

University of Alberta Easter Week-end Hours, 1984

All Libraries will remain open during the Easter Week-End, April 20 - 23, 1984. Please check postings for opening times and services provided in the Libraries.



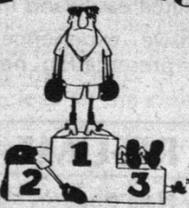
Main Floor SUB
7:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

- Gourmet Coffees
- Deli Sandwiches
- Hot Sandwiches
- Soups
- Salads
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SURSE

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Really All About

DATE: April 11
PLACE: 142 SUB
TIME: 3:00 pm. - 8:00 pm.

All interested students welcome.
Room 278 - Student Union Building
University of Alberta

SECOND WIND

by David Marples

In his feature article (*Gateway*, 3 April 1984), Ken Shipka makes an attempt to describe the "destruction of a nation." Unfortunately — for the subject matter is important — his article soon degenerates into a diatribe against the USSR. It is a collection of half-truths, unsubstantiated statements and downright inaccuracies backed by extremely weak secondary sources (*Time* magazine, *Alberta Report*, *Edmonton Journal*, etc.).

He begins with the statement that Ukrainians coming to Alberta up to the 1920s met with "persecution," yet makes no attempt to define this persecution. It may well be true that the Ukrainians, or Galicians as they were known then, were victims of discrimination on the part of the Canadian government and earlier settlers from other regions of Europe, but Shipka declines to elaborate.

He goes on to state categorically that the Famine was a "holocaust" and that "eight to ten million Ukrainians and Cossacks" were "murdered through starvation." The Soviet emigre demographer Maksudov has spent several years trying to estimate the number of Famine victims. As yet, his findings are unpublished, but the shortfall is believed to be in excess of 4 million persons. The larger figures that are quoted somewhat at random by Shipka and others include estimated population shortfalls, i.e., the unborn. It is known that between 1926 and 1939, the Russian population in the USSR increased by some 15 per cent, while the Ukrainian population declined. This does not detract from the horror of the event itself, of course.

Stalin did not renew his purges in 1937 and 1938, "five years after the man-made famine." The purges were begun after the assassination of the Leningrad party chief, Sergei Kirov, in December 1934, and the purges were "assisted" by restrictive legislation passed by the authorities in the following year. The purges reached a peak in 1936, but had wider causes than the Ukrainian predicament, as Shipka surely knows.

It is true that German treatment of the Slavic peoples was inhuman; it is not true that "within two weeks of Nazi occupation, the Ukrainians organized into an effective underground movement." At first, some Ukrainian nationalists in Lviv, Western Ukraine, operated openly, declaring the formation of an independent Ukrainian state through the Lviv radio station on 30 June 1941. They were rounded up by the Germans and taken to Germany, where they were kept under house arrest. Only in the following year did a Ukrainian insurgent movement arise in the northern part of Ukraine. It owed its origin partly to German atrocities against the local population, but partly to the incursions of Soviet partisans in the area.

The statement that 100,000 anti-Communist Ukrainians volunteered for the German army is also erroneous. There is little evidence that Ukrainians "volunteered" for anything. Only when the tide of the war had turned in the USSR's favour, in the summer of 1943, did the Germans set up an SS Division comprised of Ukrainian troops, which was subsequently defeated by the Red Army in a fight against impossible odds.

Shipka comments that when the "Russians" returned to Ukraine, they faced poorly equipped and trained Ukrainians who were "no match for the Soviet Army." Again, this shows ignorance of the historical record. Upon their reannexation of Ukraine in the summer and fall of 1944, the Soviet authorities faced strong resistance in the countryside, particularly in the western areas that had been annexed from Poland in September 1939. For three years, the combined forces of the MGB, MVD and the army were unable to make headway against the Ukrainian insurgents who resorted to ambushes and assassinations of Soviet officials and sympathizers within the villages. Far from poorly trained, the Ukrainians provided the most substantial resistance ever offered to the Soviet regime in "peace-time."

Shipka's claims that "Russia" has done all in its power to "destroy the language, culture, and religion" of Ukrainians are too sweeping. Soviet history has had its periods of repression and thaws. Khrushchev, for example, initiated a brief respite from Stalinism in 1956. Rather than refer to the columns of the *Edmonton Journal*, the reader might refer to the recent publication *Politics and Society in Soviet Ukraine 1953-1980* by Borys Lewytzkyj (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1984), which contains an excellent account of these events.

The "struggle in Ukraine for freedom," declares Shipka, "has continued to this very day." This is simplistic. There are dissident marxists, dissident nationalists and other groups. What is meant by "freedom?" We hear much about Solzhenitsyn — indeed Shipka quotes from him freely — yet the writer is one of the firmest advocates of the Russification of Ukraine. Shipka, however, equates Soviet and Russian interests, anti-Soviet feeling with anti-Russian feeling. They are not the same thing at all.

Finally, the story of Professor Yar Slavutych is a tragic one. The reader can only respect his resilience and fortitude. His statements on the USSR, however, lack analysis. Indeed, one wonders how students can acquire any understanding of the nature of the Soviet system from statements such as "In Ukraine...you are not even a human being." Or "You are simply a slave..." The Soviet regime has its historical predecessors: Mongol Russia, Ivan IV, Peter I. And in Soviet terms, the current period is considerably more lax than the Stalin years. There have been no reoccurrences of the great purges of the 1930s, for example.

Ukraine has had the misfortune of being dismembered and ruled by foreign occupants throughout much of its history. Yet even this has had its compensations: it was Stalin's USSR, for example, that united East and West Ukraine, thereby generating (wittingly or not) a national resurgence. According to Borys Lewytzkyj, "The Ukrainian people's self-awareness and sense of national identity is greater now than in 1953, and they are at the forefront of the world-wide struggle for the realization of human rights." There is some room for hope, after all.

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CABARETS

Tickets are available from the SUB Box Office (2nd Floor SUB) and various club members.

NOTE: These events are open only to U of A students, staff, and guests.

DINWOODIE

2nd Floor SUB

Proof of age required

Doors 8 PM

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Wednesday, April 11