

The Ukraine is Liberating Itself¹

December 1, 1918

Source : *Works*, Vol. 4, November, 1917 - 1920

Publisher : Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1953

Transcription/Markup : Salil Sen for MIA, 2009

Public Domain : Marxists Internet Archive (2009). You may freely copy, distribute, display and perform this work; as well as make derivative and commercial works. Please credit "Marxists Internet Archive" as your source.

The Ukraine with its natural wealth has long been an object of imperialist exploitation.

Before the revolution the Ukraine was exploited by the Western imperialists quietly, so to speak, without "military operations." French, Belgian and British imperialists organized huge enterprises in the Ukraine (coal, metal, etc.), acquired the majority of the shares and proceeded to suck the blood out of the Ukrainian people in the usual, "lawful" and unobtrusive way.

After the October Revolution the picture changed. The October Revolution snapped the threads of imperialism and proclaimed the land and the factories the property of the Ukrainian people, making it impossible for the imperialists to exploit in the "ordinary," "unobtrusive" way. Imperialism was thus expelled from the Ukraine.

But imperialism had no desire to yield and positively refused to reconcile itself to the new situation. Hence the "necessity" for the forcible enslavement of the Ukraine, the "necessity" for its occupation.

The Austro-German imperialists were the first to undertake the occupation of the Ukraine. The "Rada" and the "Hetmanship," with their "independence," were only playthings and a convenient screen for this occupation, giving outward "sanction" to the exploitation of the Ukraine by the Austro-German imperialists.

Who is not familiar with the endless humiliations and tribulations undergone by the Ukraine during the Austro-German occupation, the destruction of workers' and peasants' organizations, the complete disruption of industry and railway transport, the hangings and shootings, which were such commonplace features of Ukrainian "independence" under the aegis of the Austro-German imperialists?

But the defeat of Austro-German imperialism and the victory of the German revolution have fundamentally changed the situation in the Ukraine. The road is now open for the liberation of labouring Ukraine from the imperialist yoke. The ruination and enslavement of the Ukraine are coming to an end. The fires of revolution now spreading in the Ukraine will consume the last remnants of imperialism and its "national" hangers-on. The "Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government"² which has risen on the tide of revolution will build a new life based on the rule of the Ukrainian workers and peasants. The "Manifesto" of the Ukrainian Soviet Government, which restores the landlords' land to the peasants, the mills and factories to the workers, and full liberty to the labouring and exploit-ed—this historic "Manifesto" will reverberate like thunder through the Ukraine, striking fear into the hearts of its enemies, and ring out like a joyful peal of bells, gladdening and consoling the oppressed sons of the Ukraine.

But the struggle is not yet over, the victory is not yet secure. The real struggle in the Ukraine has only just begun.

At a time when German imperialism is at its last gasp and the "Hetmanship" in its death agony, British and French imperialism is massing forces and preparing to land troops in the Crimea for the occupation of the Ukraine. They, the Anglo-French imperialists, want to fill the place left vacant by the German invaders of the Ukraine. At the same time, a "Ukrainian Directory" ³ is appearing on the scene, headed by the adventurer Petlura, with the slogan of the old "independence" in a "new" form—as a new screen, one more convenient than the "Hetmanship," for the new, Anglo-French, occupation of the Ukraine!

The real struggle in the Ukraine is still to come.

We have no doubt that the Ukrainian Soviet Government will be able to administer a fitting rebuff to the new uninvited guests—the would-be enslavers from Britain and France.

We have no doubt that the Ukrainian Soviet Government will be able to expose the reactionary role of the adventure-seekers of the Vinnichenko-Petlura camp who, willingly or unwillingly, are paving the way for the incursion of the Anglo-French enslavers.

We have no doubt that the Ukrainian Soviet Government will be able to rally around itself the workers and peasants of the Ukraine and lead them with credit to battle and victory.

We call upon all loyal sons of the Soviet Ukraine to come to the aid of the young Ukrainian Soviet Government and help it in its glorious fight against the stranglers of the Ukraine.

The Ukraine is liberating itself. Hasten to its aid!

Zhizn Natsionalnoستي, No. 4 December 1, 1918

Notes

- ¹. This article, with certain alterations, was also published as an editorial in Pravda, No. 261, December 1, 1918.
- ². The Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government of the Ukraine was set up in the latter part of November 1918, its seat being first Kursk, and then Sudja. K. E. Voroshilov and F. A. Sergeyev (Artyom) were among its members. On November 29, 1918, the Ukrainian Soviet Government issued a manifesto announcing the overthrow of the Hetman and the establishment of Soviet power in the Ukraine.
- ³. The Ukrainian Directory—a counter-revolutionary nationalist government formed in Kiev at the close of 1918 by Ukrainian nationalists headed by Petlura and Vinnichenko. It was overthrown by an insurrection of the Ukrainian workers and peasants in February 1919.

[Collected Works Index](#) | [Volume 4 Index](#)
[Works by Decade](#) | [J. V. Stalin Archive](#)
[Marxists Internet Archive](#)