there have been absolutely no developments indicating the growth or even the further normal development of that movement, to say nothing of any mass nationalist or separatist manifestations. The reasons for this action should be sought, in my opinion, in the systematic, planned, and perspicacious policy of the Muscovite rulers, calculated for the long term: they are becoming more and more great-power politicians, strengthening their regime and the borders of their state, sacrificing to that end the ideals hitherto upheld by the Communist International. The emissaries of Moscow in Ukraine, [Pavel] Postyshev and [Vsevolod] Balytsky, for their part, are merely the scrupulous and devoted executors of the instructions given them from the top....

Head of the Consulate General

J. Karszo Siedlewski

Letter from the student Buczak, 12 January 1934, delivered to the Polish consulate in Kyiv. In *Pomór w "Raju Bolszewickim"* (2009). Excerpts, pp. 141–42. Translated by Bohdan Klid.

...The spring of 1933 will be remembered by grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Workers who could not find work were also dying of hunger in the cities of Ukraine. In 1933 there was a series of layoffs in enterprises. Laid-off workers were deprived of ration cards for bread, swelled from hunger, and died. Many also died of hunger in hospitals and prisons. Bodies were removed from prisons and hospitals by freight trucks. Families of the deceased were not informed, and no one asked the names or titles [of the deceased]. Parents who received miserly wages were unable to feed their children; [hence] they took them to the bazaars and abandoned them there. They froze from cold and hunger [*sic*]. Some of them were taken by orphanages, but this was only a tactical game on the part of the authorities. To avoid embarrassment, the authorities removed them from public view. [However] in the orphanages [the children] were also starved and died all the same....

In Ukraine the main component of nourishment is bread. All that the farmer and the worker now dream about is bread. The people of Ukraine have forgotten about oils and other products. For the last four years the workers have been living on money that has no value. The peasant does not have even that. He produces grain but does not see it. For nourishment, he has to eat linden leaves, chaff, and all kinds of weeds. This was a mass phenomenon in the Ukrainian countryside in the spring of 1933. From this one can infer just what the attitude of the Ukrainian population is to Soviet Power in Ukraine. That is the source of Ukrainian nationalism in the Party, which is now feared more than the kulaks were three years ago. Ukrainian nationalism is now treated by Jewish communists and Great-Power Russian chauvinists as the main internal danger. They know that they have sinned [*sic*] and realize that if the peasants could be awoken from their slumber, their situation would not be a happy one. They would pay with their lives.

At present the communists are frightened of Ukrainian nationalism, which has raised its head to free the Ukrainian people and separate Ukraine, a de facto Russian colony, from Russia. As of now, the second five-year plan makes no provision at all for construction in Ukraine. The communists are afraid that the time will come and, with the help of other peoples, Ukraine will begin to free itself, and all that has been built will become the property of the Ukrainian people.

Kyiv, 12 January 1934

Buczak

Reaction to the Famine by NGOs and Ukrainians outside the Soviet Union

[Appeal by] the Ukrainian Catholic Episcopate of the Galician Church Province concerning events in Greater Ukraine, to all people of good will. *Dilo* (Lviv), 27 July 1933 and *Pravda* (Lviv), 30 July 1933. Reprinted in *Natsiia v borot'bi za svoie isnuvannia* (1985), p. 84. Translation in *Svoboda* (Jersey City, N. J.), 20 September 1933, p. 1. Modified by Bohdan Klid.

UKRAINE IS IN ITS PRE-DEATH CONVULSIONS! — Its population is dying of starvation. Based on injustice, fraud, godlessness and depravity, the cannibalistic system of state capitalism has reduced this recently rich country to complete ruin. Three years ago the Head of the Catholic Church, His Holiness Pope Pius XI, protested energetically against everything in Bolshevism that is contrary to Christianity, God, and human nature, warning against the terrible consequences of such crimes—and the whole Catholic world, and we with it, joined in that protest. We now see the consequences of the Bolshevik actions: the situation becomes more terrible with every passing day. The enemies of God and humanity have cast aside religion, the basis of social order; suppressed liberty, mankind's greatest good; made slaves of free peasant citizens; and do not have enough sense to feed them for their hard slave labor in the sweat of their brows.

In the face of these crimes, human nature grows numb, and the blood chills in one's veins.

Powerless to provide our dying brethren with any material assistance, we call upon Our faithful, through prayers, fasting, nation-wide mourning, sacrifices, and all possible good works of Christian life, to beseech aid from heaven at a time when there is no hope of human assistance.

And before the whole world we again protest against the persecution of the little ones, the poor, the weak, and the innocent, and accuse the persecutors before the Most High for Judgment.

The blood of the workmen who tilled the black earth of Ukraine as they starved cries out to heaven for vengeance, and the voice of the hungry reapers has reached the ears of Almighty God.

We ask all Christians throughout the world, all who believe in God, and especially all workers and peasants, and above all our compatriots, to join us in our voice of protest and pain and to disseminate it to the remotest corners of the world.

We ask all radio stations to broadcast Our voice to the whole world; perhaps it will reach the poor cottages where the peasants are dying of hunger.

May it be at least some consolation to those facing a terrible death in the severest of suffering to surmise that their brethren knew of their terrible fate, empathized and suffered, and prayed for them.

And you, our suffering, starving, and dying brethren, call on our Merciful God and Savior, Jesus Christ. You are enduring severe suffering—bear it for your sins, for the sins of all our people, and repeat after Jesus Christ: “Thy will be done, Heavenly Father!” Death accepted as the will of God is a holy sacrifice, which, united with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, will bring you the Kingdom of Heaven, and salvation to all our people.

Our hope is in God!

Issued in Lviv, on the day of St. Olha, 24 July 1933 AD.

[Signed] Andrei Sheptytsky, Metropolitan [and six bishops of the Ukrainian Catholic Episcopate of Galicia]

“Byimo u velykyi dzvin na trivohu!” (Let Us Strike the Great Bell to Raise the Alarm!), *Dilo* (Lviv), 14 August 1933, p. 1. Reprinted in *Natsiia v borot'bi za svoie isnuvannia* (1985), pp. 80–83. Excerpts. Translated by Bohdan Klid

Let Us Strike the Great Bell to Raise the Alarm!

Ukrainian people!

Greater Ukraine, your mainland, this richest of lands in Europe, is now contorted in pains of hunger and torment and suffering unbearable national oppression.

The Russian communist Bolsheviks, who destroyed the Ukrainian State on the Dnipro with fire and sword, who imposed their dictatorship on our land with bayonets, are now crucifying the Ukrainian people. They are destroying its finest sons by firing squads, tormenting them with imprisonment and exile, and starving the entire population of Ukraine en masse.

This is not rumor or gossip but the honest truth! The whole world is now speaking out about this terrible truth; our brothers from over there are telling this painful truth in many letters to relatives and friends; and numerous refugees from Bolshevik captivity are speaking about this horrible truth. However, communists are covering up this tragic truth. From all the letters from our unfortunate brethren and from all the accounts of the refugees we hear the desperate cry: "Save us, for we are perishing from violence and famine!"

Ukrainian people!

Wherever you may be living beyond the bounds of Greater Ukraine...nowhere can you calmly observe the great tragedy and torments of your enslaved and starved brothers.

You must do all you can to save the threatened existence of 35 million brothers in order to save yourself, your national life, from annihilation. For the communist Muscovite dictators are now bent on destroying the very life of the Ukrainian people, which finds itself under their rule. They have destroyed all the riches of the Ukrainian land; they have destroyed the economy of the Ukrainian people; through forced collectivization they have completely destroyed agriculture and reduced the Ukrainian people to starvation. The broad, fertile Ukrainian fields are now mainly overgrown with weeds, and the Ukrainian farmer, tormented by starvation, has descended to cannibalism in some instances. On the Ukrainian lands, where recently abundant ears of wheat rolled like waves on fields without end, cannibalism prevails as a result of communist management. This is the most horrific phenomenon under the sun. That in an agrarian land brother should eat brother because of hunger—this the world has never heard of, and our land has never known....

The communists have decided to ship all grain north from Ukraine, to the Muscovite industrial centers, and thereby to consign the Ukrainian population to death by starvation en masse. For resisting this pillage of the country and starvation, the communists are destroying the people by merciless executions and blaming the poor harvest entirely on Ukrainian national consciousness, and that is why the Ukrainian people are suffering political persecution worse than under the Muscovite tsars. They are abolishing all remnants of the political autonomy of Soviet Ukraine, destroying all Ukrainian cultural achievements, and rooting out Ukrainization. By means of terror, they are inflicting political oppression unheard of and unseen in the history of any people on the organism of the nation, exhausted by hunger.

Ukrainian people!

The limits of your patience have been broken. Silence is no longer possible! Wherever a Ukrainian heart beats, one must not only protest all communist oppression but also stir the conscience of all humanity, bring the whole world to its feet so that it pays attention to your situation and renders you assistance.

The Ukrainian Parliamentary Representation and all central Ukrainian institutions have established in Lviv the Ukrainian Civic Committee to Save Ukraine. Similar Ukrainian committees should be formed around the world; their work should be coordinated and joint efforts directed toward easing the fate of our enslaved brethren in Greater Ukraine.

Ukrainian people!

Wherever you may be living...rise together in solid columns for battle with tyranny. Mobilize world opinion against the communist horrors in Greater Ukraine. Help your brethren in Greater Ukraine with whatever you can and however you can. The Lviv Civic Committee will conduct a mass aid action in this country and abroad, and will announce details of its plan in the immediate future. The Committee is counting on general, mass support for its work. With complete faith in the success of the action undertaken, the Committee calls for harmonious cooperation on the part of all Ukrainians who sincerely wish to unite in pain with their oppressed brethren along the Dnipro.

And you, unfortunate Brethren from the Dnipro, Kuban, and Don regions, swollen with hunger, accept from us expressions of admiration for your courage in adversity; accept from us expressions of deepest sympathy in your great misfortune; and rest assured that sooner or later your suffering will end, and from beyond the communist clouds and darkness hanging over Ukraine the sun of Freedom will shine forth.

Lviv, 25 July 1933

[Signed by the leadership of the Ukrainian Parliamentary Representation and of 34 organizations, institutions, and associations in Lviv]

“To the Christian World! Appeal of the Cardinal and Archbishop of Vienna on Behalf of the Hungry in Soviet Russia.” Published in the Austrian press on 19 August 1933. Reprinted in *Holodomor Studies* 1, no. 1 (2009). Full text, pp. 102–3. Translated by Alexander J. Motyl.

At a time that with its profound seriousness awakens the consciousness of responsibility of civilized humanity, there arises the duty to appeal to the world public to engage in relief work. No attempts at denial can contravene the fact that hundreds of thousands, indeed millions, of people have in the last few months perished of hunger in Soviet Russia. Hundreds of moving letters from the famine areas of the Soviet Union, especially from Ukraine and the North Caucasus, provide reports, while eyewitnesses about whose competence there is no doubt have depicted horrible details of the tragedy taking place in Russia. I draw your attention to the appeal of the Metropolitan of Galicia, Count Andrei Sheptytsky, which reports on the terrible suffering of the population in the Ukrainian region of the Soviet Union. The Englishman Gareth Jones also confirms this; indeed, he establishes on the basis of enquiries on the ground that in some areas of the Soviet Union a quarter of the population has already died of hunger. In a memorandum that incorporates authentic information from the various people dying in Russia, Dr. Ewald Ammende, the General Secretary of the Congress of European Nationalities, reports that the famine catastrophe has horribly affected, besides the Russians and Ukrainians, members of all other ethnic groups living in the Soviet Union. Famine in the Soviet Union is killing the members of all religions and nationalities in equal measure.

It is already certain that the catastrophe is continuing even now, at the time of the new

harvest. In order to supply industrial centers, the grain output is, as the Soviet press openly admits, being forcibly taken from the peasants in Ukraine, the North Caucasus, and elsewhere. The Russian famine catastrophe will therefore reach a new high point in a few months, and then millions of human lives will be destroyed. To remain silent any longer means to raise the responsibility of the civilized world for the mass death in Russia to the level of unacceptability; it means bearing the guilt for the fact that, at a time when large areas of the world are choking on too much grain and foodstuffs, people in Soviet Russia are starving miserably and falling victim to such terrible accompanying phenomena of every mass hunger as the killing of children and cannibalism.

In the name of the eternally valid laws of humanity and love of neighbor, the author therefore raises his voice and appeals to all, especially to those organizations and agencies of the world whose work stands in the service of humanity and justice, to conduct, before it is too late, general relief work in an effective manner on the basis of supranational and interconfessional principles, on behalf of the people threatened by death from hunger in Russia. This appeal applies above all to the international Red Cross and its world-wide organizations; it is also directed toward all those actors who are today negotiating the expansion of economic relations with the Soviet Union, so that the principle be maintained that these negotiations be made dependent on a general clarification of the aid requirements in various parts of Russia and on the acceptance by the Soviet Union of a so-called humanitarian clause.

In order also to promote this relief work from Vienna, I will invite representatives of various confessions to create a committee. This invitation will be sent out in the next few days. To common fraternal work, before it is too late! God wills it!

Theodor Cardinal Innitzer, Archbishop

Letter from the Liaison Committee of Women's International Organisations to the President of the Council of the League of Nations. In *The Foreign Office and the Famine (1988)*. Excerpts, pp. 326–27.

Liaison Committee of Women's International Organisations

Hon. Secretary:

Miss Elsie M. Zimmern,

26, Eccleston Street

London, S.W.1

Member Organisations:

World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union

International Council of Women

World's Young Women's Christian Association

International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

World Union of Women for International Concord

International Federation of University Women

Equal Rights International

International Federation of Women Magistrates, Barristers

and Other Branches of the Legal Profession
St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance

September 26th, 1933

His Excellency Monsieur Joh[an] L. Mowinckel,
President of the Council,
League of Nations

Excellency,

On behalf of the above Committee of Women's International Organisations may I beg you to bring to the notice of the Council of the League the desperate condition of the famine stricken population of Soviet Ukraine.

Again and again the League has rendered invaluable services to the cause of humanity and we entreat Your Excellency as President to submit to the Council the present need for League action in any form which you may think wise.

The Committee was unanimous in their decision to appeal to you....

On behalf of the Committee I have the honour to remain,

Your Obedient Servant,
(signed) Margery Corbett Ashby
President of one of the Organisations
Int. Alliance for Suffrage & Equal Citizenship

Letter from the Ukrainian National Council in Canada to Prime Minister of Canada R. B. Bennett. In *Natsiia v borot'bi za svoie isnuvannia* (1985), p. 118. Excerpts.

October 2nd, 1933

Right Honourable R. B. Bennett.
Prime Minister of Canada,
Ottawa, Ont.

Sir:

We are taking the liberty of directing your attention to the deplorable fact that for a considerable time the population of Eastern Ukraine (now under a military Bolshevik occupation) are being systematically starved by the Moscow authorities.

The tragedy of the great famine of 1921–22, when nearly ten million people died from hunger, is being repeated, but in all probability on a still larger scale. Thousands of letters are being received in Canada continuously, containing gruesome details of the vast number dying; there are settlements in Ukraine where only one-third—sometimes only one-fourth—of the original population are still alive.

Crop failure is not the reason for this famine, but the brutal policy of the Moscow rulers who, needing grain for export to balance their budget, pitilessly take everything from the farmers, already proletarianized. Especially in Ukraine, where the peasants are opposed to the

foreign Russian rule, are they being deprived of literally everything, being left without even the smallest ration for daily meals, under the excuse that they are hiding food. With such tactics, even a bumper crop, of huge yield, could not save these people from starvation.

Having in mind the tragic plight of their compatriots, and realising their moral duty in the matter, the Ukrainian National Council in Canada turn to you, as to a leader of a great civilized nation, with an urgent request to take the necessary steps to arrange for an immediate neutral investigation of the famine situation in Ukraine, with a view to organizing international relief for the stricken population. Any private action, even on the largest scale, would prove inadequate owing to the magnitude of the calamity. We are prepared to supply you, if necessary, with original documents and information giving details of the famine conditions.

We trust that your Excellency will take this, our appeal, under most serious consideration.

We remain,

Yours faithfully,

Ukrainian National Council in Canada

[Signed] President, S. Skoblak; Secretary, J. M. Boyduck;

Chairman of Advisory Board, L. Biberovich

“Memorandum of Ukrainian Organizations to the President of the United States Concerning the Recognition of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics,” *Svoboda* (Jersey City, N.J.), 30 October 1933, no. 252, p. 1.

The President,
Washington, D.C.

Sir,

The time has come when you shall decide one of the most important problems of America’s foreign policy: the question of the official recognition by the United States of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

Hitherto this question of recognition has been decided negatively, for the United States Government had no desire to have any official connection with a state whose rule over the Russian people, as well as over its subjugated and enslaved peoples such as the Ukrainians, was based upon direct force alone. We have grown accustomed to regard the Soviet Republic as a state whose main purpose is the wholesale destruction throughout the entire world of those principles of democracy upon which our Constitution is based. We have come to regard the Soviet Republic as a state which through the medium of its subservient tool, the Third International, disseminates Bolshevik propaganda throughout the United States for the purpose of overthrowing by violent means our democratic institutions and our social order.

The truth of this assertion has been repeatedly confirmed by the investigations of our government. It has been the motivating cause of the recent resolution of the American Legion—a body whose members fought to defend our democratic institutions—to oppose the recognition of the Soviet Republic by the United States Government.

The American Federation of Labor has recently also expressed its opposition to this proposed recognition, basing its action upon the ground that in no other country in the world is the laboring class so mercilessly exploited as in Soviet Russia. The Federation has repeatedly

pointed out that the recognition of Soviet Russia by America would give the former an unprecedented opportunity of gaining American credit and loans by means of which Soviet trade would greatly increase, as a result of the further and greater exploitation of their enslaved workers, and the underselling of their competitors, including America. And finally, as the American Federation of Labor points out, the recognition of the Soviets by America would automatically open America's door to the hordes of Bolshevik propagandists who, as already has been proven, would stoop to any means to create dissensions and troubles among the American workers, seek to dominate the labor unions, and thus retard the progress of American reconstruction and make impossible the cooperation between Capital and Labor, towards which goal the National Recovery Administration is striving today.

And it is because of these reasons that we, American citizens of Ukrainian descent, are also strongly and unequivocally opposed to the recognition of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics by the United States Government.

And in addition to these very pertinent reasons as brought out by the American Legion and by the American Federation of Labor, we beg leave to add one more, to wit:

During the past year several millions of inhabitants of Soviet Ukraine, the land of our ancestors, have died from starvation. The existence of this terrible famine in Ukraine has been repeatedly proven by the leading European and American press. It is impossible to give the exact figures as to the total number of deaths from this great famine, principally because of the rigid censorship in Soviet Russia. Just recently the Associated Press correspondent during his interview in Kharkiv with Alexander Asatkin, a Moscow political overlord in Ukraine, managed to obtain some official figures as to the number of famine victims in Ukraine, only to have these figures, which were considerably lower than reported in the outside world, refused transmission to America by the censor in Moscow.

It will be sufficient for us, however, to affirm the well authenticated reports of impartial American and European newspaper correspondents that during the past year several million inhabitants of Ukraine have died a terrible death from starvation, and that even cannibalism was discovered in several sections of the country; all of this in a land which is regarded as one of the most fertile in the world.

As to the cause of this terrible famine in Ukraine, even the foreign correspondents in Soviet Russia do not attempt to hide the fact any longer that the famine is a result of Soviet policy. They regard the famine as another step taken by Moscow directed towards the breaking down of the opposition of the Ukrainian peasantry, which at all times was and still is, uncompromisingly hostile to the Communistic system, as well as to the occupation of Ukraine by Moscovschena (Russia proper).

The American-Ukrainian press is filled with reprinted letters from Ukraine which somehow managed to elude the strict Soviet censorship, and which contain pathetic appeals for help against this terrible foe—hunger. They implore us and others to appeal to the American sense of humanity and justice and have America aid the stricken Ukraine once more, as it did back in 1921.

All of these foregoing reasons have led us to send a delegation to the President of the United States, in order to inform the United States Government of our opinion concerning the recognition of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics by the United States Government. We regard this task of expressing our unprejudiced opinion on this most important problem as our patriotic duty. And because of the reasons already cited, we respectfully recommend to the

President to conduct any further necessary negotiations with the Soviets on the subject of the recognition only on the condition that the Soviet Republic permits the sending of an impartial Special American Mission to Soviet Russia, particularly to Ukraine, for the purpose of investigating the conditions therein, and to ascertain the direct cause of this terrible famine which during the past year mowed down millions of victims in Ukraine.

We are firmly convinced that the famine in Ukraine is not a result of poor crops or drought, but on the contrary, is a result of the political and cultural conflict between Ukrainian nationalistic aspirations and Moscow's imperialistic and centralizing designs; and also because of the Ukrainian peasants' opposition to Moscow's economic exploitation of Ukraine and to its forcibly imposed collectivization and other Communistic experiments practiced upon the Ukrainian people. The famine is the culmination of that unremitting and ferocious persecution of the Ukrainian people by Moscow dictatorship, which beginning back in 1918—when the Bolsheviks forcibly seized Ukraine, which in accordance with the will of its inhabitants and their desire for self-determination had been formed into the Ukrainian National Republic—has continued with unabated force to this day.

The Bolshevik dictatorship over Ukraine, from its very beginning up to the present time, has always and without any interruptions whatsoever been maintained by brutal force alone against the will and wishes of the Ukrainian people. And in order to break this opposition, and to quell forever the unceasing struggle of the Ukrainian people to free themselves, the Soviets fostered during the past year this famine which has taken such a terrible toll of human life.

And therefore, in view of all of these circumstances, we believe that at least from the standpoint of humanity an investigation of these terrible conditions in Ukraine under the Soviets be immediately undertaken by this proposed Special American Mission.

Only after a thorough investigation of these conditions—as enunciated by the American Legion and American Federation of Labor, and finally by Ukrainian people—can the question of the official recognition of the Union of Socialist Republics by the United States Government be finally decided in accordance with the world renowned American principles of justice and humanity.

In view of the fact, that the Ukrainian people have repeatedly declared, thru their legal representatives, that they do not recognize the Russian occupation of Ukraine nor treaties and obligations entered into by the Moscow government concerning Ukrainian territories,

And in view of the fact, that under present Soviet Russian oppression the Ukrainian people are unable to express themselves freely upon questions vitally affecting them,

We owe it to the American Government as loyal citizens to call its attention to those facts.

Respectfully submitted,
United Ukrainian Organizations of the United States:
Emil Revyuk, President; D-r Luke Myshuha, Secretary [and others].

73rd Congress, 2nd Session. H. Res. 399. In the House of Representatives, May 28, 1934. Resolution. Reprinted in *Famine in Ukraine* (1934). Full text, pp. 3–4.

Mr. [Hamilton] Fish submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed.

Whereas several millions of the population of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the constituent part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, died of starvation during the years of 1932 and 1933; and

Whereas the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, although being fully aware of the famine in Ukraine and although having full and complete control of the entire food supplies within its borders, nevertheless failed to take relief measure designed to check the famine or to alleviate the terrible conditions arising from it, but on the contrary used the famine as a means of reducing the Ukrainian population and destroying the Ukrainian political, cultural, and national rights; and

Whereas intercessions have been made at various times by the United States during the course of its history on behalf of citizens of states other than the United States, oppressed or persecuted by their own governments, indicating that it has been the traditional policy of the United States to take cognizance of such invasions of human rights and liberties: Therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives express its sympathy for all those who have suffered from the great famine in Ukraine which has brought misery, affliction, and death to millions of peaceful and law-abiding Ukrainians; be it further

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives express its earnest hope that the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will speedily alter its policy in respect to the famine in Ukraine, take active steps to alleviate the terrible consequences arising from this famine, and undo so far as may be possible the injustices to the Ukrainian people; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives express its sincerest hope that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Government will place no obstacles in the way of American citizens seeking to send aid in form of money, foodstuffs, and necessities to the famine-stricken regions of Ukraine.

Soviet Denials and Related Documents (1930s to 1980s)

Letter from Maksim Litvinov, People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, to Herman P. Koplemann, U.S. Congressman, 3 January 1934. In *Famine in Ukraine* (1934), p. 6.

I am in receipt of your letter of the 14th inst. and thank you for drawing my attention to the Ukrainian pamphlet. There is any amount of such pamphlets full of lies circulated by counter-revolutionary organizations abroad, who specialize in the work of this kind. There is nothing left for them to do but to spread false information or to forge documents.

However, I am instructing Mr. Skvirsky in Washington to supply you with data on the real situation in the Ukraine.

Yours sincerely,
M. Litvinoff

Letter from B. Skvirsky, Counsellor of the Embassy of the USSR, to Herman P. Koplemann, U.S. Congressman, 3 February [1934]. In *Famine in Ukraine* (1934), pp. 6–8.

My dear Representative Koplemann:

Commissar Litvinoff has forwarded to me your inquiry in regard to a pamphlet ostensibly published by the "Ukrainian National Women's League of America." In effect these anonymous ladies (I use the word anonymous because no name nor address is given in the pamphlet) accuse the Soviet Government of deliberately killing off the population of the Ukraine.

The idea is wholly grotesque. The population of the Ukraine is somewhat over 30,000,000. During the period of the first Five-Year Plan, concluded a year ago, the population increased at the rate of 2 per cent per year. The death rate was the lowest of that of any of the seven constituent Republics composing the Soviet Union, and was about 35 per cent lower than the pre-war death rate of Tsarist days. The death rate in the larger Ukrainian cities is the lowest among the cities of the Soviet Union. More than three times as many children are in school today in Ukraine as in 1913. The Ukrainian language is used in the schools as well as Russian, and in the literature and the theatre. It was banned in the Tsarist days. So much for the general charge.

Fortunately we can check up on one or two specific things mentioned in the pamphlet. They show that the authors were not particularly scrupulous about facts.

1. The pamphlet states that in the N.Y. Times of August 24, 1933, Duranty stated that three to four million persons in the Ukraine died the same year. Duranty, writing from Moscow on that date, actually stated that from information he had received he estimated that owing to the poor harvest of 1932 possibly three million persons died during 1932, not in Ukraine alone but in Ukraine, North Caucasus and lower Volga region together, an area roughly triple the size of the Ukraine. The pamphlet does not add that in the Times, September 13, writing from Rostov-on-Don in the course of a personal inspection trip through these sections, Duranty stated that his estimate of July 24, before he had made his personal inspection, was exaggerated. He said that the poor harvest of 1932 had made for difficult conditions in certain sections, but there had been no famine. Writing from Kharkov, capitol of Ukraine, Sept. 18, 1933 on the conditions of that year, he said:

"The writer has just completed a 200 mile trip through the heart of the Ukraine and can say positively that the harvest is splendid and all talk of famine now is ridiculous.' The A.P. correspondent made a similar first hand report."

[**Interpolation by editors of *Famine in Ukraine*:** The letter then proceeds to disqualify the report of Frederic T. Birchall appearing in the New York Times of August 25, 1933, in which that correspondent states that three or four million people starved to death in Ukraine—by saying that Mr. Birchall was not in Ukraine but used as a basis for his article information received from persons who came from Ukraine. The letter then concludes as follows:]

3. The pamphlet quotes "The Ukrainian Daily Dilo" published in Lemberg "in the western part of the Ukraine"? as authority for the statement that six million Ukrainians had starved to death. Here apparently we have a newspaper published in the Ukraine itself apparently admitting this horrible fact. Unfortunately, however, the pamphlet is a little bit misleading. Lemberg, as you can readily see from any standard atlas, is not in Ukraine at all, but in Poland. The "Dilo" is not a Ukrainian publication. It is an organ issued by an émigré group in Poland by former feudal landlords of the Ukraine, now living abroad. The question is whether one should credit this émigré source or credit the two American newspaper men, representing respectively the N.Y. Times and the Associated Press, who made a personal inspection of the territory in question.

Sincerely yours,
B. Skvirsky,
Counsellor of the Embassy.

News release, Press Office of the USSR Embassy in Canada, no. 60, 28 April 1983. Copy in the possession of the editors supplied by Marco Carynnyk.

ON THE SO CALLED 'FAMINE' IN THE UKRAINE

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 the 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.

Many Canadians of Ukrainian origin know from their mothers and fathers that the Ukraine had chronically suffered from crop failures, and though there were good years the bad ones came nearly as often. In fact many of them left their country exactly because of the famines that occurred in the Ukraine in the 19th as well as in the early 20th century.

In 1931, 27 million hectares of land in the Ukraine (nearly 60 million acres, more than all the cultivated area of Saskatchewan) were hit by the most severe drought. In 1932 major grain producing areas in the Ukraine and in the Russian Federation were affected by the drought again. As a result the 1932 harvest in the Ukraine was 14.7 million metric tons, 3.9 million less than the year before.

Specialists in anti-Soviet propaganda say that Moscow allegedly imposed “Draconian quotas” on the Ukraine, which made the situation worse. In actual fact, history carries quite a different record.

The reasons for the crop failure were considered at the 3rd Conference of the Communist Party of the Ukraine (July, 1932) and measures were taken to lessen the effect of the poor year on the population. As a result, government quotas were drastically reduced to 6.6 million metric tons. Later even this figure was cut and the actual Ukrainian quota was 4.7 million tons.

In other words, 10 million tons of grains out of the 14.7 million tons harvested in 1932 remained in the Ukraine. Of course distribution of grain was not absolutely even, some areas were better off than the others, but the overall situation in the country was far from that described by some Canadian media.

The agricultural difficulties in the Ukraine happened to take place during one of the most crucial periods in the history of farming. The transition to large scale collective farming was completely new and untried. Farmers, as well as the party and government officials lacked the experience as to how to organize their work better, hence there were mistakes and omissions. Tractors or other agricultural machinery were scarce at the time and yet at many collectivized farms the stake was made on machinery while draught horses and oxen were neglected, which resulted in a mass loss of cattle. That misjudgement frustrated to great extent the sowing and harvesting campaigns in 1932.

Another reason for the difficulties the new collective way of farming experienced was that it was violently opposed by the wealthy landowners called the Kulaks and not by peasants, as it is sometimes claimed here. The overwhelming majority of peasants immediately saw the advantages of collective farming which among other things was able to increase farmers' security against crop failures and put an end to the Kulaks' tyranny. The Kulaks who did not want to lose their control over poor peasants or to share a piece of bread with them tried every possible means to hamper the progress of collective farming. For this purpose they organized gangs that poisoned the cattle, set fire to collective farmers' houses and office buildings, exercised terror and murder.

In 1929 alone when collective farming was just starting on a mass scale, the Kulaks killed about 10,000 activists, communists, leaders of the farms or those who agreed to try to farm collectively. In the first six months of 1930 they committed over 1500 acts of terrorism in the Ukraine.

The acts of sabotage were multiple. The Kulaks, using blackmail, terror or other means managed to make their way into collective farms' management, where they delayed or ruined field work, damaged machinery, etc. Western authors admit that in 1931 in the Ukraine arson committed on 24.7 per cent of the collective farms, machinery damaged in 9.6 per cent, cattle poisoned in 8.8 per cent, activists attacked in 44 per cent.

All this could not but tell on the results of the agricultural production and on the overall situation in the republic.

The masters of the new anti-Soviet campaign which fits so perfectly into the recently pronounced crusade against communism, finding it hard to oppose the facts, or bring any evidence in support of their allegations, tend to concentrate on the emotional side of the story, overplaying human sufferings. Some even say that collectivization resulted in a smaller population in the Ukraine. Of course, many families were badly affected, some did suffer, especially those whose husbands or sons were murdered by the Kulak bandits. Some villages felt a terrible strain after their grain reserves were burned, or cattle poisoned. Nevertheless, the whole picture in the Ukraine was not that of a nearly complete collapse with a smell of a nation-wide tragedy as it is portrayed by the most zealous anti-Soviet writers in the media in Canada. On the contrary, the atmosphere of vigorous work and unparalleled enthusiasm prevailed as the nation embarked on great economic and social programs. Collective farming proved extremely effective as 22.3 million tons of harvest were harvested in 1933.

As to the alleged decrease in the Ukrainian population, the argument is as groundless as the whole man-made-hunger campaign. The fact is that in 1929 the Ukraine had a 30.2 million population. Throughout 1932–1933 the population remained at a level of 32 million, which has nothing to do with the widely circulated and televised lie that some 10 million Ukrainians were starved to death.

The early thirties in the USSR witnessed an historic drive of the whole country to build its own industry, and many huge construction projects were started across the country. There were big schemes in the Ukraine, like the world famous Lenin hydro-power station on the Dnieper river. But a great number of them were built in the Urals and in Siberia, in Central Asia and the Caucasus, in the Far East and in the North. Hundreds of thousands of people from the Western part of the country left their homes for those industrial projects because there they found jobs and new professional and career opportunities. One of the major social results of the first years of industrialization in the USSR was that it created the conditions for the first time ever to

achieve full employment. Economic and political consequences of an unprecedented construction boom in the USSR in the early thirties were no less important. It was then that Soviet industry was consolidated which made it possible in a few years' time to face and eventually defeat the most powerful Nazi war machine.

This argument is hard to find in the new round of slanders against the USSR, because some of the emigrants' organizations and their leaders who are behind this campaign participated in or actively supported Nazi atrocities against their Ukrainian compatriots.

And finally, if the hard times of 1932–33 are to be remembered, there is one solid reason for that. The droughts in the early thirties were the last to have such an effect on the Ukraine or the USSR. Since farming in the country became collectivized fifty years ago Soviet people, including Ukrainians, no longer fear that poor crops may result in human suffering. We may have a good year or a bad year, but on the whole collective farming indisputably resulted in steady and continuous growth of grain production.

These are the most important social, economic and political results of collectivized farming and they are the prime target of the new slanderous anti-Soviet campaign under the pretext of the so-called “man-made famine” in the Ukraine.