Edited by Roman Solchanyk

Ukraine

From Chernobyl' to Sovereignty

A Collection of Interviews

Foreword by Norman Stone

UKRAINE: FROM CHERNOBYL' TO SOVEREIGNTY

Also by Roman Solchanyk

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Foreword

"The Estonian people has been cultivating its existence on the shores of the Baltic for the past two thousand years," ran one of the historic documents of communism. It came out in September, 1988; and it amounted to a statement of independence—technically, "sovereignty"—by the one and a half million inhabitants of Estonia, the smallest of the republics that make, or made, up the USSR. This tiny pebble, in slipping, was the first sign of what has become a landslide. Now, three years later, Moscow itself has crumbled too: with the election of Boris El'tsin as President of the Russian Republic, a new Union treaty for the whole of the Soviet Union has been drafted. The place will no longer be called "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics" but "Union of Soviet Sovereign Republics"; it will be a confederation, not a centralized state as before. Even then, a great many people in many of the republics want more: they want formal independence, in some cases membership in the Common Market.

In all this, the Ukraine plays a key, in many ways *the* key, part. It is the second largest republic, its boundaries stretching from the Polish border in the west to the northeastern shores of the Black Sea. Its population, over fifty million, makes it one of the largest European states; and it is also naturally very rich, its soil and climate making it Europe's breadbasket and its minerals—coal, preeminently in the Donets Basin; oil; rare and very valuable metals, essential for enriching sophisticated steel—making it an all-important source for the things that ultramodern economies need. Its people, though historically divided, have their own language: Ukrainian is quite distinct from Russian, although, as with the Scandinavian tongues (Finnish apart), if you can read the one, you can make out the other. There *is* a sizable Russian minority, and the great cities, L'viv in the west apart, are in majority Russian-speaking: Kiev, Kharkiv, Odessa. Ukrainians will tell you (and they are probably right) that the populations there would revert to speaking Ukrainian if they were allowed to; but in the past the emphasis was all on Russian, and you were penalized if you used Ukrainian, or even protested. Time was, quite recently, when typewriters did not sport the three distinctive Ukrainian letters. But there are other minorities. The Crimea is formally part of the Ukraine, and it contains not only Russians but also Tatars, once the majority of its population. There are Romanians, even Greeks; there are Poles—by one account,

over half a million. And there are Jews, though no one knows quite how many. The question is: will this vast and variegated mass become not "the Ukraine"—a term that really means "the edges"—but "Ukraine," a new state within the European community?

If this were to happen, then Russia itself—much of the country subarctic—would become, in Alain Besançon's phrase, not a USA, but a Canada. Many Russians on the democratic side might not object: after all, Russians have suffered as much as, and maybe more than, their own subjects in the effort to maintain an empire. Events are now moving so fast that some kind of division of the old USSR could easily happen quite soon. Who, after all, would have thought, three years ago, that we could quite seriously be talking about Ukrainian independence?

For a very long time, that matter was purely speculative. Nationalism is in any case rather difficult to discuss: you can fall, all too easily, into a mixture of lists and poetry. In the Brezhnevite USSR, with media so tightly controlled, evidence for the growth of national feeling was very slight indeed. Brave dissidents, a handful, surfaced and suffered, as Vyacheslav Chornovil and Levko Lukyanenko did in the Ukraine, emerging from years and years in prison to become leaders of the democratic forces as these were eventually allowed to win free elections. Remarkably, they survive with their energies and self-control in good shape: prison, far from breaking the best, can often make them even better. Now, they are in charge in the Western Ukraine—the L'viv, Ternopil', and Ivano-Frankivs'k regions—and their allies have done very well even in the largely Russified city of Kiev. Relations with the local Russians (and Jews) seem to be rather good. Unlike the cases of the Baltic states, there is no antinationalist grouping of Russian immigrants in the Ukraine, no "Interfront," as such organizations are called. True, the population of Odessa so far has not been greatly penetrated by Ukrainian nationalism. But the movement has spread now, quite far into the Eastern Ukraine, that half of the country on the left bank of the river Dnieper or Dnipro, which, once upon a time, was quite Russian—Russian in its Orthodoxy, much of its language, and some of its population.

Nowadays, we can at last say something positive about this, because we are allowed to have evidence—unfaked elections, a free press, visas (even for declared nationalistic exiles) are now on hand, though there are still restrictions in different places and in different ways. One very important thing is the ability of Western observers to read the opinions of Ukrainians who have lived through the past generation or two, in which everything was kept down under a Soviet ice cap. They stirred,

of course, and resented the oppression to which things Ukrainian—"folklore" apart—were subjected. The testimonies that are gathered together in this volume come from interviews conducted by a number of experienced and skilled people, with the results edited, overall, by Roman Solchanyk, of the RFE/RL Research Institute in Munich. Reminiscences and personal impressions are important evidence in the world of communism (and post-communism) precisely because so little else has been reliable. Similarly, the observations of central actors in the unfolding reemergence of a free Ukraine, are important for any Westerner anxious to know how matters in the USS(for "Sovereign")R will proceed. Ivan Drach, for instance, who promoted the popular movement "Rukh" from within the Writers' Union and its newspaper *Literaturna Ukraina*, speaks about his past.What is striking here is the way in which provincial Ukrainian links, within the Communist Party, could be used for Ukrainian (and, in the end, non-Communist) purposes. Much the same happened in Estonia and in Lithuania, where the Communist apparatus was used in defense of the local culture (as can be seen at a glance in Vilna [Vilnius], where the old architecture has been quite carefully restored). We should not blame the local people for behaving in this way, within a Communist apparatus: they had no choice. In this collection of interviews, Ukrainian voices can now speak hopefully about their present and future. These voices include tones that, in the past, might have been discordant. There is now, however, a good chance that people in the Ukraine, whether of Ukrainian, Russian, Jewish, or other origin, will have a state that they can call their own.

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Preface

Beginning in 1989 the political situation in Ukraine had changed to the extent that direct contact with the West became increasingly more common. Not only officially approved representatives of the establishment but also its critics, primarily members of the cultural intelligentsia, were given the opportunity to visit the West and express their views on what was happening in their homeland. Conversely, it became much easier for Ukrainians in the diaspora and others in the West to visit Ukraine. This opening made it possible to meet with some of the most important political and cultural figures in Ukraine and discuss face to face and forthrightly with them the transformations taking place in Ukraine and the USSR as a whole. The interviews assembled in this volume represent one concrete by-product of this exchange.

The appearance of the volume owes much to my colleague and good friend David Marples of the University of Alberta, who first suggested its compilation and who has himself contributed several interviews to it conducted in Ukraine as well as in Canada. I would also like to thank Chrystia Freeland, a postgraduate student of Soviet politics at Harvard University and a frequent contributor to the British press on Ukrainian affairs for her part in conducting the interview with Dmytro Pavlychko.

The preparation of the volume for publication was under the general charge of Robert Farrell, Assistant Director of the Publications Department of the RFE/RL Research Institute. He liaised with the publisher, designed the layout of the book, copyedited and computer-typeset the text, corrected proofs, and prepared the Name Index. I am grateful for his considerable help and especially for his unflagging encouragement of the project.

ROMAN SOLCHANYK

Introduction

Roman Solchanyk

Chernobyl' and the declaration on state sovereignty adopted nearly unanimously by the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet are two events in the recent history of Ukraine whose long-term significance can hardly be overstated. For the outside world, the explosion at the Chernobyl' nuclear power plant in April, 1986, will be remembered as the world's worst nuclear accident. It is difficult to predict with any degree of accuracy what the ultimate consequences of Chernobyl' might be for the people of Ukraine (and neighboring Belorussia), although some commentators do not shrink from speaking of a Ukrainian "ecocide." If such dire predictions turn out to be true, it would be the second time in this century, the first being the artificial famine of 1932–33, that the Ukrainian nation has been confronted with the prospect of physical annihilation.

For Ukrainians, Chernobyl' has also acquired a very special symbolism. In the aftermath of the nuclear catastrophe, Ukrainian writers and journalists began to talk in terms of "a linguistic Chernobyl'" or "a spiritual Chernobyl'" when discussing the consequences of the seventy-odd years of the Soviet experiment for the Ukrainian language and culture. In short, for Ukrainians, Chernobyl' became identified with the duplicity and failure, indeed the complete bankruptcy, of the Soviet system as a whole. It also served to mobilize large masses of people against that system. Initially, as Roman Szporluk rightly points out, Chernobyl' was "ideologically neutral"—i.e., it could have been interpreted from any of several viewpoints. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union could have treated it as a *Soviet* tragedy and used it as a rallying point for the solidarity of all Soviet citizens. This did not happen. Instead, the Ukrainian intelligentsia saw it as a *Ukrainian* issue, not in a narrow ethnic sense but as a tragedy for Ukraine and all of its people. Chernobyl', writes Szporluk, "was the first event to inspire what in the end would grow into a popular national movement."[1]

NATIONAL AND CULTURAL REVIVAL

The first concrete signs of growing national assertiveness could be seen at the Ninth Congress of the Ukrainian Writers' Union in June, 1986, which opened with an impassioned speech by Oles' Honchar, one of

the most prominent literary figures in Ukraine, urging his colleagues to cultivate and protect the Ukrainian language. Honchar, whose novel *The Cathedral* (1968) was banned during the campaign of repression against Ukrainian intellectuals launched in the mid-1960s, also spoke about Chernobyl', saying that it had completely changed the way Ukrainian writers related to the world. It was perhaps not altogether fortuitous that Honchar, when defending the Ukrainian language, presented his argument in terms of protecting the natural "linguistic environment."[2] The dual themes of Chernobyl' and the language also figured prominently in the address given at the USSR writers' congress in Moscow several weeks later by the well-known poet Borys Oliinyk, who used the occasion to broaden the discussion to include the national question in general and the heretofore proscribed issue of Ukrainian-Russian relations.[3] The effects of the longstanding official but unwritten policy of linguistic Russification continued to occupy the Ukrainian intelligentsia, particularly the writers, in the years that followed. An important turning point was the founding of the Shevchenko Ukrainian Language Society in February, 1989. Headed by the respected poet Dmytro Pavlychko, it led the campaign for the enactment of special legislation to define the status of the Ukrainian language in the republic, a demand that began to be voiced with increasing frequency from the end of 1986. Although a law "On Languages in the Ukrainian SSR" was finally adopted in November, 1989, making Ukrainian the state language in the republic, the language question remains a serious problem to the present day.[4]

The early years of *glasnost'* and *perestroika* also witnessed the first attempts to rehabilitate entire periods and specific aspects of Ukrainian history and culture that had long been officially branded as "ideologically harmful" or "nationalist," as well as efforts to rehabilitate victims of the Stalinist terror and the Brezhnev-Andropov campaign against dissidents. An important role in this cultural renaissance was played by various "informal groups" such as the Ukrainian Culturological Club in Kiev and the Lion Society in L'viv, both formed in the summer of 1987; the unofficial publication *The Ukraintan Herald*, which resumed publication in August, 1987, under the editorship of longtime political prisoner Vyacheslav Chornovil; the Ukrainian Association of Independent Creative Intelligentsia, created in October, 1987; the Ukrainian Memorial Society, which emerged in the fall of 1988; and student groups like the Community at Kiev University and the Student Brotherhood in L'viv.[5] Unlike developments in Moscow and Leningrad, however, the process of filling in "blank spots" in Ukraine began later and proved more difficult because of stiff resistance from the local Communist Party

authorities. The fact that Honchar's aforementioned novel, which focuses on historical awareness and continuity as symbolized by an ancient cathedral built by Ukrainian Cossacks, was first reissued in 1986 in Moscow rather than in Kiev is a case in point. Similarly, discussion of the collectivization campaign and the ensuing famine at first proved easier in Moscow journals and newspapers than in the Kiev media. After decades of official denials of the famine, it was only in December, 1987, that Ukrainian Communist Party First Secretary Volodymyr Shcherbitsky could bring himself to perfunctorily admit that, in his words, "a number of rural areas" suffered from famine at the end of 1932 and in early 1933.[6] At the beginning of 1988, when Moscow publishing houses were busy preparing the works of Tsarist historian Nikolai Karamzin for republication in mass editions, establishment historians in Ukraine were still arguing against the rehabilitation of Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi, a Socialist and a member of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences who is universally recognized as Ukraine's foremost historian. Thus, it is only within the past few years that Ukrainians have been able to move forcefully in reclaiming their history, culture, and language, a process that is still under way and one in which the Ukrainian intelligentsia, particularly the writers, continues to play a crucial role.

RELIGIOUS REBIRTH

Religion in Ukraine is integrally tied to the national question. Both the Ukrainian Greek Catholic (Uniate) Church, which is dominant in the western Ukrainian regions that were formerly part of Poland, and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church were banned by the Soviet regime in 1946 and 1930, respectively. Ukrainian Catholics nonetheless continued to practice their faith secretly and illegally, and in the early 1980s an organized movement was formed to press for the restoration and legalization of their Church. The first indication that this goal could be realized came in November, 1989, when the governmental Council for Religious Affairs in Kiev issued a statement affirming that Ukrainian Catholics "may enjoy all rights that are provided by the law on religious associations in the Ukrainian SSR," thereby opening the way for registration of their congregations.[7] In March, 1991, the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, Cardinal Myroslav Ivan Lubachivs'kyi, returned to Ukraine from Rome and subsequently met with Leonid Kravchuk, chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, and other government officials. In May, the Church was officially registered

on the republican level.[8] The movement for the revival of an independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church was launched in February, 1989, with the formation of an Initiative Committee for the Restoration of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. In June, 1990, Ukrainian Orthodox believers convoked an organizational council, the First All-Ukrainian Holy Council (Sobor), and announced the formation of a Ukrainian patriarchate. Metropolitan Mstyslav, who resided in the United States, was elected patriarch of Kiev and All Ukraine, and the following October he returned to Ukraine. Relations between the two independent Ukrainian Churches and with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, a branch of the Russian Orthodox Church, are far from ideal, especially on the local level, where the primary source of interconfessional conflict is the struggle over church buildings and properties.

THE POPULAR MOVEMENT: "RUKH"

The broadening of the Ukrainian national movement from its initial concern primarily with language and cultural issues to include political demands is linked with the emergence of the Popular Movement of Ukraine for *Perestroika*, or "Rukh," in Kiev in the fall of 1988. Short-lived "popular fronts" made their appearance earlier that year in several Ukrainian cities. In L'viv, for example, a "democratic front" was formed in the course of mass demonstrations in the summer of 1988. It was "Rukh," however, that ultimately proved capable of mobilizing broad support for a democratic reform movement throughout Ukraine. Interestingly, one of the first calls for the formation of a mass public organization to promote *perestroika* that reached a wide audience was made by Pavlychko at an ecological meeting in Kiev organized by several "informal groups" on November 13, 1988.[9] The idea had already been discussed several weeks earlier by a group of Kiev writers and literary scholars who formed an Initiative Group to organize such a movement. A draft program of "Rukh" was proposed and discussed at a meeting of the Kiev branch of the Ukrainian Writers' Union on January 31, 1989, and on February 16 it was published in *Literaturna Ukraina*. Even before the draft program was published, however, the Communist Party–controlled press made clear its opposition to the writers' initiative. Thereafter, an intensive campaign was launched to discredit "Rukh" that was reminiscent of the political accusations of the 1960s and 1970s and that did not subside until after the retirement of Ukrainian Communist Party leader Shcherbitsky in September, 1989.

In the meantime, "Rukh" held a founding congress of its Kiev regional body (July 1) and a constituent congress of the republic-wide organization (September 8–10), which elected the popular poet Ivan Drach its leader. It was not until February, 1990, that the authorities officially registered "Rukh" as a legal organization, thereby effectively precluding its direct participation in the first relatively free elections to the Supreme Soviet the following month. Initially, "Rukh" pursued a moderate policy that included cooperation with the Communist Party. Thus, when Mikhail Gorbachev visited Ukraine in February, 1989, he was assured by the "Rukh" leadership that they had no intention of creating an alternative political structure, and the program that was adopted at the constituent congress in September still envisaged Ukraine within the framework of a Soviet Union that was to be transformed into "a genuine union of fraternal sovereign peoples based on the Leninist program of federalism." But with the radicalization of society came the radicalization of "Rukh." A clear indication of shifting political attitudes was the collective statement "To Members of Rukh and to All Citizens of Ukraine" published in *Literaturna Ukraina* on March 8, 1990, and signed by, among others, several prominent "Rukh" leaders who at the time were still members of the Communist Party (Drach, Pavlychko, Volodymyr Yavorivs'kyi, Vitalii Donchyk, and others). It urged that "Rukh" be transformed into a political party and called for "the building of real and definitive independence for Ukraine." The fourth session of "Rukh's" Grand Council, which was convened at the end of March, decided against transforming the organization into a political party. At the same time, Drach and Pavlychko announced that they had left the Communist Party, while others were expelled soon thereafter. At its second congress (October 25–28, 1990), "Rukh" dropped the term *perestroika* from its official name and proclaimed complete independence for Ukraine as its primary goal. At that time, it claimed a membership of 633,000 out of a total of more than 5 million members and sympathizers.

EMERGENCE OF MULTIPARTY SYSTEM

Organized opposition to the Communist Party and to Gorbachev-style *perestroika* in Ukraine is not limited to "Rukh," which from its inception saw itself as a broad popular movement (*rukh* means movement in Ukrainian). Today, "Rukh" serves as an umbrella organization for various political groups and parties ranging from radical nationalists, who are based primarily in Western Ukraine, to Western-style liberals

and social democrats.[10] One of the most influential, certainly in Western Ukraine, is the Ukrainian Republican Party (URP), which supports complete independence for Ukraine and is uncompromising in its anti-communism. The URP, which claims about 9,000 members, has its origins in the Ukrainian Public Group to Promote the Implementation of the Helsinki Accords (1976–88), one of the most important human-rights groups in pre-Gorbachev Ukraine, which was transformed into the Ukrainian Helsinki Union (1988–90). At a constituent congress convened in Kiev (April 29–30, 1990), the Ukrainian Helsinki Union established itself as the URP and chose Levko Lukyanenko as its head. Lukyanenko, like other URP leaders, is a former political prisoner and a people's deputy of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet. The URP was the first political party in Ukraine to be officially registered by the authorities (November, 1990). The proceedings of the party's second congress in June, 1991, showed that its ranks were deeply divided into moderate and radical camps grouped around Lukyanenko and Stepan Khmara, respectively. The congress, however, did not result in a formal split and reelected Lukyanenko its leader.

More radical in its views and political ambitions is the Ukrainian National Party (UNP), which held its founding congress in L'viv on October 21, 1989. The UNP considers the Soviet Ukrainian state to be "an artificial structure" and does not recognize it or its laws. Accordingly, it boycotted the elections to the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet. The party's aim is to reestablish the pre-Soviet Ukrainian People's Republic "within its ethnic boundaries." The Ukrainian People's Democratic Party (UNDP), which held its constituent congress in Kiev (June 16–17, 1990), has an analogous but somewhat less strident program. It considers the Union treaty of 1922 to be illegal inasmuch as it was signed by a government of occupation in Ukraine. The UNDP aims to revive "an independent, democratic, and lawful Ukrainian state." The UNDP evolved from the Ukrainian People's Democratic League (UNDL), formed at a constituent conference in Riga on June 24 and 25, 1989, which, in turn, was organized on the basis of the Ukrainian Democratic Union. The last-named group developed as a branch of the Democratic Union, which emerged in the spring of 1988 as the first Russian political grouping in opposition to the CPSU. Together with the UNP, the UNDP took the initiative in forming the Ukrainian Inter-Party Assembly (UMA) in July, 1990, which along with a dozen other groups and parties is active in the registration of citizens of the Ukrainian People's Republic and preparations for convening a National Congress. The UMA has also declared its intention of forming a Ukrainian national army. It is headed

by Yurii Shukhevych, the son of the commander of the wartime Ukrainian Insurgent Army and a veteran political prisoner who was first arrested at the age of thirteen. Other parties on the right of the political spectrum include the Ukrainian Christian Democratic Party and the All-Ukrainian Political Union "State Independence of Ukraine." More moderate is the Ukrainian Peasant Democratic Party.

The main representatives of the political center are the Democratic Party of Ukraine (DemPU) and the Party of Democratic Rebirth of Ukraine (PDVU). The former was established by those "Rukh" leaders who favored the transformation of the organization into a political party. As mentioned earlier, this proposal was voted down at the fourth session of the Grand Council of "Rukh" at the end of March, 1990. Addressing that forum, Pavlychko announced that plans for forming the DemPU were under way. Its "Manifesto," published in *Literaturna Ukraina* on May 31, 1990, reflected a social democratic orientation (later shelved) and called for the state independence of Ukraine. The DemPU held its constituent congress in Kiev on December 15 and 16, 1990, at which time it had almost 3,000 members. The PDVU traces its origins to the Democratic Platform within the CPSU, a reform movement within the Communist Party that emerged in January, 1990. The first conference of Party clubs and representatives of Party organizations in Ukraine supporting the Democratic Platform within the CPSU was held in Kharkiv at the end of March, 1990. On June 3, *Radyans'ka Ukraina* published a draft "Unifying Democratic Platform to the Twenty-eighth Congress of the CPSU (Democratic Platform within the Communist Party of Ukraine)," which contained a series of proposals that would have to be accepted if the Communist Party of Ukraine was to remain unified. The document was not discussed at the Party Congress, and in July the Democratic Platform within the Communist Party of Ukraine began preparations for forming a separate party. At the same time, twenty-eight people's deputies of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet who were adherents of the Democratic Platform within the Communist Party of Ukraine announced their resignations from the Communist Party. The list was headed by Vladimir Grinev, deputy chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet. The PDVU's constituent congress was held in Kiev on December 1 and 2, 1990, at which time it had 2,340 members. The DemPU and the PDVU have joined forces at the local level, and there has been talk of the two parties merging.

The Green Party of Ukraine (PZU) sees itself as a left-of-center party. It is headed by Yurii Shcherbak, a physician, well-known writer, and USSR people's deputy, who is also head of the Ukrainian ecological

association "Green World." The idea of forming a Green party was raised as early as at the constituent congress of "Green World" in October, 1989. An initiative group met in March, 1990, and the following month Shcherbak announced the formation of the party at an ecological meeting in Kiev. The PZU held its constituent congress from September 28 to 30. Its declared aims are the rebirth and protection of the natural environment and the building of "a free and sovereign democratic state—the Republic of Ukraine." There are also two small social democratic parties in Ukraine.

Ukrainian student organizations have played a particularly important role in Ukrainian politics. It was the student hunger strike in Kiev in October, 1990, that forced the resignation of the chairman of the Ukrainian Council of Ministers, Vitalii Masol. The strike was organized by the Ukrainian Students Union (USS), formed in December, 1989, in Kiev, and the Student Brotherhood, formed in L'viv in March, 1989. In March, 1991, the two groups were united to form the Union of Ukrainian Students (SUS), which is headed by Volodymyr Chemerys, a student at Kiev University. Less influential is the Union of Independent Ukrainian Youth (SNUM), established in August, 1989, which has its base primarily in Western Ukraine and stands on a platform of "revolutionary nationalism."

THE POLITICS OF SOVEREIGNTY

A new phase in the political life of Ukraine was inaugurated with the elections to the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet in March, 1990. Already the previous year, during the elections to the USSR Congress of People's Deputies, many high-ranking Ukrainian Communists, including first secretaries of oblast Party committees, suffered humiliating defeats at the hands of opposition candidates. In Kiev, for example, of the fifteen Communist Party members who stood for election in the city's seven electoral districts only one was elected. The two top leaders in the Ukrainian capital, the first secretary of the Kiev City Party Committee and the chairman of the Executive Committee of the Kiev City Soviet, both of whom ran unopposed, were turned down by the electorate. Shcherbitsky, who also ran unopposed in his native Dnipropetrovs'k region, won more than 72 percent of the vote. Yet given his position, the fact that about 25 percent of voters crossed his name off the ballot could hardly be interpreted as a resounding victory.

The elections to the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet were preceded by a heated debate over the election law, specifically over whether so-called public organizations (the Communist Party, Komsomol, the republican trade-union organization, and the like) should be allowed fixed quotas of deputies, as was the case during the elections to the USSR Congress of People's Deputies. In the end, guaranteed representation for public organizations did not find its way into the Ukrainian election law, thereby providing the basis for relatively democratic elections in the republic. In November, 1989, a Democratic Bloc of Ukraine representing more than forty opposition groups was formed as a coordinating body to organize the opposition's campaign for the elections in March. In spite of widespread voting irregularities, about one-quarter of the 450 seats in the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet were won by Democratic Bloc candidates, who organized themselves into a parliamentary bloc called the People's Council. Within a year, the ranks of the parliamentary opposition grew to about one-third of me deputies.

The first session of the newly elected Supreme Soviet (May–August, 1990) was marked by almost continual confrontation between the People's Council and the Communist-dominated majority (popularly known as the Group of 239), including frequent voting boycotts and walkouts by the former. A particularly heated dispute arose over the Communist-backed candidacy of Volodymyr Ivashko, Shcherbitsky's successor as first secretary of the Communist Party, for the post of chairman of the Supreme Soviet, with the democratic opposition maintaining that two such high-level offices should not be held by one individual. Nonetheless, Ivashko was elected on June 4, but the opposition refused to take part in the voting and pointedly left the proceedings. After little more than a month in office, he resigned after having ignored, together with other Ukrainian delegates to the Twenty-eighth Congress of the CPSU, a request from the Supreme Soviet to return to Kiev in order to participate in the debate on sovereignty. Immediately thereafter, on Gorbachev's recommendation, he was elected deputy general secretary of the CPSU. Ivashko's "defection" to Moscow, as Kravchuk later put it, was a blow to the parliamentary majority and was used by the opposition to argue that the interests of Ukraine had little or no meaning for the republic's Communists. It also radicalized the deputies, a shift in attitude that was reflected both in the vote on sovereignty on July 16 (355 for and 4 against) and in the text of the declaration itself, which went considerably further in setting out Ukraine's prerogatives vis-à-vis Moscow than the sovereignty document adopted earlier by the RSFSR. Before adjourning, the session also

passed a law on the economic independence of Ukraine. Later in the year, amid much fanfare, Russian leader Boris El'tsin came to the Ukrainian capital to initial a treaty between Ukraine and Russia. He emphasized that, unlike previous agreements between the two sides that were arranged in Moscow on unequal terms, "we very much wanted to sign this one in Kiev." The gesture was intended to underline the fundamental change in the nature of relations between the two sovereign states.

The Supreme Soviet's second session (October–December, 1990) opened against a background of growing tension. On September 30, an estimated crowd of 10,000 responded to a call from the opposition political parties to demonstrate in Kiev for Ukrainian independence and rejection of a new Union treaty. The following day, when the Supreme Soviet opened, 15,000 to 20,000 people were in the streets, and workers organized a one-day warning strike. Then, on October 2, students from throughout the republic set up their tents in Kiev's main square and began a political hunger strike. Their demands were: (1) the resignation of Masol, the head of government; (2) legislation stipulating that military service by residents of Ukraine be performed only in the republic; (3) rejection of a new Union treaty; (4) nationalization of Party and Komsomol property in the republic; and (5) new elections to the Supreme Soviet on a multiparty basis. On October 17, after more than two weeks of crisis during which calls were heard to take "the extremists" in hand and proclaim a state of emergency in the capital, the Supreme Soviet conceded the students' demands. Specifically, the parliament resolved that: (1) residents of Ukraine would perform military service outside the republic only on a voluntary basis; (2) it would be "untimely" to sign a new Union treaty prior to the adoption of a new constitution; (3) the issue of Party and Komsomol property would be reviewed within the government and discussed by the Supreme Soviet; and (4) a referendum in 1991 would decide the question of new elections. Soon thereafter Masol resigned. The outcome of the students' strike represented a clear victory for the democratic opposition. Still, the political situation in Ukraine remained tense. In November, Stepan Khmara, a radical deputy from Western Ukraine, was arrested in the Supreme Soviet building after his parliamentary immunity had been waived, illegally according to the opposition, because of an alleged attack on a police officer. In December, in a move clearly directed against the opposition, the majority succeeded in introducing a change in the voting procedure whereby only more than half of the deputies, as opposed to the previous two-thirds, would suffice to constitute a quorum.

The extent to which the notion of sovereignty has, in a relatively short time, become the focus of Ukrainian politics became evident early in the third session of the Supreme Soviet (February–July, 1991). Ukraine, like the other republics, was confronted with Moscow's decision to hold a referendum on March 17, 1991, on the preservation of the Soviet Union. The referendum issue, as could be expected, was highly charged. The opposition argued that the decision to hold a referendum had been made without consulting the republics and was therefore illegal. Naturally, Ukrainian Communists supported the referendum. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet introduced a draft resolution criticizing the wording of the referendum question ("Do you consider necessary the preservation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a renewed federation of equal sovereign republics, in which the rights and freedoms of an individual of any nationality will be fully guaranteed?") as unclear and confusing and proposed that the USSR Supreme Soviet consider the addition of a second question for voters in Ukraine ("Do you consider it necessary that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics become a Union of Soviet sovereign states in which each people will decide its own fate?"). The parliamentary majority had its own draft resolution, which contended that voters should be asked only one question—the one formulated by the center. Neither draft was able to get the necessary votes. At this juncture, Kravchuk proposed that Moscow's referendum question be left untouched but that a republican survey be conducted at the same time. The formulation of the additional question would be determined by the appropriate parliamentary commissions. Kravchuk's proposal was carried, and within two weeks the Supreme Soviet adopted, by a vote of 277 in favor and 32 against, a resolution approving a republican survey question to be worded: "Do you agree that Ukraine should be part of a Union of Soviet sovereign states on the principles of the declaration on the state sovereignty of Ukraine?" On March 17, 70.2 percent responded to Moscow's referendum question in the affirmative, and 80.2 percent gave their approval to the question posed in the republican survey. Although the results are subject to various interpretations, Kravchuk has consistently and forcefully cited the results of the republican survey as proof of mass support for Ukrainian sovereignty and a popular mandate for his policies.

The failure of the parliamentary majority to push through its position on the referendum, taken together with Kravchuk's success in gaining approval for his compromise proposal, showed clearly that the Communist-dominated majority in the Supreme Soviet could no longer be viewed as a monolithic bloc and that a parliamentary center unofficially

headed by Kravchuk was in the process of taking shape. In the words of Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Soviet Vladimir Grinev, the voting revealed that the majority was no longer the majority. Increasingly, observers of the Ukrainian political scene began singling out two groups of Communist deputies in the Supreme Soviet—"the sovereignty Communists" and "the imperial Communists." This was subsequently confirmed by Kravchuk: "In practical terms, this group [the Group of 239] no longer exists. In essence, it has liquidated itself."[11]

A dramatic indication both of the independent direction in which Ukraine is evolving and the shifting political balance in the Supreme Soviet was provided by the Ukrainian lawmakers in the course of one day—June 27, 1991—when the decision to postpone discussion of the new draft Union treaty until mid-September was carried by an overwhelming majority of 345 votes. The reason? To determine if that document is compatible with Ukrainian sovereignty.

When Kravchuk was chosen to succeed Ivashko as chairman of the Supreme Soviet in July, 1990, the predominant view within the democratic opposition, which once again boycotted the voting, was that he would follow in the footsteps of his predecessor and defend, first and foremost, the interests of his backers—i.e., the Communist Party. This was to be expected, given his background. Previously, Kravchuk had served as the Party's ideological secretary and had played a leading role in its campaign against "Rukh." But in the course of less than a year, an orthodox Communist Party functionary became the foremost representative of Ukraine's interests vis-à-vis Moscow and in the international arena. Thus, at a news conference summing up the work of the Supreme Soviet's third session, Kravchuk was asked what would happen if those republics wishing to join the new Union decided not to wait for Ukraine to make a decision. The Ukrainian leader answered: "As a rule, a girl marries the one she loves; otherwise, she looks for another fiancé."[12] For some, this kind of political evolution remains a mystery. For Kravchuk, there is no mystery whatsoever:

> In order to change one's views, it is necessary, at the least, to be prepared for this internally. There are people who, in principle, are incapable of this process. They consider it a loss of their own "self," of their person. I think differently. On the contrary, a person who changes his viewpoint depending on changes in life rises in the estimation of those around him, inasmuch as they see him as a

> realist. Let's take my attitude towards sovereignty. I will not pretend that I have always held the position that I hold today. Or my view of "Rukh."[13]

This is the credo of a *Realpolitiker.* Whether Kravchuk will be able to carry out his pledge to fight for Ukrainian sovereignty "to the end"[14] is the only real mystery.

NOTES

[1]Roman Szporluk, "National Reawakening: Ukraine and Belorussia," in Uri Ra'anan (ed.), *The Soviet Empire: The Challenge of National and Democratic Movements*, Lexington and Toronto, D. C. Heath and Co., 1990, pp. 78–79. For further reading on recent developments in Ukraine, see also Roman Solchanyk, "Ukraine, Belorussia, and Moldavia: Imperial Integration, Russification, and the Struggle for National Survival," in Lubomyr Hajda and Mark Beissinger (eds.), *The Nationalities Factor in Soviet Politics and Society*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1990, pp. 175–203; Peter J. S. Duncan, "Ukrainians," in Graham Smith (ed.), *The Nationalities Question in the Soviet Union*, London and New York, Longman, 1990, pp. 95–108; and Anatol' Kamins'kyi, *Na perekhidnomu etapi: "Hlasnist'," "perebudova" i "demokratyzatsiya" na Ukraini*, Munich, Ukrains'kyi Vil'nyi Universytet, 1990.

[2]*Literaturna Ukraina*, June 12, 1986.

[3]*Literaturnaya gazeta*, July 2, 1986. Oliinyk is now an adviser to Mikhail Gorbachev and has parted ways with his colleagues in Ukraine. See his attack on fellow Ukrainian poet and democratic opposition leader Dmytro Pavlychko in *Pravda*, May 29, 1991.

[4]In the 1990–91 school year, only 47.9 percent of schoolchildren in Ukraine were taught in Ukrainian, while in Kiev the corresponding figure was 25.4 percent (72.3 percent of the capital's residents are Ukrainian). See *Literaturna Ukraina*, January 3, 1991, and *Slovo*, No. 9, May, 1991.

[5]See Taras Kuzio, "Unofficial Groups and Publications in Ukraine," *Report on the USSR*, No. 47, 1989, pp. 10–21.

[6]*Radyans'ka Ukraina*, December 26, 1987, and *The Ukrainian Weekly*, January 10, 1988.

[7]Bohdan Bociurkiw, "The Ukrainian Catholic Church in the USSR under Gorbachev," *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 39, No. 6, November–December, 1990, pp. 1–19.

[8] *The Ukrainian Weekly*, June 23, 1991.

[9] See David Marples, "Mass Demonstration in Kiev Focuses on Ecological Issues and Political Situation in Ukraine," Radio Liberty Research Report 525/88, December 5, 1988.

[10] Analysis and programmatic documents of the most important political parties in Ukraine are provided by A. H. Slyusarenko and M. V. Tomenko, *Novi politychni partii Ukrainy. Dovidnyk*, Kiev, Tovarystvo "Znannya" Ukrains'koi RSR, 1990; Oleksa Haran' (comp.), *Ukraina bahatopartiina. Probramni dokumenty novykh partii*, Kiev, MP "Pamyatky Ukrainy," 1991; and the special issue of *Komunist Ukrainy*, 1991, No. 5.

[11] *Trud*, June 26, 1991.

[12] *Kul'tura i zhytta*, July 13, 1991.

[13] *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, April 27, 1991.

[14] *Za vil'nu Ukrainu*, March 5, 1991.

1 *Vechirnii Kyiv*, the Voice of *Perestroika* in Ukraine: An Interview with Vitalii Karpenko

David Marples

On June 13, 1989, the author was granted an interview at the editorial offices of the newspaper Vechirnii Kyiv, *which has been in the forefront of the reform movement in Ukraine. He met with Vitalii Karpenko, chief editor of the newspaper, and also with Oleksandr Bilyk, deputy chief editor. The questions asked here were addressed to Karpenko.*

In the West, we have read about accusations that were made against you in the newspaper *Robitnycha hazeta* during the election campaign for the USSR Congress of People's Deputies.[1] Do you feel that they had a significant impact on the results of the elections?

It is not easy to answer this question, because we did not conduct a sociological investigation. The criticism that was directed at me was, in my view, unjust and biased. It was made deliberately on the eve of the election campaign. There were forces that wanted to prevent me from being a candidate in the elections. It is difficult for me to tell what consequences this attack on my credibility may have had. To date, I have received more than 200 letters from Kievites. Many are not from individuals but from entire collectives, letters with dozens of signatures. One of them has 150 signatures. As far as the criticism of me personally is concerned, 99 percent of the letters have supported me.[2]

As regards the election results, I was put forth as a candidate in three different districts. Of these, two are territorial. The third district, the national-territorial district, embraces all of Kiev, and I agreed to run in this major area. Now at least I know who supports me and what kind of people are behind me. There were thirty-three candidates in this national-territorial district. In the first round,

no one received enough votes to win the election. As a result, the two leading candidates entered the second round. These are some of the elements of a majority system. I received 470,000 votes in the second round, but my opponent, Volodymyr Chernyak, received 600,000 votes. That, to put it briefly, is my comment on this matter.

There is a general perception in the West that *Vechirnii Kyiv* is a newspaper that supports *perestroika*. Are there strong forces in Ukrainian and Kievan society that are in opposition to this policy?

First of all, let me say I am very pleased to learn that outside the Soviet Unon *Vechirnii Kyiv* is considered to be among the supporters of *perestroika* inside the country. Second, I wish to point out that the main guidelines for our newspaper are the principles that were put forward at the Nineteenth Party Conference. As far as the forces that are opposed *to perestroika* are concerned, I can only agree that they are substantial, but the fact is that no one will actually come out and tell you openly: "I am against *perestroika*." You see, it is not possible to achieve everything overnight, and the press, the media, are greatly dependent on the administrative apparatus. *Vechirnii Kyiv* is trying to keep pace with *perestroika*, but this is not to everyone's liking.

We are experiencing how difficult it is to work under these conditions. In the first place, there are many who are opposed to the publication of critical articles if they affect the higher echelons of power, high officials. No one talks about this openly, but we can feel it in indirect ways. I am reluctant to give the names of the newspapers that are in opposition because it would not be fair for me just to label these newspapers conservative. I would like to say that different newspapers have different levels of openness. Some are rather cowardly. I would also add that all the criticism that has been directed at *Vechirnii Kyiv* and at me personally has come from opponents of *perestroika*.

To sum up, the topics that our newspaper, *Vechirnii Kyiv,* brings to light are unique. No other newspaper has touched upon them. For example, we have covered the burning problems of so-called special stores for Party officials, special hospitals, and special spheres of services.[3] These questions were discussed and were in the limelight during the election and also during the Congress. We have also touched upon questions of social justice and the economics of

power. Our newspaper elucidates these problems and generates discussion of them. As a result, 500 letters arrived at the editorial office during the election campaign and revealed that Kievites support this newspaper. And here are some facts. In 1985, 210,000 copies of our newspaper were published, whereas in 1989 the circulation is 460,000.[4]

In 1985, we received only 30,000 letters, but since 1986 the figure has risen to between 68,000 and 70,000 letters a year. Many letters have been prompted by the subjects that we cover, but some do not support us. There are those who criticize our newspaper, and we try to publish their letters too, which is something that we did not do previously. It is a feature of *perestroika* that there are two points of view. We often publish opposing viewpoints so that alternative opinions and pluralism can be put forward. Our readers support this tendency. Unfortunately, though, we are criticized from above. The main criticism is: if you are publishing opposing points of view, how is the reader to ascertain the position of your newspaper? Our answer is that our position is the Party's position, which should reflect the broad views of the people.

Vechirnii Kyiv is not available to subscribers in the West. Will this be possible in future?

The question is a pertinent one. The problem is that our newspaper is available only in Kiev and the Kiev region. Outside this area one cannot buy it. This is typical of the USSR. One cannot buy *Vechernyaya Moskva* outside the capital. Ours is a local newspaper. We have many people who write to us from Moscow, Sverdlovsk, the Carpathians, Kirovohrad, Odessa, even from Bulgaria. They want to subscribe to *Vechirnii Kyiv*, and their requests have constantly been refused. We feel this is annoying and very unjust. They have even appealed to the minister of communications to rectify this situation, but it is easier to get a camel through the eye of a needle than to get through the bureaucratic jungle. The reason given is that it would involve additional expenses for transportation. Today this question is being studied. The transportation costs could be covered through subscriptions. All this, however, remains at the discussion stage.

There is great interest today in what is termed the lack of change in the Party hierarchy in Ukraine. Is the current leadership in the republic really behind _perestroika_?

The answer to this question would be better given by the Party leadership itself, because we can only rely on guesswork. Some minor changes have been made. Oleksandr Lyashko, the chairman of the Council of Ministers, has resigned, and Vitalii Masol has taken over. Volodymyr Ivashko has become second secretary, replacing Oleksii Tytarenko. In the agricultural sector, Ivan Mozhovyi has been replaced by Ivan Hrintsov, the first secretary of the Sumy Oblast Party Committee. At *Radyans'ka Ukraina*, the chief editor, Volodymyr Sirobaba, has been succeeded by Volodymyr Stadnychenko.

But these changes have been few and far between?
Personally, I think that personnel changes should take place more rapidly, but this matter is out of our province.

I would like to ask you two questions about nationality issues. First, with regard to the language question, how is the position of the Ukrainian language changing in the schools and universities? And, second, can you tell me how many copies of *Vechirnii Kyiv* are published in Russian and how many in Ukrainian?
The national question is one of the most acute issues at present. I would say that it is the second most important. Language is just a part of the problem, but it is the focus of the overall national question. During the Stalin period and the time of stagnation, the use of the Ukrainian language leveled off. This was not a natural process but rather a process that was enforced from above. Today, the whole situation is changing. In schools, more Ukrainian-language instruction is being provided. A special commission attached to the republican Supreme Soviet is now drawing up a new law to give Ukrainian the status of a state language. The draft law is to be published.[5]

Concerning our circulation in Ukrainian and Russian, the circulation of *Vechirnii Kyiv* in the Ukrainian language is 130,000 copies and in the Russian language 330,000. But since 1985 circulation in the Ukrainian language has risen. Thus, in 1986, the figure was 85,000 copies; in 1988, 100,000; and in 1989, 130,000. Subscription is on a voluntary basis. Between 1983 and 1985, the number of Ukrainian-language subscriptions decreased. A low point was reached with a circulation of 78,000. We hope that our circulation will continue to rise in the future.[6]

As a final question, I would like to ask you about the character of the Popular Movement of Ukraine for *Perestroika*, or "Rukh." There has been criticism in the press that "Rukh" is a small, elitist group made up of Kiev writers. Is "Rukh" supported by the readers of your newspaper?

Again, we have not undertaken a sociological study, but we can refer to the letters we have received. Some of the letters express their opinion about "Rukh." My view is that the Kiev press generally presents a one-sided view of this question. Our newspaper has tried to present the alternative point of view. Insofar as the letters that we have received are concerned, I can respond to your question as follows: two-thirds are pro-"Rukh," and one-third are opposed to it. You are correct in saying that the leadership of "Rukh" is composed of writers and intellectuals, who are mostly concerned about the Ukrainian language. In my opinion, there is nothing wrong or unnatural about this. The creative intelligentsia is always at the forefront of progressive thinking. They are the best prepared to put this problem in a theoretical way. As for our office, we have a very definite point of view, which is that of the Nineteenth Party Conference. It boils down to this: everything in favor of *perestroika* should be used, and all that is against it should be rejected.

NOTES

[1]See David Marples and Roman Solchanyk, "Plagiarism and Politics in Kiev," *Report on the USSR*, 1989, No. 24, pp. 17–19.

[2]Recently, in response to a reader's letter, *Vechirnii Kyiv* revealed that pressure had also been exerted on Karpenko by the Kiev City Party Committee in the form of an investigation by its Control and Auditing Commission. The presidium of the Commission adopted a resolution stating that, in addition to shortcomings with regard to work with readers' letters, there had been "deviations from the Party line on the part of individual Communists" on the editorial board and that Karpenko had tried "to conceal from the city's citizens letters received by the editorial board in which toilers did not support the formation of the so-called Popular Movement of Ukraine for *Perestroika*." See "Stvoryty atmosferu vysokoi vymohlyvosti," *Vechirnii Kyiv*, July 1, 1989.

[3] *Vechirnii Kyiv*, June 10, 1989.

[4] In March, 1991, the newspaper's circulation was 534,645.

[5] The well-known writer and critic Ivan Dzyuba has been entrusted with the task of writing on the language question for *Vechirnii Kyiv*. Letters on the subject are filed for him, and periodically he provides lengthy articles in response to them.

[6] At the end of November, 1990, the newspaper's circulation was 469,379, of which 305,479 (65.1 percent) was in Ukrainian and 163,900 (34.9 percent) in Russian. See *Vechirnii Kyiv*, November 21, 1990.

2 The Beginnings of "Rukh": An Interview with Pavlo Movchan

Roman Solchanyk

Pavlo Movchan, a poet and one of the secretaries of the Kiev writers' organization, was involved in the formation of the Popular Movement of Ukraine for Perestroika, *or "Rukh," from its beginnings, and is a member of the Ukrainian Writers' Union "Rukh" Initiative Group and a Ukrainian people's deputy. The following interview was conducted on June 24, 1989, at a conference on* "Glasnost', Perestroika *and Ukraine" sponsored by the Ukrainian Research Program at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign.*

How did "Rukh" come to be formed? What were its beginnings?
There is a precise chronological order. First of all, there was a meeting of writers in Kiev at which a number of people, a number of writers, spoke, particularly Viktor Teren and myself, about the need to form an Initiative Group now. Then, in October, 1988, a meeting was held to which people trusted to take part in forming such an Initiative Group were invited. The meeting took place in the conference hall of the Writers' Union on October 30. Close to 150 people were present. Teren and I jointly chaired the meeting, and the Initiative Group was formed then. The participants understood not only the need to activitate literary work but also the need to have people, honest people, involved in the formation of such an organization.

Was this a general meeting of the Kiev writers' organization, or a specially convoked meeting? That is, was it formal or informal? Who participated?
This was a specially convoked meeting. Those who took part in the meeting had been informed of it by telephone, not in writing, with information being passed on from one person to another. Then we were invited to the Writers' Union, as we had agreed to this with the Party committee—that is, we had agreed to undertake such an

initiative, and we had permission for it. Borys Oliinyk, Ivan Drach, and Dmytro Pavlychko attended the meeting. Oliinyk stayed only a short while, then left because he had some pressing matters to attend to. But Pavlychko and Drach, as secretaries of the Writers' Union—one heads the Kiev organization, the other is a secretary of the republican organization—were present. Pavlychko proposed to add the entire Party committee to the Initiative Group that had already been chosen. I, as a non-Party member, said that if we wanted to create an Initiative Group for the formation of a popular movement, then I would emphasize the notion of a popular movement, not of a Party movement. A number of people objected to this, saying that we should not distance ourselves from the Party.

The meeting was informal. It could not have been formal, because it would not have been sanctioned. That's why it was informal. But the Institute of Literature took part in the discussions and in proposing candidates for membership in the Initiative Group—specifically, Mykola Zhulyns'kyi, Vyacheslav Bryukhovets'kyi, and Vitalii Donchyk. Bryukhovets'kyi and Donchyk to this day remain the most active participants in the discussion and formulation of documents, of the draft program and of the statute.

Already on October 31 there was a distinct reaction. The secretaries of the Writers' Union, as well as the secretary of the Party organization, Oliinyk, were called to the Central Committee, where there was a discussion with the ideological secretary of the Central Committee, Yurii Yel'chenko. We non-Party members and those who do not belong to the leadership group of the Writers' Union were not invited to attend. When the others returned, they told us that they would create their own Initiative Group within the Party committee; and an Initiative Group composed of members of the Party committee of the Kiev organization was formed.

So, basically, the initiative was taken over by the Party organization of Kiev writers, and in the end the two segments were joined.

Well, yes. Later they were forced to include non-Party members in the group. Then, when this information became widely known, we began to question why this movement was restricted only to members of the Party committee and why the Initiative Group should be headed only by those who were put forth by the Party committee. This was already a discreditation of the very idea of the Group, something that I had discussed at the November, 1988, plenum of the Board of the

Writers' Union in Kiev.[1] I said that this was a popular movement and that I, as a non-Party member, demanded that the existing Initiative Group of the Party committee include within its ranks those who had been selected at the earlier meeting. They said that the quota was small, 150 people for the 500 members of the Writers' Union and that because of this there had to be a meeting of the Kiev organization of the Writers' Union.

This meeting had already taken place in January in the Cinema Building. A draft program had been put together by that time. During the formulation of the program the Party committee proposed the most important amendment, which had not been there before, concerning the leading role of the Party in the popular movement.

But earlier, at the [November] republican plenum, it had been stated that on the local level the heads of the Writers' Union branches would automatically be members of the Initiative Group of the Ukrainian Writers' Union. The idea was to create, right from the start, a broad network. This position was adopted. Leonid Kravchuk, the head of the Ideological Department in the Central Committee, was present at all of these undertakings. Until the unanimous adoption of the draft program at the meeting of the Kiev writers' organization, until the emergence of the document, he reacted positively, saying that this was a good idea, one that had to be supported. At the time, the information about the Baltic popular fronts was not so widespread.

So Kravchuk's position was positive until the appearance of the draft program on February 16 in *Literaturna Ukraina*.

No, not then; his reaction came earlier, at the January meeting of the Writers' Union, when we were discussing the draft program. We read it out then; Petro Osadchuk and Mykhailo Shevchenko, secretaries of the Kiev organization of the Ukrainian Writers' Union, read it out. We familiarized ourselves with it, and it was unanimously adopted by the meeting. There were already discussions then, there were speeches—for example, there was Yurii Shcherbak's speech requesting that there be a number of clarifications, that the program was too long, that it had to be shortened. And there was the very serious address, the first attack made against the program by Kravchuk himself.

What are the aims and the tasks of "Rukh"?

The tasks can be found in the draft program. If you are familiar with it, then you know that they encompass the entire complex of problems in Ukraine today—from the economic to the national.

The program comprehends the entire spectrum of painful problems that cannot be solved by old, administrative methods that do not inspire the people.

In the negative reactions to "Rukh," it was constantly being emphasized that the popular movement was some kind of alternative organization, even a political alternative to the CPSU.

Without a doubt, this was the main ace. All the discussions and disputes that took place on television with members of the Initiative Group added up to Kravchuk always asking, this was his rhetoric: "So, after all, you want to form a political organization, or what?" He was told no, that that was not the case, that this was a popular movement. "No, no, you want to form a political organization, an alternative one." We responded that all of this comes also from Party documents; from encouragements; and, specifically, from the appraisal of the popular fronts by Central Committee secretary and Politburo member Vadim Medvedev, who, in an interview in *Kommunist* last year said that this was a positive phenomenon.[2]

Who would you list as the main initiators of "Rukh"?

I would say that this was clearly defined from the very beginning—people who assert themselves on all levels. First of all, I would mention from the Institute of Literature: Donchyk, Bryukhovets'kyi, and Yurii Kovaliv, and from the Writers' Union there is, without a doubt, Drach, who, I thought, at the first meeting viewed the whole idea ironically and skeptically, but who later came to understand that this could only have come from the writers, in an intellectual atmosphere. Then, Dmytro Vasyl'ovych Pavlychko joined in. Although he also heads the Taras Shevchenko Ukrainian Language Society, he is not indifferent to "Rukh." Further, there is Stanislav Tel'nyuk, Serhii Hrychenyuk, Mykhailo Slaboshpyts'kyi, Oleksandr Bozhko. Here I am naming those who are both members and nonmembers of the Party committee. And the aforementioned Teren.

Does "Rukh" now have some kind of an organizational structure?

Yes, it has an organizational structure. After a prolonged bombardment, so to speak, the Initiative Group that was formed by the Writers' Union moved beyond the limits of the Union itself, and this was a logical continuation. It was an evolution that required a broadening of the structure in view of the fact that there was close to 90 percent support of "Rukh"—discounting the mysterious letters and condem-

nations that took place at the railroad car repair plant in Kiev and all the other stereotypical forms of disapproval—and a Coordination Council was formed headed by the philosopher Myroslav Popovych, the Institute of Philosophy having formed its own group and joined in the movement just like the Institute of Literature.

What can you say about the number of members, although perhaps at the moment it is too early perhaps to talk about formal membership in "Rukh." Let's say sympathizers.
I will not talk about sympathizers; I will only say that there are 240 centers in the Kiev region. Every day there are people who say they have held a meeting and have formed their own initiative groups at various institutes, plants, or other organizations and institutions.

On average, how many members are there in any given group?
From ten members to thousands. We have letters that have been signed by thousands.

Would you explain exactly how the draft program was formed? Who specifically were its authors?
There were a great many authors. Above all, we had as models those programs with which we were already familiar, the programs of the Estonian Popular Front, "Sajudis," and the Latvian Popular Front. But the specifics of the Ukrainian situation demanded certain correctives, and therefore [this was done] in the Party committee, in the presence of Oliinyk and his deputy Oleksa Musiyenko, who is also one of the initiators of this popular movement and of the draft platform. I have forgotten to mention one other, the critic and literary expert Yurii Tsekov, who has been very involved with managing information, working on letters—in a word, with the preparation of registers. This was a collective effort, although there were people who specifically worked on the economic side, such as Venyamin Sikora; as for the legal aspect, if I am not mistaken, the jurist Serhii Holovatyi took part. There were consultations with other people, specialists. On ecological matters, we were advised by Serhii Plachynda, the well-known publicist. In a word, a great number of people were brought in. This was not some sort of sectarian, closed affair.

How in your view is the negative reaction of the authorities to "Rukh" to be explained? What I have in mind is the avalanche of so-called indignant letters that have been published in the

republican press. And, a further question, how will this affect future relations between the Ukrainian intelligentsia and the Party?

To tell the truth, I would begin with the second point—that is relations between the Party and the Writers' Union. I would put the word Party in quotation marks here because what is meant is not the entire Party, not the entire Central Committee. I am sure that there are people there who share the views of the writers. But, in general, the Ideological Department took an unusually hard, inflexible, and at the same time Stalinist position, a Stalinist-Brezhnevist position. This is understandable. What are the reasons for it? Our Party organization has not experienced any changes. It continues to the present day to be headed by a Brezhnevist, Brezhnev's first toady, Volodymyr Shcherbitsky, who, it seems to me, is the initiator of all of these repressive measures taken by the Ideological Department.

I think an intelligent man like Kravchuk is at certain times forced to act in such a manner. Otherwise, how can his illogical behavior, even during television discussions, be explained. He can agree on one thing and then take an absolutely extreme view on something else.

In this connection, were there discussions between Kravchuk and representatives of "Rukh" broadcast on republican television?

Yes, there were three discussions.It began with dialogues with Drach. Then the initiators were invited to two of the discussions—because Kravchuk and his followers put forth a corresponding number of their own historians and sociologists; they got them from the institutes. Then there were the members of the Initiative Group; they participated in the discussions. Those who took part included Donchyk, Bryukhovets'kyi, and Osadchuk. I forgot to say that Osadchuk is a secretary of the Kiev organization, a man who is full of initiative and is uncompromising.

So, Kravchuk was not alone in these discussions, but his aides or consultants also took part.

Consultants from the Institute of Philosophy and the Institute of History took part. There were two rounds, or discussions, open discussions with Kravchuk himself. They took place in the spring of 1989. The first discussion, a very interesting and serious one, was, in the opinion of most people, won by Popovych, the head of the Coordination Council; the second, owing to rhetoric and not

a readiness to give in or compromise, by Kravchuk—largely because, having learned from the first encounter, he engaged in endless attacks.[3]

You mentioned Popovych as the head of the Coordination Council. Let us return for a moment to the organizational structure. As I understand it, the Initiative Group continues to exist as such. Or has it been absorbed by the Coordination Council?

Initiative groups exist within the Writers' Union, within the Institute of Philosophy, within the Institute of Literature, and within various other institutes and enterprises. I mentioned 240 groups, each of which has its own initiative group and leader. But, towards the end of March, 1989, a Coordination Council was formed that went beyond the framework of the Writers' Union. The Ideological Department had to take this into account and not bombard the writers. You see, if until then there were attacks and the writers were genuinely in confrontation with the Central Committee, now this has gone further.

Because the original Initiative Group was within the framework of the Kiev writers' organization.

Yes.

In March, 1989, the Ideological Department of the Ukrainian Party Central Committee organized a round table with representatives of the creative intelligentsia with the idea of drawing up a program of development for Ukrainian national culture. What do you think? Is this supposed to be the Party's alternative to "Rukh." What does this amount to?

Without a doubt. This is a narrowing down of the entire program only into a cultural program, into a microprogram. "You writers, you artists, you composers engage yourself in your own line of work. Why are you intruding?" These were the constant accusations. "Why are you intruding? You would be better off working, writing, and painting. This is not your affair. Who dared to authorize you to speak for the people?" The apparatchiks always talk in the name of the people. But who gave them the authority? In the event, condemnations were organized, such as that at the railroad car repair factory in the Darnytsya part of Kiev. A television show was put on where all the workers made condemnations.

I am thoroughly convinced that the overwhelming majority was not familiar with the draft program. This is not a program but a draft program. We are always forgetting that this is only a draft program. On July 1 of this year, there will be a constituent meeting of Kiev and the Kiev Oblast, at which representatives from all the local "Rukh" groups will convene and adopt a program and statute.[4]

Reading the report of that round table, one gets the impression that the representatives of the creative intelligentsia have gone over to Kravchuk's position. Is this fair to say? That is, with the exception of Ivan Drach, who categorically stated that the idea of forming a program for the development of Ukrainian national culture was fine but that "Rukh" should continue to exist. In short, is the account that was published in *Radyans'ka Ukraina* accurate?[5]

It is possible that, privately, they did not agree; however, the majority of them are nomenklatura workers. One should not forget that these are people who are in this or that position thanks to the Central Committee. They are people who were recommended for their posts. Drach, who was elected democratically and unanimously by the Writers' Union, is completely independent of Kravchuk's opinion about him or of that of any of the Party workers. Thus, there were some, well, attempts to compromise. Come on, yes, let's do it. But strength was shown. As they say, the Party supporters talked them down. Judging even from the account that was published, which you and I read and which was later supplemeted by other information, I understood that they tried to talk them down, to reduce everything to the cultural program, and everything that pertained to the overall social existence, the national, the republican was, well, not within this framework.

Let me ask a question along the same lines. *Radyans'ka Ukraina* published a letter by Borys Oliinyk, wherein it was not difficult to see that he was making an attempt to distance himself from the draft program. How can this be explained? What's at issue here? Are there some personal problems here? What are the reasons behind Oliinyk's attempt to distance himself from "Rukh"?[6]

In point of fact, we know that this was not an attempt by Oliinyk to distance himself from "Rukh"; he did distance himself. And it was strange because—well, it surprised us. Oliinyk had taken part in the

discussions and developments at all levels, from the very beginning—at the plenum, at the meeting of the Kiev organization, at the plenum of the Kiev organization, at the republican plenum. He was present, and he participated, It was in his office at the Party committee that we finished working on and amending the draft program. His deputy Musiyenko informed him about how things were going. When we read Oliinyk's letter, we understood that this was either a betrayal—it had to be explained in this way—or that he was distancing himself, which could have to do with considerations related to the election campaign, although he was one of the hundred who could not but be elected. Thus, we explained it to ourselves in this way: these are his own personal moves in the game he is playing.

It is my personal opinion that this has to be understood in light of the tremendous rise in popularity that Drach, as the head of the Initiative Group of the Writers' Union, had acquired throughout the entire Ukraine. Oliinyk could not, so to speak, have failed to take notice of this. It was an attempt to somehow outshine Drach. What it amounted to was, evidently, not so much an act of moving away from the popular movement, but more an effort to lower the status of Drach.

So you think there are certain personal issues that are involved here.

I feel that this is the most important thing. No one could have pressured Oliinyk and forced him to write this piece.

What are the prospects for "Rukh"? And, in general, what are the prospects for *perestroika* in Ukraine?

Perestroika in Ukraine is conditioned precisely by the participation of the people in this popular movement. The prospects for *perestroika* are dependent upon the prospects for "Rukh" and its work; and they will be determined only by this. That the Ideological Department, the Central Committee, has, up to the present moment, maintained the stance that it has—this attests to the fact that they are defending the old positions. These are, in fact, anti-*perestroika*, anti-Gorbachev, one can say anti-Party positions somehow. That is to say, if the [Gorbachev] program is put forth both by the [Nineteenth Party] Conference and by the Congress of People's Deputies, this will show that Ukraine is the absolute outpost of Shcherbitskyism, or whatever you want to call it.

And that is why, now, the dynamics of the Congress of People's Deputies have served to intensify this movement. We all realize that today it is imperative, absolutely imperative to step things up in Ukraine. July 1, it seems to me, will mark a very important event—the constituent meeting of Kiev and Kiev Oblast "Rukh" in the Cinema Building. Until now the authorities did not give us either permission or a place to hold the meeting. Neither the Cinema Building nor the Artists' Building would have dared to take this step on its own; only the Congress, which demonstrated that there is, after all, an alternative idea and that pluralism, if it is to be at all effective, must be illustrated at least by such a step as the holding of the constituent meeting.

But this will be a regional constituent meeting. Will there be a constituent meeting at the republican level?
Without a doubt. All the more so because such constituent meetings have already taken place in Khar'kiv, L'viv, and in other cities, small and large. I think it would be good if a regional meeting were to be held before the summer vacation period. It must also be kept in mind, though, that acting too quickly could be harmful, because things have to be thought out. The program, the statute, has to be adopted at this constituent meeting in Kiev, so that later everything can be coordinated with other drafts; then a general program, a republican program, could be presented.

Does this mean that the individual groups have certain distinctions in their programs. Do these programs differ in some respects from the draft program published in *Literaturna Ukraina*, which can be seen as having emerged from within the writers' milieu?
Yes, it emerged from within the writers' milieu, but it is the foundation. We have been getting a great number of proposals and letters, masses of letters to the editors of *Literaturna Ukraina*, whose publicistic department has been swamped, and to the Writers' Union, which has received a great many letters. There are all kinds of proposals reflecting various positions. I think that after we iron things out we can bring everything up at the constituent republican meeting.

In that context, allow me to ask one more question. It looks as if the criticism of "Rukh" that was published earlier this year in the republican press has now died down. Do you have reason to expect a similar reaction to occur in the aftermath of the constituent meeting that is planned to take place in Kiev?[7]

I don't think it will have any effect. Articles in the Party press, the press subordinated to the Ideological Department, which, in fact, encompasses all spheres and sources of information, are possible, but they are useless. They have elicited, on the contrary, a backlash and a flood of adherents to the ranks of the popular movement. Condemnation stimulated interest. This is a phenomenon of our life—that everything that was condemned by the Ideological Department and the Central Committee and by the oblast and raion Party committees evoked in the population both astonishment and the need for an explanation. They sought firsthand information—that is, the draft program, in order to familiarize themselves with it.

I know of cases where functionaries came to the "Lenins'ka kuznya"—and not only there but also to other enterprises. These were functionaries of the ideological departments of Kiev's Party committees who came in order to conduct meetings to condemn "Rukh." And people left these meetings already fully convinced that "Rukh" had to be supported. The workers demanded to know concretely what the program said. "You say there are extremists there. What is this extremism? Nationalism? Where is it?" The point is that the draft program talks about the development of all cultures—Jewish, Polish, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Greek.

In short, these local groups have already been formed in response to the draft program. Already so much has been accomplished only as a result of one effort—the writers' word.

Can we expect that "Rukh" will be active and that it will develop further?

"Rukh" can be active and develop only if the processes we are now witnessing in the Soviet Union continue; then there will be consolidation in the Baltic states and in other republics. This means the death of stagnation.

NOTES:

[1]See *Literaturna Ukraina,* December 22, 1988.

[2]See V. Medvedev, "K poznaniyu sotsializma. Otvety na voprosy zhurnala *Kommunist,*" *Kommunist,* No. 17, October, 1988, pp. 3–18.

[3]For Kravchuk's version of these events, see the interview with him in *Dialog,* No. 11, July, 1990, pp. 48–52.

[4]The constituent meeting was held on July 1 as scheduled. See *Literaturna Ukraina*, July 6 and July 13, 1989.

[5]See *Radyans'ka Ukraina*, April 6, 1989.

[6]See *Radyans'ka Ukraina*, March 8, 1989

[7]Critical appraisals of the meeting were carried in *Radyans'ka Ukraina*, July 5, 1989; *Robitnycha hazeta*, July 8, 1989; *Pravda Ukrainy*, July 9, 1989; and *Komsomol'skoe znamya*, July 11, 1989.

3 Little Russianism and the Ukrainian-Russian Relationship: An Interview with Mykola Ryabchuk

Roman Solchanyk

Mykola Ryabchuk is a well-known critic, poet, and translator. While a student at L'viv Polytechnical Institute in 1971, he and a group of friends worked on an unofficial literary almanac, which resulted in their expulsion from the Institute. In 1983, Ryabchuk was admitted to the Writers' Union. He is the author of a collection of articles, Potreba slova *(1985), and an anthology of poetry,* Zyma u L'vovi *(1989), and coauthor of a short English-language book entitled* Ukraine: Stepping Stones to Perestroika *(1989). In various articles over the past several years, Ryabchuk has been exploring the problem of Ukrainian national identity, which was also the focus of the following interview conducted in London on August 13, 1989.*

In your articles, particularly the piece in *Druzhba narodov* last year,[1] you discuss the problem of Little Russianism so-called. What do you mean by this?

In my opinion, Little Russianism encompasses an entire range of problems and phenomena that have to do with the relationship between the colony and the center. In essence, Little Russianism, as I understand it, is, in the first place, a certain mentality: a mentality, on the one hand, characteristic of the nation that has experienced the colonial yoke and, on the other hand, a mentality characteristic of the nation responsible for the colonial yoke, specifically those at the center who impose it.

This phenomemon is the result, obviously, of Ukraine's special status, which it had even in the Russian Empire. For 300 years, Ukrainians—a separate Slavic people with its own ancient culture, language, and traditions distinct from those of all other Slavic nations—had a certain stereotype of their status thrust upon them. Who and what they were was dictated to them. It was a distorted

conception of them, their language, their culture, and their historic past in general. The essence of this distortion was the idea that they were not a separate nation. You know the official ideology that was implemented by Russian tsarism. It boils down to the following: the Ukrainian language is a dialect of Russian; the real heir of Kievan Rus'—the ancient culture of old Rus'—is actually Russia; and Ukraine is some sort of misunderstanding.

In short, things were turned upside down. Today, this goal has almost been accomplished. The majority of Ukrainians are far from aware that it is they who are the direct heirs of the culture and civilization of ancient Rus'. This causes an inferiority complex, which for me is what Little Russianism is. On the one hand, an inferiority complex felt by the nation itself and, on the other, an attitude of others towards that nation as something inferior—that is what Little Russianism is about.

So, there is clearly a historical background here. This would suggest that this is an exclusively Ukrainian-Russian problem. Is that right?

Well, I don't think we should place this problem outside the framework of general, universal phenomena and processes. I think that similar relations and similar phenomena have occurred all over the world between colonies and their centers. But what is specific to the Ukrainian case is that, historically, Ukraine and Russia have really been very close—in their languages, religion, and geographical location—and this fundamentally complicates the situation. It creates particularly favorable circumstances for this kind of mental colonialism. That is why in this respect Little Russianism is a unique phenomenon; it certainly has some parallels elsewhere in the world, but it is unique from the point of view of this closeness.

In other words, if we look at the problem historically, although tsarist nationalities policy affected all the non-Russians, the effect of that policy was not the same everywhere. It produced one effect on the Ukrainians, another on the Central Asian nations, and still another on Poles, Armenians, and Georgians.

No doubt, there are very different aspects and very specific peculiarities here. I think the only direct parallel that can be drawn is with the situation of the Belorussians—a nation that also belongs to the Slavic community, has a similar language, and is an heir to the ancient culture

of Rus'. This mental colonialism is also implemented there in a similar fashion. Regarding the other nations of tsarist Russia, obviously it was difficult to practice this variant of mental colonialism: first, these are nations with different languages, completely different; second, these nations have, as a rule, a different religion or, even in the case of Christian nations, a different religious character.

That type of "sameness" could not operate in these nations, no matter what. The colonial pressure in them worked by different channels; it was directed in other areas, even though policies of assimilation were carried out there as well. The blows were aimed at different points because the Little Russian experience could not be repeated in these nations.

So, insofar as there is something specific (I'm glad you mentioned the Belorussian case), one could note a very important element, the Slavic. This all comes down to various aspects of Slavdom—that is, certain common historical, cultural, linguistic, and other features. Thus, if I understand you correctly, one can scarcely speak of some kind of Georgian or Estonian or Tajik version of Little Russianism. The problem basically lies in the relationship of the three east Slavic nations.

Without question. Clearly, mental colonialism is carried out differently in different regions, but, in principle, it has in all instances been aimed at depriving a colonial nationality of its identity. In Ukraine it was being done one way—specifically, by inculcating the Little-Russian consciousness and by relegating the Ukrainian language to a dialect—and in Central Asia, for example, it was done differently. These nations were deprived of their traditional written language, which was based on the Arabic script. Right away, an entire chunk of their culture was torn away, they were immediately robbed of their past. As a matter of fact, they also were turned into, well, if not Little Russians, then some kind of *churki*—a derogatory term that is commonly used to refer to these people. Chauvinists call them *churki*, as though these people had never had an ancient culture, as though they were aboriginals who had just emerged from their caves. This attitude exists among chauvinist Russians. Here, in principle, is a form of Little Russianism, but it is of a slightly different variety.

Clearly, in Georgia and Armenia it is more difficult to accomplish this because these nations have, after all, cultures and civilizations that are even older than the Slavic. But I think that efforts there were

probably not as resolute as in Ukraine, because they are relatively small nations. They did not pose any particular danger to the Russian empire. A degree of relative autonomy was permitted there and is allowed today.

Meanwhile, Ukraine is a great mass, and it would be difficult to achieve the same effect through migration there as, say, in the Baltic states. In the Baltic states, colonialism was carried out differently—by diluting the indigenous population with a multitude of newcomers. There is a different method for every region, but it is pretty effective everywhere.

To continue with this theme along slightly different lines—thus far we have been talking about policies in the tsarist empire—do you think that one can say that this prehistory of Little Russianism, this historical baggage, was incorporated into Soviet nationalities policy, specifically during the Stalin and Brezhnev periods? I have in mind the notorious concept of "the Soviet people"? And, does this concept have application in the particular case of Ukrainians and Belorussians in the sense that the so-called Soviet people could be formed around a Slavic nucleus?

Personally, I am convinced that the Stalinist-Brezhnevite nationalities policy was the direct heir to tsarist nationalities policy. It differs only in some of its terms, in ideological coloration, but not in essence. The essence is directed towards the same thing—towards expanding the center and strengthening its hegemony. As for the—as you called it—"notorious" concept of "the Soviet people," I feel that we should not be taken in by this because it is merely a cover for that very same Russian nation. Because the language of this "Soviet people" is Russian, and that says it all. In the view of the assimilationists, it would be the ideal state if the entire country spoke Russian. That this people is called "Soviet" changes nothing: it will see itself as the Russian nation first of all, and its language will be Russian.

As for the role of Ukraine and Belorussia in this process, I think that it was to have been important and exceptional in the view of these "denationalizers," if only because of the weight that Ukraine and Belorussia carry—especially Ukrainians, who form the largest nation after the Russians—in forming the state. These two nations, Ukrainian and Belorussian, obviously should have resisted assimilation the least, for the reasons of Slavic kinship and so on that we discussed before.

The thrust was directed first of all here. They had to be swallowed up first because they were central and the largest regions; and they were probably the easiest also because this process had been going on for several centuries. Finally, there was the similarity of the languages and cultures, history, and so forth.

Last year, the journal *Druzhba narodov* published an article of yours, "Ukrainskaya literatura i malorossiiskii 'imidzh'," in which you discussed the problem of how Ukrainian literature is perceived or, rather, not perceived by Russians. I would like to know if this problem of the Little-Russian image affects only the Russians. Can one speak of an image of Ukrainians as Little Russians among other nations in the Soviet Union as well?

Unfortunately, I think that one has first of all to speak of the image of Ukrainians as Little Russians that Ukrainians have of themselves. Ukrainians, in becoming Little Russians, actually assume such a consciousness and take on this image; they grow into it. As for other nations, this perception of the Ukrainians devolves from the self-perception of the Ukrainians. If the Ukrainians themselves do not know and study their history, if they deny their language, if they themselves do not know their own writers, often leading writers (frequently they cannot know them because there is probably no other nation that has had so many first-rate writers and their works banned), then it is not strange that other nations know nothing of this as well. They cannot know about this because who would publicize and propagandize it? Who would stand up and bring it to the world's attention?

So, I feel that the core of the problem is in Ukraine itself. This image, this perception of Ukraine as Little Russia, as something that is second-rate, of the Ukrainain language and culture as something second-class, something not genuine, something inferior, is disseminated not only among Russians. I think that many people in other republics of the Soviet Union perceive it in the same way and probably those abroad too, if they are aware of Ukraine at all. This is also a problem; it also derives from Little Russianism. Why should anyone know about some provincial culture, some provincial language, second-rate and not genuine? Many people in the world do not attach any significance to it, they are not even aware of the existence of this nation of 50 million people in the middle of Europe.

It was very interesting to see one reader's letter published in *Druzhba narodov* in response to your article.[2] It was a letter from an instructor at the [Patrice Lumumba] Friendship of Peoples University who, it seems to me, was somewhat offended by your article, although there was an attempt on her part to understand the problem. I was interested in her arguments—namely, that she was an internationalist; that she had been teaching for some thirty years at this internationalist university; that she lived in Moscow on Friendship of Peoples Street, and so on. Also, and this seems typical, she said she had been enamored from childhood with everything Ukrainian, and she even referred to one of her favorite Ukrainian songs. How do you respond to this? Where does the problem lie here? Why didn't this educated woman have the vaguest idea of what you were talking about?

First of all, let me say that I was happy that this letter was published because it shows very characteristically and eloquently the thinking of many Russians, particularly educated Russians—and probably not only of Russians, but intellectuals in general who try to understand something of the Ukrainian question. The first thing that strikes you is this totally primitive understanding of the term "internationalism." This is a very widely held view. If the Soviet press and propaganda always stressed that, for example, so many different nationalities lived in a certain city, then that city was "international," and if so many students were studying in a college, then it was "international," and so on. It even produces oddities that equate living on a street named "Friendship of Peoples" with being an internationalist. This is a very primitive way of thinking. But we see that over the decades propaganda has had such an effect. Even intelligent people have succumbed to the influence of these stereotypes and think along the lines thrust upon them by this rather vulgar and primitive propaganda.

I think that this woman is completely under the influence of these stereotypes, particularly the stereotype of Little Russianism. She, like many of her colleagues, feels that Ukraine is Little Russia. As a specific ethnographic region, it has folk songs that are not bad. It has a kind of melodic dialect, although it is not clear whether this is a language or a dialect. It even has something of a poet in Taras Shevchenko, who, for the most part, is acknowledged. But it has no present and no future. This is the main message if you read between the lines. You Ukrainians, go ahead and consider yourselves Ukrainians if you do not

want to be called Little Russians. Sing your songs, dance the *hopak*, get dressed up in a costume—i.e., a purely museum-ethnographic perception of the Ukrainian question. Here we can see evidence that the Little-Russian stereotype is being successfully reproduced and is having an impact on the consciousness of very many people, particularly educated people.

This is similar to a discussion published in *Vechirnii Kyiv*, perhaps you remember, which was also prompted by an educated woman who said there was no need to translate Pushkin into Ukrainian or to write scholarly works in Ukrainian, and so on. Again, an ethnographic perception. Well, you go ahead and converse in Ukrainian at home, in the kitchen, dance the *hopak*. But to use Ukrainian for scholarly work, for lecturing in colleges, or for conducting government business—forget it. Here is another classic example of Little Russianism.

Last year, there was an interview with the playwright Viktor Rozov in *Knizhnoe obozrenie*.[3] If I am not mistaken, he is considered a liberal among the Russian intelligentsia. In his article he puts forth the argument that Ukrainian writers defend the Ukrainian language not on its own merits but because their books, written in Ukrainian, cannot compete with books written in Russian, and therefore they are losing royalties.

How widespread is this image among the Russian intelligentsia, ignoring the Russian nation at large for a moment? What I have in mind is that recently there have been some very interesting national processes emerging among the Russians themselves. We heard Valentin Rasputin's speech at the Congress of People's Deputies. There have been others. Just the other day Vitalii Vorotnikov, the prime minister of the Russian Federation, took the same position as Russian patriots or nationalists—namely, that what is needed finally is to have a "normal" Russia, "normal" in the sense of Russia's own national institutions, an academy of sciences, trade unions, a Party, and the like.[4]

There is a very interesting dilemma here, which I see as follows: either the empire will be salvaged, or Russians must give up their imperial position and become a "normal" nation.[5] My question is: how far can one assume that this "normalization" process has advanced among the Russian intelligentsia? The Ukrainian question is, of course, a part of this. Or, to put it

another way: can one speak of a future for Russians who are prepared to discard the Little-Russian image, to discard this attitude towards the Ukrainians and Belorussians.

I will try to answer the first question concerning Viktor Rozov. I honestly do not want to think that he was projecting his attitude onto other authors—this self-centeredness concerning the number of copies published, earnings, and so forth. You might as well drivel on about Shevchenko writing in Ukrainian and struggling for the sake of the language out of selfishness, although he earned nothing from this language other than hard labor in exile and a fatal illness. You can say the same about many other writers who have gone through the prisons and camps; that is the extent of the comfort they got from this language. I think that many of them would have been able to secure good positions if they had changed over to the imperial language. I find it very sad that a writer such as Rozov should say such strange things. Honestly, I do not understand it. Rather, I can understand it in terms of the internal struggle in Moscow between the cosmopolitan and the Russophile factions. But it is a pity to project this onto some extraneous issue that he does not understand at all.

Regarding the status of the Russian nation in the USSR and the "normalization" of its status, I would not want too much idealism to be attributed to the remarks of Vorotnikov and Rasputin that you cited, because they seem to me to be nourished not so much by concern about the status of other nations and their sovereignty but some internal, factional struggle. It is that struggle to which I referred earlier—between the Russophile and the cosmopolitan factions. You know that currently there is a vigorous traffic in ideas in Russian public opinion about the so-called universal Judeo-Masonic conspiracy. These ideas are being disseminated and thrust upon the Russian man in the street by certain elements who allege that there is a danger, particularly in Russia itself, and that the so-called Judeo-Masons are responsible for everything that is being done. So I am afraid that this enthusiasm about Russia is tied to this issue and not to the other. Although I want to believe in the sincerity and decency of these people, the more so since Rasputin and Vasilii Belov are good writers.

Perhaps they are aware of the simple truth that no nation can really be free if it oppresses another nation. Indeed, no man can be free if another is not. This is a very simple truth, which, unfortuntely, is difficult for many people to grasp, in Russia too. I cannot say that I know many people in Russia who fully understand this question; most take a strange stance. They respond to these problems in an

elementary fashion: "Well, who is standing in your way? Who is stopping you? Go ahead, talk to each other in Ukrainian." Once again, everything boils down to whether you can converse in Ukrainian. I can converse in esperanto and so forth; no one is stopping me. But this does not mean that the objective conditions exist for this yet. Circumstances are contrived so that people do not speak or use their national languages.

This is the point, and, unfortunately, I think that the majority of the Russian intelligentsia has not yet realized it. I think you get a sense of this from the press. Very few Russian intellectuals defend national languages and cultures. And, if they do, it is in a very superficial and patronizing manner: "Well, yes it's a shame that the Belorussian language is disappearing; well, of course, we must do something about it." They do not look at the root of the problem but somehow limit themselves to linguistic and cultural autonomy. Again, this is the operation of the image of Little Russianism or of pseudo-Belorussianism.

Earlier this year, the well-known Ukrainian writer Yurii Shcherbak raised a very interesting, even provocative idea. Writing in *Literaturnaya gazeta*,[6] he argued that unlike other regions of the Soviet Union where the conflicts are interethnic—we know about the events in Sumgait, Tbilisi, and other places—in Ukraine there is a different sort of conflict—i.e., between Ukrainians and Little Russians. Shortly afterward, an article appeared in *Radyans'ka Ukraina*[7] that criticized "certain Ukrainian writers" for making such a differentiation. What do you think? Did Shcherbak come out too strongly with these categories? Who is in the right here, or does the problem need to be studied more closely?

I do not think that this is a contrived problem. The writers did not invent it, and they did not divide the nation into Ukrainians and Little Russians. This, unfortunately, is objective reality. Concerning the position taken by the writers, at least our leading writers, their aim is not to divide but, on the contrary, to unify, to find some common denominator for these categories of people. After all, this is a segment of the population with a really rather distinct consciousness.

As for the national-minded Ukrainians, I would say that thus far they view the so-called Little Russians with a certain contempt, as people who have renounced their language; they call them renegades,

mankurty, and use other abusive terms. And the Little Russians respond in kind, referring to those Ukrainians, those "real" Ukrainians, the nationalists, the Banderites, and the like, only because they stick to their language. I think that both sides should gradually move away from pinning labels on one another towards a search for some sort of understanding.

In Ukraine, a significant percentage of the Ukrainian population converses in the Russian language at present. This is a reality, and it must be taken into account. I do not think that by calling these people renegades and so on we will achieve what we want. Obviously, the first thing needed now is to explain to these people that they are, in the end, Ukrainians and that this is nothing to be ashamed of; that here is a great nation, a great language, a great culture with a great and dramatic history, in which, in my opinion, there is absolutely nothing of which to be ashamed. They must be told; the majority just do not know this. These conflicts often come about because of misunderstandings. Perhaps I am a Utopian, but I feel that this enlightenment, in the true sense of the term, can have a positive effect.

This reminds me of a related issue. We are accustomed to thinking that, when talking about Little Russianism, the main problem lies with the urban population. We know the dynamics here. Someone moves from the village to a town or from a town to a big city and immediately tries to speak Russian, because Ukrainian somehow lacks prestige and prospects. He begins to think of himself as "better," although now he can speak neither Russian nor Ukrainian properly but, instead, a bastardized form of both, the *surzhyk*. You remember, however, in a recent article in *Ukraina*[8] that you wrote with Volodymyr Panchenko, you argued that this is not the only problem, that Little Russianism is also a problem afflicting the Ukrainian intelligentsia. What are the circumstances here? Is it critical? We, of course, are accustomed to thinking about the intelligentsia as being in the forefront in defending the Ukrainian language, culture, and history.

I think that there is a misunderstanding of terms here. Certainly, the Ukrainian intelligentsia in the strict sense of the word is undoubtedly a national-minded segment of the population that considers itself to be Ukrainian, is not ashamed of this, and is trying to somehow change the existing situation. I was referring to the Ukrainian "intelligentsia"

in quotation marks, to the Russified intelligentsia. As a rule, they are the children of that urban milieu. Maybe they do not see themselves as such, but they have inherited that sort of thinking from their parents and have been conditioned by their surroundings, by society. This is a way of thinking, a conception of the Ukrainian language and culture as something inferior, third-rate, and completely unnecessary, all Cossack pants and dumplings. The point here is the difference between the Ukrainian intelligentsia and the intelligentsia that merely lives in Ukraine, an intelligentsia that cannot identify itself because somehow internally it understands that it is not the Russian intelligentsia but, at the same time, does not know who or what it is. Their situation is in its own way tragic too.

We have been talking about the problem of Little Russianism. It is a very complicated problem that has a long history. Currently, the atmosphere in the Soviet Union is liberal, conditioned by *perestroika*. There are changes going on. What do you think has to be done in order to put an end to Little Russianism? How can *perestroika* be utilized for this? We talked about the "abnormality" of the Russian nation. What has to be done in order to make the Ukrainian nation "normal"?

I think that these are interrelated problems: the problem of the Russian nation and the problem of the Ukrainian nation and, indeed, the problem of the Soviet Union. It is all contingent on democratization. I think that if we have a true democracy in Ukraine then all the other problems will be resolved; if not, then none will be solved. This is obvious. One cannot say what has to be done in a single word—whole books, treatises, dozens of articles are being written on this. But if one were to sum it up, then it is that the democratization process in Ukraine has to be continued, and everything that this entails.

What role can "Rukh" play in these processes?

I think the most important role it can play is striving for the consolidation of all the restructuring forces regardless of their religious, political, or national affiliation. I think "Rukh" has a chance of becoming the largest mass organization and the one that can have the most decisive influence on the development of *perestroika*. Of course, it is up to the Ukrainian intelligentsia—how it conducts itself in "Rukh," to what extent it is able to lead and direct the organization,

to what extent it is able to influence the democratization process in the country. I think the future not only of Ukraine but also of the Soviet Union and, perhaps, of the entire world depends on this.

NOTES

[1]Mykola Ryabchuk, "Ukrainskaya literatura i malorossiiskii 'imidzh,'" *Druzhba narodov*, 1988, No. 5, pp. 250–54.

[2]*Druzhba narodov*, 1988, No. 9, pp. 266–68.

[3]"Zagadki i teorii," *Knizhnoe obozrenie*, September 2, 1988.

[4]See the interview with Vorotnikov in *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, August 10, 1989.

[5]This problem is discussed by Roman Szporluk in his article, "Dilemmas of Russian Nationalism," in *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 38, No.4, July-August, 1989, pp. 15–35. See also Poel' Karp, "Metropoliya ili respublika?" *Knizhnoe obozrenie*, July 21, 1989.

[6]*Literaturnaya gazeta*, January 18, 1989.

[7]*Radyans'ka Ukraina*, April 8, 1989.

[8]Volodymyr Panchenko and Mykola Ryabchuk, "Pro 'pravdu' hirku . . . ," *Ukraina*, No. 12, March, 1989, pp. 8–10.

4 Language, Culture, and the Search for a Ukrainian Hero: An Interview with Yurii Pokal'chuk

David Marples

Yurii Pokal'chuk is a popular writer and translator living in Kiev. He graduated from Leningrad University and has worked at the Institute of Literature of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. A member of the Ukrainian Writers' Union, he is the author of ten novels, most of which have been translated into Russian and published in mass editions. Pokal'chuk is an expert on the contemporary American novel. He has been an active member of "Rukh" and an outspoken opponent of the Shcherbitsky leadership in Ukraine. He was a guest of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Alberta, when this interview took place on September 27, 1989.

May I ask your reaction to the retirement of Ukrainian Party chief Volodymyr Shcherbitsky from the CPSU Politburo?
Ever since they pressed ahead with the 1986 May Day parade in Kiev, one week after Chernobyl', I have regarded both Shcherbitsky and Ukrainian President Valentyna Shevchenko as ipso facto criminals.

What about the other people in the Ukrainian Politburo?
I would not maintain that all its members are necessarily of the same hue. Someone in the nature of a Gorbachev may arise, but they have all been immersed in the Brezhnev atmosphere, and so far I have not seen much hope for major change.[1]

I notice that the name of former Ukrainian Party leader Petro Shelest is appearing in the press.
Shelest was preoccupied with improving the Ukrainian language and culture. He had begun to speak Ukrainian openly as a Ukrainian Party leader. He was not a reformer to the same degree as Khrushchev.

I never approved of Khrushchev's attitude towards artists and towards literature; he was an uncultured man. Nevertheless, one should note his achievement in removing Stalin's body from the mausoleum and in initiating de-Stalinization. I believe that Gorbachev is the second such major figure. After Brezhnev one might have expected some kind of military regime, but now we have democratization that owes its origins to Khrushchev. Khrushchev's diaries show that as a Party leader he recognized that he made many mistakes.

Returning to the current situation, what is your impression of the coal miners' attitude towards "Rukh"? Are they part of the movement, or are they outside of it?
Some of them are in "Rukh," but not all. One coal miner made a speech at the constituent Congress of "Rukh" [September 8–10, 1989] that was well received. His view was that, though the miners' strike had been characterized as a manifestation of economic problems, the concerns of the miners were also ideological. He said: "We have replaced all the local Party committees with our people, we are changing all the mine leaders, and so forth." It felt good, he went on to say, to be able to speak in Russian, because he cannot speak Ukrainian. He stated that he felt uncomfortable at the Congress because he did not understand the symbols that decorated the meeting hall. "I feel sad about this," he said, "because I believe that I should understand them. But we have not been given the chance to know about such things, and we have been living and working 'in the dark,' so to speak." He wasn't an anti-Communist, but he was hardly pro-Communist either. He was simply trying to understand the symbols.

By symbols, I assume you mean the trident and the blue-and-yellow flags?
Yes, those sorts of things.

Was the congress a manifestation of proindependence feelings among Ukrainians?
It would be inaccurate to say that. The Russian popular movement was represented, as was the Ukrainian group "Slavutych" from Moscow. There were representatives of all the minorities that live in Ukraine, including the Jewish community in Kiev. Oleksandr Burakovs'kyi gave a speech on behalf of Kiev's Jews in which he spoke of the equality of minority groups. For the first time in a long period,

Ukrainians and Jews were feeling a real harmony. The next speaker was a Jewish man from Chernivtsi, a former chairman of the Jewish Council of the USSR who has twice been imprisoned. He brought greetings and support from that council. "If you support the development of Jewish culture in Ukraine," he stated, "we will support the development of the Ukrainian language and culture, which is the culture of the republic."

You know, I get angry about some of the Soviet press accounts. For example, the article in *Pravda*[2] was a wretched one; it was not objective. Reporters like Mykhailo Odynets' and Il'ya Tikhomirov seem to be lost in Kiev. They don't know what they're doing. The same goes for *Pravda Ukrainy* correspondent Mikhail Derimov, whose reputation in Kiev could hardly be lower. I am not maintaining that the organization of the Congress was perfect. There were some problems, some extremist speeches. I don't think that at present it is even possible to speak about independence for Ukraine, because we do not have the economic, cultural, or political background for such a step. It's absurd. On the other hand, if we are supposed to be a democratic country, then everyone should have a voice.

One of the general goals of "Rukh" is economic sovereignty within the Soviet Union. We are interested in the concept of the European Economic Community, with its different viewpoints. From the perspective of a Stalinist country, we have had a federation in name only. But we regard the attainment of economic and cultural independence as a real possibility. This is why we are trying to make our elections be elections for all the people. I am not a politician and until last year was not remotely interested in politics. I wanted to look at current developments as an outsider, but I found that I could not stand aside. I might be doing other work today that is more important than my political engagements, but I had to undertake the latter work.

So I have been speaking in different areas, from Volyn' to Crimea, and doing organizational work. This may result in some problems for me, but I feel that I have no choice. Twenty years ago, I might have ended up in Siberia for coming to Canada and saying such things! All Ukrainian intellectuals, I think, feel the same way deep down—that it is time to act. I am averse to noisy speechmaking that results in no practical results. I believe that this first step—i.e., the Congress—was very important. But more significant is solid day-to-day work, without applause—not writing articles making major demands. That is the only way that we can win.

With regard to the question of economic sovereignty in places like Crimea, which you just mentioned and where there is known to be a problem of ecological damage caused by industrial and energy projects: is there a danger that the republic could not survive as an economic unit if various industrial plants, such as the Crimean nuclear power plant, were closed down?

Energy is certainly a very important problem today. But I think the notion of a nuclear power plant in Crimea is misguided, because of the seismicity. And yet, though the authorities claim that it will be closed, they continue to construct it. Ecology is an important issue for "Rukh," because the decisions on such plans are made in Moscow. I am not saying that everything that originates in Moscow is bad, by any means. If the decision were not made in Moscow, it would come from the government in Kiev, and we have nothing in common with them.

I am not a Party member, but I am a supporter of Gorbachev. He is my leader. Even if sometimes my Ukrainian compatriots do not agree with some of his opinions, I still believe that he is a great politician. No one can achieve everything at once. When he made his speech on nationalities, many people were disappointed. I was expecting that reaction. But what could he say? That the entire Soviet Union was about to disintegrate? As the president of his country, he could not say that. I am concerned about the activities of some of my colleagues, particularly some in the Ukrainian Helsinki group, who are demanding too much, in my opinion. They are trying to achieve political power, but it is impossible. They do not understand that the average person does not support such things.

As a Ukrainian writer, I am fighting for my language and culture. And I am doing this through my work. My last novel was about the sexual experiences of young people in Kiev, and, though I am somewhat older now, my friends could bring me up to date on such matters. I have also written a folkloric novel, which is also a reflection of my inner feelings. It is a combination of the Middle Ages and something Tolkienesque that is centered on my home region of Volyn'. I believe, however, that it could be translated into any language of the world and still be interesting. This is important for our literature: to produce works that are not solely patriotic and comprehensible only to Ukrainians. Our goal is a literature that is Ukrainian but at the same time universal. My favorite writer is England's William Golding, especially his book *Lord of the Flies.*

Today I am especially involved with juvenile delinquency. This might seem strange, because it is not closely connected with my work. It was as a result of *glasnost'* that I got a commission from the newspaper *Molod' Ukrainy.* I suggested to them a series of articles on the colony for juvenile delinquents that is located in a small village called Pryluky, between Kiev and Chernihiv. I have been going back and forth there for three years, keeping a journal of events and writing a collection of stories about it. I am a permanent fixture there now. It is sad, because many of the inmates are, for all intents and purposes, innocents. They have committed crimes, perhaps, but they are not hardened criminals.

I want to make this colony the center of a novel that embraces society as a whole and looks at the interrelations between politicians, secretaries, and the Party, at all aspects of society. But I think I must visit the colony for another year before I start to write this book. In our literature, it is still frowned upon to write about such subjects as brutal colonies or prostitution. My work on this colony is, I think, typical of the sort of work that we must do today; no one is likely to thank me for it. It is my own idea. But I believe that it is good work. The delinquents always ask me to return. I even sent them post cards from London. It is almost like some sort of religion, the notion that I must give part of myself to others.

Would you describe yourself as a religious man?

I am not religious in the strict sense of the word, but I am not an atheist either. I am a Christian. In the near future, my colleague Vitalii Korotych will publish my article entitled "What Is Happening in Ukraine?" in *Ogonek.* It is a forty-eight-page article the last part of which is devoted to the Church. It is my profound belief that the authorities must legalize the Ukrainian Catholic Church and that people must be allowed religious freedom. In both the tsarist and Stalinist periods, the Russian Orthodox Church had a monopoly on religion. I have nothing against the Russian Church itself, but I do, nevertheless, believe that in Ukraine both the Catholic and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church must be allowed to exist.

I attended Leningrad University, and I have many Russian friends. I am not anti-Russian, like some of my colleagues. I have also spent much time in Moscow and have been pleased to do so, because there I experienced the fresh air of democracy much more than in Kiev. Yet the situation is as follows: most Russians have nothing against Ukrainian cultural independence. The problem lies rather with

Russified Ukrainians. Chingiz Aitmatov's novel *And the Day Lasted More than a Century* retells an ancient Asiatic legend about men in olden times who were captured in war, imprisoned, and tortured and who, as a result, suffered so much that they forgot everything. These people were called *mankurty* and were trained to fight against anyone. In Ukraine we had similar episodes when the Turks kidnapped young men for service and trained them so that they could not even recognize their own mothers! Today we use this same term, *mankurty*, for Ukrainians who have lost their identity, their language. They speak pidgin Russian, but Russian is not really their language either.

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which had a major influence on the Ukrainian people, was closed down for no reason. It had been established during the revolution. Despite all the complications of that period and the short-lived nature of the Ukrainian People's Republic, nevertheless, the revolution provided some great opportunities for Ukrainians. Stalin cut off this rebirth of Ukrainian culture. These events are linked closely with the policies of the Russian Orthodox Church, which would not acknowledge a Ukrainian Church supported by much of the population. It had no money, no resources. Now I am defending the Ukrainian churches as strongly as possible simply for democratic reasons. The people want them reopened. There should be plain, apolitical churches for people who believe in their God, nothing more.

The fiftieth anniversary of the Nazi-Soviet Pact has just passed, and the press is full of stories about events of that period. Would you say that today the differences between the two parts of Ukraine are still so distinct?

September 17, 1939, as I have written, was a momentous day that should never be forgotten. In that situation, Stalinist colonial policies were very important for Ukraine, because it became reunited after a lengthy period. But of course that was only part of the story. I myself was born in the town of Kremenets', in the Ternopil' Oblast, and grew up in Luts'k, both in the occupied zone. But in all those areas thousands of people were shot. An article about this appeared in the press shortly before the Congress of People's Deputies. The same executions occurred in every city in Western Ukraine. Thus, I believe that the Banderite movement, which began as a reaction to the colonization policies of the Polish government [in Eastern Galicia], continued to exist when it was recognized that the Soviet regime in those years was even worse.

In no way do I defend National Socialist policies. Criminals are criminals. Those who maintain today that the atrocities committed during the war were carried out by KGB groups may be partly right, but there were also Banderites who committed serious crimes. I am not trying to deny this fact. Yet I want to ascertain where the truth lies, and my intention is to write a novel with a Ukrainian hero, just as other writers, like Sholokhov and Pasternak, have their own heroes. And he will not possess any ideology but will fight for Ukraine as a patriot.

As for the differences between Western and Eastern Ukraine, without doubt they still exist. In Kiev, for example, I am regarded as a westerner, a "cowboy" from the frontier district near the Polish border! Generally speaking, we are more patriotic than Ukrainians from other areas, although there are many patriots from Eastern Ukraine, such as Ivan Drach, from Kiev, or Voldodymyr Yavorivs'kyi, from Vinnytsya. The problem of language is so painful for us. For about fifty years, anyone who spoke Ukrainian was regarded as a nationalist. But today we do not use the word "nationalist." A person is either an extremist or a nonextremist, and there is nothing wrong with love for one's country.

In Kiev today, when someone is seen wearing a trident or carrying a blue-and-yellow flag, he may be regarded as a nationalist, but it is no longer considered unusual. No one would consider him an enemy or a spy, or whatever. People want something new. It is pointless to condemn such symbols. Only a swastika could be regarded as odious because of its inhuman, murderous connotations. Our symbols are historical. The trident dates back to Svyatoslav of Kievan Rus', and the flag originated in the period of the Zaporozhian Cossacks. It is condemned by some because it was used by the government of Symon Petlyura and may thus evoke memories of the independent Ukrainian republic. But this is no longer the case.

At the "Rukh" Congress, there were numerous tridents and blue-and-yellow flags. But the blue-and-red flag of Soviet Ukraine was also displayed.

One newspaper has maintained that Western Ukrainians were overrepresented at the Congress of "Rukh" and that the large industrial cities of the east, like Dnipropetrovs'k, were underrepresented.

The representation depended entirely on the number of people from each city who had joined "Rukh." The congress was not supposed to represent each city according to its total population. That would have

been absurd. This wasn't the election to the Supreme Soviet. I was very disturbed by the accounts suggesting that teachers or writers had too many delegates or that there was a shortage of workers or farmers. The cultural intelligentsia took the lead in establishing "Rukh." Besides, a teacher from a country village was there not to represent teachers, but only himself. So I don't know what these critics are talking about. It's the sort of critique that smacks of the Stalin-Brezhnev years.

So what happens next for "Rukh"? What is the program for the future?

The next stage is simply work. It is not necessary to hold another congress in the near future. Perhaps, after six months or a year, we shall see. But each of us must now work hard. I am speaking out so much while I am outside the country—to the BBC Russian Service, to Radio Liberty, and others—in order to help my people. If this makes life more difficult for me upon my return, so be it. The authorities do not like me to begin with. But I am loyal enough. I am not working against the government, although I am not happy with the Ukrainian government and its proposed election law.

Incidentally, in that connection, my friend Mykhailo Batih, the thirty-four-year-old editor of the L'viv newspaper *Lenins'ka molod'*, wanted to publish the alternative election law in his newspaper. The authorities forbade him to do this, so the printers declared that no newspaper would appear the next day. Within two days the alternative law was published everywhere. This episode reveals the nature of the Ukrainian government.

On the Communist Party of Ukraine: suppose that the amendments to the electoral law are passed and that many of the conservatives are removed from office in the local elections. Could the Party emerge as a revitalized force, one with which "Rukh" could work?

Why not? Probably most of the Party leaders from Brezhnev's period have to be changed. Also, the Party cannot occupy the all-powerful position it did in the past. I think that both communism and capitalism have their problems and that we need some sort of convergence of the two systems. We have some good features in our system, but they have become obscured by mass discontent. I think some of my ideas are those of a Socialist, but I have chosen not to be a member of the Communist Party, because I do not want to be associated with the

Party of Brezhnev. Not being a Party member entailed some disadvantages in the past, especially insofar as traveling abroad or publishing articles in certain journals was concerned. But today I am happy to be free. Nevertheless, "Rukh" must also use good Party people.

NOTES

[1] This interview was conducted before the election of Volodymyr Ivashko as first secretary of the Ukrainian Party. Pokal'chuk has declared that he regards the change of leadership as a significant improvement (CBC Newsworld interview with Yurii Pokal'chuk, September 29, 1989).

[2] *Pravda*, September 11, 1989. See also *Pravda*, September 15, 1989.

5 The Current Situation in Ukraine: A Discussion with "Rukh" Chairman Ivan Drach

Roman Solchanyk

Ivan Drach, a prominent Ukrainian poet, is a secretary of the Ukrainian Writers' Union and head of the Kiev writers' organization. He was elected chairman of the Popular Movement of Ukraine for Perestroika, *or "Rukh," at its founding congress, held on September 8–10, 1989. Drach was in Munich in early October, 1989, as part of the Ukrainian delegation participating in the ceremonies that established a sister-cities agreement between Kiev and Munich. The discussion was conducted in the Munich studios of Radio Liberty on October 6 and was broadcast on October 9 and 10. Also participating in the discussion was Bohdan Nahaylo, director of the Ukrainian Service of Radio Liberty.*

Nahaylo: Ivan Fedorovych, allow me, first of all, to welcome you here in Munich. I don't know if perhaps you have brought greetings from Leonid Kravchuk or Yurii Yel'chenko[1] for us, but we welcome this opportunity to have you here at the microphone in Munich. First, this question: What is the overall situation in Kiev now—i.e., after the founding congress of "Rukh" and after the removal of Volodymyr Shcherbitsky from power? What is the mood in the Ukrainian capital?

Drach: To begin with your question about greetings: as a matter of fact, I really have brought greetings. Right before my departure from Kiev, there was a certain incident. A group of industrialists and businessmen came to Kiev, bringing a number of things with them. They brought along a computer and other things—maybe some Xerox machines—for the Taras Shevchenko Ukrainian Language Society, the Lion Society in L'viv, and, of course, "Rukh." And one Canadian turns to me and says that this unfortunate thing happened—we arrived here and all these things were taken by customs, and could I perhaps

help them out. Well, where do I turn in such a situation? Naturally, I telephoned Leonid Makarovych Kravchuk, the head of the Ideological Department. And he promised me that he would intervene, that all these things that our Canadian friends had brought for these various societies would be delivered to those for whom they were meant. And I said, Leonid Makarovych, I am going to Munich and will relay greetings to Radio Liberty from you. He, a person with a sense of humor, joined in and said but of course, greet them for me. I wish them the best, and I hope that the more truthful their information about Soviet Ukraine, the greater will be the success of their radio station.

So, I think that we are also in favor of there being this truthful information about Ukraine and that there should be as much as possible of it from your radio station. I think that under the circumstances—when, after Shcherbitsky, there is a new Party leadership in the person of First Secretary Volodymyr Antonovych Ivashko—there are some possibilities for cooperation. As for Kravchuk himself, comparing the relations that we had with him about half a year ago and the situation today, we see that the possibility for cooperation is there—although I cannot say that everything pertaining to one Party leader also pertains to another. So, as in every other such situation, let's sort this out realistically and tactfully.

Nahaylo: We actually invited you here today to disseminate the truth, because the press in Ukraine does not always write truthfully about you and about the movement that you head. But first allow me to ask you the following. Not long ago, a Western correspondent wrote that, ostensibly, Ivashko has already said in private circles, at meetings—and I think that you were mentioned as well—that he is in favor of a dialogue, suggesting that perhaps there will be a new course under his leadership. Do you agree with this assessment?

Drach: Well, first of all, with a figure of that stature and in a republic such as ours, one must simply wait a certain period to see just what happens in the political, ideological, and other spheres of our life, to see if there is a throwback to what took place previously in the Shcherbitsky epoch, during those twenty years. In my opinion—I've already spoken about this in Kiev—Volodymyr Vasyl'ovych Shcherbitsky is probably second only to such a person as Lazar Moiseevich Kaganovich. Or maybe they will still be, so to speak, competing with each other over how to differentiate themselves in

Ukrainian history. So, after these really very dramatic and difficult twenty years of hard times—one can put it this way and no other—it will probably be very difficult, even when there is movement towards an understanding between "Rukh" and our bosses. This will probably not happen right away. And let us look at all these things realistically and soberly.

Nahaylo: To what extent do elements exist within the Party that can restructure themselves or have the desire to restructure? We are aware, for example, of Ivan Salii from the Podil' Raion of Kiev.[2] Are there more people like Salii throughout Ukraine?

Drach: I respect Ivan Mykolaiovych Salii. He is an interesting and original Party figure. I think, however, that he is not the only one of his kind, that there are others in different areas of our life, in different regions. I have heard that there are some complaints with regard to the L'viv leaders—that is, the mayor of L'viv and the first secretary of the city Party committee,[3] an ethnic Russian. This means that there, too, there is some sort of feeling that all these older cadres—I see them as graduates of the Shcherbitsky school—and the younger Party cadres, well, I think there will be a dramatic struggle here. But it is an unavoidable struggle. I think that if we want a victory for the Gorbachev line—and I support this line, and I think that these younger Party leaders also support it—we will wait for this struggle. And I think that this Gorbachev line must win out.

Solchanyk: Allow me to return to the greeting—an unexpected one for me—from the head of the Ideological Department in Kiev. If we are talking about the truth and its dissemination, then I think I can say that, personally, as far as my work at the Radio is concerned—and I think that this also pertains to the work of the Ukrainian Service—we try, to the extent that our possibilities allow, to disseminate information, truthful information. I think that we have no interest in propaganda. It would be very good if we could have more direct contacts with people in Ukraine, with the creative intelligentsia. And not only with the creative intelligentsia but with Party workers as well. Let us say, for example, with Leonid Makarovych himself. I think we could even invite him to Munich. If he is interested in disseminating the truth, we would be ready to give him access to the microphone at the Ukrainian Service. Likewise, if the people in Ukraine would be interested in direct contact (both the Party workers and the creative

intelligentsia), we would be ready—in any case, I would be ready—to go to Kiev or L'viv at any time and, so to speak, present myself for an evaluation of that truth. Does such a possibility exist, or are these merely fantasies on my part?

Drach: Well, I think that when we have lived to see a situation in which I, first of all, am grateful to Radio Liberty for broadcasting my preelection platform, and I also am grateful that the possibility exists to meet directly with you here—this is something that would have been unimaginable literally even six months ago, never mind a few years ago. When these things take place in this manner, then I think that what you call a fantasy is not a fantasy. If people go on developing normally, then it will indeed be so. When you talk about contacts with the intelligentsia but not just the intelligentsia, you are also probably interested in "Rukh."

I have a complaint to make. You broadcast a great deal of information relying solely on the Ukrainian Helsinki Union. The Ukrainian Helsinki Union, okay, this is normal. I think, however, that perhaps we—I am referring to "Rukh"—should have our own information center in Kiev and a similar center in Moscow. If we were to have such a center, then you would probably have a somewhat broader range of information. When listening to your broadcasts, it sometimes appears that they pertain primarily to the Western Ukrainian region, Galicia. As though everything that takes place in Ukraine takes place only in Galicia. But you must yourselves understand that, among all those details that are important to emphasize in one situation or another, at times some event that appears not to have any implication for national life, for cultural life—an event taking place somewhere in the Donbass or Odessa—can be very significant in the life of the republic and for the entire Ukrainian situation. I think that this is especially important.

What is more, when one talks about direct contacts with our radio center in Kiev or with our press, I think that we will also live to see this. In actual fact, Natalka Martenko [Marta Zielyk] has already been at the Chervona Ruta music festival representing Radio Liberty. I think that shortly either Bohdan or Roman will be in Kiev and will have the opportunity to discuss the most pressing problems facing us today.

Nahaylo: I am grateful that you brought up this problem because it also gives me the opportunity to answer the question for listeners. It is true that this is a problem for us. Even today, when the processes

of *glasnost'* and democratization are taking place, it can be very difficult to obtain information from Ukraine. We receive publications late, a week later. For example, *Literaturna Ukraina* comes out in Ukraine on Thursdays, but we get it, if all goes well, only on the following Thursday. Not everyone is prepared to telephone us directly. We receive, on average, about fifty to sixty letters a week from listeners. We get three, four, five telephone calls a day. This is already something; it is a great change. Unfortunately, for some reason or other informal groups do not have the kind of bold people who belong to the Ukrainian Helsinki Union and the kind of organization for providing information. I have in mind "Memorial," and the Ukrainian Language Society, and many others. In point of fact, they use the Ukrainian Helsinki Union to supply their information to the West. Here I would like to commend the activists of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union, in particular such people as Anatolii Dotsenko in Moscow or the people who run the correspondents' centers in L'viv and Kiev, because, if they did not provide us with information, then it would truly be very difficult for us to inform you about the events that take place throughout the entire Ukraine.

Second, I am also aware that we broadcast a lot about the Western Ukraine. But I am also aware that under the processes of *glasnost'* and *perestroika* Kiev has once again become the center of national life in Ukraine. If earlier, perhaps, it appeared that L'viv and Western Ukraine remained the bastion of Ukrainian nationalism or the national movement, I think that, from the very beginnings of the *glasnost'* era, Kiev, thanks to the role of writers such as yourself, has again taken on the leading role. And we attempt to focus as much attention as possible on Kiev. We try to ask correspondents to supply us with information on the Donbass, Kharkiv, the Sumy Oblast, and so on. But, again, if people there do not show any initiative, do not overcome this fear and inertia, then obviously we will be restricted to the information that until now has come from the Ukrainian Helsinki Union. Therefore, I welcome the possibility of "Rukh" having its own press center in Kiev, and especially in Moscow. After all, this does not pertain just to Radio Liberty; rather, the entire world should know about what is happening in Ukraine, not just those who listen to Radio Liberty.

Drach: Yes, you are right, because representatives from many different radio stations have turned to me, and not only to me, but to many of my colleagues, writers, scholars, and people who, so to say,

are close to the leadership of "Rukh." We were very pleased that there were many representatives from the Western media at our founding congress. For example, the Italians were very active in their reporting. I know of one producer from Greece—we met by chance not too long ago—and I was very interested to find out that Greek television also broadcast a program about this event. So we do see, we feel that there is an urgent need to have our own press center, which could provide necessary information in all areas. I don't know what kind of relations you have with our press centers, for example, such as RATAU [Radio and Telegraph Agency of Ukraine].

Nahaylo: We have no official relations. Obviously, we read what they issue and publish; we make use of their information.

Drach: And, well, they pretend that you are not there, that Radio Liberty does not exist. I feel that, in general, these are shortcomings of our Party's ideological service. As a member of the Communist Party—I have been a Communist for thirty years—I feel that the ideological work of our Communist Party of Ukraine is at a remarkably low level. It's all done using some sort of outdated, neo-Stalinist methods, methods overgrown with moss. A great many people no longer believe in this kind of information. One would think that for the rejuvenation of the situation within the Party—so that this propaganda would be disseminated everywhere accurately and precisely—this would have been changed long ago. Unfortunately, it is not changing, and I feel that precisely because you do exist and there are other radio stations that air information, treating it the way it should be treated depending upon the situation, this must serve as an incentive for our ideological service, which must change radically.

Solchanyk: As we are talking about the dissemination of information, I would like to draw attention to the other side of this situation. Bohdan mentioned the problems we have that are, to a certain extent, technical and the readiness of certain people within the Ukrainian informal groups to supply information. But, in my opinion, the main problem is not technical. Rather, it is the contents of the republican press. Actually, we officially receive only the republican press. If we start talking about normalization, well then, let there be normalization. Why, for example, is it not possible to subscribe to *Vechirnii Kyiv*, or *Prapor komunizmu*, or

Lenins'ka molod', or *Vil'na Ukraina*? After all, the Soviet Union, and this includes Ukraine, has entered onto the road of normalization. Why are we forced to use only the republican press? This is also a technical aspect of the problem.

Let us return to the contents. Unfortunately, we do not have any other possibility to find out what is going on in Ukraine. We are talking about certain people who are ready to supply information to us. I will give you a specific example. The draft program of "Rukh" appeared in only one newspaper, *Literaturna Ukraina*. How is one to explain this? Let me return again to the topic of normal relations, to normalization. After all, Ukraine and the Soviet Union should become normal countries.

Drach: That to which you refer, all of this, does not happen right away. So, on the one hand, we are of course happy that *Literaturna Ukraina*, an organ of the Ukrainian writers, published the statute and the program and publishes the speeches made by the writers, and not just the writers. But it is generally understood here that, how can this be? If we really do want there to be some sort of objective stand regarding the program and statute of "Rukh" and towards the overall situation with "Rukh," then this means that, first of all, these would have to be published by all the central organs: *Radyans'ka Ukraina*, and *Pravda Ukrainy*, and *Molod' Ukrainy*, all the newspapers. Then, all this must be discussed and looked at in the proper light, depending on an individual's knowledge, understanding, position, and insight.

One cannot assume that all this is normal, that a newspaper with a circulation of only 100,000 [published the draft program]. Although, with the help of the Ideological Department of the Central Committee and that very same Leonid Makarovych Kravchuk, an additional printing of *Literaturna Ukraina* was published. But, after all, these 200,000 copies are a very small number for a population of 50 million. Furthermore, because this was all printed, obviously, in the Ukrainian language—now we have translated the main documents into Russian—how will it reach the Russian-speaking workers of the Donbass, the metallurgical workers of Dnipropetrovs'k, or the residents of Odessa, who read only Russian? So, once again, the opportunity and the occasion are there to accuse "Rukh" of nationalism; to accuse it of being some sort of invention of pseudo-intellectuals who have come up with their own special hobby in the form of a popular movement; to argue that it is not something that is profoundly needed by everyone.

Solchanyk: Yes, here I would like to add something that surprised me very much at the time. This was in the early stages of "Rukh." The draft program was published on February 16 in *Literaturna Ukraina*, and then suddenly, literally the next day, letters from various indignant readers appeared in *Pravda Ukrainy*, *Robitnycha hazeta*. A completely normal question occurs to me: How did they know what was in that draft program? So, once again, we have the issue of normalization of the press, normalization of the exchange of information. I think that such things should not occur, although they were rebutted in *Literaturna Ukraina*. Members of the Ukrainian Writers' Union responded that the campaign against "Rukh" in March and April, 1989, was concocted. Now the relations are, once again, according to the materials that are available to us—i.e., the official press in Kiev—improving. I see that the attitude taken by the ideological *aktiv* towards "Rukh" has changed somewhat. Do you sense this change? If one were to compare the situation today with that of February, March, or April of this year? And all the more so because now it is frequently being said that, yes, "Rukh" is a reality. I think that in April one could not have said this.

Drach: I think that "Rukh" itself has brought about this situation, making it a reality. And not to take "Rukh" into account would simply be a big political mistake. So, "Rukh" has consolidated certain of its positions, despite all the defamations against us. This is primarily the position taken by RATAU, which was disseminated throughout the entire media, casting the work of the Congress in a negative light. All the same, the very fact that the Congress took place convinced us of the fact that we really do exist and that we should exist.The publication, although it is slow, of documents in *Literaturna Ukraina* is taking place. We are also pleased that we are receiving support from such a newspaper as *Molod' Ukrainy*, where a primary organization of "Rukh" was recently formed. I think that this is, after all, the positive route, the cooperation that we are thinking about. We feel that Ukraine must go along this normal road of coexistence with the Party leadership, with the Soviet administration, with other organs, just as in the Baltic republics, in Georgia, and in other republics.

Nahaylo: How are relations with the activists of the popular movements in the Baltic states? I would also like to ask you—since you touched upon the matter of *Molod' Ukrainy* and its attitude towards you—does it not sometimes appear that there is a more positive

attitude in certain circles in Moscow than in Kiev itself. I have in mind, for example, the recent article in *Komsomol'skaya pravda* about "Rukh," which was quite objective,[4] and certain broadcasts on Central Television. So, where are your allies and where are your opponents today?

Drach: It is good that you mentioned those Moscow organs. In addition to *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, *Sobesednik*, its supplement, has also come out positively about us.[5] You also referred to Central Television. I think that it is important for our ideological workers and for many circles in our society to take note, in this case, of Moscow. And it is, well, more normal for them to look at how Moscow responds; in this instance, I consider this to be the positive and progressive Moscow. Not only *Komsomol'skaya pravda* but *Moskovskie novosti*, for example, respond to many of our Ukrainian situations, or even *Ogonek*. I have in mind publications on the Ukrainian Catholic Church. I think that our ideological and Party workers in Ukraine should learn about objectivity of information precisely from these publications.

Nahaylo: I would like to return to my question about allies and opponents. From what you have said, one senses that there are still quite a few opponents. Do you get any help from the Baltic states? Do they, for example, print your materials in the publications of the popular fronts, in *Atmoda* or other journals?

Drach: They are planning to publish them and have already published some. We have contacts, good contacts, with the Latvians, the Estonians, the Lithuanians certainly. We have, I think, a good idea—i.e., to issue a joint publication with the Lithuanians, with "Sajudis," and to call it *The Lithuanian Statute*. This is the Lithuanian Statute under which the Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Belorussians, and Poles lived for such a long time. We have the possibility here to put together a joint publication. Let it first be a Ukrainian-Lithuanian one. Later, perhaps, there will be a Belorussian variant, a Polish variant, and, of course, Russian and English variants. Here we can say quite a bit, maybe even what we cannot say in Ukraine under the present conditions.

Speaking about the conditions in the Ukraine today: we do have some sort of preliminary agreement, and we believe in this agreement—i.e., that we will publish a popular [*narodna*] newspaper. This will be an organ of "Rukh," and I think that all this information that

we are trying from all sides to digest about what is going on in today's world, this sort of information will be supplied precisely by this popular newspaper of Ukraine that we are planning. But I think that if we have, aside from this popular newspaper, another variant, like *The Lithuanian Statute*, for example, then we will have yet another possibility to reach still another circle of readers. Thus, I think that this kind of cooperation will be possible. We also have some sort of preliminary agreement with the Poles.

Nahaylo: Actually, I wanted to ask you about the Poles. Only a few years ago, the press was frightening people with "Solidarity" and the events in Poland. Yet representatives of "Solidarity" attended the founding Congress of "Rukh." What, then, does the situation look like today? Are you cultivating ties with "Solidarity"?

Drach: In our situation, it is very important to have good relations with the Poles. I think that all of this is only beginning to take shape now. And we were very pleased that two parliamentarians, Adam Michnik and Wlodzimierz Mokry, were part of this six-man delegation from Poland. It was very interesting to listen to their speeches and to get a sense of their position regarding the future of Ukrainian-Polish relations. As you know, at times they were tragic and highly dramatic. So for us this is exceedingly important. I believe that we will be thinking also about some sort of joint publications and some kind of joint actions that would pertain to our relations and possibly about many other situations, not just our inter-nationality Polish-Ukrainian relations.

Nahaylo: Is it worth learning from "Solidarity" and the Poles with regard to forging better ties with Ukrainian workers?

Drach: I think we would benefit a great deal and gain more understanding of our own situation by studying the 1920s and 1930s, how things were back then. I think that perhaps Radio Liberty could help as well to delve more deeply into this; someone could begin sorting out those relations. As for "Solidarity" and the overall situation in Poland, it is generally understood that this is a link-up of Poland's intelligentsia and workers. It was only made possible by the years and years of, perhaps thousand-year-long, nurturing by the Church—of this single ethnos, this one Polish stream, and so on. In the current Ukrainian situation, we do not have a comparable variant.

We have, on the one hand, this plundered, mutilated, downtrodden, chemicalized village that is rising to its feet under very difficult conditions. It is not certain how it is managing to get to its feet. On the other hand, we have the workers, who in most of Ukraine are Russian-speaking. It is only in Galicia that some of the workers—predominantly Galicians or those from Volyn'—are Ukrainian-speaking. Therefore, the problem of relations with the working people—and for me this is first of all a problem of relations with the Donbass, with the Dnipropetrovs'k metallurgical workers, with other regions of Ukraine—is for us especially complicated and particularly important. I think that we will work all this out through those of our "Rukh" branches that are there and functioning. They exist in Donets'k and Dnipropetrovs'k, and through the intelligentsia they have an outlet to the working class. Here we are talking, first of all, about priorities, and the priorities for us in this situation are ecological, economic, priorities concerned with the social welfare of the individual, including, first of all, the workers.

I think that then the problems of language, culture, and national symbolism will come up by themselves and become normal—rather than, to one extent or another, interrupting the normal process of our life.

Nahaylo: You know, even today I heard from one representative of the Kiev delegation that this "Rukh" is all well and good but that this is all only slogans and catchwords. When you get down to concrete matters, there is very little that is concrete here. So, I would like to ask you specifically: What do you have to offer, as an organization, to the Russian-speaking worker in Ukraine? Why should he support "Rukh"?

Drach: I think that, first of all, we are talking about what must occur in Ukraine as a republic, a sovereign republic that—and this is in our program—is to be part of a new Union of republics on the basis of a new Union agreement. You know that the Ukrainian SSR was one of the founders of the USSR in 1922. If we build all this up in such a way that the Russian worker in Ukraine has opportunities and conditions that are better than he has in any other republic, including in the Russian Federation, then I think this will be the main reality for which we should struggle along with the Russian worker.

Furthermore, we are not talking here only about Russian workers. Naturally, there are many Ukrainians among that working class who have stopped being Ukrainian-speaking under the conditions imposed during the Stalin and Shcherbitsky eras in Ukraine. They speak

Russian, and for them this is all quite normal to the extent that it is even difficult to imagine a situation without the Russian language. That's how far it has gone. I think that here, first of all, we must raise, very realistically, ecological problems, economic problems, and problems of the individual's social welfare—bringing this individual from his knees to his feet. I think that this will be the first, elementary precondition after which that Russian-speaking worker will sense that he must support "Rukh."

Nahaylo: But there is also the danger here that there are those who are interested in safeguarding their positions. Obviously, they play on this national element and frighten people with the notion that "Rukh" ostensibly stands for the idea of Ukraine for the Ukrainians and some sort of compulsory Ukrainization. These types of ideas can often be found in the press. How do you respond to this?

Drach: I respond in a stereotypical way. I say that the Russians in Ukraine should live better than they live in Leningrad, Moscow, or New York. I say that the Jews in Ukraine must live better than they live in Moscow, Leningrad, New York, or Tel Aviv. And I say that, again returning to my own native Ukrainian roots, Ukrainians in Ukraine must live better than they live in Canada and the United States, and probably in Munich also, given that we are talking about this here in Munich.

Solchanyk: You know, I don't want to introduce pessimistic notes into our discussion. All the same, I feel, however, that we have somehow forgotten a very important point while talking about "Rukh"—namely, the stand taken by the CPSU or the Ukrainian Communist Party. Based on my reading of the Kiev and Moscow press, I have formed the impression that the Party in Ukraine is not happy with "Rukh." True, the Party now acknowledges it, albeit grudgingly. It is being said that "Rukh" is a reality, and you yourself mentioned that it must be taken into account because otherwise one cannot carry on any sort of political process. Fine, we recognize all of this. On the other hand, reading the speeches made, for example, by Ukrainian Party Ideological Secretary Yel'chenko—his speech at the Ideological Commission in Moscow in May of this year; his speech at the CPSU Central Committee plenum in September, where he and others called for applying legal and administrative methods with regard to so-called extremists, without explaining whom exactly they had in mind—all this is rather disturbing.

It is now very fashionable to talk about extremists, destructive movements, and so on. General Secretary Gorbachev himself speaks in this manner. I will also mention the speeches by the first secretaries of the Ivano-Frankivs'k and L'viv Oblast Commitees, Ivan Postorenko and Yakiv Pohrebnyak, at the July meeting in the CPSU Central Committee. There also, one could hear calls for ideological vigilance, especially against those who support the restoration of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. The speech of the new leader of the Ukrainian Communist Party on September 8 in *Izvestia*—here too there is the call for using administrative methods against all those destructive elements. Therefore, I think that we have to look at all this realistically. Good. "Rukh" exists; "Rukh" is active; "Rukh" wants to help the Party. But I personally feel that the Party is not happy with "Rukh." It, so to speak, rejects the help that "Rukh" wants to offer.

Let us go back to the first problem that we raised. Perhaps I am putting too much of a slant on all of this. After all, I have not been to Ukraine, and I can only substantiate my views on the basis of reading the Soviet press. Nonetheless, I have the impression that the reaction of the Party, or of the Party organs, is negative. Although the Party perceives "Rukh" as a reality, it nevertheless seems to me that the Party would be very pleased if "Rukh" did not exist. Does this correspond to the truth? I don't know.

Drach: Well, you think you have given me such a difficult question, and then you sit back so easily in your chair. But I would like to ask you, why do you think that the Party is, let us say, Yel'chenko? Why are Pavlychko, Drach, Popovych, and Bryukhovets'kyi not the Party? At the founding congress of "Rukh" there were some 204 or 205 Communists, members of the CPSU. They made up either a fourth or a fifth of the entire number of delegates who were there. So why do you not feel that this is not the Party, but that that is the Party?

Probably, we should talk here about the Party apparatus or, in this case, a specific leadership. I feel that, for the most part, these people whom you mentioned are the pupils of our own glorified Brezhnev, Suslov, and Shcherbitsky, that entire team that is leaving, that must leave, and that must give the new forces a chance. I believe absolutely in these new forces that will come to cooperate with "Rukh" and with the Communists who work within "Rukh." In this way, through joint efforts, we will be able to raise all those terrible, heavy, unbelievably heavy loads that confront us right now. I think that this

is true even for those people who right now are still somehow taking stock of the situation, who feel that, well, who knows how it will all turn out?

You know, it's like that ancient Rus' hero riding along on a horse, when suddenly he sees several roads in front of him. On one stone it says: "Ride this way and you will not find your head." On another: "You will face fire and water." And there is some third variant. We have the exact same situation now, and I think not just for Ukraine but for the Soviet Union in general and for Gorbachev's team as well.

We have these variants, and there will probably be no other way out. Either the Chinese variant—i.e., either what Deng Xiaoping resorted to, this eighty-five-year-old man, when he gave the order to shoot, no longer his sons, but his grandsons and great-grandsons. This is simply unbelievable. When you think about it your soul shudders from horror at what happened. Or there is the Polish-Hungarian variant, which also exists for this hero who paused and is thinking about which way to go. I think that it will be neither the Chinese nor the Polish-Hungarian variants. It will be a unique variant. But at least insofar as it depends upon me and upon "Rukh," I think that we will take pains to make sure that this variant is, after all, closer to the West. Because, when speaking about a common European home and the ideas that were voiced by Gorbachev in West Germany, one must not forget that the geographical center of Europe is in Ukraine. You know that. So, if this is the case, at least geographically, I think we will not be doing everything possible in order to run this Ukraine out of that European home, because it must be an equal, authoritative, sovereign, and honest partner in this common European home.

Solchanyk: You know, I mentioned these people, these comrades, because they are, after all, the representatives of the Party leadership. Unfortunately, or perhaps not unfortunately, Ivan Drach is not the ideological secreary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine. Perhaps this will come about one day, I don't know. But to the point. We have referred to the attitude of certain people in the leadership of the Ukrainian Party. You were at the meeting of the general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Gorbachev, with Ukrainian writers in February. Not long ago, Gorbachev was in Kiev again in connection with the Central Committee plenum of the Ukrainian Party. Could you perhaps tell us, our listeners actually, what went on there? Dmytro Pavlychko mentioned a number of things in

Literaturna Ukraina. It seems that Gorbachev was very concerned that "Rukh" is some sort of an opposition party, and Pavlychko made great efforts to rectify this illusion or this mistake. Someone must have slipped this to Gorbachev; I don't know who. In any case, concretely, what took place at that meeting in Kiev in February?[6]

Second, I noticed that after the Ukrainian plenum Soviet Central Television broadcast short segments of conversations that took place between Gorbachev and people in Kiev, one of whom asked him specifically about his attitude towards "Rukh." He did not give a direct answer. He said that he felt there should be cooperation with all the movements; the Party respects them and needs their help. But, and this is a big "but," a message was converyed of I am against, or we are against, or the Party is against, destructive movements and destructive individuals. In a word, you had a chance to talk to Gorbachev personally on this topic in February and perhaps again later. What does he know about "Rukh," about the situation in Ukraine, and about *perestroika* in Ukraine?

Drach: Well, I think that perhaps a leader of Gorbachev's rank, if you were in his position, or I, or any one of us—you must, after all, understand him in this obviously difficult situation that he finds himself in as the leader of the country. When there are, so to speak, certain indications that all this is evolving and can evolve into a Baltic-type scenario or an Azerbaijani scenario—I have in mind the Azerbaijan Popular Front; you know what the situation there is like now—then, probably, you too would express the same kinds of fears and would attempt to somehow reassure certain forces. And especially in such an uncommonly complicated and, so to speak, potentially important region in every sphere as Ukraine. You also would probably say something to the same effect.

Here I give Gorbachev his due—for his intelligence, tact, and discretion—after having listened to such an unequivocal speech as was given at the plenum of the Ukrainian Party by the first secretary of the Odessa Oblast Committee, Heorhii Kryuchkov, where the latter threw mud at "Rukh," and having listened to similar attacks by Yel'chenko at the Central Committee plenum in Moscow, where he referred to "the so-called 'Rukh.'" This so-called ideological secretary of ours has, so to say, gone that far. After all these things, after all this active rage and the attacks upon him in order that he clearly define his position—he still found it possible to take a careful stand on this issue, saying that we, after all, support these popular movements

insofar as the positive aspects of their programs are concerned. Clearly, if I were in the position of the general secretary, I would have also said about the same thing.

Nahaylo: But what do you think about Gorbachev and Ukraine? His visit in February was very ambivalent. On the one hand, he did not criticize Shcherbitsky directly and did not distance himself from him; on the other hand, he said that the leadership must be changed if it is stagnant and so on. What were your impressions at that meeting? What is his overall attitude towards Ukraine? And, strictly speaking, does he sense that there is some kind of a Ukrainian question?

Drach: He is a person who is uncommonly quick at perceiving a situation. When he met with us, Ukrainian writers, he posed a literary riddle. He asked us if we knew who wrote: "My Ukraine. I need nothing else in the world but to hear your voice and to look after your tenderness." And who wrote this? Pavlo Tychyna, he asked? And he was told that, no, obviously this was Andrii Malyshko. But when a person who is in contact with writers can act this way, establish contact, move towards some sort of understanding, then you must realize yourselves that it is clear that Ukraine itself, and the concept of Ukraine, is not alien for Gorbachev. I think that there is something here—well, perhaps from his childhood upbringing in the Stavropol region, where there are a large number of Ukrainians—some sentiment towards Ukraine, and his positive attitude could be felt. But, certainly, for him these general interests, the general interests of the entire Soviet Union, were of primary importance. After all, let us not forget that it is we who are sitting here together at Radio Liberty, and I have the courage to answer both your dangerous and your harmless questions, precisely because there is Gorbachev, there is this so-called *perestroika*, and everything that is tied to the name of this unique man.

NOTES

[1] At the plenum of the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Party, held on October 18, Leonid Makarovych Kravchuk, who had headed the Central Committee's Ideological Department since October, 1988, was confirmed as chairman of the Central Committee Ideology Commission and elected a

candidate member of the Politburo and a Central Committee secretary. Yurii Nykyforovych Yel'chenko is the ideological secretary of the Ukrainian Party. At the plenum he was confirmed as chairman of the newly created Central Committee commission on Inter-Nationality Relations.

[2]Ivan Mykolaiovych Salii is first secretary of Kiev's Podil' Raion Party Committee. For more about Salii, who was criticized at a Ukrainian Central Committee plenum earlier this year by former Party leader Volodymyr Shcherbitsky for his "unauthorized" campaign for a seat in the USSR Congress of People's Deputies, see David Marples and Roman Solchanyk, "Plagiarism and Politics in Kiev," *Report on the USSR*, 1989, No. 24, pp. 17–19, and Kathleen Mihalisko, "Ukrainian Party Takes Stock after Election Defeats," *Report on the USSR*, 1989, No. 25, pp. 15–18.

[3]Bohdan Dmytrovych Kotyk is chairman of the Executive Committee of the L'viv City Soviet of People's Deputies; Viktor Aleksandrovich Volkov is first secretary of the L'viv City Party Committee. On August 5, 1989, *Robitnycha hazeta* reported on the discussions held between Volkov and representatives of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union—Vyacheslav Chornovil, Mykhailo Horyn', and Bohdan Horyn'. The meeting was initiated by the L'viv Party authorities and was criticized by the Kiev correspondent of *Pravda* in the latter's issue for August 11.

[4]N. Polozhevets, "'Rukh,'" *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, September 24, 1989.

[5]Aleksei Levitsky, " Ochishchat' rodniki!" *Sobesednik*, No. 39, September, 1989.

[6]USSR People's Deputy Volodymyr Yavorivs'kyi, who was visiting in the United States in early October, 1989, revealed that Gorbachev's meeting with the writers was arranged secretly—i.e., without Shcherbitsky's knowledge. See the excerpts from Yavorivs'kyi's address to the Leadership Conference of the Washington Group in *The Ukrainian Weekly*, October 15, 1989.

6 Ukraine and Poland: An Interview with Adam Michnik

Roman Solchanyk

Adam Michnik—historian, publicist, human-rights activist, and former political prisoner—has been one of the leading figures in the Polish opposition movement since the mid-1960s. He was one of the leaders of the student protests in 1968, a member of KOR (Workers' Defense Committee), and an adviser to "Solidarity" and Lech Walesa. In May, 1989, he became chief editor of Gazeta Wyborcza, *the newspaper with the largest circulation in Poland, and in June of that year he was elected a deputy to the Sejm. Michnik addressed the founding Congress of "Rukh" (September 8–10), which he attended along with several other guests from Poland. On November 23, 1989, Michnik participated in a forum on "Ukraine and Poland" sponsored by the Ukrainian People's Home in Toronto. The following interview was conducted the same day.*

You attended the founding congress of the Popular Movement of Ukraine for *Perestroika*, or "Rukh," in Kiev in early September. How did it happen that you were in Kiev with a Sejm delegation?

I must say that it would be difficult to call it a delegation. No one delegated us. We were simply invited individually by the organizers of the "Rukh" Congress, and that is why we and not other people attended. We were also not a delegation in the sense that we did not have any formal mandate. For example, what I said in Kiev, I said in my own name, although I am convinced that a great many people in Poland think the way I do. So it just happened that we were invited [to the Congress]. We considered this invitation to be a great honor. When, as at this time, a revival of national feeling, a revival of national and human dignity is taking shape in Ukraine, then if one is invited to a congress, one is invited to a festival. This sort of invitation is an honor.

That means that the initiative came from Kiev, from within "Rukh," and one could assume that people from "Rukh" want to have contacts with people like yourself, with representatives of "Solidarity," and that they see this as a positive development in terms of building something for the future.

I think so. You know, we already had some contacts with people from Ukraine earlier. Some of our people traveled to Ukraine, and there were people from Ukraine who traveled to Poland. So we knew something about each other. But there was a certain new element here. I don't know why I, in particular, was honored and not someone else from among my colleagues, but one can't turn one's back on honors. Both on the Ukrainian and on the Polish side, I think, there is a conviction that both of our nations need this type of contact. First of all, because we are neighbors and we must know each other, we must know something about each other. Second, because, on a certain level, we have a common cause—that is, both of our nations are searching for a way to extricate themselves from the totalitarian system. Third, in the past there were many conflicts between our nations, but there were also many things that we had in common. We traveled a great stretch of historical road together. This association may have been good or it may have been bad, but it was shared. And, it seems to me, this places a certain responsibility on both of our nations: the responsibility to see to it that there is no return to certain conflicts; one has to be able to break away from certain conflicts, certain stereotypes.

What is your assessment of "Rukh"? And how do you see the political situation in Ukraine, particularly in comparison with the situation in Poland?

The situation is completely different. Besides the few general similarities that I already mentioned—that in both places there is the problem of breaking away from the totalitarian system—basically, other than that there are really only differences. Poland is theoretically a sovereign state. Ukraine is theoretically a sovereign republic in the Soviet Union. In Poland, the opposition as a mass phenomenon dates back to 1976. In Ukraine, these developments are new.

In Poland, it began with Radom and Ursus in 1976. In Ukraine, these are new developments. The Polish opposition had already experienced sixteen months of "Solidarity," when "Solidarity" was a movement of millions, really a powerful movement. Ukraine has not experienced this. In a word, there is a mass of differences. As for my

evaluation of "Rukh," it seems to me that there are some similarities, on the one hand, with a movement like "Sajudis" and, on the other, with a movement like "Solidarity." But I also see differences. Basically, the similarities arise from the fact that, in my opinion, in the totalitarian system the fundamental social and political conflict is whether you are for the totalitarian system or against it. All those who are against it unite around the fact that they are against it. They unite—"Solidarity" and "Sajudis" and "Rukh" in Ukraine. These are the similarities. As to whether there are other similarities, however—for at a certain point in Poland "Solidarity" encompassed everything, both that which was best in Poland and that which was worst—I don't know if it's the same with "Rukh" in Ukraine. At least I, as a Pole, should not be making statements on this subject. It is for the Ukrainians to conduct Ukrainian self-criticism.

Do you think there is a chance for Ukraine to develop in a direction similar to that in Poland? Or are the differences too great for that to be possible?

I am unable to answer that question, because the dynamics of change at this moment are such that everything is possible. Could you have imagined five months ago that what is going on in East Germany, in Bulgaria, in Czechoslovakia, would be happening? No. It seems to me that in Ukraine, of course, considering its history, the process will take a different course. The basic goal of this process will, however, be the same. This is inevitable. It will be what I said in Kiev—a free, democratic, just Ukraine.[1]

How did the audience at the Kiev Polytechnic react to your speech?

Wonderfully, they reacted wonderfully. You know, it was perhaps the greatest ovation that I've ever received in my life. Ten minutes' standing ovation with banners raised. It was wonderful. For me it was a tremendous experience. Because first, in the hall of the Polytechnic, and later still, when we went to the Taras Shevchenko monument after the Congress ended, when people saw our banner . . .

The "Solidarity" banner?

. . . and the Polish national flag, which was carried by Bogdan Borusewicz and then Wlodek Mokry, who is a Sejm deputy, a Polish Ukrainian, and they shouted "Long live Poland! Long live 'Solidarity'!" This was extremely heartwarming, and for me this was an argument

that there is a chance for relations between our nations to work out well in the future. It seems to me that this was important—for me personally at least, and perhaps not just for me, perhaps for some of my Ukrainian friends as well—that at the moment of Ukraine's revival the Polish flag was there; that this time Poles had come to Kiev as friends, to help the Ukrainians. I see in this a meaningful symbol, or at least I would like it to be perceived as such by Ukrainians.

That was the reaction of the Ukrainian people. Did you sense that there was a different reaction from the authorities?
Obviously. There were people in the hall from the Communist Party Central Committee who observed us all and our banners and what we said there with great distaste. Later, I know, they wrote a denunciation to Moscow saying that I had gone there with my colleagues in order to ignite Ukrainian nationalism and separatism. That is not why I went there. What I said there, if you read it, was said clearly: we must excise chauvinism from our hearts. We Poles must excise Polish chauvinism from Polish hearts, and you Ukrainians must excise Ukrainian chauvinism from Ukrainian hearts. If that is inciting nationalism, then in that case I don't know what is meant by the brotherhood of peoples of different nationalities. It seemed to me that was precisely what was meant.

Nationalism, however, is one thing—something I do not like and have never liked; another thing entirely is the natural right of every nation to take pride in its own history, the natural right of every nation to its own language, its own national symbols, to develop its own native culture. If I hear that the fact that there were blue-and-yellow flags at the Congress is evidence of Ukrainian nationalism, then I ask myself: How would a Pole react if someone were to say that the presence of red-and-white flags was proof of nationalism? That is our national flag.

Of course, there was an incident, an attempt to pass a resolution saying that September 17—this was a proposal from the floor—was a national holiday for Ukraine, because this was the moment at which Ukraine was united. Luckily, it didn't pass. I say luckily because no one in Poland would understand this. And here we have a very delicate issue. Ukrainians feel that, until September 17, half of Ukraine was under Polish occupation. Poles think that these were Poland's eastern provinces. Now, from a historical point of view, both sides are right. This is very difficult to understand. Because the Ukrainians are right in their belief that this was their land, but not their state. And the Poles

are right because the Polish state had existed on this land for 500 years. Polish families had always lived there, and it is hard to imagine Polish culture without L'viv. This is an extremely dramatic problem from the historical point of view. But it is also a problem on which Stalinist forces, both in Ukraine and in Poland, are now going to prey. Here it is very easy to set our nations against each other, for this is a bone of contention. Now, on both sides, we must think in such a way as to make L'viv, which was a bone of contention in Polish-Ukrainian relations, into a place that will link the two nations, not divide them.

There was one reaction from the public, another reaction on the part of the authorities, and still another in Poland. I remember reading a speech in *Trybuna Ludu* by Leszek Miller, a member of the PUWP Central Committee Politburo, and also Mieczyslaw Rakowski's speech at the Central Committee plenum accusing you, not by name . . .
But that's what it was about . . .

. . . not by name, but accusing people from "Solidarity" of meddling in affairs in which they have no business—i.e., international affairs.[2] I know that you responded to these accusations in *Gazeta Wyborcza*.[3] How do you see these moves by Miller and Rakowski?
You've read my assessment of these statements in *Gazeta Wyborcza*, where, as you remember, I did not engage in self-criticism—rather the reverse. I repeated once again what I believe. Well, you see, I could say that Miller and Rakowski are resorting to demagogy, and so on. But I don't want to say this. I don't know Miller very well. I know Rakowski better. It seems to me that part of the Polish intellectual elite—and not just the Communist elite—has not yet realized that Polish-Ukrainian relations are of fundamental importance for the future of Central and Eastern Europe. They charge us with being "humanists," which means idiots. They accuse us of supporting all nationalisms except Polish nationalism, of being ready to support Ukrainian, Lithuanian, or Czech nationalism, but only not Polish nationalism.

But we don't support Ukrainian nationalism. I want to make this very clear. For me, nationalism represents a certain concept of the world, an exclusivist concept, where there is a place for the people of my nation, but no place for others. But no, this is not my view.

I can say sincerely that this is certainly not the view of the leadership of "Rukh" either, because that is a movement for restructuring Ukraine, all the nations in Ukraine. Jews, Russians, and Poles are represented in that movement, and every person who wants to live in Ukraine and be a loyal citizen of the Ukrainian state can join. This is the idea. I can't say how it works in practice, because I'm not competent to do so. But until I'm convinced that the practice is otherwise, then I sympathize with this movement precisely because it is not a nationalistic movement; because there is no chauvinism in the movement; precisely because this movement was able to overcome a certain historically conditioned Ukrainian complex, be it in relation to Russians or to Poles. Of course, as I said, the practice may vary. But we must always support all the tendencies that look to the future rather than to the past.

As for Rakowski, it seems to me that various statements on this topic, including his, are simply based on very superficial information. Of course, I am from a different political camp than Rakowski, but I can say with complete conviction that Rakowski is not a Polish chauvinist. He is not. He is someone whose thinking is modern, broad. It seems to me that he does himself an injustice with such statements. To tell you the truth, I even discussed this topic with him later on and tried to explain to him that one simply has to know much, much more about Ukraine even to express one's opinion on the subject; that there are important issues and less important issues. If the point is to give Michnik a thrashing, then you do it on another occasion, not on an occasion that can put us in conflict with a 50-million-strong nation of which we are a neighbor. Because that would be political idiocy.

I know that leaders of "Rukh" like Ivan Drach want to develop ties with Poland, with the Polish intelligentsia, and with democratic forces in Poland. Do you, either personally or as a representative of "Solidarity," also have such intentions?
Yes, absolutely.

Will this take some concrete forms?
Yes. We want to have a Polish-Ukrainian round table. I am convinced we will do this, and in the near future, in the coming months. Both the democratic forces in Ukraine and the democratic forces in Poland need this. It is necessary because our nations are faced with a simple choice. Either, on the one hand, we choose the road of constructing some sort of community that would resemble Western Europe—and

this will not be an anti-Russian community. There is a place for the Russians, and it is an important place, but the Russians have to understand that they must now make a break with the habit of Great Russian chauvinism. I believe that a great part of the Russian intelligentsia has already made this break. So this is not an anti-Russian idea. Or, on the other hand, nationalist, chauvinist orientations will gain the upper hand in our countries. Then we will be doomed to a bloody conflict that will bring only harm to our nations. In history, neither the Ukrainians nor the Poles have ever gained anything from a Polish-Ukrainian conflict; a third party has always won. Whereas in concord, in agreement, we will win together.

I would like to move on to a slightly different but related topic. There is a new situation in Poland now. For the first time in the history of postwar Poland, a Ukrainian, Wlodzimierz Mokry, was elected a Sejm deputy, and from a predominantly Polish region at that. How do you view the very complex problem of a solution to the Ukrainian question in contemporary Poland?

I think that, up to now, whatever was independent in Poland, whatever was not within the framework of the nomenklatura system, was destroyed and repressed. Now a new era has arrived. One fragment of that new era, in my view, is also a new status for the non-Polish citizens of Poland, be they Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Belorussians, Jews—there are very few of them, practically none—or Germans.

You see, I think that this issue has two sides. First, the administrative side. I think that Ukrainians who are Polish citizens should have the same rights to develop their culture, language, religion, and so forth as do all other citizens of Poland. The only criterion must be loyalty to the Polish state. And the same applies to Poles living in Ukraine; in the sense that Ukrainians should have the right to Ukrainian schools, to the Ukrainian theater, and so forth, and we expect the same rights for Poles in Ukraine. This, it seems to me, is extremely important.

The second issue is not, on the other hand, an administrative one. It is a question of a certain understanding by the Polish elites, by the Polish people, that the fact that Ukrainians or Belorussians or Lithuanians live in Poland is not bad, that in fact this is good, because it enriches Polish culture, it enriches Polish public discourse, it leads to our becoming spiritually richer than we would be without it. This

second issue is a question of changing the attitude of public opinion towards people of a different nationality. This issue, when it comes to Polish-Ukrainian relations, is difficult.

I would like to return to this. One issue, if I understand you correctly, is the question of views of people like yourself, from the democratic forces of "Solidarity." It's a question of democracy and a liberal approach to the problem. But the reality is that the elite is one thing and . . .

No, no. You've misunderstood me. One issue is the question of rights. What sort of rights Ukrainians have in Poland, what they are free to do and what is forbidden. And now these things have to be changed. Up to this point, things looked bad. Ukrainians did not have the rights they wanted to have, and this is a question of law and administration. Whereas the second issue is a question of opinion.

Mind-set.

Yes.

Are you optimistic on this score? About the mind-set of Polish society?

I am always an optimist. I am always an optimist because I believe that pessimism is something paralyzing. I'm one of those people who are capable of telling Polish opinion very disagreeable things, very unpleasant things. And I must say I've never regretted this, under the single condition that these things were said honestly and reflected what I really think. It's the same here. This is a very difficult question, in the same way that it is a difficult issue in Ukraine. There are many people in Ukraine who remember that their parents, their older brothers suffered at Polish hands.

Just as Poles did. The same problem exists in Poland.

Yes, the same. And for this reason it is a difficult issue. To make matters worse, for many years one of the elements of official Polish propaganda was anti-Ukrainian propaganda. This is also true. Jan Gerhard's Ukrainophobic book *Luny w Bieszczadach* was a school textbook, and a film was made from this book. It is a book in which Ukrainians are depicted as bandits and murderers. If you add to this that there were no other books, or that the others were not so widely advertised, then you have a picture of the situation.

The second issue is the entire question of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). In Poland, one and only one view was obligatory on this topic—i.e., that this was simply a band of murderers, a band that joined up with Hitler in order to butcher Poles. If someone has this sort of mind-set, he not only understands nothing but is also unable to carry on a discussion with Ukrainians. The fundamental problem is to explain to Poles just what the drama of the Ukrainian situation was at the time—i.e., that Ukrainians were wedged between Russia, Hitler, and Poland. Neither of those countries recognized their right to an independent state, while Hitler recognized—or pretended to recognize—that Ukrainians could have that right. The misfortune of the Ukrainians was that Hitler's Germany was the one country that told them they had the right to independence. And this must be seen as the great misfortune of the Ukrainian nation. But, up to this point, few people in Poland have thought in these categories.

Further. Poles have the sense that they have been wronged by history, by fate, and for this reason they really do not like to admit that not only were they wronged, but that they also wronged others. This applies, for example, to the "Akcja Wisla" (Operation Vistula).[4] This was so despicable (*dranstwo*), so disgraceful (*swinstwo*), that this must be said once and for all. But here there is, I would say, a certain Polish complex—i.e., the Poles want to show that we are still not yet a free nation. The Poles react in accordance with this complex. In general, they listen only unwillingly when someone tells them that someone else besides Poles suffers. The entire argument with the Jews about the Carmelite convent [at Auschwitz] is, in essence, an argument precisely about this, about who suffered most. The Jews say that Auschwitz is a Jewish matter, while Poles say that Father Kolbe perished in Auschwitz. This is a discussion in which it is basically very difficult to come to an understanding.

I suppose that it will be like this with the Ukrainians as well. Ukrainians also died at Auschwitz. Why is there no plaque in the Ukrainian language at Auschwitz saying that Ukrainians perished there? Because this changes a certain image of Ukrainians, right? Ukrainians are supposed to be the ones who do the killing. What is more, here various things are even invented. For example, it has already been documented that there were practically no Ukrainian formations putting down the Warsaw Uprising. When something is published, however, it says "Ukrainians." These were not Ukrainians.

A final question. You were in Kiev at the invitation of the Ukrainian community. And now, in November, you are on a second tour, in Toronto at the invitation of the Ukrainian community. I assume that you accepted this invitation in order to pursue the same motives as in Kiev. Is that right?
Absolutely.

What do you hope to achieve here in North America?
I'll tell you. I don't really want to accomplish a great deal here. I just think Polish-Ukrainian relations are so important, there is so much to be done, that if such outstanding representatives of the Ukrainian émigré community invited me, then I simply could not refuse to come. All I wish to accomplish is that we come to understand each other even better. I discuss things, as you've noticed, very frankly; I speak very openly about various things, so it seems to me that only in this way, through discussion, will we be able to communicate. Finally, I want to say that this applies not only to Poles and Ukrainians; this also applies to Poles, Ukrainians, and Russians. We have to be able to communicate, because understanding generates understanding, whereas conflict generates hatred.

NOTES

[1] For an English translation of Michnik's speech, see Kathleen Mihalisko, "Adam Michnik's Speech to the Founding Congress of the Popular Movement of Ukraine for *Perestroika*," *Report on the USSR*, 1989, No. 38, p. 25.

[2] Miller's speech was published in *Trybuna Ludu*, September 14, 1989; Rakowski's address at the fifteenth plenum appeared in *Trybuna Ludu*, September 20, 1989.

[3] Adam Michnik, "Myslenie z rozwaga," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, September 18, 1989.

[4] "Akcja Wisla" was the mass deportation of Ukrainians in 1947 from their traditional homelands in the southeastern part of the country to the so-called recovered territories in the west and north. In a round table on Polish-Ukrainian relations organized by the Catholic weekly *Lad*, one of the participants, noting the important role played by Soviet "advisers" to Polish security organs in the immediate postwar period, stated that the decision to deport the Ukrainians "was not made by Poles," although "Poles bear the responsibility for the way the decision was carried out." See "Ukraincy a Polska," *Lad*, September 29, 1989. On August 3, 1990, the Polish Senate adopted a resolution condeming the operation. See *Gazeta Wyborcza*, August 7, 1990.

7 The Democratization Process in Ukraine: An Interview with Anatolii Pohribnyi

Roman Solchanyk

Anatolii Pohribnyi is a well-known literary critic who played an active role in the organization of "Rukh." He is a secretary of the Kiev organization of the Ukrainian Writers' Union, a professor in the Department of Journalism at Kiev State University, and chairman of the Commission on Education of the Shevchenko Ukrainian Language Society. Pohribnyi recently visited Munich as a member of the delegation from the Ukrainian Republican Committee in Defense of Peace. The following interview was conducted on February 17, 1990.

The decisions taken at the plenum of the CPSU Central Committee earlier this month have generated a great deal of discussion both in the Soviet Union and in the West. What are your impressions of these developments?

I think the situation in the Soviet Union now is hopeful and at the same time alarming—but more hopeful. We were waiting for this plenum, and we were concerned, because, in our view, the plenum was to resolve fundamental matters, such as the place and role of the Party, the Party's relations with other sociopolitical organizations, and a whole complex of other problems. We saw this plenum as a specific kind of development that would decide whether we would emerge from a situation that we call "the stagnation of *perestroika*." These are two words that are difficult to juxtapose—stagnation and *perestroika*—but this is precisely how it is seen by the public at large, and it is my impression as well—the stagnation of *perestroika*.

The question being decided was whether there would be an improvement at the level of the Central Committee and which forces would prevail. If you read the materials of the plenum—and I was one of the avid readers of these materials—you can see that there were

various tendencies. I know that there were some people there, particularly from Ukraine, who tried very hard to influence the work of the plenum through their speeches. I appeared on television in Kiev and criticized the speech of Anatolii Korniyenko, first secretary of the Kiev City Party Committee.[1] He described the situation in Ukraine in, let us say, very dark colors.

Do you think that Korniyenko's speech reflects the overall position of the apparatus in Ukraine—if, indeed one can talk about an overall position? Does his speech reflect the norm?
I am not inclined to make such generalizations. Our apparatus is quite large, and I wish it were better; but one must approach this in a differentiated way. It is true, of course, that a considerable portion of the old cadres, those of the old school, are people whose attitude towards the restructuring process is guarded. I know that many of them like to talk about *perestroika*, but if the signal came from the top to put an end to *perestroika* they would probably do it with pleasure. There were speeches opposing the need for the Party to cooperate with other sociopolitical organizations. But, you know, the final outcome of the plenum was that these forces did not emerge victorious. This is very important. The programmatic documents adopted by the plenum are those that we were waiting for. I think that the issue of Article Six of the Constitution is no longer up for discussion; practically speaking, it has been resolved. The necessity of cooperating with other sociopolitical organizations was clearly stated, which means that the question of the CPSU's monopoly role is also beginning to be resolved. Obviously, this is still on paper, but we think that the way is being cleared for its realization in practice.

What is the reaction of "Rukh" to these recent decisions?
This is something around which all democratic forces must unite. If the broadest segment of society wants such decisions, then, of course, the response of "Rukh" will be positive as well. It sees this as one of the victories of the overall democratic movement in the entire Soviet Union and especially in the Party. The Party is very numerous; there are 20 million Party members. And there are various kinds of people in the Party. One cannot, so to speak, paint them all with one brush and view them as a monolith. Once such decisions are made, this bears witness to the fact that in the Central Committee and in the Politburo there are people who want positive changes and who are working in that direction.

In September of last year there was a very important change in the post of first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine. Volodymyr Shcherbitsky's place was taken by Volodymyr Ivashko. About four months have passed since then. How do you appraise this? Have there been any concrete changes? I'll tell you what I have in mind. Recently, I read an article by the former editor of the journal *Prapor*. He has now become ideological secretary in the Kharkiv Oblast Party Committee. At one point, he writes that when Ivashko was ideological secretary in the Kharkiv Oblast Party Committee he helped push through some works of the well-known writer Anatolii Dimarov.[2] One gets the impression, therefore, that Ivashko, at least in comparison with Shcherbitsky, has a positive attitude. What do you think? Is there any movement away from the old positions?

Not much time has passed, you understand. Four months is not a very long time. I must say that we heaved a sigh of relief when Shcherbitsky left the scene. I'm convinced that there are a great many bad things on his conscience, things for which there are grounds for holding him accountable. For example, he was one of the functionaries who initiated the destruction of our Ukrainian schools, of the Ukrainian language, and of much else. Then there is Chernobyl' and various other problems.

As for Ivashko, we are still studying him. We know that there are certain improvements in the republic, that a change of cadres, the old cadres from the stagnation era, is currently under way. Perhaps not as quickly as we would like, but, in any case, if you follow the press, if you look at Uzhhorod, Poltava, Donets'k, Chernihiv, an important role is being played by initiatives from above and from below. Ukraine is now beginning to boil, and many cities are in turmoil. We are following speeches of Ivashko, and, of course, there are differences between his speeches and those of Shcherbitsky. Ivashko is striving to somehow proceed more reasonably. We see this in the relations between the Central Committee and the Writers' Union.

You know that with Shcherbitsky it was basically confrontation, especially in the last years, when we couldn't find a common language and the possibility of any kind of constructive discussion was out of the question. Now things are beginning to get straightened out. Meetings are being held, not only with the Writers' Union but with "Rukh," with the Ukrainian Language Society, and with "Zelenyi svit" (Green World). It has now become easier to find solutions to some

problems that we cannot solve alone. We are expecting a meeting with Ivashko at the Writers' Union. For a long time we have wanted the entire Politburo of Ukraine to meet with the writers to go over a whole series of issues, but so far that hasn't happened. The Central Committee, with Ivashko at its head, is examining the situation. As for us, we are waiting, watching, and hoping. I think that the processes that have now surfaced, particularly since the plenum, will probably also nudge Volodymyr Ivashko to get onto a more constructive footing with the writers. You see, I was stunned and shocked—this has to do specifically with the creation of the Popular Movement of Ukraine for *Perestroika*—that all of a sudden writers were, in essence, portrayed as the enemy. This was during the anti-"Rukh" campaign.

At the beginning of last year.

At the beginning of last year. It was something barbaric. How can I put it? Something abnormal was happening. The idea of creating the Popular Movement of Ukraine for *Perestroika* was an honest Party initiative. After all, the writers were responding to Gorbachev's numerous appeals, arguing that *perestroika* was impossible without support from below. The writers decided to come forward, and an Initiative Group was formed. Oles' Honchar joined, as did Ivan Drach, Borys Oliinyk, Dmytro Pavlychko, Volodymyr Yavorivs'kyi, and many others, myself included. And then this uproar started. One could ascribe it to Shcherbitsky, but not only to him. The idea was set in motion that this was something hostile, and our very best writers found themselves in the role of "extremists," "nationalists," and the like. How can this be fathomed? By what logic? It was crazy.

You mentioned the role of Shcherbitsky in the campaign against "Rukh." This was obviously very strange. We know that "Rukh's" draft program appeared in only one newspaper, *Literaturna Ukraina*, then suddenly there were letters from various indignant readers in *Robitnycha hazeta* and other newspapers, and of course the question came up: where did these people read the draft program? But more concretely, I have the impression—if I'm mistaken, please correct me—that the former head of the Ideological Department, Leonid Kravchuk, played an important role in that campaign. And now, reading the press in the past few months, we see that Kravchuk's position has changed somewhat in connection with "Rukh." Is

my view correct? What role does Kravchuk, who is now ideological secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine, play?
I would say that evolution has played a great role in all this. I could use the example of the formation of the Ukrainian Language Society. We put forward a whole series of arguments, they advanced counterarguments, and then they began speaking our language. And so, Leonid Makarovych Kravchuk also traveled this road towards a more profound truth. Because there really is a great difference between what he was saying about "Rukh" at the beginning of last year and what he says now. There is a change in tactics, a change in understanding. It's possible that this is connected with the fact that "Rukh" has assumed rather large proportions. Obviously, many people could not imagine that "Rukh" would have such a great impact. Once this happened, there was no choice but to shift to cooperation. At first, the ideological apparatus had its sharp teeth directed at "Rukh"; but, when "Rukh" became a fact, it simply became necessary to cooperate with it. That cooperation is, at the moment, relative; our ideological leaders smile in a very friendly way at "Rukh" activists and declare "let's work together, let's cooperate," but there is very little real cooperation and much that remains unclear. In any case, I would not say that the press has entirely ceased its attempts to somehow discredit "Rukh." I see that there are efforts to come up with something negative and depict it as typical of "Rukh," although one cannot make judgments based on isolated incidents.

I would like to ask you about the Communist Party. A so-called Democratic Platform has been formed. Do you consider this a split in the Party, a faction in the Party? What are the prospects for the Democratic Platform in the Communist Party of Ukraine?
It is difficult at the moment to talk about prospects. But the split, or let's say the emergence of the Democratic Platform—especially in Ukraine, where the Writers' Union actively supports the idea—did not happen by chance. I am a member of the Party,[3] and I feel very uncomfortable with those people in the Party who have discredited themselves by their activities. They have disgaced themselves, and the shadow of their disgrace somehow also falls upon me. Unfortunately, there are those in the Party who have discredited themselves in the eyes of the people. They must bear moral and, in some cases, legal responsibility for their deeds. I'm talking about people who have inflicted considerable material, spiritual, and moral damage on

society. The appearance of the Democratic Platform has its origins in the conscience of the people who initiated it. I can't say now how it will develop further. I just think that the Party needs to cleanse itself. This is very, very serious, because, unfortunately, it includes many careerists, many dishonorable people, various intriguers. Something must be done for the Party to cleanse itself and shore up its authority. As you know, at the moment its authority has been badly shaken.

We have talked about the Democratic Platform. In Ukraine there is the Democratic Bloc. In this connection, I would like to ask how the election campaign in Ukraine looks. We read quite pessimistic things in the press about various difficulties and such. You yourself are a candidate in Kiev. How does the situation look today, a few weeks before the elections?

This is really what troubles me, because the Writers' Union proposed me as a candidate for people's deputy in Kiev's Central Electoral District. I am still fresh from my meetings with the voters. What is the situation? The situation is critical to a certain extent. Why? Because we who represent the democratic forces have to pool our efforts so that there will at least be a strong democratic faction in the new parliament. What is disturbing is that a large number of the cadres, those whom we consider to be the old cadres, cadres who discredited themselves in the past in the eyes of society, are making every effort to stay in power. On the other hand, we see that some of the democratic candidates are being unjustly accused of attempting to seize power. I don't think that grasping for power is a crime. But attention is simply being diverted from the main issue, which is not that the democratic forces are grasping for power but that the conservative forces are struggling to keep power in their hands.

What disturbs me most is the level of civic activity of society in Ukraine. Why? Because I've had many meetings, and attendance at these meetings has been small. I know that all the candidates are in the same situation. Some say that the people will start taking an interest one or two weeks before the elections—that is, at the last minute. But up to now very few voters have been coming. At the same time, one frequently hears people saying that they do not intend to vote at all. A mood of indifference and apathy can be observed. That is not good, not good. That is why whenever I speak at electoral meetings I make a point of urging people to participate in the elections. The fact there are so many candidates is a colossal achievement. In some districts it's unbelievable, they're bursting with

democracy. In my electoral disctrict there are twenty-four candidates. Please come and choose one. If you think none of the candidates are worth voting for, then cross all the names out. But not to vote, that is not a position at all.

This is extremely interesting. On the one hand, it seems that there is considerable passivity, as you confirm. On the other hand, in the past two months we have seen that the people are going out onto the streets to demand the removal of local authorities. We saw what happened in Chernivtsi, Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Donets'k. How can this be explained? Passivity on the one hand, and readiness to go out onto the streets and demand that the Party leadership resign on the other.

This can be easily understood if you take into account that the Ukrainian nation is numerically very large and, of course, it is a great achievement for us when 70,000 or 100,000 people demonstrate. But what do I observe here? At these actions, meetings, and protests in Kiev, for example, who is it that is participating? The intelligentsia, students—i.e., it hasn't reached the broad masses of the population yet. It hasn't reached the ordinary person, although he is also getting restive. In Chernihiv there was a special situation connected with sturgeon fillets and fancy foods that one cannot find in the stores: suddenly an oblast committee car comes along and all this stuff tumbles out. This provoked a reaction and shook the city. The average person does not always act in the name of lofty principles; that doesn't concern him as much. That, too, is an indication of how much work remains to be done in order to awaken civic consciousness. Because, for the average person, the main concerns are material ones; matters of principle are of little or no interest to the people.

But I have the impression that the indignation of the people is widespread. This concerns not only Chernihiv, but also Voroshilovhrad, Donets'k, Kharkiv, and so on.

What you say fills me with optimism. I believe that to work and to govern the way it was done in the past is simply no longer possible. The people are providing support. Do you think the plenum would have taken the decisions it did if not for the movement of the masses? These things are happening not only in Ukraine but also in many cities in Russia and in many republics. The will and demands of the people provide the support and make the correctives to the decisions that are being made. To some extent this has a positive effect on those decisions being taken in Ukraine.

I referred to apathy as regards the elections. Many people don't understand that the fate of Ukraine depends a great deal on those who are elected to parliament. Not enough significance is attached to this factor. Activism has been growing, though not to the extent that is required. I have in mind the situation with the elections. Each and every person must think carefully about whom he will vote for, since we know that some of these cadres of the old school, the Brezhnev-Stalinist school—"the stagnators," as we call them—resort to all sorts of maneuvers. Sometimes they go looking for constituencies in some distant locality where the population's civic consciousness has not been sufficiently aroused and in this way expect to get themselves elected. I know that there are some among them who even buy the voters. They arrive in the region and say: "We'll build a road, a plant, a school." And people say: "What a nice guy, let's give him our vote."

You were nominated as a candidate by the Writers' Union. I would like to ask you about your election program and, specifically, how you view the question of Ukrainian independence. Well, generally I consider myself a member of the Democratic Bloc. My program is meant to serve the interests of the Democratic Bloc and democratic forces. I'd like to stress here that in our movement, in the democratic forces of society, one can sometimes see an unreasonable attitude towards Communist candidates. I've already told you that I am a Party member. I think one must approach this matter in a responsible and differentiated manner, because today the Party is really two parties or a multitude of parties. There are different kinds of people [in the Party]. I am certain that Party members like Yurii Mushketyk, Ivan Drach, and others from the Writers' Union, such as Volodymyr Yavorivs'kyi, have profoundly democratic convictions. One must approach [these matters] carefully and reasonably. There are issues around which people must rally, whether they are Communists or not. When I hear the call for "soviets without Communists," I do not accept this. I know it isn't right; it's not the right tactic. I repeat, there are 20 million Communists in the country, and among them are many civic activists. If they want to rebuild, if they subordinate their activities to the interests of the people, to the interests of the republic, of Ukraine, then why shouldn't one vote for them?

As for my election platform, I make it clear that the Ukrainian SSR should have jurisdiction over its natural, economic, cultural, and other resources. This is a question of sovereignty. Sovereignty, you understand, is written into our constitution, but it exists only on paper;

it does not exist in reality. We are totally dependent in all areas. We live in a monopolized state. I don't know of any analogies that one could draw where everything is so centralized. We would like this to be a Ukrainian republic, a Ukrainian state—a Ukrainian state that would have jurisdiction over all its resources. This is what I emphasize. Furthermore, I stress the need to sign a new Union treaty in which everything must be looked at anew. It is of the utmost importance to me that the Union of the future be a Union of states in which each nation decides for itself. This is the cardinal principle, because, in fact, we are still living under the Stalinist model of the Soviet Union as a unitary state. This has to end. When I speak to voters, I give concrete examples of what I mean by real sovereignty. You know that in our country sugar is rationed. When there is not enough sugar we get it from abroad. I am aware of one statistic. Last year the per capita production of sugar in Ukraine was 160 kilograms. This is a great deal of sugar; one could get buried under all that sugar. How do I see this? I think that the republic should cover its own demands for sugar first, to have enough for its own population, and then sell it to other republics, to other countries, or trade it. What do we need sovereignty for? Not to be up to our necks in sugar but to have normal relations, contractual relations. At present there is only draining, draining, and draining, and as a result some terribly unjust things happen.

In addition, when I speak I stress the following. Sometimes the apparatchiks argue: "You see what they want, they want sovereignty for the Ukrainians." I feel this is a deliberate distortion. It is a fact that Ukraine is a multinational country. We have Russians, Jews, Poles, Germans, Hungarians, and representatives of many other nations living here. I am absolutely convinced that the matter of attaining sovereignty for Ukraine is something that concerns representatives of all nations in Ukraine. We should struggle for sovereignty through our joint efforts, and then life will be better for the Ukrainians, and for the Russians, the Jews, the Poles, and for everyone who lives here.

We have essentially come to the nationality problem in Ukraine. There are two aspects here that are extremely interesting. First, the problem of "Little Russianism" in Ukraine. This is a historical problem, one that some Ukrainian writers have treated. I have in mind the remarks of Yurii Shcherbak and the article by Mykola Ryabchuk in the journal *Druzhba narodov* at the end

of 1988.[4] In the West, commentators obviously realize that Ukraine is very important to the whole nationality question in the Soviet Union. On the other hand, the problem of underdeveloped national self-awareness, especially in the eastern oblasts, does exist. How do you view this? How can this historically very complex problem of Ukrainian "Little Russianism" be solved?

This is a real problem. It exists, and it cannot but exist insofar as Ukraine has been dependent for so long; the forces of denationalization have, unfortunately, assumed colossal proportions in Ukraine. Bear in mind the three hundred years of tsarist rule and now the decades of the Stalinist-Brezhnevite regime. In essence, we are only just awakening. As you know, the process began in the 1920s, "the executed rebirth." The renaissance is beginning. The problem exists, and somehow a way out has to be found. I think through major educational work . . .

You mean "Rukh"?

. . . I mean "Rukh," I mean the Taras Shevchenko Ukrainian Language Society, the Writers' Union. There is no other way, you understand. I know, and it is widely known, that a legion of our countrymen are Russified and denationalized. I would not begin to blame each of them. It is not their fault. That is how things turned out. There was an avalanche of Russification policies aimed at them. Many of them are simply not aware; they are "Little Russians," and they don't understand.

But what is the answer? I would like to make the following point. Sometimes extremist slogans, as they are called, appear—as on the anniversary of the unification of Ukraine, when the slogan "Occupiers of Ukraine, Get Out" could be seen. I approach this very realistically and soberly. These slogans cannot have a positive effect. They can only bring about a split in the Ukrainian population, which would then result in negative attitudes towards nationally conscious Ukrainians. These slogans are impossible, and I consider them absolutely unnecessary. It's disturbing that our official propaganda seeks out such things, such slogans. Then they say: "See, this is what 'Rukh' is about." This is how "Rukh" gets defamed, even though it may have been an unwise act on someone's part or possibly a provocation. I think the methods of education and enlightenment are the only possibility. We must awaken the people.

You head the Commission on Education of the Ukrainian Language Society. What kind of role could the language law, which came into effect at the beginning of this year, play in Ukraine, and particularly in the eastern oblasts, where I get the impression that the language issue is not a paramount one for Ukrainians?

As you know, the law came into effect on January 1, 1990. It is an imperfect law in which there are many loopholes that will permit the stagnators and bureaucrats not to implement it. But we think the newly formed parliament will be able to make some amendments to this law. This is necessary. But for the moment the law, even in its present form, represents a certain achievement. I think that the struggle to implement this law constitutes one form of parliamentary struggle for the attainment of the republic's sovereignty. Obviously, we are all slightly naïve; we thought that, come January 1, 1990, the changes would take place immediately. But it is all very complicated. There is one major drawback to the law—i.e., it has no financial backing. The necessary funds should have been appropriated, but this was not done. The government is planning something. A few weeks ago I attended a session of the Kiev city soviet where the issue was being examined as to what could be done in Kiev in order to bring the law into force. It would be relatively easy, let us say, to put up Ukrainian-language signs, exclusively Ukrainian-language signs, in the subway, on buses, and on streetcars. But then the man who is responsible for the subway says: "You understand, the subway route maps and directions for use of the subway are in Russian, and now we want to order new signs." But then he cites a figure of six rubles per sign and asks: "Where are we supposed to get the money?" Here is one of the small examples of how this law lacks a financial base.

Second—and this is very bad—the consequences of violation of this law, particularly by leaders, are not specified anywhere; that is, the law does not establish legal penalties for failing to adhere to it. This is how it all begins. If those things are missing, then implementation of the law will proceed slowly. We know that there is a major struggle ahead. I look at this realistically. I see how many plans have been adopted—five-year and seven-year plans or whatever you like—and never carried out. I don't want to sound too pessimistic, because, after all, we see a national awakening taking place. Our writers and activists of the Ukrainian Language Society are conducting a great deal of propaganda work, and there is strong pressure from below. Being a professor at Kiev University,

I gave a talk at a meeting of the Department of Geography, and students adopted a resolution requiring the faculty of their department to lecture only in Ukrainian as of September 1, 1990. Do they have this right? Of course they do. It is a sacred right, and one cannot ignore such demands.

As for the eastern regions, this is all very difficult, especially in the Donbass and in the south of Ukraine. Historically, the impact of denationalization was greatest in these areas. Again, I look at things realistically. Ukraine is very large. I would not press for any kind of accelerated measures, because that would only irritate the average person and not accomplish much else. It could even backfire and be harmful. That is why I would call those areas "transitional zones." In Western Ukraine there is not much to do; the law should be implemented there right away, let's say in the higher educational system. All this can be done there immediately. In central Ukraine—Kiev, Cherkasy, and so on—this could take, I think, about two or three years, because the target dates for implementation are so stretched out, they are different by region. In any case, for the moment we are still in a situation in which, in a Ukrainian city like Donets'k, we are struggling for one single Ukrainian school, and the struggle is still not over. On the eve of my departure, the problem was ostensibly solved, but we have heard this many times before. It is a disgrace for a civilized nation to find itself in such a position. But that's the position we are in. I have in mind the eastern regions. But somehow we'll get out of it. There is movement from below. I know of lecturers from Dnipropetrovs'k University who have asked the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education to publish Ukrainian textbooks so that they can lecture in the Ukrainian language. Students in Donets'k sent a petition insisting on lectures in the Ukrainian language. The problem can be worked out. It is one of the questions that can be reduced to the phrase: "To be or not to be?" Will there be a Ukrainian nation and Ukrainian language or will there not?

My next question is also about the national question. Recently, the Western press—and not only the Western press—has begun writing about the possibility of pogroms—anti-Jewish, anti-Semitic pogroms in the Soviet Union. The same has been said about Ukraine. I recall statements on that subject in the declaration of the Odessa authorities. There are statements on the subject in a recent issue of *Literaturna Ukraina*.[5]

This happened so quickly that it is difficult to find one's bearings here. What is the problem? Is there a problem? Let's phrase the question in the following way: Does the problem of anti-Jewish feeling exist in Ukraine? We won't mention Leningrad or "Pamyat'" or Moscow; let's direct our attention to Ukraine. Does the problem of anti-Semitism exist?

I would pose the question this way. Whose interests does this nonexistent problem serve? I don't think the problem exists in Ukraine. It is a problem that emerges, looking at it historically, at times when the people's attention has to be diverted from some other, very difficult, problems. That was the case during the revolution of 1905–07, when anti-Jewish violence took place, and during the Civil War. This is to the advantage of the stagnators and apparatchiks. But these rumors of pogroms in Ukraine do exist, it's true. Some time ago, a man calling himself one of my supporters telephoned me to urge "Rukh" to do something, to undertake something, because ostensibly on such and such a date an anti-Jewish pogrom was being planned. I asked him who would conduct the pogrom. He said that 10,000 members of "Pamyat'" would come to stir things up. I told him that there is no basis for anti-Semitism in Ukraine. This is a fabrication needed by the stagnators and apparatchiks. In addition, I would like to reproach the mass media in the West, because unfortunately the myth of endemic anti-Semitism among the Ukrainian people crops up from time time in the Western press. I see it this way—no [nationally] conscious Ukrainian would support such actions.

I want to say that the resolution you mentioned was adopted by us.[6] And now "Rukh" and the [Ukrainian] Writers' Union have come out with another declaration. We were among those who initiated the formation of the Jewish Cultural Society. We want our own rebirth, and that is why we understand the need for a Jewish, a German, and a Polish rebirth. There can be no ambiguity in our position, because we have common problems; there must be a joint development of a Ukrainian sovereign state. We will never give in to any kind of setting people against each other according to nationality, and we are making every effort to root out passions aimed at inflaming national animosities, so that they will disappear. And this is wonderful. Jews—[nationally] conscious Jews—understand this and have taken a very sympathetic position towards us. This is true of representatives of other nations as well. Again, I

pose the question: In whose interests are these rumors about pogroms? Unfortunately, they are in the interests of the conservative forces, the dogmatic, orthodox forces that would like to warm their hands on something that cannot in any way be permitted in Ukraine

NOTES

[1] Vladimir Kolin'ko, "Poiski rabochego Ignatenko," *Moskovskie novosti*, February 18, 1990.

[2] "Zbahachennya dukhovnosti," *Sil's'ki visti*, January 28, 1990.

[3] Pohribnyi left the Communist Party in May, 1990.

[4] See the interview with Mykola Ryabchuk in this volume (pp. 19–30)..

[5] *Literaturna Ukraina*, February 8, 1990.

[6] A reference to the resolution "Against Anti-Semitism" adopted on September 10, 1989, by the constituent congress of "Rukh." See *Literaturna Ukraina*, October 5, 1989.

8 Filling in the "Blank Spots" in Ukrainian History: An Interview with Stanislav Kul'chyts'kyi

Roman Solchanyk

Stanislav Kul'chyts'kyi, Candidate of Economic Sciences and Doctor of Historical Sciences, is head of the Department of the History of Socialist Construction of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences' Institute of History. Kul'chyts'kyi is a specialist on the Soviet economy in the 1920s and 1930s, and during the past several years he has focused his research on collectivization and the famine in Ukraine in 1932–33. Among his many works is a recent monograph entitled 1933: Tragediya holodu *(1989). Kul'chyts'kyi participated in the conference "Ukraine under Stalin, 1928–39," which was held in Toronto on March 2–4, 1990, under the sponsorship of the Chair of Ukrainian Studies and the Centre for Russian and East European Studies of the University of Toronto. The following interview was conducted in Toronto on March 4, 1990.*

During the past two or three years you have been studying the problem of collectivization in Ukraine. You are doing research on this topic and publishing articles in the press and in journals. I would like to ask you how you got started on this subject. What led you to study this problem?

I worked for many years on the problems of industrialization in Ukraine. I have published several books on this topic. Understandably, in the course of this work I always came up against the problem of collectivization, because the problems of collectivization and industrialization are not only tightly interwoven—in essence, they form one problem. It is the problem of building a new society in our country during the 1920s and 1930s. What were the intentions and what sort of deformities were there, resulting in what we got? Naturally, because of this my interest in the situation in the countryside grew. And when the need arose to study it in depth, I simply reoriented myself. One

can say that I restructured myself. I left, although I hope not forever, the problems of industrialization and became occupied with what took place in the village.

Already in 1985 and 1986, I began working more or less seriously in the archives, and I wrote a report to the Party's Central Committee about the crisis in agriculture in the early 1930s and how it manifested itself. I was advised to prepare an article based on this report and to publish it. We have our own journal, the *Ukrains'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, and my first article on the agricultural situation in the early 1930s actually appeared in the third issue of the journal in 1988.[1] By that time, one can say that it was possible to call things by their proper names—that is, to say that, yes, there was a famine.

You're saying that until then this was a topic that was being avoided.

This was a theme that was avoided, of course. It was a problem that was avoided, and not because there were someone's instructions that had to be carried out. No, I don't think so. It was simply along the lines of inertia—for many, many years. The whole point is that the famine was proclaimed as not being a reality at exactly the time when it was taking place—that is, in 1933. And this was indeed a rule imposed by Stalin for all phenomena in the countryside connected with the famine of 1933. There was no way to get around this; it was not possible. So, the years went by, the decades passed. After the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, there was a great deal of interest among the entire population in what really happened in the countryside in the early 1930s. The fact that one could not speak about the famine did not mean that no one knew about it. On the contrary, in every family someone had suffered. All this was clear and obvious. All that needed to be done was to study it.

In order to be precise, allow me to backtrack. You said that you wrote a report, an outline of the problem, and submitted it to the Central Committee in 1986. What exactly did you write in that report? That this was a problem that needed to be researched? Is that how things are normally done—a historian submits a report to the Central Committee stating that a certain problem should be clarified?

Strictly speaking, this is not a scholarly problem. It is, above all, a political problem. Therefore, of course, I had to raise it at the level of the Central Committee.

So, this was a kind of proposal arguing that we have to deal with this problem and asking can we do that. Is that right?
That is correct. But I want to say that this was not my proposal. A commission set up under the US Congress was working on the famine in Ukraine in 1933. The results of the commission's work also became known to us, as in the rest of the world. We, the Ukrainian scholars, were being asked more and more frequently: "What is this? How can you respond to this issue, which is posed by life itself and not just by the results of the US Congressional commission?" Therefore, the time was right for this question to be raised, especially after the fiftieth anniversary of the famine was marked throughout the entire world in 1983. It was an event that naturally concerned us as well. In this report, I simply put forward my own understanding of the problem, and I was advised to make this available to all historians by means of publication in order to initiate a discussion—not just for discussion but also to delineate a path for scholarly research in this area.

As I already mentioned, you have been dealing with this topic for a number of years. Can you tell me what general conclusions, scholarly conclusions, you have drawn on the basis of your research and, I assume, your work with certain archival materials? You are aware that, obviously, there are various views with regard to the famine issue. How would you present the conclusions of your scholarly work?
When I and some of my colleagues in the department began working on this topic, we—this is of course unavoidable—went along the same paths that were once followed by scholars in the West. Two questions that had to be answered came up right away. The first was the number of victims of the famine. Actually, one can put it in broader terms—i.e., the demographic consequences of the famine—because these were of such magnitude that this was how the problem had to be formulated. The second was why the famine was possible. Was this an unexpected result of economic policy—that is, unexpected by those who created this policy? Or was this, if one is to use the language of jurists, premeditated murder—that is, was the grain collection used only as a means to destroy the peasantry, a goal that Stalin had set for himself and went about achieving? In other words, famine as genocide. Specifically, famine whose final aim was precisely to accomplish the genocide either of the peasantry in general—there are such positions and ideas—or of the Ukrainian peasantry alone.

And what were your conclusions?

I feel that, in order to understand the problem of the famine of 1933, one cannot look at it in a purely emotional manner. When an ordinary person—not a professional scholar—becomes acquainted with all the materials, they make such an impression on the human imagination that one automatically asks oneself: "Why did this happen, how was this possible?" And this emotional point of view that, aha, Stalin did everything to destroy the Ukrainian people is very widespread. I feel that the issue is not only the Ukrainian people, although it was the Ukrainian people that suffered the most because of the famine. The issue is the "leap" that Stalin began to implement beginning in 1929, the year he declared to be the year of the great turning point; or the year of the accelerated construction of socialism on all fronts—that is, not only in the cities (industrialization), but in the villages as well (collectivization). If one is to view it from this angle—this is of course the only existing scholarly approach—then this must be the point of departure. It must be acknowledged that we still know the results of this "leap" only very poorly, including the methods used to accomplish it; we do know something of these methods, but the results we know only poorly, both here and in the West.

In the West, the famine has been studied for more than fifty years. A great mass of material has been accumulated. I am already familiar with this material. In the Soviet Union, it was stored in closed holdings (*spetskhrany*). All these books were in closed holdings. Now, the practice of closed holdings has been done away with, and all these books have become available to anyone who is interested in reading about this and studying it. In the West, a more emotional point of view is prevalent—i.e., that this famine was brought about in order to bring the peasantry to its knees. To a certain degree, this point of view is legitimate, because in pursuing this economic policy everything was done in the worst possible way as far as the peasantry is concerned. When it was neccessary to get out of the economic catastrophe to which this Stalinist "leap" brought the country, then the ruling circles—the Party-state apparatus that was completely under Stalin's control—resolved the problem at the cost of the peasantry.

What do I mean by this? Already in 1932, there were grain collections that were extraordinarily immense in their volume, just as they had been in 1931 and 1930. It was through the grain collection that the "leap" in industry was being accomplished. So in 1932, there was already degradation, the economic degradation of the village. The peasantry had stopped giving. Actually, it is more correct to say that

those great quantities of grain could not be squeezed from them anymore. That grain was later exported and provided the necessary resources for purchasing machinery. Under these circumstances, the "leap" could have been stopped. The designated pace for the growth of industry and capital construction could have been slowed down. This would have been the wisest policy. Stalin chose a different path. He sent special commissions to the countryside. In Ukraine, the special commission worked under the leadership of Vyacheslav Molotov. In the Volga region Pavel Postyshev was in charge, and in the Northern Caucasus it was Lazar Kaganovich, although Kaganovich also came to Ukraine precisely with regard to these matters. In the winter of 1932–33, from the Ukrainian peasantry, just as from the peasantry in the Northern Caucasus and the Volga, they squeezed out practically everything there was. All the reserves were squeezed dry. And what were these reserves used for? Well, first of all to supply, through the rationing system, the urban population and the new construction sites—that is, the working class; for export; and so on. The countryside was left without bread.

Stalin thought—obviously, I cannot speak for him about how he visualized all this—but the materials point to the fact that he thought there was still some bread left for the peasantry, that the peasants were hiding this bread. No, they were not storing it away, and they proved this with their very lives when they began to die of hunger. When they began dying of hunger, Stalin simply decreed that everything was to be kept quiet, that nobody should talk about it. No one was to mention the word hunger at Party conferences. And it is here that Stalin's taboo had its effects on the very problem of the famine. One can say that a curtain of silence came down on the countryside. And this is what transformed the famine into an extermination famine. Yes, many would have died from the famine; of course, many would have died. But if other regions of the country had been given the opportunity to help—for example, Belorussia, which was never a major grain producer but all the same had some supplies there that it could have shared with neighboring Ukrainian oblasts. And not only Belorussia. Nor did Stalin ask for help from abroad, where they learned about the famine in the Soviet Union. Volunteer aid began to be organized there, but shipments of grain were stopped at the border, in Poland where they had been collected. They were stopped at the border. And it was announced that "we do not need any grain," that "there is no famine here."

How is all of this to be explained? Actually, this brings me to my next question. We are here at the conference "Ukraine under Stalin." During the past three days, the topic of the famine emerged as one of the most important and interesting. There has been a great deal of discussion on this theme. As we have already noted, there is the view among a number of Western researchers that the famine was a policy formulated by Stalin not just against the peasantry but exclusively against the Ukrainian people. These views exist. You heard a number of analyses by Western scholars. What is your reaction? Did any of these arguments influence you? Are there grounds here to revise some of your conclusions? In general, what are your impressions of the discussions that took place here at the conference, specifically with regard to collectivization and the famine?

I feel that we have come to a certain agreement here concerning the problem of the famine's victims. This is an important scholarly problem, and we should know, after all, how many people died in Ukraine in the 1920s and 1930s from collectivization, from deportations, from the dekulakization of the peasantry.

Can a concrete figure be given, in your opinion?

Yes. Both I and Sergei Maksudov, who is at the Russian Research Center at Harvard University, and an Australian scholar, Stephen Wheatcroft, had the opportunity in December of last year and at the beginning of this year to be in the Central Archive of the National Economy in Moscow, where at just that time the data on the demography of the 1930s were made available. This was everything that had been kept tightly closed up for many decades, as soon as Stalin ordered it. All this is now open and has become accessible to specialists for study. Not just our own Soviet specialists, but all others, as you can see. Maksudov and I and Wheatcroft presented papers at this conference. We have different approaches, and we cited different figures, but we referred to the same sources. After we had presented our papers, we decided to get together, to study all our material and to come out with one article signed by the three of us—a joint position on this question. The article is not yet ready; there are only some random thoughts. We will write and publish it in perhaps a month. But we came to the following agreement: that we can talk about a loss of population in Ukraine in the vicinity of some 4 million people between the two censuses of 1926 and 1937—that is, over a period of exactly ten years. (In point of fact, the 1937 census is called "the suppressed

census." It was first kept secret, then falsified, and even the falsified results were a completely secret document. And now we know all this. We can study all of it.) What part of this 4 million is accounted for by the year 1933 itself is something we have not yet determined.

But, in any case, these are the demographic losses—that is, direct losses of the population. These are abnormal deaths. On many occasions, I have spoken and written about the demographic consequences of the famine of 1933. I want to say that I even came up with "inflated" figures of the famine victims. In what sense? I also took into account those who had not been born—that is, I took into account the drop in the birth rate because of the famine. These are also demographic results of the famine. The drop in the birth rate comes close to 1 million people. This is a very large number; but these are not direct losses. Our joint position is 4 million over ten years. Of these, no fewer than 2.5 million are accounted for just by the year 1933.[2]

As to whether the famine was directed towards destroying the peasantry or whether it was the unavoidable consequence of an economic catastrophe that was made worse by a policy based on pulling out of that catastrophe at the cost of the peasantry—here I am not of two minds. But I feel that discussion of this topic will continue for quite some time—that is, at the present level of our knowledge regarding the character of the development of the economy of the 1930s, the question cannot be answered. I feel that the real reason behind the famine was an economic policy directed towards the building of a type of society that is not capable of existing—that is, a society without a trade and market economy. Stalin did not announce this, but everything he did was directed towards forming such a society. And, in the natural sphere, it cannot exist. By the way, Lenin, when he rejected War Communism in 1921, called the policy of War Communism an economically impossible policy. Stalin did not acknowledge this. He did not recognize the experience gained from our economic construction in the early years of Soviet rule and the Civil War years. He crossed over, as I said, in 1929, to this "great leap." Unfortunately, we do not have anything on this either in Western or in Soviet literature. This Stalinist "great leap" was not researched from this point of view because the archives were closed. And we should concern ourselves with this now.

By the way, I am aware that in September of this year there will be a conference in Kiev on the famine. Soviet scholars will, of course, participate in it, as well as scholars and

specialists from the West. What are the problems that will be discussed there? Where did the initiative for such a conference come from?

Well, you know that various decisions connected with resolving some of these purely scholarly problems have been accelerated now. Our specialists travel to the West, and specialists from the West come to us in Kiev. And, of course, it was on the initiative of the writers—above all our writers, and the "Memorial" Society, on the Soviet side—and on the initiative of scholars who study the problem of the famine in the Ukraine in Canada—and not only Canada—that the decision was made to organize this conference. Specifically, I know that James Mace, who is the head of a scholarly research group of the US Congressional Commission studying the problem of the famine in Ukraine,[3] will also be taking part in the conference and is on the organizational committee.

The program of the conference has not been worked out yet in detail; this will depend on who is invited to attend. But it is quite clear that the most important issues will be debated: the general agricultural policy of this period; the question of losses due to the famine; the question of the reasons and motives behind the economic policy and the political decisions connected with 1932–33 and the mass destruction of the peasantry; the export of Soviet grain at that time; and, I think, a variety of other questions.

I would like now to move on to a different theme, a more general but no less interesting one—i.e., the problem of *perestroika* in your institute, the Institute of History. I have the impression—perhaps you see it differently, in which case please correct me—that this process in Kiev, this process of *perestroika* in historical scholarship, has been very complicated. I also have the impression that our literary critics, our writers in Kiev, L'viv, and other cities, moved forward much faster in filling in these "blank spots" in the area of literary history, which is quite closely related to historical scholarship as a whole within the framework of Ukrainian history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. I know that Russian historians also set about doing this work much faster, and perhaps even with greater success. I have in mind the publication of such historians as Karamzin, who, one must say, has nothing to do with either Marxism or socialism but has rather a lot to do with the history of the Russian state, and with a specific direction at that. What can you

say about this? How is *perestroika* in historical scholarship proceeding in the Institute of History? Are my impressions correct to some extent? What are your impressions?

The Institute of History is only one institution. I would pose the question in more general terms, concerning historians as a whole. Where they work is not particularly important. Historians are truly slower getting into *perestroika* than literary scholars; this has to be admitted. And those articles on historical themes that already began appearing in 1987 in our press were written for the most part not by historians but by publicists. But it is always easier for a publicist than for a professional historian, because a historian must address these various questions through archival materials. And it is necessary first of all that there be *perestroika* in the archives, and then later among those who make use of these archives. The process of *perestroika* in the archives is very difficult, very painful. You know about this. There were a number of pieces in *Izvestia* on how the archives are opening up their secrets. But this process has also begun, and along with it we too have begun *perestroika.* I have already emphasized that the biggest such secret was the demography of the 1930s, which has already been opened up. And, furthermore, it is open to everybody, to foreign scholars as well as our own.

But is it open only in Moscow, or in Kiev as well?

Aha, it's open in Moscow. We in Kiev simply do not have these kinds of materials. Unfortunately, such demographic statistics were not saved. I know that we have only a very, very limited number of materials from the 1939 census. The main body of materials is kept in Moscow. I myself am a member of the commission dealing with the opening up of archival materials for widespread use. If one is to talk about the slowness of this work, then I should talk about myself—I am not working so diligently in this direction. But, one way or another, work is progressing. And the reading rooms in our archives are now full; earlier they were empty. Now they are full of people who are studying these so-called blank spots.

You mentioned Karamzin. I could name a historian who, in terms of his influence on our Ukrainian historical scholarship, did no less than Karamzin did for Russian historical scholarship. This is Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi. In the process of developing the republican program of historical research, which we began after the appropriate resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine in

February of last year,[4] we decided that we would publish a huge amount of the work of the classics of historical scholarship, because such work is at present inaccessible—it was either destroyed or simply not saved. And this section of the republican program is very large. The draft program includes forty-four publications in ninety-six volumes encompassing the work of thirty-seven authors. These are the classics of historical scholarship. The overall volume will encompass more than 3,500 printed sheets, and one-third of this will consist of the scholarly legacy of Academician Hrushevs'kyi. Preparation of his selected works is under way; these will include *The History of Ukraine-Rus'* in ten volumes (fourteen books) and *The History of Ukrainian Literature* in six volumes. The two-volume work *Social-Political Movements and Religion* and Hrushevs'kyi's correspondence, prepared by contemporary compilers, will be published separately. We will also reprint the two best-known works of the historian: *The Illustrated History of Ukraine* and *The Outline History of the Ukrainian People.*

Yes, I am aware of that resolution, and I read the interview with you in *Radyans'ka Ukraina.*[5] This is a very ambitious program. Not long ago, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine again examined the problem of historical research in Ukraine, and the Central Committee adopted corresponding resolutions: one on "blank spots" and another specifically on the famine.[6] What does this amount to? Why was it necessary to once again adopt special resolutions after the program on the development of historical research had already been decided upon?

These resolutions deal precisely with the "blank spots" of Stalin's era. This is the least researched period, if one takes into account that everything we published earlier came from Stalin's *Short Course of the History of the VKP (b).* This was the carcass with which we dressed up this fact or the other—that is, it was not history as a science, but something politicized that did not correspond to anything and did not satisfy any of the public's needs. Inasmuch as one or another aspect of historical scholarship is tied to the political appraisal of this or that leading figure, this or that Party decree of the 1920s and 1930s, we cannot do all of this without the help of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine. So this resolution on "blank spots" was adopted. Almost immediately thereafter, there was a separate resolution on the famine of 1933. What was the reason behind this

resolution, frankly speaking? It was necessary to obtain permission to publish high-level Party documents—documents of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine, documents of the Central Committee of the VKP(b), connected with the problems of this period in Ukraine. This could not be done without the appropriate permission of the Central Committee itself. And that is why this resolution was adopted. It also has a purely concrete aspect regarding the publication of a collection of documentary materials that will consist of approximately 200 documents, a collection that is large in scope. It will be published by the Ukrainian Politvydav at the end of this year.

And not just the famine, but other "blank spots." I am aware, for example, of a resolution that is being drawn up now concerning the problems of research in the Academy's Institute of History, where I work. Specifically, it will reexamine a resolution adopted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine in 1947 regarding the Institute of the History of Ukraine of the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine.[7] This resolution will be duly condemned as unjust, as one that fundamentally retarded the development of historical scholarship, and some trends in research that are the most topical will be outlined.

This is most interesting. These plans can only be welcomed. But I would like to ask you something about Hrushevs'kyi. On the basis of what I have read in the Kiev press, I have the impression that not all scholars appraise Hrushevs'kyi so positively. I have in mind the well-known historian Vitalii Sarbei, who, in my opinion has certain reservations concerning the "overrating" of Hrushevs'kyi.[8] How do you view this?

I know Vitalii Hryhorovych Sarbei very well; he is a colleague of mine, he is head of an adjacent department. And he is doing a great deal of work now on exactly this problem—preparing a monograph on Hrushevs'kyi's historiographical legacy. You see, there can be no two opinions about Hrushevs'kyi. He is the most fundamental figure of Ukrainian historical scholarship. And—perhaps not everyone is aware of this—even when we bad-mouthed Hrushevs'kyi on all counts, when we kept his writings locked up tightly, not allowing doctoral candidates to read them, and so on, even then we made use of the factual material that is in Hrushevs'kyi's work. Many of the archives perished. But his immense volumes remain the only witnesses to that history; it can only be found in these volumes. Clearly, Hrushevs'kyi will remain forever.

But Hrushevs'kyi was not only a historian. He was also a political figure of very high rank. And it is completely understandable that some standpoint of his, some concrete appraisals in his political activities, could evoke reservations on our part—in fact, different ones in different people. I think the time will come when we will know more about Hrushevs'kyi. Especially when we become acquainted with his two volumes of correspondence. There will be a more objective view of his activities during various periods. But we will, of course, continue to criticize certain of his positions.

One specific question. Not long ago, I read an interview in *Robitnycha hazeta* with Volodymyr Mel'nychenko, and there I learned that he has moved to Moscow, where he is head of the Sector of Historical Sciences in the Ideology Department of the Central Committee.[9] For me, it is extremely interesting that such a sector even exists. And my question to you is this: Do you feel—inasmuch as this is probably your colleague from Kiev—that this could have some sort of positive impact on the development of historical scholarship in Ukraine, in the sense that a historian from Kiev now holds a rather responsible position in the apparatus of the Central Committee in Moscow?
I deeply respect Professor Mel'nychenko, who earlier worked in the Institute of Party History of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine. He was the deputy director of this institute and headed the Party archives. And actually it was he who began this major work on the research into the famine of 1933, the compilation of these Party documents. This work was later continued by his deputy, Ruslan Yakovych Pyrih.[10]

In conclusion, a traditional question. What are you planning to work on now? Will you continue to study the famine?
My own personal plans as a scholar are to study the problem of War Communism after 1921. Actually, I dream about this, because I do not know how things will work out in terms of time. Here lies the question of Stalin's so-called leap to communism—that is, after the year of the great turning point of 1929, the economic catastrophe of 1933, and the famine, and so on. This all has to do with the problem of the famine. But I would like to deal with this from the inside, focusing on economic policy, on the economic processes that were taking place, and to study the entire forma-

tion of that economic mechanism that we are now restructuring with such great difficulty, attempting to move on to an economy that respects the laws of the market.

But I also have many other plans. The point is that we have a large collective of professional historians. We are, for example, preparing a major work on cooperatives in Ukraine, the cooperative process in the 1920s. This year we are planning to hand over to the publishing house Naukova Dumka a large collection of documents entitled *Sutsil'na kolektyvizatsiya i holod na Ukraini v 1929-1934 rr.* This is the chronological time frame, with new documents. These will not be documents from the Party archives that the Institute of Party History is publishing this year. These are documents from the state archives that show collectivization through the eyes of the peasants. We have discovered a vast number of letters written by peasants to the editors of newspapers, and in these letters—which were never published in those newspapers but were kept in their archives—we have the history of collectivization, the kind of history that should be made available to everyone.

NOTES

[1] S. V. Kul'chyts'kyi, "Do otsinky stanovyshcha v sil's'komu hospodarstvi USSR u 1931–1933 rr.," *Ukrains'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, 1988, No. 3, pp. 15–27.

[2] In a recent article in Russian adapted from a forthcoming book on the subject, Kul'chyts'kyi writes that, on the basis of the 1937 census data, "the population deficit" in Ukraine resulting from the losses of the 1933 famine—and not including the repressions, which assumed massive proportions after the assassination of Kirov—totaled at least 6,074,000 people. See Stanislav Kul'chitskii, "Golod: Neskol'ko stranits tragicheskoi statistiki," *Soyuz*, No. 3, January, 1990, p. 14.

[3] James Mace is staff director of the Commission on the Ukraine Famine.

[4] See *Radyans'ka Ukraina*, February 3, 1989.

[5] "Istorychna nauka: Novi rubezhi," *Radyans'ka Ukraina*, December 15, 1989.

[6] See *Radyans'ka Ukraina*, February 4 and 7, 1990.

[7] The resolution was adopted on August 29, 1947. See *Kul'turne budivnytstvo v Ukrains'kii RSR, cherven' 1941-1950: Zbirnyk dokumentiv i materialiv*, Kiev, Naukova Dumka, 1989, pp. 308–19.

[8]In his introduction to a book published in 1956, Sarbei characterized Hrushevs'kyi as "the sworn enemy of the Ukrainian people." See V. Belyaev and M. Rudnyts'kyi, *Pid chuzhymy praporamy*, Kiev, Radyans'kyi pys'mennyk, 1956, p. 5. For a more recent and restrained appraisal, see Sarbei's "Do pytannya pro naukovu spadshchynu akademika M. S. Hrushevs'koho," *Ukrains'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, 1989, No. 10, pp. 114–26.

[9] *Robitnycha hazeta*, February 2, 1990.

[10]Pyrih is a candidate of historical sciences. In February, 1989, he was identified as head of the Science Sector of the Ideological Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine. He is currently deputy director of the Institute of Party History in Kiev.

9 Ferment in Western Ukraine: An Interview with Rostyslav Bratun'

Roman Solchanyk

Rostyslav Bratun' is a well-known Ukrainian poet and a USSR people's deputy from L'viv. In 1965–66, he was chief editor of the L'viv literary monthly Zhovten' *(now renamed* Dzvin*), and, from 1966 until 1980, he served as head of the L'viv organization of the Ukrainian Writers' Union. In recent articles, Bratun' has argued for a reappraisal of various aspects of Western Ukrainian history, including the Western Ukrainian People's Republic of 1918–19, Stalin's campaign against the interwar Communist Party of Western Ukraine, and the role of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) during and after World War II. This interview was conducted on March 8, 1990, in Maplewood, New Jersey.*

As a USSR people's deputy from L'viv, how do you see the political situation in Western Ukraine today?

The political situation in Western Ukraine, without a doubt, reflects all those processes that are now taking place in Ukraine and throughout the entire Soviet Union. Of course, the historical circumstances in our region have their own special peculiarities. Western Ukraine, and Galicia in particular, has some unique features in its development. It was there, under the rule of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, that the first ray of light of independence, of national revival, shone. It was there that the formation of the Western Ukrainian People's Republic took place, and the struggle for a Ukrainian L'viv, and the legend of the Ukrainian Galician Army and the Sich Riflemen [*Sichovi stril'tsi*]. This rather high level of national consciousness was formed under the influence of the awakener of Galician Rus', Markian Shashkevych of the Rus' Triad [*Rus'ka trijka*] and, later, the titanic figure of Ivan Franko. All this had a powerful impact on the development of the spritual culture and national consciousness of this Western branch of the Ukrainian nation.

Would it be correct to say that, to a certain extent—or to a large extent—Western Ukraine provided an impetus for *perestroika* and democratization in Ukraine as a whole?

Undoubtedly. This national consciousness, this pride of the people, the feeling that one is not only a son of Western Ukraine but above all a Ukrainian, had not yet been destroyed by the Stalinists. This thinking along the lines of a nation, of responsibility for the entire Ukraine, was always intrinsic—above all, to the Western Ukrainian intelligentsia.

I do not mean to glorify the significance of Galicia as a Piedmont, but, without any doubt, when we review history, we see how many positive things there were. It served as the hearth where Ukrainian literature developed and was safeguarded; where Ivan Franko and Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi worked; and where the Taras Shevchenko Scientific Society and a number of other Ukrainian institutions, not only cultural but economic as well, were active. So we can speak about this as a historical center of Ukrainianism, where what was being destroyed by tsarism and later by Stalinism was safeguarded. There was a certain path of development here, though we should not isolate it, as some people are doing—I feel that this is completely destructive and wrong—from the overall Ukrainian historical development. Because above all this there stood the towering figure of Shevchenko, who was the common, unifying light of this nation.

All the same, an interesting and at the same time complex question arises here: how can this experience, this historical baggage accumulated in Western Ukraine, be disseminated in the central and eastern regions of Ukraine? Are there people within "Rukh" or the Deputies' Club who are addressing this question? Is there some sort of program for disseminating these traditions, this historical consciousness, the language, and, in general, politicization—that is, democratic Western political culture—in the eastern regions?

You must understand that the diffusion of the national experience was there all the time. This was perceptible, particularly after 1939, when Western Ukraine was unified with Soviet Ukraine; it was also perceptible in the postwar years. We cannot discard the many things of value that were brought from the East—in particular, the development of culture and science and, I would say, the unity of the entire Ukrainian nation. After all, Kiev is our historical center, the center of Kievan Rus'. Our common origins are in the era of the Kievan Princes, the Zaporozhian Sich, and again the national rebirth of the nineteenth and

twentieth centuries. Therefore one cannot say that there was influence only from the West. There was a genuine national diffusion that permeated literally every cell of the national organism. We should remember this. Attempts were made to prevent this from happening. Even now, some say that "the L'viv disease" should not move East.

It is possible that there is some sort of ethno-temperament, some unique ethno-character of the residents of L'viv. And this applies not just to native Galicians but also to those who come to L'viv. They take on this recalcitrant spirit, the spirit, I would say, of this positive expansiveness. And L'viv, after all, has become a real Ukrainian city. On the streets of L'viv, one hears primarily the Ukrainian language. And therefore these questions, which are so painful now in the eastern regions, are for us simply the normal state of affairs; we are returning to our native Ukrainian language. We fought for this; the first Ukrainian language society was organized there. The Lion Society, which was the first one to be organized, provided the impetus for the social awakening of that city. These were young people. I am proud of the fact that I was there from the very beginnings of this group. And later, the Taras Shevchenko Ukrainian Language Society—the bureaucracy tried to prevent this, but it was formed. And then the "Zelenyi Svit" [Green World] association and the "Memorial" society. The first societies of the national minorities were formed in L'viv: the Sholom Aleichem Society of Jewish Culture, the Russian one named for Pushkin, the Polish cultural society, the Armenian one, now the Hungarian one.

These issues were all resolved within the framework of a positive political culture. Yet the bureaucracy, the conservative elements, were the same everywhere. And they were sent to L'viv. Local cadres were not trained. Somehow we were always forced to feel like second-class citizens in L'viv. I am not against there having been this exchange of cadres. Still, the very fact that one was a local, a Galician, quite often meant that one's road to advancement, especially along government and Party lines, was blocked. Consider how few Galicians or, for that matter, native Western Ukrainians are in leading positions, as directors of large plants and the like.

But how can this experience be disseminated? Some commentators feel that the first order of business, in terms of transmitting the Western Ukrainian experience to Eastern Ukraine, should be not the language question but social issues. After all, there is a difference between the western and eastern parts of Ukraine. Can one perceive a movement towards some fusion—from one direction as well as the other?

Yes, without a doubt. What about the human chain on January 21, 1990? We did not expect such a grandiose, national, vibrant Ukrainian wave rolling from L'viv to Ivano-Frankivs'k to Kiev. After all, 100,000 Galicians could not have come to Kiev. Let's say there were a thousand, but for the most part the Kievites turned out. People from Eastern Ukraine came. This means that an awakening is taking place. This wave is rolling like a flood; it is coming from Western Ukraine and from Kiev, and it is moving further east. Let us recall the meeting in Kharkiv at the Taras Shevchenko monument on January 21. This means that there is a national awakening. It is moving along together with a social and a political awakening, through the activity of the masses. This is an overall process that manifests itself in different ways. Take the Donbass—and we should draw attention here to its demographic structure. Possibly, nationality questions are not so pressing there; but we are unified by our joint economic concerns. The economic sovereignty of the republic concerns all of Ukraine.

In 1988 and 1989, the situation in Western Ukraine and especially in L'viv was explosive. Maybe things are different now, but in that first phase of *perestroika* there were certain problems in L'viv. How does all this look today? I have in mind, for example, your relations as a people's deputy with the Party leadership in L'viv—with Yakiv Pohrebnyak, Viktor Volkov, and Bohdan Kotyk—and, on the other hand, with the leadership of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union—Vyacheslav Chornovil and the Horyn' brothers—particularly in light of the fact that the Soviet press constantly emphasizes these people are "extremists." So, on the one hand, the local Party leadership and, on the other, these so-called extremists. L'viv is somehow spontaneously explosive in its emotions. You can witness this when you go to our famous and unique "Hyde Park Corner," which I don't think can be duplicated anywhere else on earth. You can hear everything and anything there. But all the same, you can feel that there is something uniting these people. They are joined together because they are from L'viv. There is a feeling of pride in their city and a desire to be politically active. Perhaps they do not always demonstrate a great understanding of certain questions, particularly concerning the tactics and strategies of political struggle at a given stage. But you can feel the decency of these people, their honesty. They want, after all, to be the real masters of their land and their fate.

You know, I went through the elections. I myself am, as they say in the West, a naturalized citizen of L'viv, because I was born in Volyn'. I know that, even when there were times when I wanted to, I could not walk

away from the elections. I could not do so because of the L'viv citizenry and their faith, which can be deep, and even because of a sort of love for this activity that I was conducting. Though it can be very easily lost if one does not constantly reappraise oneself in light of their moods. This doesn't mean that one has to allow them to lead one about. Often, one must also be the regulator of these moods. Because there is a problem here—namely, that L'viv was singled out by this conservative-bureacratic group, or who knows who is behind this—as a city for political provocations. I take full responsibility in saying that I know that they wanted to introduce martial law in L'viv. Someone especially wanted this. And so we had the well-known provocations of March 12 and October 1, 1989.[1] They took General Volodymyr Popov in hand with very great difficulty. Some people were punished, but they were not tried.

And how does the situation look now?

I am removed from the situation. We are talking here in New Jersey, so I probably only know as much about it as you do. I think it should stabilize itself now, particularly as far as religion is concerned. The relegalization of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church brought up a whole range of problems. I and my colleagues among the people's deputies posed this question right from the beginning of our work as deputies—and even beforehand. The same holds true for the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. My colleagues and I stand for freedom of choice, for freedom of conscience. An individual may choose the religion, the denomination, that is closer to his heart—or simply be an atheist. That is one's own, and only one's own, personal matter. There has been all kinds of administrative meddling and interference by the authorities, as we have seen in the activity of the representatives of the Council for Religious Affairs, who delayed and who apparently are still delaying the registration of a given parish of whatever denomination. In the context of Galicia, the Greek Catholic religion is indigenous. It is the people's right to have the religion that they lost but that they tried to preserve. Because that famous "Sobor" with automatic weapons in 1946 did not, after all, destroy the people's faith. And for this they must be respected.

Can we return to the question of cooperation with the local authorities?

As a peoples' deputy, I stand on the principle of consolidation, not confrontation. We must find a common ground for discussion—and often we do find it. We have argued very heatedly with Yakiv Petrovych Pohrebnyak and with Viktor Oleksandrovych Volkov as Party leaders, but

we often come to some sort of compromise in solving a problem. I have experienced this personally as a deputy and before then. I think that, in the given situation, one should not distance oneself so sharply from the apparatus. There are also people within the apparatus with whom we must work, with whom we must find that one common denominator, because everyone tries in his own way—unless he is an out-and-out Stalinist or Brezhnevite or simply a careerist—to accomplish something. He can think differently. We should try to do away with intolerance, which is still characteristic of many of us and which leads to discord.

Clearly, I am for the abolition of Article 6 of the Constitution, which legalizes the leading role of the Party. But even if there are other parties, there should be consolidation among them. Let us recall the words of Ivan Franko: "It is not the time, it is not the time, to bring strife into your own house." But it happens that strife is sometimes brought in. Being self-critical, I have in mind the democratic forces, the oppositionists. I feel that there should be opposition, a healthy opposition, because the truth emerges only in the process of argumentation and discussion. That is why we must find a common path.

And this probably applies to the Ukrainian Helsinki Union in L'viv as well.

Certainly. The first secretary of the L'viv City Party Committee, Volkov, conducted discussions [with the Ukrainian Helsinki Union], for which he was severely taken to task by the central newspaper *Pravda*.[2] Articles appeared in *Pravda* and *Uchitel'skaya gazeta*, I would say very unfair articles, by journalists like Viktor Drozd and Vitalii Panov,[3] who simply conducted anti-Ukrainian propaganda and attempted to vilify this city that gave them shelter. And they apparently regard themselves as residents of L'viv. These were provocations in the press, just like those in *Pravda Ukrainy*. Nothing good came of all this. Here again we have the creation of a portrait of the enemy—i.e., that in L'viv there are only Banderites or nationalists. You can hear this even today from politically immature or just plain hostile people, chauvinists and other types who would like to see tensions. Because in this dirty little pool of provocation you can easily catch your own little fish, the little fish of holding onto your positions, a return to the old ways. No, this will not work.

Earlier you mentioned the religious issues that have their characteristic traits in the western oblasts. What do you think about the situation there? Will the Greek Catholic problem be resolved positively?

I think it is already being worked out in a positive way. I believe that both the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church will find a common ground for discussions, because these are two national Churches, and there is nothing to be divided between them. People want to have a choice. Here we must look at the demographic makeup. After the war, there was a migration of people from Poland—Lemky of the Orthodox faith, natives of the Kholm region, a great many from Eastern Ukraine, and there are many from Volyn' now. So we must pay attention to the spiritual and religious concerns of this segment of the population. I am not against there being parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church. There are Russians there; there are people who want to practice that religion, belong to that denomination. Again, that is their right. We cannot forbid people this.

Only mutual tolerance, the absence of confrontation, and wisdom will lead to correct solutions to these problems. Because the religious question is an important one now. It is a question of spirituality. Just as one cannot subdivide culture into the religious and the secular, one cannot divide the Ukrainian nation in this way, into denominations, bringing in once again this strife, this discord. These are the politics of those dark forces that still continue to exist. They have not been successful in sowing interethnic hostility in our city. They have not been successful in pitting the intelligentsia against the workers. So why, then, religion again? They have openly said that they would create a new Ulster out of L'viv. There was such talk; we heard such calls. No, it won't work. I believe in my people, in my fellow countrymen—that they are intelligent, that they can always find a solution to even the most complex of problems that trouble them, and without the intrusion of Moscow central religious departments.

All the same, I have the impression based on my reading of the Soviet press—including the newspaper *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, which carried an article precisely on this topic[4]—that the Russian Orthodox Church in Western Ukraine is not ready to deal with this problem. It has been taken aback by all this, it reacts negatively to these developments.

You must understand that they are trying to hold on. The Russian Orthodox Church is an alien element [in Western Ukraine]. It was part of the policy of Russification, although now the orientation has changed. It's good that you mentioned *Literaturnaya Rossiya*. I'll remind you that *Literaturnaya gazeta*, on February 7, carried my statement, which was a response to Archbishop Kirill.[5] It's somehow not appropriate, in his high clerical position, for His Grace to be repeating rumors and trying to create,

once again, this portrait of the enemy in L'viv—i.e., the Greek Catholic faithful. One should not do that kind of thing. We should act in the spirit of love for our fellow human beings, in the spirit of brotherly love, to quote Shevchenko's transcription of evangelical wisdom. Somehow it is not fitting for me to [have to] instruct such a high religious figure.

In the history of Western Ukraine, there were certain institutions and traditions—for example, the Shevchenko Scientific Society. There was also the Western Ukrainian People's Republic, the Communist Party of Western Ukraine, and, of course, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. You have had some personal experience with regard to this last issue; I have in mind your article in *Moskovskie novosti* and the response that appeared in *Radyans'ka Ukraina*.[6] How does all this look today? Are these traditions, these institutions, being renewed? What are the prospects for the revival and incorporation of historical Western Ukrainian traditions?

The truth and only the truth will provide the opportunity to evaluate this complex, difficult, contradictory, and, quite often, very uneven history of Western Ukraine. It is not divorced from the rest of Ukraine, but it has its own special traits. You mentioned the Shevchenko Scientific Society. It was closed down. In 1939 or 1940, scientific organizations were formed under the auspices of the Academy of Sciences. That was good, because it was a high-level state institution, and it survived the war. After the war, there was the western branch of the Academy of Sciences, if I am not mistaken, and now the Western Scientific Center. But the humanitarian profile that the Shevchenko Scientific Society had was lost. When the Institute of Social Sciences was headed by such people as Volodymyr Chuhaiov, a nobody—I don't know if he is still head of L'viv University—the study of literature and language and history was destroyed, and all the traditions were trampled upon.[7] The Shevchenko Society has now renewed its activities as a civic organization,[8] because, after all, we also have the Academy of Sciences. There is no contradiction there; one supplements the other. As far as I am aware, a branch of the Taras Shevchenko Institute of Ukrainian Literature will soon be formed in L'viv.

Again, we are returning to that humanitarian renown, that tradition of L'viv that was destroyed at L'viv University, which carries the name of Ivan Franko. I think this will all sort itself out. I should say that a great deal of harm was done to L'viv and the L'viv region by the infamous [1971] decree of the CPSU Central Committee on political work with the inhabitants of the L'viv Oblast.[9] The authors of that document were the

egregious Suslov and Valentyn Malanchuk. In fact, that decree should be abolished, and I think this question should be raised by the Party organization of the L'viv region. It is a decree that is offensive to the residents of L'viv, declaring virtually everyone to be not just nationalists but Fascists. [It trampled upon] the renowned L'viv traditions, even of the Socialist Democrats, the traditions of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine, which was controversial. But that wing of the party that stood behind Oleksandr Shums'kyi did a great deal towards maintaining the national traditions of Ukrainian political thought. That party was, in essence, executed, dispersed, crushed—a party that called itself Communist—not to mention the other social movements that were silenced and vilified.

As for the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, there can again be no one-sided determination. This was an extreme manifestation of opposition to the Polish occupation. So it has to be approached this way as well. What types of people were there? What were the inclinations? When we talk about the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, we cannot forget it was the first to begin the struggle against the German Fascist occupiers in the Volyn' region. I have spoken about all this. For me, all these, pardon the expression, scribblings—I consider it below my dignity to answer them. This scholar who signed his name to them, this professor and doctor of sciences who claims to know the problem so well, would be better off looking into the German documents. He should read what the Germans themselves had to say about that period of warfare in Western Ukraine.

A few days ago, the first phase of the elections in Ukraine were completed. I am aware that it is difficult to make prognoses, but what do you think? What will the political landscape of Ukraine look like after the elections?

I think there will be a renewal. And the further we move forward, the more the differences in the development of Western Ukraine and eastern Ukraine will fade. We are one nation. That means that we have one goal; we have one heart. So we cannot divide Ukraine into western and eastern halves. Yes, the characteristic traits will remain. And perhaps it is good that there are different ethnic groups and dialects; this is the wealth of a nation. So I do not think they should be erased. But the boundaries that divided us should be erased, the boundaries that they tried to force upon us. Those who were against the unity of the Ukrainian people—some of them are around today, trying to split us. That is an old ploy, division into westerners and easterners. It includes spitting upon our history, talking about "the L'viv disease." In particular, several Russian-language newpapers specialize in this, such as *Pravda Ukrainy* and, unfortunately, some

Moscow-based papers. They should learn from journals like *Ogonek*, *Moskovskie novosti*, and, in part, from *Literaturnaya gazeta*, where there are objective explanations and a thoughtful approach to these problems rather than disorientation. I feel that those journalists and correspondents who try to thrive on speculation, standing on their hind legs before the bureaucratic Party apparatus, have no place in the press, particularly in a press that should be the true exponent of the people's thoughts, an objective and a free press.

NOTES

[1]The street clashes with the authorities on March 12 and October 1, 1989, were reported in the Western media. *Viche*, an unofficial publication of the L'viv regional organization of "Rukh," devoted its entire issue for October, 1989, to the disturbances on October 1. See also Marek Kasz and Ryszard Giedrojc, "Laskotanie lwa tryzubem," *Kultura* (Warsaw), October 18, 1989, for an eyewitness account.

[2]The meeting between Volkov, Chornovil, and the brothers Mykhailo and Bohdan Horyn' of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union's executive committee was reported in *Robitnycha hazeta* on August 5, 1989, and was criticized in *Pravda* by Kiev correspondent Mykhailo Odynets' on August 11, 1989.

[3]V. Drozd, "Kuda oni metyat? Shtrikhi k portretu l'vovskikh neformalov," *Pravda*, October 10, 1989, and Vitalii Panov's articles "Strast' provokatsii," "Signal opasnosti," and "Tsena slova," *Uchitel'skaya gazeta*, for October 10 and 14, 1989, and No. 7, February, 1990, respectively.

[4]Oleg Shestakov, "V ozhidanii varfolomeevskoi nochi," *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, February 9, 1990.

[5]Sergei Kiselev, "V dukhe soglasiya," *Literaturnaya gazeta*, February 7, 1990.

[6]Rostyslav Bratun', "Zapadnaya Ukraina: Sentyabr'—goryachii mesyats," *Moskovskie novosti*, October 1, 1989, and V. Cherednychenko, "Fakty—uperta rich," *Radyans'ka Ukraina*, November 1, 1989.

[7]See Roman Solchanyk, "V. P. Chugaev: From Ideological Apparatchik to Rector of Lvov University," *Radio Liberty Research Bulletin*, May 21, 1982.

[8]For details of the work of an initiative group of scholars to reestablish the Shevchenko Scientific Society, see Bohdan Kushnir, "Asotsiatsiya vchenykh," *Molod' Ukrainy*, October 24, 1989.

[9]O politicheskoi rabote sredi naseleniya L'vovskoi oblasti." For the text of the decree, see *KPSS o formirovanii novogo cheloveka. Sbornik dokumentov i materialov (1965-1976)*, Moscow, Politizdat, 1976, pp. 129–35.

10 Roman Szporluk and Valerii Tishkov Talk about the National Question

Roman Solchanyk

Roman Szporluk is a professor of history at Harvard University and a leading expert on Soviet nationality problems. Valerii Tishkov is a Doctor of Historical Sciences and, since early 1989, director of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the USSR Academy of Sciences. The following round-table discussion took place on May 3, 1990, in the course of an international conference on "The 'National Question' in the Soviet Union," which was held at St. Jerome's College, University of Waterloo in Ontario, under the sponsorship of the Waterloo-Laurier Centre for Soviet Studies.

Solchanyk: Dr. Tishkov, in one of your articles last year in *Sovetskaya etnografiya*[1] you began by saying that you felt that the entire presentation of the problem was incorrect, that one should not speak about "the national question." We do not talk about "the economic question" in the Soviet Union, we do not talk about "the social question," so why should there be "the national question"? This has to be treated differently. In fact, you also said that there might even be "national answers" of various kinds—the Crimean Tatar answer, the Ukrainian answer, and so on. Can you tell us what exactly you mean by this?

Tishkov: The formula that existed for decades in the Soviet Union and was transmitted to the Western mentality—i.e., "the national question"—was actually never applied to other countries. Maybe that is the principal reason why I was trying to challenge the formula itself—because it had become rather like a dogma in our official ideology, in our political practice, and also in the field of social sciences. In my opinion, when we talk about "the national question" in the Soviet Union, we should now be talking about the Soviet Union

iitself, about the legitimate basis of the state, about an area one-sixth of the earth's land surface that makes up one state, a state that is now in a very difficult situation. One cannot separate the national question from any other parts of the social and political realm in the Soviet Union.

What really justifies the existence of the Soviet Union now as one state? I did not discuss this in the paper I have given at the conference here, but actually it is a basic question. All great powers and big states are experiencing very hard times today, and it seems that, at the present stage of mankind's evolution, small states are doing better at providing for the social existence of their citizens. If, in the past it was "the bigger the better," this was because the bigger the territory the more resources, the more people for the army in order to fight against enemies. But now all these postulates are called into question by the fact that, in the event of a global catastrophe, the first ones to be destroyed will be the great superpowers.

Solchanyk: Are you suggesting that the Soviet Union should not be a large, multinational state?

Tishkov: Well, at least we should be looking for some kind of answers and justification, because the answers that were given in the past—and are being given even now—by the center, by Gorbachev, by the Communist Party, by our social scientists, are no longer adequate. Answers like "the friendship of peoples provides us with all our victories, with all our achievements" and so on do not work now. And other answers do not work—like "we should build and reconstruct our federation and fill it with new content." Moral sentiments of any kind do not work. We should look for something else.

What can work now, at least in my opinion, is to regard the Soviet Union as a possible structure or avenue for bringing the people of this territory into a more peaceful global community. There are more and more problems that can only be solved internationally, like ecology, health problems, communication, business, and many others. Only from that point of view can we now find any kind of justification for the existence of a large state—only as something like an avenue or channel, a route. To my mind, it would be contrary to the global historical perspective, a move against the balkanization of the entire world. We now have about 170 states and about 3,000

peoples or ethnic groups in the world. So, it is difficult to imagine that sometime in the future the entire world will become balkanized and there will be 3,000 states.

Solchanyk: But to be more concrete: you are the head of a very important institute in the Academy of Sciences—an institute that deals with the nationalities issue. Let me put it to you very directly: what is your "national answer" or "national answers"?

Tishkov: When I express these kinds of sentiments, I usually get arguments against them from my colleagues and others. They say: "How is that you, the director of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, you who study cultures and people, are saying things against the national cultures or ethnicity?" But I am not in fact against them. If you look carefully, the independent state, or sovereignty, or powers, or authorities, or structures, actually do not provide a guarantee for maintaining a culture. You can give full autonomy, for example, to Uzbeks or Kazakhs, but there is no guarantee that this will prevent genocide against the Tajiks or Meskhetians—or by Georgians against the Abkhazians. The political structure—I mean the structure of the state itself—is not a solution to the problem. You can have a unitarian state but with very democratic structures that can provide, on another basis, certain guarantees for the preservation and even the flourishing of cultures.

Solchanyk: If I understand you correctly, the platform of the September, 1989, plenum of the CPSU Central Committee is, then, not really the answer because the emphasis there is precisely on state structures.

Tishkov: That's right.

Solchanyk: And you are talking about granting cultural freedom to people. But let me be a provocateur: the point is that there are some nations in the Soviet Union that are no longer satisfied with cultural autonomy. Certainly the Balts are not satisfied. The Ukrainians are now using the word *nezalezhnist'* [independence]. So, in a sense, maybe your argument is not enough.

Tishkov: When Balts or people in Ukraine speak about independence, that is not entirely the same, I would say, as the sovereignty of the Latvians, Estonians, or Lithuanians. It is a question of indepen-

dence and sovereignty for the people who live in Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania. Thus, I would prefer to see the principle of the right of self-determination applied not so much to ethnic groups, to nations, as to the civil society, to groups that live within a certain territory. There should be—it is much better when there is—a certain dominant cultural entity or group that can serve as a reference culture and can actually provide the common means of communication and articulation and a certain cultural basis. But it should not be absolutized, because you will never find a territory in which there are only people of the same cultural origins and which can define itself only as Latvian, only as Estonian, or only as Ukrainian.

Solchanyk: But that is what they want.

Tishkov: Well, it must also be understood that in the field of ethnicity and nationality there is a great deal of myth-making The "nation" concept has a very strong instrumentalist message. It is an objective force because people believe it, but it was always used to gain sovereignty and independence for a certain civil society. When you take, for example, Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and Africa in the twentieth century, when they were trying to gain independence and self-determination—actually, the states in Africa were formed not on a tribal basis; they are also multi-ethnic societies. So, the "nation" concept was used as an instrument, as a powerful idea, but it is a myth to a certain extent. It is an in-group definition. It is like a constant referendum by the people. It is a common loyalty, and people invent and reinvent their own loyalty.

I am not against cultures, against maintaining ethnicity. We should keep the world more and more varied, different in culture, because by losing the cultural differences we will lose the life of mankind. It would be like social entropy for mankind, so it is a very crucial thing. But, strictly speaking, it should be separate from the question of statehood. Like business, for example. Business now in the developed world is functioning separately from ethnicity. And states too. It is still very powerful and highly correlated with the common cultural base. Nevertheless, you cannot say that Great Britain is a state for a certain nation. What about the Scots, the Irish, the Welsh, and the many immigrants who live in Great Britain? It is the same with Canada and the United States. Even France and Italy.

Solchanyk: Professor Szporluk, in many of your recent appearances and in your published articles, you have been stressing the importance of the Russian question to the solution of the entire nationalities question.[2] Can you expound on that concretely? Why do you see the Russian question as a key question?

Szporluk: There are many reasons why the Russian question should be the most important. One—the most obvious reason—is that there are more Russians than there are any other people, even combined. It does not matter whether the Russians account for 51 percent or 49 percent. The Russians are clearly the dominant element economically, culturally, and politically. And, in my view, the most remarkable process now taking place in the Soviet Union is the resumption by the Russian leaders—the elite, the intelligentsia—of the process that was interrupted in 1917 and during the Civil War—i.e., the process of the formation of a modern Russian nation.

In my understanding of modern Russian history, the Russians went through a very complicated process of trying to form themselves into a modern nation. By 1917 they were very close to becoming one. For reasons that cannot be discussed in our conversation here—Marxism, Leninism, the Communist Party—the Bolsheviks succeeded in imposing a different conception of political and social organization. We know the story of Marxism. Now, they had hoped, Lenin and his friends, that their program, which they viewed globally and internationally, would simply remove the traditional national problems from the agenda of history. Again, for reasons that we need not consider here, by our times—by the 1970s and 1980s—it became clear that the Marxist-Leninist project had not fulfilled its tasks. So we are now back to square one, we are back to the early twentieth century, and all those questions that excited Milyukov, Struve, Kerensky, and all sorts of people—and, indeed, all those questions that excited people like Chaadaev 150 or 160 years ago—are back on the agenda.

What are those questions? Where is Russia in the scheme of world history? Is Russia part of a general, common historical process, like England, France, or Germany, only with some variance? Or is it a civilization that is quite unique? Is it part of the East? No, the Russians say it is not like Japan, India, or China either. That is one Russian answer. Other Russians say that Russia is really a country that should catch up with the West; it has been diverted. Yet others say that Russia is really not a normal nation at all, because it is a country, a polity, a civilization whose identity consists in the fact that it was

formed under the influence of the Mongols, the Tatars, Genghis Khan, Batu Khan, East and West, Ivan the Terrible, Kazan, and Moscow, and Novgorod.

Tishkov: It included many non-Russian elements.

Szporluk: Precisely. Therefore, it is a political entity that should never aspire to being an ethnically designated entity. In other words, it should not even become a nation state. Even if it could be, some Russians say no, the beauty of Russia consists in its being Russian and Mongol, Orthodox and Muslim, and so on. One could go on with the list. Let's move on to the current Russian debate. I feel that this is what the Russian intelligentsia is trying to do. And I think that they are now increasingly getting rid of some of those ideas I just mentioned. They say enough of being special; let's just become a normal country. In the modern world, a normal country, even if it is multiethnic, is a country that nevertheless assumes a national character. Therefore, they say—even those Russians who are willing to admit that there should be Bashkirs, and Kalmyks, and Chukchi and who do not want to assimilate them—they still say let it be a Russia, a *Rossiya*, that will be pluralistic, civilized, Western, and so on. So, I think Russia is a very exciting phenomenon in the modern nation-making process.

Tishkov: In one of my articles, which I called "We Missed Out on the Twentieth Century," I was already thinking about the same kinds of questions from the point of view of national development. The Soviet Union missed out on the century during which at least two great superpowers and empires on the Eurasian continent collapsed, the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires. I think the same fate was designed for the Tsarist Empire also. But Lenin's slogans about the right of nations to self-determination and also the notion of equality in a society without exploitation were quite attractive to many peasants and workers in the country—and these ideas worked. Besides, the Red Army used force from the very beginning, and this should be remembered. Then, five years later, there was already a totalitarian regime. What many of our people should perhaps realize is that the historical fate was not realized.

The question now is: What shall we do? Should we go back to the beginning of the twentieth century? Or should we look for something else? Now, at the end of the twentieth century, the situation has really changed dramatically, not only in the outside world but in the

Soviet Union too. There is a greater mix, the ethnic borders have become much more uncertain. It is much more difficult now. Even in 1917, it was very difficult to set borders for republics, and now it is practically impossible. That is why I am trying to look for some kind of modern solution.

Szporluk: May I respond to this? There are two answers to your point. One of them is that, of course, the means of transportation have improved, and it is easier to move people from those places from which they could not be moved eighty years ago. The second, more serious point—and I think that this is very encouraging—is that the understanding of nationality in what is now the Soviet Union has changed.

During the Russian Revolution, one of the weaknesses of the national movements was the fact that, even when they had various liberal, progressive, and even socialistic slogans, they defined nationhood very ethnically. Ukrainians, for example, even when they were very Leftist, thought that only Ukrainian-speakers were real Ukrainians. Now, at the end of the twentieth century, the Ukrainian national movement accepts Russians, Jews, Poles as in some sense Ukrainian—namely, as fully legitimate citizens of Ukraine. And here I would like to express my agreement with Valerii when he stresses the importance of the civil society as something that is now more of a reality than it was then.

Tishkov: The argument for this is the concrete example of the Soviet Union now, when the republics are moving more towards real independence and sovereignty. They are beginning to talk less and less about the ethnic state; they talk about the peoples of Latvia or independence for the citizens of Lithuania and Estonia. They also understand that there cannot be a massive relocation of all these peoples. That is why, for example, 50 percent of the Russians in Lithuania are also in favor of independence. So we are talking not about national independence but about the civil society.

Szporluk: Okay, in that case we have to ask ourselves why it is that those Russians in Latvia or Lithuania want to live in an independent Latvia or Lithuania. And I want to go back to an idea that Dr. Tishkov raised at the beginning of our conversation. He raised the interesting and obviously very important question: Why is it that in the modern world, the world of our times, small countries are suddenly

becoming attractive? It was one of the great beliefs of the nineteenth century that "the bigger the better." We had Lenin, who was a typically nineteenth-century figure, saying that, when one must choose between small and big, one must choose big, because big is better. Therefore, he said, we support all those centralized states that are progressive and democratic, but the bigger the better. In the age of the railroad and the steam engine, this was perhaps a sensible idea. But if we go back again to the question that Dr. Tishkov has touched on, we have to ask ourselves which kind of state—large or small—provides better conditions for individual men and women to achieve their full humanity? Perhaps in the times of Bismarck's Germany one could really develop any talents that one had more easily in the united German Reich than in the principality of Baden-Baden.

Tishkov: And also the economy, which was restricted by state borders.

Szporluk: Yes, the market and customs borders. One could achieve intellectual and economic progress. But perhaps now, in our time, in some sense the development of electronics and computer information eliminates the need for huge blocs, huge states, huge central post offices, and so on. One can really be a full citizen of the world working in the Netherlands or some other small country. And perhaps for all those reasons that matter to individuals—environment, family, and recreation—and one does not have to pay for them by giving up intellectual progress, because one can still be a citizen . . .

Tishkov: . . . And also feeding a large bureaucracy and the army.

Szporluk: Yes, one no longer has to have a large burearcracy or army. Exactly. So, for all these reasons, one can really be a fully participating member of humanity while being a citizen of an independent Latvia. That independent Latvia will have no military bases in Cuba, it will not be subsidizing revolutionary regimes in Mozambique, it may not even have to have an independent army, because somebody else will keep it safe. And the citizens of Latvia will be enjoying themselves playing computer games, engaging in sports, watching films. When they want to go to Paris, they will go to Paris; when they want to see the Bolshoi ballet, they will take a quick flight from Riga to Moscow or an overnight train.

To put it very briefly: there was a time before the modern age when one could achieve full humanity by living one's entire life in one's village. Then came education, printing, culture. To get an education, one had to be a citizen of a nation state, because education had to be in a language. We may now have come to an age of the post-traditional nation state that will be multiethnic, pluralistic, it will be close to you, it will be your own, and then, after that, there will be the world rather than the superpowers.

Tishkov: Okay, I will follow your logic. It is very interesting and completely in line with my vision of the future. Indeed, I would go further. Not large states and small states, but the state itself has become more and more like a barrier in the—well, I do not like the word progressive—the evolution of mankind. People can now arrange their own social groupings and organizations without the state because of computers, business, and so on. Actually, they do not accept borders. Borders have become obsolete now, bureaucracy has become obsolete. I agree with you fully.

But the question is: What to do with the big powers? Big powers are very dangerous, because they are more inclined to dangerous competition in the world arena. We did not mention this question. They also want to maintain huge armies, and they require large expenditures. I agree with you. Ideally, I could imagine a moment when all great superpowers would dissolve at the same time. But to imagine a situation whereby the Soviet Union would voluntarily dissolve while the United States would remain, with its manifest-destiny mentality—that is the question.

Szporluk: Yes, well maybe this is the solution. Of course, it is not the solution but a partial solution, because we are leaving out those parts of the world for whom the agenda that we are discussing is not yet a topical agenda. So let's leave out China, India, Africa, and Latin America for the moment, for the sake of discussion.

Returning to the Russian question, I think that the Russians have not outlived themselves as a nation. On the contrary, I think the progress of millions of people we call ethnic Russians will be advanced—their moral, intellectual, and social progress—if a kind of country called Russia, a meaningful entity, is established. It can be a Russia that respects Siberian autonomy; it can be a Russia that grants all sorts of freedoms to its constituent peoples. But I really do agree with those Russians—and I think they have a point here, even if they

sometimes speak rather strangely—that in some sense the emotional, moral, and cultural needs of Russians as Russians have been denied by the Soviet state even while Russians were used as an instrument to deny the same needs to other peoples. It did not make Russians happier that they made Ukrainians unhappy. Therefore, it would be a "progressive" step to establish a kind of Russian democratic republic that would allow the Russians to meet some of those needs. That kind of Russia would still be a relatively great power, and I suspect that that kind of Russia would be a country before which America would happily disarm and, in fact, guarantee its existence—perhaps against China.

Tishkov: I would agree. That is perhaps the basic argument. It is difficult to find any fault with this. Russian culture is really very strong; it has made a major contribution to world culture. And it is also very rich. I see, for example, the Russian Federation within about the same limits and as a state with a certain regional autonomy. There should be autonomy for Siberia, for the Urals, for the European part . . .

Szporluk: And for the north.

Tishkov: Actually, we already have eight economic regions of the Russian Federation. Why not give all the eight regions a certain sovereignty, like the *Länder* in West Germany or like the states and provinces in the United States and Canada? We should do it immediately. That is maybe the only way to keep some of the republics in the Union, because it will minimize their exclusiveness.

Szporluk: I want to add to this. If Russians begin to worry more about Russia and do something about improving Russia as such, then perhaps the non-Russsian republics will not feel threatened by Russian attention. You see, the tragedy of Soviet reality is that Moscow, which in the eyes of non-Russians represents Russia, is their enemy. It interferes. It says that you cannot build a theater, you cannot have more movies, and so on. If Russians worry about rebuilding Russia, perhaps then the Union republics will say: "All right, there are terms on which we can still be affiliated with you."

Tishkov: I think I will draw some sort of final conclusion, at least for myself. As a historian, I can see that all great empires have collapsed when the center was dying and the periphery became stronger. It

looks as if that is what we have now. The best thing to do now is to improve the situation in the center. Perhaps this will serve as an example. That may be the only solution. Not by force.

Solchanyk: You know, no one would disagree with the point that the Russian question is very important, and certainly the entire conversation that we have had about the state is crucial precisely to the Russian question, given the historical background. I really do not wish to introduce a pessimistic note into this. Looking at the Russian press, though—let's say *Literaturnaya Rossiya*—really the discussion there appears to have veered off into some sort of strange channel. Maybe I am not reading the proper things, but I do not see this kind of debate that we are having here being reproduced in *Literaturnaya Rosssiya* or *Sovetskaya Rossiya*. I see discussion of Russophobia, the Jewish question, and so on. How will that add to the solution of the Russian question, and, even more important, how will it contribute to the solution of the national question?

Tishkov: First of all, *Literaturnaya Rossiya* and *Sovetskaya Rossiya* are losing their subscribers. That is already something. They are only one of the many voices of *glasnost'*. Here in the West, you should not overestimate these kinds of things, like "Pamyat'" and the position of *Nash sovremennik*. All these people ran in the elections to the Russian parliament a month ago, and they lost badly in Moscow. Ordinary people did not want to support them. Their viewpoint exists, but it exists as one of many voices. I do not, for example, judge France by Le Pen, and I do not judge the United States by the Ku Klux Klan.

Szporluk: I tend to agree with Dr. Tishkov. We should not exaggerate the importance of those extremists, but we have to be aware that the process of "normalization" of Russia is being impeded by two forces. First, the Russian imperial tradition. Russians were taught for centuries to think of themselves as a supernation in charge of others, so the imperial temptation is still very strong, and the Russians have to get rid of it. The second point is that the search for a real identity for Russia includes very strongly the direct opposite of the imperial tradition, although it is compatible in practice with it—namely, a definition of Russia that in some sense views Russia as a special oddball among nations. If the entire world were to have free elections, some Russians would say, well, the beauty of Russia is that Russians do not have elections. People have independent courts, but they say

Russians are a beautiful people who do not need judges. We are a sincere and happy people who do things with the heart and not reason. This is a very dangerous current, and, because the Russians are very frustrated, generally, this can be appealing to some people.

Tishkov: I would agree with you. It is really a danger. I think the Russians should overcome a very, very serious psychological barrier in their own mentality. I have friends who are intellectuals and work with me at the Academy of Sciences. And they still ask me sometimes: "Are you ready to accept the responsibility and lose what for centuries our predecessors had acquired?" That kind of logic really exists.

Szporluk: You see it as a relic of the imperial mentality.

Tishkov: Yes.

Solchanyk: So, is the Russian intelligentsia asking the wrong questions at the moment?

Tishkov: I would say that the intelligentsia is basically in good shape. But there are people who are really quite attached to this logic. It is very strange how this has appeared in people's mentality. Educated, clever people, good friends, but they still are used to this. How it functions in the mind—that is the mystery.

Solchanyk: Gentlemen, thank you very much.

NOTES

[1]V. A. Tishkov, "O novykh podkhodakh v teorii i praktike mezhnatsional'nykh otnoshenii," *Sovetskaya etnografiya*, 1989, No.5, p. 3.

[2]Roman Szporluk, "Dilemmas of Russian Nationalism," *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 38, No. 4, July–August, 1989, pp. 15–35; *idem*, "The Imperial Legacy and the Soviet Nationalities Problem," in Lubomyr Hajda and Mark Beissinger (eds.), *The Nationalities Factor in Soviet Politics and Society*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1990, pp. 1–23.

11 Inside Ukrainian Politics: An Interview with Dmytro Pavlychko

David Marples & Chrystia Freeland

Dmytro Pavlychko, a renowned poet and a key figure in the Ukrainian reform movement, is a USSR and Ukrainian people's deputy and heads the Commission on Foreign Affairs in the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet. He is a leading member of "Rukh" and served as the first head of the Shevchenko Ukrainian Language Society. In Edmonton, Canada, to deliver the annual Shevchenko Lecture at the University of Alberta, he spoke on the theme "Five Years of Glasnost' *in Ukraine." The following interview, which took place on June 26, 1990, at the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, was conducted by David Marples, who is a research associate at that institute, and Chrystia Freeland, who is a member of the executive body of the Shevchenko Ukrainian Language Society in Kiev and is currently studying Soviet politics at Harvard University.*

Would you comment on the significance of the election of Stanislav Hurenko as the Party leader in Ukraine?

I expected that to happen; it was no surprise. In essence, it is good news, because Stanislav Hurenko is a person with whom the Democratic Bloc in the Supreme Soviet, "Rukh," and informal organizations have already had some dealings. He belongs to that group of Communists among our current leaders who have the ability to listen. Of course, he has some rigid views. On occasion, he has been accused of being a hard-liner who would prefer a return to the old ways. But insofar as I know him—and I am personally acquainted with him—I think that he supports and will continue to support the innovations that have occurred and will represent the Gorbachev view in Ukraine. This is not such a bad development. It could be a problem if he were a poor representative, but he seems to be a solid figure.

A key question is whether he will be able to support fully the movement towards independence that is developing in Ukraine, as Algirdas Brazauskas did in Lithuania. Or will he hew to the old line

that, even though there can be independence and statehood in Ukraine, there must always be subordination to the center? That is the fundamental question: how will he behave? Only when we know the answer will it be possible to offer a definitive judgment. But I can say that, of all the candidates for Party leadership, I believe that he is the person who will be most able to satisfy the forces promoting democracy in Ukraine.

You recently left the Communist Party. What were the major reasons behind that decision?

My leaving the Communist Party actually occurred some time ago; for a long time, my membership had just been a mere formality. I was not simply a disillusioned member but one who had come into direct conflict with the Party. It really goes back to the year 1958, when my book *Pravda klyche* was banned at the behest of the Party and its leaders. That book was actually burned and destroyed. Subsequently, there was a move to expel me from the Party because of an article I wrote about Antonych[1] and because of my book *Hranosolv* (1968). I managed to hang on as a Party member only through the support of the Ukrainian Writers' Union. Then, on the initiative of Party leaders, I lost my position at the journal *Vsesvit.* When I ran for election to the USSR Congress of People's Deputies, the Party organization in Ivano-Frankivs'k consistently opposed my candidacy. So I would say that my Party membership had become very much a formality. Many people maintained that I should leave the Party because I had long been engaged in anti-Party politics.

Could you provide some more background on this development?

I was raised in a particular social category, as the son of a poor peasant, a person who was provided with higher education by the Soviet authorities, and there were certainly some moments in my life when I accepted the Communist ideal, accepted it as a purely Christian and just ideal. There were occasions when I felt that Ukrainian independence could be achieved on the basis of Communist ideology—a "red" but independent Ukraine. This notion was also one of the guiding principles of my behavior in the Party. I considered that as a Communist, as a Party member, I would have much greater opportunities to work for the preservation of the Ukrainian language and the Ukrainian culture. And this was the basis of my Party membership.

But when a different era began and "Rukh" was formed—and bear in mind that it was formed by Communists, people like Ivan Drach, Volodymyr Yavorivs'kyi, and myself—our membership in the Party remained desirable because "Rukh" united various political groups and forces. Had we left the Communist Party at that time, the Communist presence in "Rukh" would have been weakened, and it was an important presence, because it strengthened the unity of all the political forces in "Rukh."

In all honesty, though, the turning point for me was the Lithuanian question. When Lithuania declared independence and the Soviet government, Gorbachev, and the Party as a whole strongly opposed that action, I could no longer remain. I had to leave the Party then, because it was sheer torture to remain a member of a Party that opposed the most justifiable deed in recent Soviet history, when the people declared their will. My colleagues and I spoke out about Lithuania, we wrote a declaration. We naturally placed the event in the broader perspective that included Ukraine. The Party was responsible for the destruction of the Ukrainian environment, too—for the fact that Ukraine became a colony. And please note: it became a colony not of Russia, because Russia is also a colony, but of the central ministries.

All our current problems can be laid at the feet of the Party. For this reason I felt that it was impossible for me to remain a member. Yet I had also recognized that the time had come for a multiparty system in Ukraine. New parties could only be formed by those elements who today are still within the Communist Party—all the intelligentsia, the creative writers, academicians, the aristocracy of the working class, and so forth. All these people should leave the Communist Party and join either the Democratic Party of Ukraine or the Ukrainian Republican Party. We must construct a multiparty system from people who were Communist Party members, because they constituted the majority in the leading organizations. Thus, in the Writers' Union, nearly all of us were Party members, because this seemed the logical way to work towards Ukrainian independence. But now we must attain this goal in a wider, more open fashion, through the democratization of society.

There was one further very strong motivation for my leaving the Party—namely, my feeling that yesterday's Communists must build an independent Ukraine together with those who have remained in the Party. Success depends on such cooperation, because those still in the Party are also part of the Ukrainian nation and should not be dismissed as "the dregs" of society. They include prominent academicians, noted

writers, people with a formidable knowledge of our culture. Our history was such that these people did not join the Party just to save their own skins. It would be very unfair to state that this was the only reason. In joining the Party, naturally they "saved" themselves, but they also rescued many healthy aspects of Ukrainian national life. If such an element had not existed in the Communist Party of Ukraine, then *perestroika* would not have such good prospects in the republic. Of course, there are people who are inclined to view this situation in a simplistic fashion, who say that we have betrayed our ideals. Some state that we have betrayed our Communist ideals. Still others maintain that we are totally without ideals.

Yet the Party did not provide me with anything other than the opportunity, as a writer, to wield some influence over the people, to travel, to speak with them. I had no special positions. In fact, my poems were always banned. I think the belief that we can create a foundation for Ukrainian national life through the Party—as the Lithuanians initially thought—is mistaken. Thus, my departure from the ranks was normal and consequential. I also believe that the mass desertion from the Party that is occurring today throughout Ukraine is a most important historical event, because the Party is the backbone of the empire, and the structure is collapsing.

Our next question pertains to the future of Ukraine within the Soviet Union. Do you support economic independence or total political independence?

I am for total independence and opposed to any sort of compromise concerning the so-called Union treaty. But I think we must move towards this independence through the slow, peaceful process of parliamentary struggle. It has to be a gradual affair, given that the more quickly we achieve this goal the more difficult life will be for us in the future. An immediate secession from the Soviet Union is, first of all, impossible. Moreover, it would provoke a harsh, chauvinistic reaction, and blood could flow. The matter must be carried out with considerable tact and diplomacy. We must leave the Soviet Union quietly, walking on our tiptoes, like a young girl who goes to meet her boyfriend stealthily in order not to awaken her mother or father. Like the young girl, we must quietly leave the Soviet Union and close the door gently, so that Gorbachev does not awaken. There can be no compromises, so we should postpone for as long as possible the signing of the Union treaty, at least until Ukraine has its own constitution.[2]

After independence, when matters become clearer, Ukraine can form agreements according to its needs—with Russia, Poland, or Germany, for example—political, economic, cultural, or national. If there is no need to surrender our sovereignty to Moscow, then why should we do so? What is the point? On the other hand, we are not yet mature enough as a people for complete independence. There are many Russified Ukrainians; there are many who will view such a step negatively. We know this. We also know that, if the entire Ukrainian people were convinced of the merits of such an ideal and were to announce in unison that "we desire complete independence," then we would indeed attain independence. There is no force that could stop such a movement. We have to rise, but first we must take a deep breath and look around. We need time. Oh, we will achieve independence. I strongly believe that. But it will be with a delicate, peaceful, albeit firm, step.

Let us turn to the Shevchenko Ukrainian Language Society. How much progress has been made in opening Ukrainian schools outside Kiev and Western Ukraine?

The process is moving forward, but sluggishly, because there is a certain resistance in some cities where there are no Ukrainian schools. There are still no Ukrainian nursery schools or higher educational institutions. In many areas, all official documentation is still in Russian. The creation of Ukrainian-language schools must take place in conjunction with the Ukrainianization of all walks of life. In Donets'k, however, the first Ukrainian school is being opened on September 1, 1990—a lycée affiliated with the university, in which Ukrainian will be the main language. This had not even been considered earlier. Many Ukrainian schools are being opened in villages in Eastern Ukraine, and these are schools that were originally to have been Russian.

Also, in cities like Zaporizhzhe, Dnipropetrovs'k, Kherson, Odessa, and Kharkiv, where there are no Ukrainian schools, the Ministry of Education has promised that, commencing in September, 1990, the first grades in many Russian schools will be taught in Ukrainian, and, in this way, the schools will gradually be converted to Ukrainian schools. The Ukrainian Language Society of the United States has been a great help to us. Its chairman, Professor Roman Voronka, brought us sixty computers for schools in Eastern Ukraine—on condition that these computers would operate only in the Ukrainian language. If any are converted to the Russian language, then they might have to be returned [because of violation of the contract]. So this is a time of great interest, a very important time.

How is the language of instruction determined? What legal mechanisms are in place?

The very idea of Ukrainian independence, the speeches in parliament, all this fosters Ukrainianization and prompts parents to declare that their children should be instructed in the Ukrainian language. At present, the whole system is dependent upon the parents, because the law permits parents to choose the language of instruction for their offspring. It is a primitive law. In theory, it seems to uphold individual rights, which in turn are enshrined in various international laws; but, in practice, this law guaranteeing individual rights (of the parents) is obstructive. The rights of the individual and those of the nation come into direct conflict. Such a situation would not even be contemplated in other countries.

Let me explain. Here in Alberta, French parents could organize a French school. But if we allow the rejection of the native language in a nation simply because another culture is predominant, then this right is profoundly antinational. We need a new law. A Ukrainian mother cannot freely choose the language that her child must learn, because, in selecting the language, she determines the national allegiance. In this way, the law has made our mothers national traitors. They have wanted their children to have good careers, to be well paid, to experience various benefits, and therefore they have sent them to Russian schools. At first they were oblivious of the national aspect of this affair. But subsequently, when these mothers have realized what has happened to their children, they have been in tears. We receive many letters from abject mothers who state that they have in effect cut off their own children from their native language. But they did so because that was what the state intended them to do.

So we must change this law. A Ukrainian who lives in Kiev is registered as a Ukrainian; his children must go to a Ukrainian school. There must be no question about this, it cannot be based on the decision of the parents. No one in Moscow asks a Russian in what language his children will be educated. And why don't Russians living in Ukraine express a desire to have their children educated in Ukrainian schools? Why do they prefer Russian? It is because they recognize that there is a natural law, a law of birth, of belonging to a nation. It is a question not of pure freedom of choice but of a law that is fundamentally antipeople, antinational, and even antihuman. When analyzed objectively, it is plain that such a law is undemocratic. The right of the parents will remain insofar as it is the right of Poles to learn

Polish, of Hungarians to learn Hungarian, and so forth. The right of the native Ukrainian population to be educated in its native language should be enshrined in a law for the defense of the people. And this will happen very quickly once the Ministry of Education becomes independent of Moscow.

We should like you to address various actions taken by the government of L'viv Oblast, particularly regarding conscription into the army and the alleged ignoring of unpopular laws. Is there a revolution in L'viv, is it a breakaway revolt that contravenes the Ukrainian Constitution? Are these actions to be welcomed and encouraged? How are they regarded elsewhere?

There are three oblasts—Ivano-Frankivs'k, Ternopil', and L'viv—where control of the soviets is now in the hands of the Democratic Bloc. There have been no violations of the constitution in these oblasts. There are individuals who reside there and elsewhere who do not wish to join the army or who say that they want to serve only in Ukraine. But this has nothing to do with persuasion from oblast soviet leaders such as Vyacheslav Chornovil. The affair is in the hands of the citizens themselves. And Chornovil—I heard him make this statement—declared that his commission would look into this matter but that he has never called upon young people to violate the constitution. There should be no misunderstanding about this affair. It is a trumped-up problem fabricated by the central authorities in Kiev in order to challenge these oblasts on the grounds that they are acting illegally. As a result, Kiev has been in conflict with L'viv and Ivano-Frankivs'k Oblasts. But Chornovil has denied several times in the Supreme Soviet that there have been violations of the constitution.

These oblast governments are taking concrete steps, however, to improve the standard of living. For example, they approached those to whom meat was shipped and rescinded the arrangement because it was too one-sided. So this meat now remains in L'viv, and people are starting to live better. Why has this step been taken? It demonstrates to the rest of Ukraine that, in places where "Rukh" has taken power, life is better. And this is perfectly normal. These are economic matters that can be arranged in many ways. The local government considers it necessary to keep its "home-made" butter, meat, and milk and to give these goods to its own people rather than export them, as it has done hitherto. Yet I do not consider that these people's

governments are breaking any laws. In fact, they are meticulously abiding by the constitution in order to forestall any sort of military intervention on the part of the authorities.

Turning to the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet: can you explain why the Communist Party is so dominant, how it managed to win so many seats in the elections?

The Party won seats in districts that were not as politicized as the western regions. In Kharkiv and Kiev, however, there were many victories gained by the Democratic Bloc. There is no evidence that the Party cheated in those elections; rather, in the areas in which its candidates won, the old stereotypical attitudes were still prevalent. The voter turnout was quite heavy, but the Communists won by very narrow margins—sometimes by only a handful of votes. In the future, though, they will no longer win. All Ukraine now understands that the majority of Ukrainians are represented by the minority in parliament.

The important thing is not the Party's majority but the fact that there is an opposition. It is akin to a light in the darkness. Even a very small light, such as a firefly, can illuminate the darkness that surrounds it. Our opposition is not a small light but a great fire that rages and blows. We have not yet elected a parliament that can be fully democratic. There are many reasons for this. One reason is political apathy, the refusal of the people to believe that there could be major improvement. In other areas—the Donbass for example—where there are many Russians, the candidates elected were indifferent to Ukrainian issues. Elsewhere, economic factors played a major role. Candidates promised material goods to voters in order to be elected. This occurred even in Ternopil' Oblast as well as in the east. It is still possible to buy votes, because the democratic national liberation movement has still not won a serious victory over the consciousness of the people.

How many deputies does the Democratic Bloc have in the Supreme Soviet, and what are the objectives of this bloc?

To date, the bloc has about 140 members. At first, there was a much smaller total, but thirty-seven members from a Communist faction—the Democratic Platform of the Communist Party of Ukraine—have joined us.[3] Thus, we have grown considerably. We hope we shall continue to grow in the future, if not into the majority in parliament, at least to one-third of all the members, and then we will be able

to block legislation. The ultimate goal of the Democratic Bloc is to attain the majority in parliament and then to declare an independent Ukraine.

Are there any conflicts within the Democratic Bloc or in "Rukh"? Are there factions?

There are. On the one hand, it is unfortunate that such factions exist; on the other, it can be perceived as a healthy development. The danger is that the factions might begin to split not only the Democratic Bloc but its supporters, the people themselves. This has not yet occurred. The public has not begun to call for this or that particular leader and continues to regard us as a single entity, which is good. But I am not opposed to the existence of a left wing, right wing, and center. Unanimity on all issues is in principle very harmful. Movements that seek such unanimity ultimately fail because of lapses into totalitarianism. We have already seen where totalitarianism leads. So there should be some conflicts within the Democratic Bloc. The bloc should have a book in one hand and a spear in the other.

And the future?

Everything is possible except a return to the past. We will endure the difficult period that may lie ahead, even if there are some setbacks. But there is no question that an independent Ukraine will eventually be created.

NOTES

[1] Bohdan Ihor Antonych (1909–37), Western Ukrainian poet, critic, and publicist. The reference is to Pavlychko's introduction to a collection of Antonych's poetry entitled *Pisnya pro neznyshchennist' materii* (1967).

[2] This was the position taken by the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet on October 17, 1990, in response to the demand by student hunger strikers that Ukraine refuse to sign a new Union treaty altogether. For the text of the Supreme Soviet resolution on the student demands, see *Vidomosti Verkhovnoi Rady Ukrains'koi Radyans'koi Sotsialistychnoi Respubliky*, No. 45, November 6, 1990, pp. 836–37.

[3] The Ukrainian Supreme Soviet deputies belonging to the Democratic Platform are listed in *Literaturna Ukraina*, June 21, 1990.

[4] This was achieved by January, 1991. According to Ukrainian Communist Party sources, Communist Party members hold more than two-thirds of the 450 seats in the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet and more than 52 percent of seats in local soviets. See *Radyans'ka Ukraina*, April 30, 1991. It should be noted, however, that not all Party members are ipso facto aligned with the parliamentary majority.

12 Ukraine, Russia, and the National Question: An Interview with Aleksandr Tsipko

Roman Solchanyk

Aleksandr Tsipko is a doctor of philosophical sciences and deputy director of the Institute of Economic and Political Research of the USSR Academy of Sciences. He is a specialist in the history of Socialist thought and the author of numerous works on the theory of socialism. His four-part article "The Sources of Stalinism" in Nauka i zhizn' *(1988, Nos. 11 and 12, 1989, and Nos. 1 and 2) gained Tsipko instant notoriety for its searing critique of Marxism as the source of the Soviet Union's current problems. The following interview was conducted on July 23, 1990, at the IV. World Congress for Soviet and East European Studies at Harrogate, England.*

We agreed to talk about your views on the national question in the Soviet Union. Shall we begin?

I'm troubled by only one problem—i.e., what happened in Russia in 1917 and why this terrible smog enveloped all these peoples. I came to understand part of the problem above all through Ukraine, through the suffering caused by the Ukrainian famine, through my family, my grandfather and my mother. This is the main problem for me. I took up philosophy not to make a career but to understand.

I'm very happy that you raised this issue. I have never studied the national question. I'm not a specialist, and you can tell. I have expressed my personal existence, the personal feelings that I have as a human being. If the Bolsheviks—a drop in the ocean—were able to transform the entire country, then why can't I, who am also a drop in the ocean in this country, do something? I'm a typical child of Russian history—a mixture. I was born in Odessa. My grandfather on my mother's side is from Kamyanets'-Podol's'kyi. He came to Odessa in 1902 and married a Pole, so I have that blood as well. My father's side of the family is Ukrainian and Russian. Thus, I am someone who

reflects the fate of Russian history. When I was a child, my identity was probably more Ukrainian, but I began living in Moscow, and with that came Russian identity and Russian culture.

You have to understand that I consider myself a person tied to Russian history as it is. A great many democrats don't like it, but I am categorically against the characterization of the history of Russia only as that of an empire. That is a Bolshevik approach—i.e., judging this huge country, which had various periods, exclusively from one point of view. Certainly, at least for Ukraine, it was truly a terrible history. The Poles, then the Russians, and collectivization. But that's life. A girl loves a boy, but she is forced to marry someone else, she is tormented. So she lives with her husband for twenty or thirty years and has three children. Then, at the age of forty-five, she sees the one she loved. This is a complicated situation, because the feelings are there for that young man whom she loved. The same is true for any nation. It was tormented, but it retains its distinctiveness. But this is a complicated matter, for you cannot dispose of history. This is my point of departure as far as my sense of self is concerned—i.e., that this is not only the history of the coercion of people, but also the history of life.

My grandfather, Eremei Andreevich Tsipko, raised me (I was practically without parents), and he told me how he came from Podolia like everyone else in order to make a living. He considered himself to be a Russian, like all Ukrainians in the Odessa, Kherson, and Mikolaiv Gubernias. So, I repeat, one should be honest and objective with regard to Russian history and not concentrate on this very superficial view that all this is just an empire, coercion, and the like. I am deeply convinced of this—and it seems to me that the West is falling for such a line (there are a great many democrats who say what the West likes to hear)—but the West would be very naïve if it thinks that this point of view will lead to some sort of civilization and give freedom to those nations inhabiting the country. That is my first point.

Second, I am not a Slavophile. In what sense? I do not believe in some sort of specific destiny. Still, I don't understand—and this disturbs me greatly—why I don't have the right to raise the question of the fate of the Slavic peoples at a time when the national question has become exacerbated, when it is emerging as a problem of self-identification, and when all nations can perfectly well examine their roots—Germans can examine German culture; Arabs, Arabic culture; and so on. Sure, it was a terrible history, and it was mainly linked to Russia. The Poles had a terrible history. But Poland changed and became democratic, and it did a great deal for the Slavic peoples.

Today's Russia has, after all, managed to rid itself of Stalinism. Why shouldn't I raise the question of the overall responsibility of Russian democrats with regard to the Slavs? I am not calling upon them to suppress everything. I am urging them, when resolving their own problem, to have an identity—that they are not just democrats. Now the Baltic republics are leaving, or they want to leave. I want them to understand that there is a more complex problem that is tied to the fate of the Slavs.

I will answer the question why it is stupid for Russia to abandon Russia. In the final analysis, there is no way out. All these peoples are tied to Kievan Rus', and especially the three Slavic peoples. Although I know very well everything having to do with Hetman Mazepa and so on and the genocide. This was a Stalinist genocide. The Russians are not at fault here, and they should not have to shoulder the blame, because there was exactly the same genocide in Russia. But Russia was lucky that there were fewer well-to-do people and therefore fewer of them were liquidated. Ukraine was more prosperous, and so, through the famine, they wasted—I don't know—probably 10 million people, they eliminated them.

I am not at all convinced that the Russians are the carriers of some kind of special history. One does not have to like the Russian state, but one cannot eliminate it from history. It was a tragedy, but there was also a culture there. In the final analysis, that was the reality, and one has to be clear about this. One has to say clearly that the Russians did the most for Slavic culture. I do not see the possibility of the self-identification of Slavic culture and Slavdom without Russian culture. The pope reads Dostoevsky and Tolstoy and speaks Russian. It would be a crime to say that the Russian army and Russian generals did this or that and at the same time discard the role of Russian culture in the formation of Slavic national consciousness. You cannot reject this. A Slav thinks his own way. You cannot get around this problem. Neither Ukrainians, nor Russians, nor Poles, nor Belorussians can avoid this. I was in Poland, I am also tied into that situation, and I can very easily step into that culture. I think that I have the full right to raise this question within the democratic framework. If other nations are raising such questions, why shouldn't I? Why should I lose my sense of belonging to the Slavic people?

I'm very happy that you brought up all these issues. I wanted to discuss this in stages, but you took everything on at once. Let me begin with your article in *Izvestia*,[1] which appeared shortly

before the people's deputies of the RSFSR, at their first congress, decided on the state sovereignty of the RSFSR. I must say that your article was difficult to understand; I had to read it several times, and I still can't say that everything in it is clear to me. So, please feel free to interrupt me if my understanding of your views differs from what you intended. In any case, as I see it, your article was negative with regard to sovereignty. That much is clear. The rest is not all that clear. You argued that this was a blow against Russia and that a blow against Russia is a blow against the Soviet Union. You wrote that Russia's flight from Russia is unnatural, that Moscow cannot separate itself from Moscow. You'll pardon me, I do not wish to offend you, but I feel that these kinds of conceptions, the identification of Russia—not ethnic Russia but some kind of ideological or historical Russia—with the Soviet Union is a form of imperial thinking. Is that right? Did I understand you correctly?

One can say here with the utmost clarity that yes, I am deeply convinced that the Soviet Union has two faces, just like that RSFSR invented by Stalin. It is, on the one hand, the heir to that Russian state—like it or not—the heir to all those Russian treaties, it is the heir to that place in the history of humanity that it assumed, it is the heir to that culture and all those terrible Russian problems—the unresolved national question, the unresolved economic question, the lack of consensus, and so on. That is why I was really terribly surprised that the Russian deputies representing Russia are not able to understand that this identity—that is, the RSFSR, this territory—is a Stalinist identity.

In what sense?

In the sense that this territory in the form that it has assumed is, so to speak, an identity tied up with all that mystique. On the one hand, you have the real fact of the coexistence of various peoples as determined by fate; on the other, they invented these various republics, they simply drew up the territories: this one here, that one there. I am not against the question of sovereignty; I am not at all predetermining the fate of any nation. As a democrat, I want each nation to determine its own fate as it wishes. But I want them to decide this on the basis of genuine historical legitimacy; not on the basis of the mystique of the Ukrainian SSR, but on the basis of Ukraine and how its relations developed with Russia, or on the basis of relations as they developed between Georgia and Russia, and so on.

As a result, I was astonished that these people who consider themselves democrats, fighters against totalitarianism and communism, are trying to solve a problem—in Russia—on the basis of these

Communist schemes and clichés. I am profoundly convinced that this policy will not result in any solution to the problem. The only benefit that it could bring is to nudge these movements forward. But there will be no solution on this basis, on the basis of this legitimacy. These problems—Ukraine, Russia, and Belorussia—can only be solved historically, on the basis of the old. That is the kind of history we had, we are proceeding from that. The Russians have assumed for themselves the right to decide—so let's decide how we are going to live anew. But not this mystique of Soviet Socialist republics and the like. Rather, on the basis of a serious discussion, historically. What are our relations? We can go this way or that way. Or independently. I am profoundly convinced that—this is my point of view—I do not see the possibility today for the complete detachment of Ukraine within its present boundaries. I don't see it.

We'll get to that. But let me ask you something else. Yurii Afanas'ev, who is also very well known in the West as a representative of the liberal Russian intelligentsia, is, to some degree, in agreement with you. If I understand you correctly, he also thinks that the Soviet Union is not a normal country. In an article in the fifth issue of *Vek XX i mir* for this year, which is an expanded version of his article in *Time* magazine,[2] he writes that the USSR is a sort of artificially put together country. People do not understand, he says, that this has to fall apart. Well, maybe he doesn't actually say that in so many words, but he argues that it is abnormal. And you say that the USSR is a mystification, a Stalinist creation.
There is a cardinal difference between myself and Afanas'ev, although I agree with Yurii Nikolaevich on many things. I'm delighted that he agrees with me. Still, with regard to Yurii Afanas'ev, as opposed to me and what I wrote two years ago, there are big differences. He has done a great deal for the democratic movement, but he began his work, like Mikhail Shatrov, by trying to legitimize Lenin and the Leninist guard and trying to prove that these people were more noble. I was against this from the very beginning; and this has to be clear. But we are very close.

How are your views different from his?
The difference is crucial. I feel that all this talk about falling apart and so on is a very dangerous thing, and I am categorically against it. The notion of falling apart is for me a very mechanistic approach to complicated problems. Yes, it is unnatural, but nonetheless it existed for a long time. What is the problem here? The nations tied to this state wound up here in various ways. I have to say that Afanas'ev and I had contact before

perestroika and we have contact now. But I already came out against him in Vienna. The idea of falling apart is a purely mechanistic concept. What is this falling apart? There will be no falling apart of the territories as marked by their boundaries.

I would not want to insist that he literally said "falling apart."
Unfortunately, that is exactly what he said. It's word for word. Don't be afraid. What are you afraid of? I'm not afraid of anything, so why should you be? I repeat, I am for clarifying the relations between the central Russian [*rossiiskie*] authorities—Russian, you can't avoid this—with representatives of the other nations. They wound up here in different ways. There is Ukraine; its history is known. In addition, there were punitive expeditions there. With Georgia the situation is much better. It came, it flourished, there were Russian generals who were Georgian, no one subjugated Georgia. Russia saved Armenia from genocide. The Baltic states, with the exception of Lithuania, were not states. These were territories that for 700 years belonged to the Germans.

Okay, but what about the interwar period?
Well, yes, they were. I meant earlier. Here is the difference between you and me. I am calling on you to think in concrete historical terms, and you are always confronting me with this Soviet stuff. For me, the Soviet Union is the continuation of that history, and if I want to decide the fate of the people I need to think in concrete historical terms. So, God forbid talking about "falling apart." That is a purely Bolshevik, unreasoned term. The discussion should be about a serious clarification, taking into consideration the right of the nations representing this country to solve the problem—but on a human basis. Then it will be clear there are nations interested in detaching themselves; nations that want a confederation; nations that want a federation. But this "falling apart" is for me a Marxist mechanism—i.e., destroy and kill. I can't think like that. That is why I took such a strong stand against this very mechanistic solution of such a delicate problem as the national question.

The most difficult will be the problem of Russia and Ukraine, because on the territory of Ukraine we probably have a minimum of 5 million people like myself, *surzhyk* types [i.e., people speaking a mixture of Ukrainian and Russian]—although I don't think it's the worst *surzhyk* in the world. On the other hand, we have the territory of Russia. Let's look at the situation realistically. What happened after 1652 or thereabouts? Settlement by the core Ukrainian population. And Gorbachev. Who is he by nationality? He is Ukrainian, because his ancestors, from Stavropol, are

emigrants from Ukraine. To this day they have this Ukrainian "h." And the Kuban? And how many in Russia and Siberia? It's 30-percent Ukrainian, ethnic Ukrainian, pure. This is all mixed up. The only clear problem is Western Ukraine. In ethnic terms, they have absolutely nothing to do with this history. They genuinely preserved themselves; they survived the Hungarians and the Poles, and they maintained themselves. It's a specific situation there.

It cannot be excluded—if, miraculously, all Ukrainians wanted Ukraine in its present boundaries—but this is an illusion. There is Crimea, the Donbass, Odessa, and so on. But no one will want this. And the Bessarabians? They won't want it, because they are Russians as well.

These kinds of problems are already emerging.

I argued in the article you mentioned that such serious problems as the national question should be solved by people in a serious manner—not shouting without thinking of the consequences, without the slightest culture, without the slightest education. I do not want these people to determine fate, although there are intelligent people among them, like my friend Evgenii Ambartsumov, like Viktor Sheinis and others, people whom I respect. But there are also others—some dame from Tomsk, from some Komsomol newspaper.

The independence of every factory! This is idiocy. These people don't understand that the problem of this so-called independence is a reaction to a sick and irrational economy. Solzhenitsyn writes about this nicely. Old man Maksim, my grandmother's friend, told me about this. He spoke Ukrainian his entire life. He would say that he remembered how life was before the revolution. "Alek, we lived well; we lived. I had four sons. I had eight horses. I sold." Ethnic Ukrainians lived normally in prerevolutionary Russia. Many lived normally in Ukraine. This problem didn't exist. Why did they live normally? One can curse that regime, but that Russian regime gave private property. After the abolition of serfdom, if you were an owner of private property. . . .

But it did not give the right to retain one's national consciousness.

That's true; it did not give that right. In that sense there was discrimination. Nonetheless, there was a Ukrainian intelligentsia prior to the revolution. And what's interesting here is that you are not going to get any kind of Soviet culture from Ukrainians like Volodymyr Sosyura and Pavlo Tychyna. So, yes, it was all cut down, but still there was a distinct Ukrainian culture prior to the revolution. I understand I do not have the right to make judgments here, because, unfortunately, I do not have that Ukrainian self-

awareness. Do you understand what the difference is? Therefore, I am very much afraid of being superficial. God forbid, I am not trying to force anything on anyone. I want only that, in solving these problems, we proceed from real historcal factors.

I am against this throwing around of terms like "empire" and "falling apart." This irritates me as a person who developed as a philosopher and is accustomed to thinking systematically. The point of my article was that such serious questions must not be resolved without thinking about the first problem—i.e., what this RSFSR is, it is mystique—and without thinking, in general, about the Slavic problem and the fate and future of these peoples.The problem must not be approached mechanically. That is the thrust of my article.

What is Russian liberal democracy in terms of the national question? We know about the so-called Russian patriots, we know about "Pamyat'"; a great deal is written about them in the West. Much less is written about the democrats. What are these Russian liberal democrats? Is there any thinking there about these issues? Do they have a program with regard to the national question?

I don't think that it has been defined. There is a type of self-awareness there, and it can't be otherwise. Indeed, in Ukraine, in "Rukh," you'll find many of precisely these Russian [*rossiiskie*] liberals. I had contact with them recently, and they are absolutely the same.

But I have in mind Moscow and Leningrad.

Okay, but I am addressing the question of what a "liberal" is. All these people were brought up on the old Russian culture, on *Vekhi*, on Berdyaev. Who is Berdyaev? He was born in Kiev and grew up in Ukraine. And who is Mykhailo Tuhan-Baranovs'kyi? At the time of the Ukrainian governments he was a minister, I think, with Pavlo Skoropads'kyi. And who is Gogol? He is a Ukrainian. His mother was Polish and his father Ukrainian. If I begin picking this apart, defining this Ukrainian-Russian business, it will all go to hell.

What is the essence of the problem? The whole problem is that the Russian liberal intelligentsia has no program whatsoever, because it still is not conscious of itself. And the tragedy of this whole *perestroika* is that the education of this centrist type—people who are more or less calm and who are not lunging for power—they are simply afraid of chaos. This is very important. In addition to the problem of resolving the national question—and this is the most important thing for me—

there exists the even more terrible problem of how to avoid chaos, the usual chaos in Russian history. Because the solution of the national question in 1917–18 in that easy fashion resulted in this totalitarian structure of seventy years' duration. I don't want that kind of a solution again. That is my main motive, it is subconscious. I am an intuitivist, and I feel that that kind of resolution of the question will thrust me and my children into the next chaos. I am afraid of blood once again, which all my ancestors and your ancestors experienced. I'm afraid of this.

At one point in your article in *Izvestia* you write that the Russian deputies have not only forgotten that they are Russians, but also that they are Slavs. You remind them that what they have done is likely to elicit a reaction among the Ukrainians and Belorussians, that the Ukrainians could do very nicely without Russia. What did you mean by that? Are you afraid that the Ukrainians could separate themselves from Russia or the Russians? Is this a problem for you?
Yes.

Why?
I repeat, I see no real historical possibility whatsoever for the creation of a Ukrainian state in Europe at this juncture.

Tell me why. The Ukrainians think that they can do it.
It would be very good. I would be very happy if that could be; maybe I would be happier than those who want it. But I do not see it as a possibility, because, I repeat, ethnically the population is tied together very strongly, it is all mixed together—Crimea, the southern oblasts, and so on. And so, I think, if we are going to be honest, we must solve this problem. But the first and main problem in this whole history is not the national question. Nonetheless, there are very strong ethnic differences between Ukrainians and Russians, and in the structure of their thinking, and there is the fact, which cannot be discounted, of the difference in how they see the world. The two are similar but very different types, and that's why we have the problem of cultural distinctiveness, the rebirth of the Ukrainian language, and so on. All this is very much on the agenda.

In no way am I a supporter of the Russification of Ukraine; that's 100-percent certain. I am an absolute opponent of the Russification of Ukraine, but I want these problems to be resolved humanely, without blood once again. That's what I want.

I think some Ukrainians in Ukraine are aware that perhaps Ukrainians are not yet a modern nation, although they probably are moving in that direction. I'll give you a concrete example. In a recent interview in the newspaper *Soyuz*,[3] Vyacheslav Chornovil, who is the chairman of the L'viv Oblast Soviet, came out with the notion that perhaps the best solution to all these problems, at the moment in any case, is a federated structure for Ukraine. Does this coincide with your views? I would guess so.

I agree absolutely. In no way do I support the Russification of Ukraine, and I do not want things forced on Russified Ukrainians that they will not accept now. I am afraid of force—from this side and from that side. But I am profoundly convinced that initially Ukraine should also be a federated republic, because I see many elements of distinctiveness in Western Ukraine. And one cannot but take into account the specificity of Western Ukraine. In 1971, I had the good fortune of being in L'viv and Uzhhorod on business; I spent two weeks there. People there talked with me very openly, and I realized then that there is a problem. I am deeply convinced that the question of Western Ukraine has to be solved within the framework of a federated Ukraine.

That would be the wisest solution. On the one hand, federation within, and, on the other, it would be very wise to have a federal agreement between Russia and Ukraine. That way we would safeguard the right to free self-awareness and maintain the culture of the Ukrainian people.

I know Ukrainian culture and the Ukrainian psyche very well. In no way do I feel that it is a nation that cannot and has no right to exist. That is not my position—God forbid. I just want to say that there are these tragic historical fates. And when you try again to change them, you accomplish nothing except to bring more trouble upon yourself. One has to think in genuinely humanist terms; one must come out of this situation with dignity. But that will be possible only when there is a genuinely democratic government in Moscow, when the reforms initiated by Gorbachev are carried out. I am not one of those like all of you here in the West who are saying "Gorbachev is finished." He is not finished. Actually, he is the one with [the right] qualities, for both the Russian and Ukrainian nations. As a person, he is the best, because ethnically he also incorporates both these nations. I don't know, but I just feel that he understands this, internally. Ethnically, he is very close to me in this respect. I think that this is a uniquely good accident of history, and Gorbachev should be utilized.

I would like to return to the Russian intelligentsia, but of another kind. You know, I and many of my colleagues who deal with nationality affairs are perfectly well aware that the Russian national question is the main national question. I read *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, just as I read *Literaturna Ukraina*; I read *Molodaya gvardiya*, *Nash sovremennik*, and *Sovetskaya Rossiya*. And, unfortunately, what I read there leaves me with a very unpleasant impression. Why? I understand, and I agree absolutely, that there has to be a solution to the Russian national question. But what I read in the press—I don't see how it will lead to any solution. The business with Igor' Shafarevich, Russophobia, and the Jewish question, which emerges at every opportunity. How do you explain this? What is all this leading to? I don't see any solution here either to the Russian national question or to any national question, for that matter.
Well, honestly. . . .

What in fact do these people want? I don't understand this at all.
Unfortunately, I do not read *Molodaya gvardiya*.

But you know what I'm talking about.
Yes, I know.

This is not a solution to the Russian national question.
I think you have answered the question. In general, this problem is overblown. That's one thing. This Russophobia thing is mystique. On the other hand, the business about Russian fascism is also mystique, and that should be realized in the West. Because, if it were not mystique, they would have won the elections. They are not going to win anything anywhere. Recently, I met with representatives of the Jewish Information Center. These are very intelligent people. They asked me to address, through their organ, the Jews living in our country—not to ask them not to leave, but to put forth my position. I am categorically against the emigration of the Jews to Israel, particularly Israel. From my point of view, this is a minefield. I am from Odessa. Of course there are manifestations of anti-Semitism. Unfortunately, there is much in Jewish culture that is not conducive to internationalism. This is something that is not talked about; and maybe it shouldn't be talked about, because the Jewish people suffered the most. The great or large nations should be objective. But I feel that for the moment all this is terribly politicized and vague. On the one hand,

all this shouting, this Russophobia, is stupid. On the other hand, this problem with "Pamyat'" is somehow very much being used, although it is a reality. These people exist, those who feel that Jews are to blame for everything.

Well, I can agree with you. I don't see in these polemics any kind of solution of what is a serious question.

My last, very general and very difficult question. There are national questions. In your view, what are the national answers? Is there one answer, or are there many answers?

Quite honestly, on this issue I'm with the optimists. This country is being bad-mouthed. Empire or not—many people say it is abnormal—this country experienced a terrible totalitarian regime. And all the nations, the intelligentsia of these nations, found the strength within themselves to discard that regime and initiate the democratic process in Eastern Europe. And I think that those who want to reject everything are wrong; they should be logical. I am not a person with imperial thinking. I'm simply someone with good sense.

The Soviet period, after all, gave rise to a very large intelligentsia in all the national republics, and this intelligentsia can come to a mutual understanding. If it proceeds in good faith, it will be able to achieve the most important thing for our country—i.e., to guarantee respect for all patriotic movements and, at the same time, join together in this overall democratic movement.

NOTES

[1]Aleksandr Tsipko, "Russkie ukhodyat iz Rossii?" *Izvestia*, May 26, 1990. See also Tsipko's interview entitled "Vozmozhno li chudo?" in *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, May 26, 1990. The declaration on the state sovereignty of the RSFSR was adopted on June 12 by an overwhelming majority of the deputies (907 votes in favor, 13 against, and 9 abstentions); see *Izvestia*, June 12, 1990.

[2]Yurii Afanas'ev, "Chto pozhinaem," *Vek XX i mir*, 1990, No.5, pp. 1–14 and 28; and *idem*, "Why the Empire Should Crumble," *Time* (international edition), March 12, 1990, p. 35.

[3]Nikolai Baklanov, "Oppozitsiya, prishedshaya k vlasti," *Soyuz*, No. 27, July, 1990, p. 9.

13 An Insider's View of Chernobyl': An Interview with Yurii Risovannyi

David Marples

Yurii Risovannyi is the head of the foreign relations bureau in the International Department of the Prypyat' Industrial and Research Association, located at Chernobyl'. He has been involved in the cleanup operation for the past four years. He is the coauthor (with Oleksandr Kovalenko) of Chernobyl'-kakim ego uvidel mir, *(1989). The following interview took place in Edmonton, Alberta, on September 20, 1990, at the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies.*

Would you explain the background and current functions of the Prypyat' Industrial and Research Association?

The roots of the association lie in the former Kombinat Production Association, which was established in October, 1986, to coordinate the work carried out in the thirty-kilometer zone. In January, 1990, it acquired a new status, when the nature of its activities was changed. The major cleanup operation had been completed, and it was now necessary to organize more research in the zone. The area has become something of a reserve where scholars and researchers can conduct experiments. These researchers represent the Academies of Sciences of both the USSR and Ukraine. Altogether twenty-six research institutes have personnel there, and in addition there are temporary workers from almost 100 other institutes. This huge coordinating task has been assigned to a new subunit of the Prypyat' Industrial and Research Association—the Research and Technical Center. It is headed by a doctor of sciences, Evgenii Senin, who was originally in Leningrad. In addition to organizing this research work, we are in the process of establishing an international research center in the settlement of Zelenyi Mys. This international center will be a part of the Research and Technical Center.

So it is actually within the jurisdiction of the Prypyat' Industrial and Research Association?

Yes. I began with the Research and Technical Center because it is a uniform body, and it has changed the entire direction of work today. Although the cleanup campaign is almost over, however, this does not mean that the problem of handling radioactive materials no longer exists. The unit that was part of Kombinat and still exists is the special enterprise Kompleks, which was responsible for carrying out decontamination. Its new responsibility is the correct handling of the radioactive waste dumped into repositories inside the zone. Back in 1986 and 1987, when radioactive soil, materials, and goods were collected from a huge territory, they were taken to various dumping grounds depending on the level of contamination. Currently, there are about 800 such dumps, some of which are long-term repositories for the waste, while others were constructed hurriedly simply to get rid of radioactive materials such as trees that were chopped down and soil that was less severely contaminated. These dumps are located all around the nuclear power plant. Radiation safety principles were observed, though. And this whole process falls under the aegis of Kompleks.

Another major unit within the Prypyat' association is the Radiation Monitoring Board, which monitors the radiation within the thirty-kilometer zone and the levels received by everyone who works in that area. The Board's activity has also changed recently, however, because of the new requirement for radiation specialists outside the zone, in Zhytomir and Kiev Oblasts and in Belorussia. Possibly they are needed also in Rivne Oblast, though the situation there is not as bad as in the northern parts of Zhytomir and Kiev Oblasts. In addition, there is a further subunit—the Board for Capital Construction, which has already built the new town of Slavutych and is continuing to build new houses there. There are also a huge Transportation Department and a health-care unit that has been there from the outset—Medical Unit No. 26. Finally, there are a number of small organizations affiliated with the Prypyat'Association—for the provision of food, the maintenance of communal facilities, and so on. Altogether, 5,200 people work within the Association.

A year ago, there was a significant number of military personnel—several thousand—but almost all of them have now left the zone. They had worked at Chernobyl' on a temporary basis and were used as the main force doing decontamination work. Earlier this year, there was a shortage of military reservists, because the young men would simply refuse to go to Chernobyl'. Before then, the situation had been straightforward: anyone could be called up. This year,

however, matters became more complicated. As soon as the men learned that they were to be sent to Chernobyl', they refused. Today, people raise their voices when they believe that something is unjust. The wives of the reservists also exerted pressure on them, and there was a public outcry. Eventually, the military hierarchy made a decision to stop sending troops to Chernobyl', so we had a shortage of personnel. For example, there was a dearth of drivers among the reservists.

When the soldiers were there, what was their salary relative to the rest of the population, and what was the maximum radiation limit for them; was it five rems, thirty-five rems?

The thirty-five-rem limit is another matter entirely, because it relates to the lifetime dose for people. The maximum dose for the reservists was the same as for personnel working in any nuclear facility, such as nuclear power plants and Chernobyl' itself—i.e., five rems per year.[1] Their salary is double the national average, and they also receive bonuses paid directly into their bank accounts. But the problems that arose among them were not really related to their salaries.

Would you explain the situation of the damaged reactor today and outline the plans for the future of the sarcophagus?

This is one of the most pressing issues today. I would like to emphasize at the outset that the situation with the sarcophagus is under control; yet every other day there are rumors in Kiev and other places that the "shell" of the sarcophagus is cracked, that radiation is being released from it, and so forth.

I heard a rumor that it was being forced downwards by the weight of the deposits above it.

Yes, one hears all kinds of things. Let me provide just one example of how people have reacted. When doing excavation work very close to the reactor, some military reservists came across two old mines that had been left there from World War II. They told someone what they had found, and the rumor spread that the intention was to blow up the sarcophagus. This rumor spread very quickly, so that even people in Kiev got to hear of it. But in fact the reactor is fairly safe, and people work there on a daily basis. I was there four times last year, for example, and saw the inside of the crippled reactor through a periscope, and it could even be seen without one, through a tube installed in a borehole in the lower edge of the cover.

When the investigation of the inside of the reactor began, more than sixty boreholes were drilled in it; the goal was to determine the condition of the molten fuel within. That was the basic, principal question, because physicists were afraid that a self-sustaining chain reaction might start; in order not to take any chances, it was thought best to provoke such a reaction with the use of a so-called neutron gun. (A neutron gun is a generator that releases neutron pulses.) Various investigations were conducted, and the results were reassuring. Today, the sarcophagus is believed to be very subcritical—that is, there is no nuclear danger.

The other major problem was the threat of contamination of the adjacent area. Very often people would call Chernobyl' to ask about the cracks in the structure, which had allegedly released radioactive dust into the atmosphere. The point, however, is that the structure is not tightly sealed. Spaces were deliberately left between the construction elements to provide some convection inside. The damaged reactor had to be cooled continually. There is a huge cooling system inside it. Filters have been placed in the base of the ventilation stack in order to catch all the radioactive materials. Yet the reactor remains stable. That is a fact. Researchers from the Kurchatov Institute of Atomic Energy feared the possible collapse of some of the structural elements inside the sarcophagus, and a major program of reinforcement of the internal structures was begun to prevent that from happening. Thus, it could now remain stable for a further five, ten, or even twenty-five years. When the design was conceived, it was anticipated that it would last for thirty years. But it needs almost daily care.

What about the other reactors? How soon will they be dismantled? We have noted the decision of the Ukrainian government to close down the entire plant by the year 1995.

Physically, the remaining three reactors could continue to operate until their life span is over. The average time for any individual reactor is roughly thirty years—a term that is dictated by the physical properties of its materials. Chernobyl'-1 has to be shut down for an inspection in 1992, which will be the halfway point in its life span. After fifteen years, the RBMK reactors require inspection to ascertain whether major repairs are required. Materials in the core, such as graphite, change in dimension during this period; irradiated graphite expands over time, and pressure is created on the reactor's channels. The plan was to carry out major repairs on Chernobyl'-1 in 1992, but this is in question because of the decision to close down the plant in 1995.

That decision followed the appointment of a commission of experts within the Ukrainian government headed by Deputy Chairman of the Ukrainian Council of Ministers Viktor Hladush. The commission has already held three sessions to elaborate the plan for the shutdown operation, but this might be termed "preliminary activity," because, whenever you go to the Chernobyl' nuclear plant and talk to the workers there, the response is: "Why? Why should we close down the plant?" The point is that, although the plant is located in the middle of a highly contaminated area, it produces valuable electricity. If it were shut down, there would be a need to supply electricity to the site in order to maintain the now dormant reactors for a considerable length of time. This would be the case with any nuclear reactor that were shut down; it would require constant care because of the huge amount of fuel it contained—over 190 tons in the case of the RBMK reactor. This fuel cannot be removed immediately. After being irradiated, it produces heat and can be maintained only in the cooling chambers. The whole process requires not only an electricity supply but also the retention of a large number of operating personnel at the site, especially those who deal with such equipment as steam generators. Thus, a plant continues to exist even after it is shut down. In the case of Chernobyl', the decommissioning process would take some ten to fifteen years.

So when Mikhail Umanets declared that it would be dangerous to shut down the Chernobyl' plant immediately,[2] that was the reason why?

Yes. The reactors are shut down, but the physical processes within them continue. The program was envisaged for 1995, and by then a plan of exactly how it can be done will have been worked out. It isn't like switching off a stove. Should this program be implemented, Chernobyl'-1 will be shut down next year, and then the others, in turn, until 1995. But many specialists have declared that the decision makes little sense.Umanets informed you of the modifications made on the reactors,[3] and he and his colleagues believe that the RBMK is now safe.

What are the alternative sources of electricity? When the Chernobyl' nuclear plant is closed down, Ukraine will lose about 10 percent of its generating capacity. How will this be compensated?

There is no definite program thus far to deal with this problem. People can only speculate about the future. A considerable share of the electricity produced in Ukraine goes to East European countries or to

the Belorussian republic, so the proponents of shutting down Chernobyl' argue that, if Ukraine stopped exporting electricity, it would still have a sufficient amount for domestic needs. This cannot be done overnight of course, but it remains one alternative on the agenda. There could also be a redistribution of electricity among the republics. More important is how the electricity is used: if it were used economically, a considerable amount could be saved. As for alternative sources, I have not heard of any specific suggestions.

Let us turn to the town of Slavutych—its current status, the decontamination campaign there, and the future. If the Chernobyl' station is closed down in 1995, what will happen to the Slavutych residents?

At present, there are no changes at Slavutych. People still work at the nuclear plant, and the town's population currently stands at 18,000. And they even seem to be contented with work at the station. The operative personnel are highly skilled, and if the plant is closed down they will be forced to seek alternative employment. What is interesting is that very few of them believe that the Chernobyl' plant will actually be shut down. Their view is that it will last out its natural lifetime. It is no secret that the decision of the Supreme Soviet to shut down the plant was made under great pressure from public organizations in Ukraine. On its own initiative, the government itself would never have made such a move. Experts have maintained that, though the reactors are considered unsafe despite the modifications undertaken, they can still operate well. So the Slavutych residents hope that work there will continue.

Even if the power station is closed, however, the bulk of the personnel will remain at the site during the long process of decommissioning the reactor. Also, regarding the 800 dump pits that I mentioned earlier, their contents will have to be relocated elsewhere or reprocessed. There is no other way to get rid of them. That will also be a huge program involving thousands of people. It is therefore envisaged that Slavutych residents could be retrained to carry out different types of jobs. In addition, the management of the plant and the town's authorities are already considering what else the residents might do. This is not, after all, a small city. One option is to locate modern enterprises there that would concentrate on high technology—electronics, for example, or the production of machines such as geiger counters. They would not involve large amounts of materials and would ensure employment for up to 3,000 personnel.

Such industrial enterprises would have to be ecologically clean. There could also be a reprocessing facility based on recycling technology that would not pose a danger to the environment.

It has already been stipulated that all those residents who wish to leave Slavutych will be provided with jobs or retraining courses elsewhere, at the state's expense. That decision also took note of the concerns of the workers.

As for the radiation situation, it has turned out that Slavutych was built on territory that was contaminated as a result of the accident. The rise in natural background radiation was not, however, dangerously high, though people were concerned. The real danger has been the presence of radioactive patches in the forest that encircles the town—it was constructed in the middle of a forest. Many people at first assumed that the vehicles coming from Chernobyl' brought more radioactive materials to the town, on the wheels, for example. There was strict radiation control, but such a possibility could not be excluded. The chief danger arose from the highly radioactive patches, though. Over the next two years, the plan is to remove part of the forest and clear a belt around the town, having thoroughly decontaminated the patches. This will in fact be a park, and a source of funds for the undertaking has been found. Work will begin very shortly. The park is needed not merely to protect the people but to comfort them psychologically, to reassure them about their surroundings.

Concerning the construction of the international center at Zelenyi Mys: how is it to be organized and financed? And is it conducting research into—for example—the dangers of low-level radiation?

It is not really concerned with low-level radiation. This applies more particularly to the areas around the zone in which people continue to live. Its basic task is to coordinate all the scientific work conducted there. Originally, Kombinat supervised such matters, but now the Prypyat' Association can provide high-level experts to help establish this center and coordinate the entire research work. The other basic task is to provide adequate conditions and facilities for our guests. Earlier, scientists would come to study the situation at Chernobyl', find accommodation, and work in isolation. Today, every research group is being given assistance. The center is a radiation-monitoring organization that is concerned with dosimetry, the testing of various decontamination techniques, radiobiological and ecological aspects of research.

A major dilemma to be examined by the center is the question of recultivation of contaminated land. What kinds of work can be undertaken in such areas? It is also in charge of the "Vektor" decontamination program, which is aimed at the collection, reprocessing, and long-term storage of all the radioactive materials in the zone. The "Vektor" program is not part of the scientific and technical work of the center, but it is nonetheless closely related to it.

I understand that the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] is also involved in the establishment of the center.
Yes. All the above aspects are to be studied by both Soviet and foreign specialists. The agreement on setting up the center was signed both by the government and by the IAEA. The first mission arrived in Chernobyl' in July and was made up of eighteen world experts, headed by Dr. Dipka Gupta, an IAEA commissioner/envoy. The research facilities of the center are dispersed around the zone. To date, twenty-six countries have expressed interest in participating in the work of the International Center, with the Japanese and the Americans being among the first.

How is the center being financed?
The costs will be shared by the Soviet government and the states that have representatives there.

What is the final goal of this research?
The intention is, first, to make recommendations on how to protect personnel from ionizing radiation and, second, to give practical advice on how to handle radioactive material—soil, cut wood, etc.—how these materials can be decontaminated most satisfactorily on the basis of practical experience at Chernobyl'.

Ukraine has issued a moratorium on the construction of new nuclear reactors and radar installations. Was this due to real problems raised by Chernobyl' or to public fears and reactions?
The move came after pressure from the Green movement. The public is concerned about anything related to nuclear energy. It is a psychological phenomenon, but it reflects the general malaise in our economy. No matter what goods are produced by which industry, people are skeptical about their quality and about the amount of study that went into the design. In the case of the Rivne nuclear power plant, for example, it has been established that the plant was sited on two

karst [permeable limestone] shields, which lie directly underneath the plant; so there, too, a crisis can be anticipated. People are concerned about the presence of nuclear installations near settlements. I believe that the government bowed to public pressure, but the people's fears are comprehensible.

Let me outline my own experiences of the Chernobyl' accident. My family (I have two children) was in Kiev at that time. We had to keep the children indoors with all the windows tightly sealed for days, and I am uncertain whether they received dangerous doses of radiation. We drove to Dnipropetrovs'k on May 8 and were stopped at one of the police stations there because they noticed that our car had Kiev license plates. They had a man on duty with a geiger counter that measured only gamma rays. He put the geiger counter to the thyroid glands of both children, and the reading was much higher than for any other parts of their bodies. I saw this with my own eyes.

Were your children in Kiev on May 1 and 2, when radiation levels began to rise significantly?

Yes, they were there until May 8. The wind changed direction on May 1. Prior to that date, the weather was warm and sunny. On May Day, there was a strong northern wind. I was with some friends out on the balcony of a friend's apartment and had left my children at my sister's home. Even then, I started to think about that wind, because we knew what had happened at Chernobyl'. We received no official warnings, not a single word, but a friend of mine—a photographer at the Academy of Sciences—had contacts with the nuclear research institute in Kiev. I visited him on April 28. He told me that a friend had called him to tell him that the accident was a major one. He advised me at that time to keep the children inside the house and not to let them go to school. "Shut all the doors and windows," he said, "and keep cleaning the house so that no dust can collect." And he warned me to beware of this northern wind. My first instinct on May 1, therefore, was to take my children and rush home. We spent the night there, however, and on the following morning I took the children home.

Andrei Illesh and Yurii Shcherbak have both stated that the number of initial casualties from the accident was much higher than thirty-one. Illesh gave a figure of 250, and I believe that Shcherbak mentioned 300. Do you have any information on this matter?

If you are talking about immediate deaths, I believe they are wrong. Having worked there for three and a half years, I would have heard something about that.

But there were surely deaths afterwards among members of the cleanup crews?

Yes, I believe the figure there is much higher than 300. Last year, when the Chernobyl' Union convened for its inaugural conference, some information was revealed about this question. The figure of 256 was announced for the first time. We at Chernobyl' did not know the precise number of deaths, though from my own experience I know many people whose friends died subsequently, mostly from heart attacks. These men were in their late twenties or thirties. Almost one year ago, when the CBS film crew arrived, we carried out a post-mortem on one such victim. A man born in 1958 also died of a heart attack. He had worked at the accident site after the disaster. We know of many similar stories.

I saw people in the Center for Radiation Medicine who had obviously received high doses of radiation. Some of them could not remember anything about the events connected with the accident, and they complained. One of them approached me—I was a member of a visiting delegation there—and shouted: "They are telling you lies! I will tell you everything. I lost my health there!" and so forth. The doctors declared that he was becoming rowdy as a result of his illness. Then another patient emerged, also looking terribly feeble, but, in contrast with the first, he was totally calm, and yet he supported his fellow patient's story. It was a horrible experience. And the most recent figure was cited by Shcherbak at a session of "Zelenyi svit" (Green World); he declared that 5,000 people had now died. The figure is not corroborated and is considered to be unofficial, but I admit that it is not unrealistic. More than 500,000 people were exposed to radiation, so it is a plausible percentage.

One final question—on the declaration of state sovereignty in Ukraine. How has it affected the cleanup, the International Center, etc.? Does Ukraine now have control over the nuclear program? Does it signify that Ukraine has to fund the cleanup operation and the new evacuations?

It is merely a declaration. There will be some mechanism for its implementation, but, as far as Chernobyl' and the nuclear program is concerned, [such a mechanism] has not yet been created. So to date

the declaration has not had a practical impact. The Prypyat' Industrial and Research Association remains under the jurisdiction of the USSR Ministry of Atomic Energy and Industry. Ukraine can control such an association, but it does not yet have the facilities of the ministry. On the other hand, it already has a Ministry of Power and Electrification, which will provide a smoother transition for the thermal and hydroelectric power stations to republican control. The Prypyat' Association operates on the territory of Ukraine, and some of the problems with which it deals—i.e., all the questions related to ecology and health care—come under the competence of the Ukrainian government. There is also a new Ukrainian committee on the safe use of nuclear power. But the Chernobyl' plant itself is still controlled totally by the ministry in Moscow.

Is the Center for Radiation Medicine more likely to fall under republican control?

Definitely. That has not happened yet, but there is no doubt that it will be transferred to Ukrainian jurisdiction.

NOTES

[1]This figure is ten times the permissible level at nuclear plants in the West and 100 times the permissible level for the general public.

[2]The reference is to an article published by Mikhail Umanets, director of the Chernobyl' nuclear power plant, in *Radyans'ka Ukraina*, August 7, 1990. It is discussed in David Marples, "Ukraine Declares Moratorium on New Nuclear Reactors," *Report on the USSR*, 1990, No. 41, pp. 20–21. For some of the public responses to Umanets' article, see *Radyans'ka Ukraina*, September 14, 1990.

[3]David Marples, "Chernobyl': A Personal Look at the Thirty-Kilometer Zone," *Report on the USSR*, 1989, No. 29, pp. 29–31.

14 The Communist Party and the Political Situation in Ukraine: An Interview with Stanislav Hurenko

Roman Solchanyk

Stanislav Hurenko, first secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine, was chosen leader of the Ukrainian Party at its Twenty-eighth Congress in June, 1990. The fifty-four-year-old Hurenko has been a full member of the Politburo since becoming second secretary in October, 1989. Previously, he served as a secretary of the Donets'k Oblast Party Committee, a deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, and a secretary of the Central Committee. A graduate of the Kiev Polytechnical Institute, Hurenko holds a candidate of economic sciences degree. He is a USSR and Ukrainian SSR people's deputy. The following interview was conducted in Kiev on November 10, 1990.

Mr. Hurenko, the elections in March of this year changed the political situation in the republic. It seems to me that the Communist Party of Ukraine, which previously had a monopoly on politics, is now in a rather different situation. How would you characterize the political situation in the republic and, in particular, the role of the Communist Party in these circumstances?
First of all, I would like to emphasize that these changes occurred not because of other forces but on the initiative of the Communist Party. The fact is that *perestroika* in the political sphere began with the renunciation by the CPSU and, consequently, by the Ukrainian Communist Party of their monopoly in the political and ideological spheres. That's the first thing. Therefore, these changes were not a surprise for us. It's another matter that the consequences of these changes—the developments after the elections—were not acceptable to everyone in the ranks of the Communist Party or in society as a whole.

The elections in Ukraine were—and all the political forces in our republic are in agreement about this—conducted on the basis of the most democratic election law in the USSR, as compared with other

republics, so that the existing pattern of political forces in Ukraine is reflected in our soviets. If you follow events in our republic, you know that particularly in the local soviets the lead was taken by the forces that reflected the predominant mood and had the upper hand politically in a given area. All you need to do is look at the western regions or the center of our republic [Kiev], where power in the soviets was assumed by completely new people who only a few years ago were, to put it mildly, in opposition to the existing regime. So now we have a real multiparty system, and this coincides fully with our plans for restructuring the political system in our republic. Unfortunately, we are not always able to find a common language with our new political partners, because there is intolerance and impatience. This impatience manifests itself above all in attempts to accelerate political events. In our view, there should be some time for the situation to mature and for people to accept this.

Second, and this is really unfortunate, most of the new political parties that have emerged—we now have about twenty of them in the republic—base their political programs above all on criticism of the Ukrainian Communist Party for both its past and its present activities, and they direct their practical efforts towards the quickest possible elimination of the Communist Party from the political arena. From our standpoint, this does not promote a constructive solution of the problem, and it irritates people. We feel that this could—and I hope our opponents pardon me here—lead to undesirable changes both in politics and as regards the future of these parties. This is apropos of the political situation as a whole. As for the mood in the Communist Party, we want power to shift as quickly as possible from the Party committees to the soviets. Unfortunately, we are not always as successful in achieving this as we would like.

Yes, I also have the impression that certain political forces that have emerged are impatient with regard to the political situation. Still, there are reasons for this. The economic situation is very bad, the political situation is unsatisfactory. Nonetheless, I, and not only I, feel that the Communist Party cadres and Party members are also not entirely ready to share political power. Am I mistaken here? What do you think?

I agree. It is true that there are incidents and situations in which former Communist Party leaders who still have posts in the Party and in the soviets do not yield power as quickly as would be desirable. But this is probably natural. If these problems are tackled in a democratic

fashion and not with extremist moves, they will probably be resolved. Today we have a whole series of examples of soviets' becoming genuinely independent—that is, free of the political organs and political leadership. And when this independence is directed towards the benefit of the people, then, in my view, that is exactly what is needed. But if this independence is directed only towards getting rid of the organs of political leadership as quickly as possible, then, in my view, that is not useful.

I would like to ask you what the internal political situation looks like in the leading organs of the Communist Party. I have in mind the Central Committee and the Politburo. Can one talk now of forces on the left, of centrist forces, and of rightist, or conservative, forces?

First of all, we now have a completely new Politburo, and more than 75 percent of the Central Committee is composed of new members. This is also characteristic of the times. I would not say there is such a clearly defined delineation. Perhaps for the first time in the history of the Communist Party, the Twenty-eighth Congress of the Communist Party was divided into two phases. Now, in the process of preparation for the second phase of the congress, which I think will take place soon, we are faced with various attitudes [in the Party]. I would like to emphasize that people are leaving the Party—about 150,000 have left this year; this is a large number—but about 15,000 have joined in the meantime, and our Party now numbers more than 3 million.

This is the Ukrainian Party?

This is the Communist Party of Ukraine. I would like to emphasize that the new Statute of the CPSU has a special section that allows for, practically speaking, the complete independence of Communist Parties in the Union republics.

Can you imagine a scenario in which the Communist Party of Ukraine becomes a fully independent Party? And, in this connection, an interesting question occurs to me. I have in mind your position with regard to "Rukh." You know that "Rukh" recently concluded its Second Congress. Its resolutions deny membership in "Rukh" to members of those parties whose governing bodies are located outside the borders of the republic.[1] If the Communist Party of Ukraine became independent, what would be the attitude towards "Rukh"?

Well, if the Communist Party of Ukraine became independent, as you understand it, this would not be in order to become a collective member of "Rukh."

That's obvious.

That's the first thing. Second, seriously speaking, the Communist Party of Ukraine is now organizationally, financially, and as regards cadres completely independent of the leading organs of the CPSU. This is confirmed by the new Statute of the CPSU. A Statute of the Communist Party of Ukraine will also be adopted at the second phase of its congress, and organizationally our Party will be formed as a completely independent Party. I want to state at the outset, however, that its ideological principles and organizational structure will coincide with those of the CPSU. Changes in the organizational structure are currently under way, and obviously we cannot now say what kind of Party it will be; but what I can say is that we will not have any fundamental differences with the Statute and Program of the CPSU.

Now, as regards our attitude towards "Rukh." From the time when "Rukh" first emerged, we took the position of constructive criticism of certain of its programmatic principles, and our representatives, including the present chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, Leonid Makarovych Kravchuk, was an active opponent who took the position of cooperation with "Rukh" during the early phases of its activities. Unfortunately, I am not familiar with the "Rukh" resolution regarding its attitude towards the Communist Party. There was no direct broadcasting of the proceedings of the Second Congress of "Rukh," and the materials in the press are rather limited. I have read *Literaturna Ukraina*, but it has not yet published the resolution. So I will not comment on it.

I will say one thing, though. What I learned from the address of the esteemed Ivan Fedorovych Drach, who remains the leader of "Rukh," disturbs me a great deal, because the part about "Rukh" tactics indicates, I think, that there has been a complete transformation of "Rukh," which has now also become an anti-Communist organization insofar as its activities are concerned. Obviously, this cannot but disturb us; this is a mass organization, and it is a fact that disturbs us.

I beg to differ with you as regards your claim that Leonid Kravchuk's position, as a representative of the Communist Party of Ukraine, was one of cooperation from the start. There was criticism—rather brutal criticism—in the republican

Party press. Later, Kravchuk admitted that that policy was probably mistaken and that there was no reason to take such a position with regard to "Rukh." So my question is: what is the concrete attitude towards "Rukh"? You mentioned that you are disturbed by what you consider to be the anti-Communist spirit of Drach's address. But, in general, is it possible to cooperate with "Rukh"? Or do you feel that it is a hostile force?

No, we do not consider it to be a hostile force. We feel that "Rukh" is an organization with which we can and will cooperate on a concrete basis and with regard to the solution of certain concrete questions as long as the leaders of "Rukh" are willing.

As an analyst of Ukrainian affairs, I am interested in the Shcherbitsky phenomenon. Indeed, precisely this term—"the Shcherbitsky phenomenon"—is now being used in the republican press.[2] When Gorbachev came to power, the prevailing view among Western commentators was that there would immediately be major changes in the top leadership posts. That did not happen. Volodymyr Shcherbitsky remained at the head of the Communist Party of Ukraine for a long time. This came as a surprise to everyone, although, I must say, not to me; I had somewhat different views. How do you explain the Shcherbitsky phenomenon? Even in September, 1989, when the plenum of the Central Committee was held and Shcherbitsky left, it was all rather strange. Irrespective of the criticism and negative opinion in the West and, I would guess, here in Ukraine as well, the plenum had a sort of theatrical character about it. Gorbachev came to Kiev, everyone had such pleasant words for each other, everything was so "nice." Yet we know very well, and you must agree, that things were not so "nice." So how do you explain this situation—specifically, Gorbachev's relations with Shcherbitsky?

Well, maybe we should return to the last question, which we did not finish. You cite your objective attitude towards the political situation in Ukraine, but nonetheless you are trying to get me to give you an exclusively black or white answer—"Is 'Rukh' an enemy or not?" If I were to say that "Rukh" is not our enemy, I would probably be subjected to brutal criticism from our Communists. If I were to say that "Rukh" is an enemy, I would be subjected to brutal criticism from another side. The situation here is rather complicated. My English is

not good enough to quote the original, but I know that our press wrote that Reagan liked the American or English saying that, in order to tango, the minimal requirement is to have a partner.

"It takes two to tango."

Yes, something like that. Here, too, there has to be cooperation on both sides. So, in today's complex situation in Ukraine, to pose the question in terms of who is a friend and who is an enemy is probably not entirely correct. Similarly, I think that to evaluate Shcherbitsky's role in exclusively black and white terms is probably not right. The point is that Volodymyr Vasyl'ovych Shcherbitsky was a man of his times. He traveled the entire path that our Party traveled during the past forty years or so. He fought in the war, he took part in the rebirth of the economy, and, I'll tell you, sometime in the middle of his career, in the 1960s, he even had conflicts with the political leadership, with Khrushchev. He was even removed from the post of chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR. So he was not an ordinary person in the political sense. Having worked with him, I can say that he was a strong figure. Personally, he was a very strong individual. He had his own views. What kinds of views they were is another question. He was a figure in the full sense of the word. And if one looks at the personal configuration of the political leadership when Gorbachev assumed the post of general secretary of the CPSU, it seems to me that a great deal can be understood.

In spite of all the complexities of his character and the difficult relations with his aides and with his colleagues in the leadership, I can say that Shcherbitsky was concerned about the fate of Ukraine, in his own way. Maybe that does not coincide with the current views of the new leadership or of the leadership of other political parties. But he was very concerned about the development of Ukraine and did what he could for it. And I would say that he was a very solid political figure. Had he disappeared from the political arena immediately upon the coming to power of Mikhail Sergeevich Gorbachev, that would have been totally incomprehensible. Precisely during the period before his departure, the beginning of *perestroika*, he was, in my view, to a certain extent Mikhail Sergeevich's helper.

It is difficult for me to say anything about their personal relations. At the time, I was not part of the political leadership of the republic, much less of the country. But it seems to me that Gorbachev took Shcherbitsky's views seriously—and not only with regard to developments in Ukraine. So his political career ended the way it did.

I'm sorry, but it's difficult for me to agree with the idea that Volodymyr Shcherbitsky was somehow interested in the national and cultural development of Ukraine. After all, there was an ideological secretary called Valentyn Malanchuk who was in power precisely during the Shcherbitsky period.
Well, in addition to Malanchuk there were others. There were Yurii Yel'chenko and Volodymyr Ivashko, for instance. Why only Malanchuk? This is too narrow an approach. Just within my memory, before Malanchuk there was Academician Fedir Ovcharenko, then there was Malanchuk, then Yel'chenko, then Ivashko. There was Oleksandr Kapto as well. So, during that time, there were quite a few changes of ideological secretaries—about six, if not more. I do not want to argue with you about the extent to which Shcherbitsky was concerned about the development of Ukrainian culture.

Still, looking at it objectively, that is when the decline of the Ukrainian language and culture took place.
Yes, there is no argument there. I think all this still needs to be studied very deeply, and perhaps when the situation is calmer than it is now. God help us to see that day. I feel that, without a doubt, we are dealing here with the influence of the policies of the political leadership at that time. But it is also necessary to study more specifically and more objectively the position of our artists and writers. I think that all this is ahead of us.

I would like to ask briefly about the former first secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine, Volodymyr Ivashko. Western commentators, journalists, and analysts were surprised that Ivashko left Kiev and decided to go to Moscow as Gorbachev's deputy. How did this happen?
There are circumstances here that perhaps seem unusual to Western analysts. It is not so much that he decided as it is that he did his duty as a member of the CPSU. He was elected by the CPSU Congress to the post of deputy to the general secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU; and I would like everyone to know this. Moreover, he was chosen in view of a circumstance that existed beforehand—that is, taking into consideration that he had voluntarily resigned (and this is probably a first in the history of our Soviet Ukraine) from the post of chairman of the Supreme Soviet. He did this voluntarily, and in view of the situation that existed in the Supreme Soviet. It was a crisis situation.

First of all, he felt, and I know this from my many discussions with him, that this step would in some way improve the situation. And second, he wanted to demonstrate that an individual has the right to choose, including an individual holding such a high position. He resigned, and having in fact already resigned—although prior to the decision of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR—he was elected deputy general secretary at the congress of the CPSU. He was elected, as you know, on an alternative basis with Ligachev as the deputy to the general secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU. He talked about all this, as did the people who addressed the congress and who spoke at meetings prior to the plenary session of the congress. All this is known.

Was there disappointment within the Communist Party of Ukraine because of this?

The mood in the Ukrainian Party was complex. But I want to remind you that, already at that time, Ivashko was not the first secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine. He had left that post a few days earlier. In view of the fact that he had become chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, he was released from this post at the Congress of the Communist Party of Ukraine; he was not elected.

A question about nationality issues in Ukraine and the nationalities policy of the Communist Party of Ukraine. There are some complicated problems here. There is the question of the eastern oblasts of Ukraine, the question of Crimea, of the Gagauz and the Bulgarians in Odessa. . . .

The question of southern Ukraine.

How does the Communist Party of Ukraine see all this?

I am careful about speaking in the name of a large number of people, and I never permit myself to speak in the name of the Communist Party of Ukraine. I can speak for myself as a people's deputy and as the first secretary of the Party. That is how I would like to respond. First, you and I began our discussion by noting that the Communist Party of Ukraine is now voluntarily renouncing political dictatorship and dictatorship in the ideological sphere. Therefore, the nationalities policy of the Communist Party of Ukraine today consists of a certain complex of ideas that we are implementing through Communists who are in the soviets or through the political leadership.

Today, our basic line of thought in nationalities policy is that we need to take fully into consideration that the rebirth of the Ukrainian nation and culture and the development of the Ukrainian language should not be at the expense of any other people living in Ukraine, especially those who have historical roots here. We have about 14 million people who are not Ukrainians, and there is a certain segment of the Ukrainian population that does not consider Ukrainian its native language. This is rather complicated, and the fact that the population of Ukraine was formed in a very complicated way—you referred to the eastern and southern oblasts of our country—also has its effects. We feel that the law on the Ukrainian language and, in general, the development of Ukrainian culture should proceed moderately. We are for the unconditional implementation of this law and the unconditional development of Ukrainian culture, but moderately and taking into consideration the interests of all peoples. We would not want to have internal immigrants in Ukraine. We would not want the hasty implementation of nationalities policy to lead to that.

Does the possibility exist that an interfront could be formed in Ukraine? Or maybe one already exists? Or perhaps the beginnings of an interfront?

I think these rumors are not true. And then, what, after all, is an interfront? The question of which way Ukraine will go has been raised many times, both by the gentlemen (*pany*) and the comrades. Will it be the Romanian path, the Lithuanian, or maybe the German? I think it will be the Ukrainian path. I would not want to make comparisons with developments in other republics. I think the interfront fits the pattern in the Baltic states but not at all in Ukraine. Maybe we will have some kind of similar movement, but this—if anything—will not be an interfront.

The last question. Recently, the director of Radio Liberty's Ukrainian service conducted an interview with Leonid Kravchuk.[3] Among other things, he asked Kravchuk his attitude regarding the possibility of establishing a correspondents' office of the Ukrainian service in Ukraine, particularly in Kiev. I would like to ask you the same question. By the way, Kravchuk's answer was positive. What is your reaction?

I think we can only welcome the fact that you and I have the possibility here of carrying on this rather open discussion, and I feel that the more representatives of the mass media from various countries of the world there are in the capital of Ukraine today, the better it will be both for Ukraine and for the world as a whole. That is my view.

Thank you.

NOTES

[1] See *News from Ukraine*, No. 45, November, 1990, p. 4.

[2] See Ivan Kuras, "Fenomen Shcherbyts'koho," *Spilka*, No. 5, August 6–12, and No. 6, August 13–19, 1990.

[3] Bohdan Nahaylo and Kathleen Mihalisko, "Interview with Ukrainian Supreme Soviet Chairman Leonid Kravchuk," *Report on the USSR*, 1990, No. 47, pp. 14–16.

15 Ukrainian-Jewish Relations: An Interview with Oleksandr Burakovs'kyi

Roman Solchanyk

Oleksandr Burakovs'kyi, a writer and scientist, is cochairman of the Shalom Aleichem Jewish Cultural and Educational Society in Kiev, which was established at the Ukrainian Writers' Union and publishes the bulletin Einikait. *At the Second Congress of "Rukh" in October, 1990, he was elected its deputy chairman and chairman of its Council of Nationalities. A graduate of the Moscow Electrotechnical Institute, Burakovs'kyi holds a candidate of technical sciences degree and is a senior scientific associate of the Kiev Branch of the Scientific Research Institute of Communications. The following interview was conducted in Kiev on December 26, 1990.*

The problem of Ukrainian-Jewish relations has a concrete historical dimension. It is a sensitive and controversial issue that is associated with the times of Hetman Khmel'nyts'kyi—that is, the seventeenth century—and with the pogroms in Ukraine during the period of the liberation struggle and civil war. Certain stereotypes exist here in Ukraine and in the West, specifically the stereotype of a Ukrainian as a "natural anti-Semite." How do you see Ukrainian-Jewish relations in Ukraine today?

This is a very broad topic, and it is simply impossible to address it briefly. If one talks about the historical relations, it is clear that Jews have lived in Ukraine for a thousand years, and the record of their life here has had a great many ups and downs. So, for a people that has lived here for so many generations, it is not easy to give a straightforward answer. As you know, there were pogroms during the Khmel'nyts'kyi period. Recently, I was in Israel with a delegation. In Jerusalem, there is a synagogue and next to it a mosque, both of which were built by Jews who fled the pogroms during the Khmel'nits'kyi period, so the roots go back quite far. The pogroms in 1918 and in the early 1920s were a terrible thing—there were 840 of them—200,000

people were killed; and 700,000 were left homeless and wounded.

Clearly, it is not people who are [natural] anti-Semites because anti-Semitism is something that was inspired by the regime. This can be seen very clearly from the documents. How did anti-Semitism appear? Take the Beilis Case, for example, and it becomes clear where the roots lie.

I referred specifically to this historical dimension as the background to the problem and wanted to put this question to you precisely against that background in order to determine what the situation looks like now. Has it changed to one degree or another? What can be said about Ukrainian-Jewish relations today? After all, we have had five or six years of *perestroika*, the political situation has changed, there are Jewish cultural and educational societies.

The situation today is that Ukraine is now virtually the only place in the Soviet Union where Jews can live really peacefully. I am convinced that this is the case not because there are no anti-Semites here, not because there are no people here who would like to advance those slogans that we hear from "Pamyat'" on the squares of Moscow and Leningrad, but only because "Rukh" is pursuing democratic policies. "Rukh" understands that Jews are not opponents of an independent and sovereign Ukraine. The Ukrainian intelligentsia was the first to call a meeting when, in February, there were rumors of pogroms. These people were almost exclusively "Rukh" members. Jews were afraid to go onto the streets.

In February of this year?

This year. On February 25. I went to the meeting and stood on the improvised platform near the stadium. At first, there were hardly any Jews present, but, later, they began to arrive. They were frightened. You see, this is all a result of the past, which is deeply ingrained in the Jews' memory. This is a genetic memory. It prevents people from immediately accepting that something like this, a change for the better, could occur within these past five years.

I want to tell you that "Rukh" is not a homogeneous mass. Perhaps there are also people there who do not wish Jews well. But it is not they who set the tone in "Rukh." The majority consists of people who understand that the only way is through friendship with all of the nations who live in Ukraine—and there are 127 nations here, not just Jews. At one time there were five million Jews in Ukraine,

in the so-called Yugo-Zapadnyi Krai. Now, there are 500,000 left.[1] Now, they are all leaving. They are leaving because they do not believe that tomorrow will be better than today.

Your reference to the Jewish memory is very interesting. It is something that is often discussed in the Western press. In this connection, I have a concrete question regarding what is happening in Russia. How do you explain this problem, this anti-Semitism, the articles in such journals as *Molodaya gvardiya* and *Nash sovremennik?* In general, how do you explain that there is no "Pamyat'" in Ukraine? Can anything be said about the difference or the reasons for the different situation that exists in Ukraine and how it compares with the situation that we have seen in Russia for several years now?

I repeat. It is only because "Rukh" has come to the defense—one can say it forthrightly—of the Jewish community in Ukraine. It supports Jewish national societies, it takes a stand at meetings with declarations. For example, the First Congress of "Rukh" adopted a resolution against anti-Semitism.[2] About six months ago, a woman representing "Pamyat'" was given the opportunity to present her views on the radio. She spoke for about five minutes and talked about all those things that one could read in *Molodaya gvardiya* and *Nash sovremennik.* But that's where it ended; nothing came of it.

You ask why the situation is such as it is. It is only because "Pamyat'" has strong support [in Russia]. It can go out on Red Square in Moscow and organize a meeting. Here in Ukraine, thank God, it cannot do that. The stand taken by "Rukh" offers people the possibility to expect that tomorrow there won't be any pogroms, although the rumors exist. But "Rukh" cannot somehow deny them. You know, at one time there was a newspaper called *Kievlyanin.* In 1918, it published an article by Vasilii Shul'gin entitled "The Torment of Fear," wherein he writes that those Jews who support the Bolsheviks will experience this torment for a long time unless they abandon their revolutionary ideas and drop the revolutionary cause. Today, we have virtually the same situation. Unknown persons disseminate rumors that tomorrow or in a month there will be pogroms—this is the torment of fear. And not everyone can remain calm and believe that "Rukh" will put an end to this. "Rukh" cannot stand guard by every apartment and defend every individual Jewish family or child. Still, although there may not be any major pogrom, this does not mean there won't be some kind of minor action by people who would like to stir something up that would have very negative consequences.

Clearly, anti-Semitism exists in the entire world. It exists also in Ukraine. How does this anti-Semitism manifest itself today?
What is anti-Semitism? There are many quotes from Lenin on this subject. One of them describes anti-Semitism in terms of the dissemination of negative rumors about Jews and discrimination against Jews. If we take this as the basis for anti-Semitism, then we can cite numerous examples of this kind of negative attitude today. Let's say, when *Leninskoe znamya*, the organ of the Kiev Military District, publishes the names of Heroes of the Soviet Union, people who fought in the Great Fatherland War, but "forgets" to mention the fact that among them were Jews. What is this supposed to be? Loss of memory? Or when newspapers of some parties—now we have many of them—write that they will fight for democratic principles for Ukrainians, forgetting that not only Ukrainians live in Ukraine, but also Russians, Poles, Hungarians, Belorussians, Jews, whatever. If that is the way it is going to be, then such a party should stop calling itself democratic and call itself nationalist.

We know that a great many books were published, let's say, by the Politvydav publishers in Ukraine, on the theme "The Struggle against Zionism." Such books quite simply propagated anti-Semitic slogans. Only recently, a few months ago, just such a book was published by Viktor Hura and two other authors.[3] Our Jewish society came out against the book before it was published, advising the publishers not to put it out, because it is not a scholarly work. It is an echo of dozens of similar old books that simply propagate the idea of struggling against Jews under the cover of struggling against Zionism. But the book was published. This is also dissemination of rumors and anti-Jewish attitudes. This is also anti-Semitism. They say no one is beating you, no one is bothering you, no one is breaking your windows, but [a publication of this kind] is also anti-Semitism. If, for example, a child comes home from school in tears because she is told: "Take off for your Israel, you have nothing here, this is not your home." What is that? A small child does not understand; she cries and tells her mother: "I don't want to be a Jew."

This leads me to the next question—namely, that of emigration. If one compares the census data from 1979 and 1989, one sees a substantial drop in the numbers of Jews. In short, this is the question of emigration. How serious is this problem in Ukraine? Can you imagine a situation whereby, because of Jewish emigration to Israel and other countries, in time the traces of Jewish culture in Ukraine will be lost?

This is a very painful question for me, because I am increasingly coming to the conclusion that the times are such that this emigration has become an exodus.[4] The abandonment by the Jews of their land, their fatherland, the land that they love, is not because, as some would say, they are better off elsewhere, but because they see no future for their children. I can point to the following example. Six months ago, I was in Khust, a town in Transcarpathia that was Jewish, a beautiful town. There is a big synagogue there, a beautiful synagogue that is almost two hundred years old. I talked to the rabbi there, Menachem Yankovych. I asked him the same question that you asked me: "What are we to do? Will there be Jews here tomorrow?" He answered that fifteen years ago there were 15,000 to 20,000 Jews there.

In the city itself?
In the city, in Khust. And now, he said, four families are left, and they, too, are sitting on their suitcases. Entire regions that once had thousands of Jews in small towns are now depleted of Jews; they are leaving. We will soon be talking about Jews in Ukraine, which was a Jewish center in the western regions and in Europe, in the same way that we are talking about the exodus of Jews from Spain, Portugal, England, and, more recently, Poland. This is a very tragic situation. It is tragic not only for the Jews, but also for the Ukrainian people and for all those who live here because this an ethnic exodus. The entire culture that existed here, traditions and folklore, all this is disappearing; it has already virtually disappeared. It can only be revived if all of us work together. But now, the overall situation in Ukraine is so difficult that, perhaps it cannot be done. When a house is burning, you save the children first and then the furniture.

Still, there is your Shalom Aleichem Cultural and Educational Society and other Jewish groups. Here in Kiev, in the kiosks, I bought copies of the newspapers *Einikait*, which is published by your society, and *Vozrozhdenie*. What can you say about these organizations? What kinds of activities are they involved in? Are there any differences, for example, between your organization and the group that publishes *Vozrozhdenie*?
Unfortunately, yes. But maybe that is the way life today should be. Jews today are in many ways a demoralized people. There are reasons for this. There are different people, with different relations among themselves and with society. So it happens that there is not one Jewish society but almost ten in Kiev. You perceived the situation very clearly.

There are two large Jewish groups, and you saw them through their publications. You noticed that *Vozrozhdenie* is published normally and looks very nice; *Einikait* is published by photoffset. But if you look at the contents of both newspapers, you will see opposing views. *Vozrozhdenie* mostly writes that everything is good, everything is fine, that there is virtually no anti-Semitism, that life is so good for Jews. *Einikait* says that there is anti-Semitism, and, in my view, it is telling the truth. Should Jews support "Rukh"? *Einikait* says they should because it promotes an independent Ukraine, a democratic Ukraine. For many decades now, we have had hypocrisy in nationalities policy, and we are sick and tired of it. To continue with this and maintain that everything is fine, to think one thing and say another and do something entirely different seems to me not right. You've seen this. This is precisely the difference between the two societies. One group is trying to utilize the real opportunity for revival and doing something about it; the others mostly talk about it.

In this connection, can one now talk about any concrete attainments? I have in mind the opening of schools, learning the native language, rebirth of the theater. After all, there was a flourishing Jewish cultural life in Ukraine in the 1920s. There were theaters, schools, newspapers. How do things look today?

If you look around, you will see that still, today, the Jewish society does not have its own premises. . . .

You mean your society?

Our society as well as most others. All we have is the possibility to meet at the Ukrainian Writers' Union. In spite of all of our efforts, we do not have a place of our own. They say that there is a Jewish library in Kiev, but there's not. It is a regular library where there is half a room or a couple of shelves with about fifty or sixty Jewish books, and that is why we call it a Jewish library. There is not a single Jewish school in Ukraine. The language is being learned, but for the most part it is Hebrew [rather than Yiddish]. There is nothing to hide here. Most of these people are preparing themselves for emigration to Israel. I do not see anything wrong with this, but, nonetheless, Jews are disappearing from Ukraine. These are the people who could do something for the rebirth of our culture. But this would require learning not only Hebrew, but also Yiddish. Moreover, the language is being learned on a voluntary basis, in some schools or homes, with twenty to fifty

people at the most. When the Ukrainian people's deputies queried the head of Kiev's Public Education Board, he provided figures for Ukrainian and Russian schools and said that there were classes in Polish. As for Jewish classes, he said that there was no demand and, therefore, no classes.

But where is this demand supposed to come from if everything has been destroyed? There were many schools, there were hundreds of Jewish schools in Ukraine in the 1930s. All of this was destroyed. There was 1948 and 1952, which witnessed the destruction of the Jewish intelligentsia. There was the Doctors' Plot, the campaign against cosmopolitanism, and much else. So it is naïve to expect some sort of demand at this time. If you want something to be revived you have to do something in order for such a demand to appear.

Thus far we have talked about cultural and educational matters. What is the religious outlook for Jews in Ukraine? Can one see any positive movement here? I have in mind the opening of synagogues and religious study.

Well, all of this was destroyed. For form's sake, a few synagogues existed in Ukraine, and they continue to exist.[5] In Kiev, there is only one synagogue, on Shchekavyts'ka Street. But Kiev used to have about ten synagogues. The synagogue in the Bessarab area, the so-called Brodsky synagogue, now houses the puppet theater. There was a very large choral synagogue in Victory Square; it now houses the "Transsignal" factory dining room.[6] The synagogue in Uzhhorod houses the philharmonic orchestra; the one in Mukachevo is something else. I already mentioned Khust. At one time there were many, but now they're all gone.

So, there is only one functioning synagogue in Kiev. How long has it been open?

It has been functioning all the time, although I cannot say if it was closed during the most reactionary times. But, if you go there, you will see only a few elderly people who come to pray. Otherwise, young people come in order to meet up with each other because it is a place where they can go. In general, for Jews synagogues are not just a place of worship but a meeting place. But how many people are we talking about? Maybe about twenty. More people come to celebrate the Jewish holidays. So much damage has been done that Jews know very little about their religious holidays. And, if they do go to the synagogues, it is only because they are responding to the call of their

historical memory. The numbers, however, are small. In Kiev, there are 100,000 Jews. And how many come? Twenty or thirty. All of this was destroyed, and people today are afraid to even think about their religious feelings, should such arise.

Even in these times of *perestroika*?

Yes, even now. Now no one has any objections. Please, go and pray. You understand, though, that things do not just happen overnight. It is a very touchy problem. As you know, formally, church and state are separated here, but those people who went to church or to the synagogue were repressed during the times of reaction. This explains the small numbers I mentioned. These are mostly very elderly people. The youth did not go at all because it was very dangerous. So, it is much too early to talk about some kind of revival of religious life now, here in Ukraine. The rabbis are doing a great deal. Still, it seems to me that we do not have a rabbi with the necessary rabbinical training. We now have rabbis coming from the United States and Israel, however. This, too, is an indication of our situation—we do not have our own rabbis in Ukraine. Go anywhere in Ukraine and you will see that the rabbi's role is being performed by someone from the United States, or England, or Israel. We do not have our own.

You are chairman of the "Rukh" Council of Nationalities. One can assume that your work serves the interests of all national minorities in Ukraine. Would you describe briefly the council's activities.

You are right. Things were bad not only for the Jews, but for everyone—Ukrainians, Russians, Hungarians, Poles—for everyone who had some kind of national consciousness. If an individual went outside the boundaries of the norm and wanted to live according to his or her principles, it was impossible. Today, the Council of Nationalities is a very important structure. The point is to revive, above all, the national consciousness of all people, so that they will not be afraid to say that they are German, Hungarian, Polish, Jewish, or Tatar, so that they will have the possibility of maintaining their traditions and culture and living according to the laws of their fathers and grandfathers. If one respects one's own culture, one cannot but respect the cultures of other peoples. These things are interrelated.

But we are confronted with the problem of fear; people are afraid to get involved. We have many national societies: Czechoslovak, Polish, Armenian, the Turkic-speaking peoples, not to mention the

Jews and others. But almost all of them are split into two or three societies, each of which does its own thing. "Rukh" would like to unify all the efforts of these people and their societies, unite them in order that Ukraine become a democratic state, an independent and sovereign republic with equal rights for all. This is a very important and difficult undertaking because one cannot restore in a month or two, or in a year, that which was destroyed over decades.

We are planning to call a session of the Council of Nationalities shortly and bring in new people who will be chosen by the national societies themselves. The regional organizations of "Rukh" are helping us a great deal with this as are the various national societies. But I cannot tell you that everyone is coming to us and that all the national societies are ready to carry on fearlessly with this work. Unfortunately, many of the national societies have taken a wait-and-see attitude, wondering if "Rukh" will exist at all. People are still afraid in spite of five years of *perestroika.* The fear still hangs over them; they are afraid to speak out and make decisions that could later have a boomerang effect.

Still, we hope that this land, this country of our birth, where many generations of our ancestors are buried, will be the native land for all. As I mentioned earlier, I was recently in Israel, and I want to tell you that, talking and meeting with people who left here twenty years ago, one sees how positively they speak of their native land. They would like to visit and see the people. This longing for the fatherland, regardless of where one lives, is present in everyone. This nostalgia is not related to some kind of practical matter; it is nostalgia for the land where one was born. Regardless of where one lives—the United States, Israel, or Australia—if one was born in Ukraine, one is tied to it. And, regardless of what people here say—that those who are leaving, well, let them leave, they are not citizens—that's not so. One must understand why the Germans are leaving, why the Tatars cannot live in Crimea, why the Jews are leaving. First, one must answer the question why these people are doing this. Why do they abandon everything? Everything—their jobs, friends, and property. They abandon everything and leave. One has to understand this. If someone does that, presumably there is a very important reason for it. The motivation here is a social one; it is not a question of individuals. And, only when one understands this, will well-being, happiness, and independence for all return to our land.

We hope that you personally and your society will be successful in your work. Thank you.
Thank you. I very much want this to be so.

NOTES

[1]The 1989 census listed 486,326 Jews in Ukraine, a drop of 23.3 percent as compared with the 1979 census.

[2]See the resolution "Against Anti-Semitism" adopted at the constituent congress of "Rukh," September 8–10, 1989, in *Literaturna Ukraina*, October 5, 1989.

[3]*Sionizm: Mynule i suchasne*, Kiev, Vydavnytstvo politychnoi literatury, 1990, 118 pp. is a collective undertaking by Viktor Konstantynovych Hura (head of the authors' group), Volodymyr Ivanovych Horban', Andrii Viktorovych Dashkevych, and others.

[4]In 1989, according to Soviet sources, 293,000 Jews emigrated from Ukraine. See *Orientir*, 1990, No. 8, cited by *Moloda Halychyna*, September 6, 1990.

[5]According to *Religiya v SSSR*, 1990, No. 11, p. 8, there are currently nineteen functioning synagogues in Ukraine.

[6]See also Mikhail Kal'nitskii, "Sinagogy Kieva," *Vozrozhdenie*, No. 9, November, 1990, p. 3.

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