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# THE UKRAINIAN QUESTION

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and its

**IMPORTANCE TO  
GREAT BRITAIN**

One Shilling

Mr. Lancelot Lawton

ADDRESS

given by

**Mr. LANCELOT LAWTON**

in a

COMMITTEE ROOM

of the

**HOUSE OF COMMONS**

on

*May 29th, 1935.*

*In the Chair :—*

The Rt. Hon. JOHN HILLS, P.C., M.P.

*Published for :—*

ANGLO-UKRAINIAN COMMITTEE,

*Hon. Sec. :—*

F. ASHE LINCOLN, Esq.

1, Essex Court, Temple,

London, E.C.4.

LONDON :

THE SERJEANTS PRESS, LTD.,

164, Aldersgate Street, E.C.1.

1935

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An Appendix containing extracts from  
International treaties and agreements  
defining the juridical position of Ukraine  
is on page 24.

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## ANGLO-UKRAINIAN COMMITTEE.

An Anglo-Ukrainian Committee has been formed in London and has issued the following statement :

"The position of the Ukrainians in Eastern Europe merits the earnest attention of the British public."

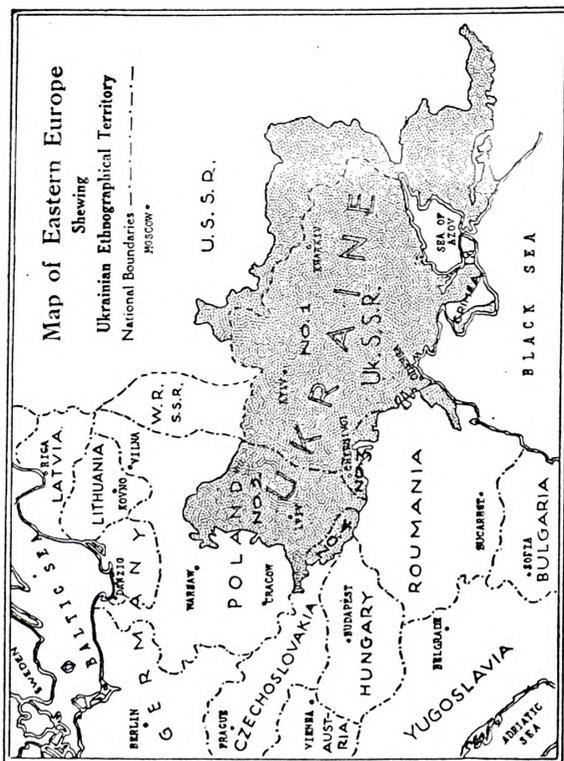
"The ethnographically Ukrainian peoples occupy a more or less contiguous block of territory (greater than that of France and Great Britain) now divided between the U.S.S.R., Poland, Czechoslovakia and Rumania."

"Very few attempts have been made to give justice to the Ukrainians and the continued neglect of this complicated question may ultimately involve all Europe."

"The undersigned have therefore formed a Committee to be known as the Anglo-Ukrainian Committee to watch the situation and to take any action which may be necessary."

The signatories include :—

The Rt. Hon. Lord Dickinson, P.C.  
Mrs. Dugdale  
Dr. G. P. Gooch, M.A., F.B.A.  
The Rt. Hon. John W. Hills, P.C., M.P.  
Mr. Lancelot Lawton  
Mr. C. A. Macartney  
Mr. Geoffrey le M. Mander, M.P.  
Sir Walter Napier  
The Rt. Hon. Lord Noel-Buxton, P.C.  
Professor R. W. Seton-Watson, D.Litt., F.B.A.  
Miss Mary Sheepshanks  
Col. The Rt. Hon. J. C. Wedgwood, D.S.O., M.P.  
Mr. F. Ashe Lincoln, M.A., B.C.L. } Hon.  
Lt.-Col. C. L'Estrange Malone, F.R.Ae.S. } Secs.



## The Ukrainian Question.

### I.

THE chief problem in Europe to-day is the Ukrainian problem. Of deep concern to this country because of its effect upon European peace and diplomacy, it is at the same time closely bound with British interests of a very vital nature. To an extent unrealized by most people, it has been a root of European strife during the last quarter of a century. That so little has been heard of it is not surprising; for suppression of Ukrainian Nationality has been persistently accompanied by obliteration of the very word Ukraine and concealment of the very existence of Ukrainians.

So successfully was this erasure effected that over the greater part of the world, Ukraine only survived in poetry and legend, and invariably it was thought that if ever it existed, it had long been buried in the cemetery of dead and forgotten nations.

That in a period of highly-developed communication and conspicuous intellectual attainment it should have been possible to create the illusion that a nation still vigorously

living had never been born or alternatively that if born it had centuries ago perished, would be astounding but for the fact that in our own time we have had abundant experience of the repressive efficacy of autocracies. The Ukrainian problem, therefore, constitutes one of the major political deceptions of history; it concerns a land which though not at all remote is almost as unknown to us as were, at one time, the exotic lands of Asia and Africa.

Ethnographical Ukraine is from three to four times the size of Great Britain and extends in one continuous whole from the Carpathians to the Caucasus. Of this territory more than two-thirds lie in Soviet Russia; one-sixth in Poland; the rest belongs to Rumania and Czechoslovakia. Thus, Ukraine dismembered, is divided among four States; before the war she was divided between two—Russia and Austria Hungary. The number of Ukrainians in Ukraine is 38 millions, of which 31 millions are in Soviet Ukraine and 5 millions in Polish Ukraine. In addition, many Ukrainians live outside Ukraine; altogether, the total number of Ukrainians in the world is not less than 45 millions. We have, therefore, to deal with a nationality which is as numerous as the British; and as we have seen with a territory much larger than Great Britain. Indeed, if Ukraine were to be reunited and freed, excluding Russia, it would be the largest and most numerous populated State of Eastern Europe. Nor would it be an exaggeration to say that in such circumstances Ukraine would be richer in resource than any other State in Eastern Europe; it must, of course, be understood here that I am including in the comparison only Russia in Europe, that is without Siberia.

The Ukrainian problem is not a problem of a petty Minority with grievances of recent growth. It is rooted in antiquity. I feel, therefore, that I must deal briefly with

history before coming to present conditions; for an understanding of the historical background is essential to an appreciation of the present situation.

How did the Ukrainian Nation come into existence? When we think of the ancient pre-European World we have always particularly in mind Greece and Rome. We forget that what is now called Ukraine was, too, one of the World's most significant and most coveted territories. Here among the Scythians eight hundred years before Christ were established thriving Greek commercial colonies on the banks of the river now known as the Dnieper, one at its mouth being called "the prosperous" city. Of this river, Herodotus wrote that because of the vast quantity and variety of its fish and the rich fertility of the land through which it flowed, it was, with the exception of the Nile, the most productive of all rivers in the world. Here at later periods from the banks of the Dnieper various peoples originating from the East, with names famous in history, spread Westwards and some of these were among the most formidable foes of the Roman Empire. Historians differ as to how from these movements and minglings the Slavonic race emerged. But none, I think, deny that in Russia the Slavonic race first manifested itself in Ukraine.

How was it then that the Eastern Slavs divided into two branches; Ukrainian and Russian or Great Russian? From the ninth century invaders came from the West as before they had set out from the East. These invaders were the Varangians, consisting of Swedes, Danes, Frisians, Angles and Normans, who made their way to the South. Here they found Kiev already established, a prosperous tributary of the powerful and cultured Chozar Empire, whose people had embraced the Hebrew Faith and whose capital was at the mouth of the distant Volga. The Varangians came to trade with Slavs and Finns; and remained

to rule. Hence rose the Principality of Kiev or in the language of later time, Ukraine.

Maintaining constant intercourse with foreign lands, it was a nation among nations, strong and respected. Contemporary Germans rated its cultural achievement as not below that of Byzantium with whom it was in close relationship; and foreigners who visited the country before its conversion to Christianity came across translations of the New Testament.

The Ukrainians rightly look back to Kievan "Russ" as the true embryo of their nation. It was in fact from the twelfth century that this territory was commonly called Ukraine, the meaning of which was outpost or frontier. Ukraine was a frontier-State, the last outpost of Europe before Asia was reached. For several centuries it kept at bay fiercely attacking Asiatic hordes, only to fall ultimately under Tartar domination.

And now we come to a development of supreme importance. It is of supreme importance because most Russians are very unscientific and unintelligent about Ukraine and do not want to admit that there is such a people as Ukrainians. Owing to unsettled conditions resulting from war and invasion, in the twelfth century an efflux from the fertile steppe of Ukraine set in during the twelfth century. This efflux proceeded in two streams, one to the North and East, the other to the West—to Galicia and Volhynia, called "Little Russia" by the newcomers, a name now heard for the first time.

Such divergence left Kievan Russ, or Ukraine as it came to be called, in the Middle Ages, much as it was but led to the creation of semi-Asiatic Muscovy. From then on, in spite of all attempts to Muscovise the Ukrainians, the two nations lived distinct and separate lives. The historical development thus described originated in this way.

To the North and East there was nothing but forest and swamp inhabited by degenerate Mongol—Finnish tribes with whom the migrants of the first-mentioned stream freely inter-married. From their fusion the Russian and Great Russian stock emerged, typically Eurasian both in appearance and mentality.

Even Kluchevski, the classic Russian historian, ascribes to it a special National Character, and says that the physiognomy of the Great Russian does not by any means reproduce everyone of the features generally characteristic of the Slavs. Thus he distinguishes it definitely from the Southern Russian Ukrainian stock.

In later years descendants of the refugees who fled to the West returned to Ukraine. The chief point to be borne in mind here is that from the beginning of authentic history Ukrainians have preserved the non-Mongolian or Western European quality of their race, and with it a strong consciousness of nationhood.

It was Platonov, a Russian not a Ukrainian historian, who said that because Southern Russia was further away from the capital of the Tartars on the Volga it felt their oppression less than did North-Eastern Russia. Yet it must not be forgotten that it was because of this Ukrainian barrier that Europe was able to build up its Medieval civilisation, free from Mongol menace.

While the Tartars were still in Ukraine two powerful neighbours, Poland and Lithuania, encroached upon her; no sooner were the Mongol invaders driven out than they fastened their hold upon her territories, a conquest cemented and extended by the union between them in 1569. At this time, too, the estuaries of all the rivers flowing into the Black Sea were held by forces of the Crimean Khan who was under the protection of the Turks. In the North the semi-Asiatic State of Muscovy, which proclaimed itself

to be the third and last Rome, was growing in might, and was also stretching out towards Ukrainian lands. Thus, then as now, much desired Ukraine was conquered and beset on all sides. From this strife the Cossacks emerged. Fierce, fanatically brave, clean-living, and not infrequently opportunist, called brigands by their foes and knights by their friends, they asserted in vigorous picturesque manner the freedom-loving not less than the stubborn spirit of the Ukrainian race.

A Polish King, Stephan Batory, said of them: "They are against a union of Poland and Ukraine," and then he added wistfully and prophetically, "Some day an independent State will spring from this scum." On fortified islands below the cataracts of the Dnieper they founded a democratic military republic, one of the earliest manifestations of national self-determination. Authority reposed in a General Assembly, whose decisions were enforced by elective officers, the Chief of whom was called Hetman. Desperately they fought to avoid the serfage which the Poles sought to rivet upon them. Then in the middle of the seventeenth century they found a great leader, Bohdan Khmelnitzki, who gained successive victories over the Poles and compelled them to withdraw from Ukraine.

This period marked the full realization of Ukrainian nationality. All Europe rang with news of the exploits of Ukrainian arms. Khmelnitzki was compared with Cromwell who among other rulers sent an ambassador to him. In marked contrast with the primitive backwardness of Muscovy, the intellectual attainments of Ukraine were high. An academy of learning had been established at Kiev and ordinary schools were scattered up and down the country. A distinguished Arab scholar, Paul of Aleppo, who visited these parts about the time wrote: "Although a stranger I felt myself at home in the Ukraine. But in Muscovy my

heart felt heavy, for wherever I went no one was even a little free. . . . Those who want to shorten their life by fifteen years must go to the land of Muscovy. In Ukraine I found joy in life, freedom and civilisation. The Ukrainians are learned. They like science and study the law. They know rhetoric, logic and philosophy. Practically all the inhabitants can read and write. Their wives and daughters know the liturgy and religious singing. And their children, even orphans, learn to read and write."

Peace was short-lived. In 1651, the struggle between the Poles and the Cossacks was renewed. Hard pressed the Cossacks sought an alliance with Muscovy. A treaty was concluded which recognised the independence of Ukraine with but one reservation; she could not have dealings either with the King of Poland or the Sultan of Turkey without knowledge of Moscow. But soon the Tsar sent large forces into Ukraine and after a severe struggle annexed it. The Cossack revolt continuing, he resolved in turn to seek the aid of Poland and divided the Ukraine with that country. Still the resistance of the Cossacks went on notably under Mazeppa; until finally at Poltava in 1709 the Swedes, with whom they had made common cause, were crushed by Peter the Great. Despotism, believing herself to be the heir to Byzantium, could not tolerate the existence of a free Cossack or Ukrainian State which formed a barrier to the Black Sea littoral.

There were further abortive Cossack risings and in 1764 Catherine the Great finally abolished the Hetmanship and deprived the Cossacks of what privileges remained to them. In the several partitions of Poland which took place between 1772 and 1795, Ukraine too was partitioned; Galicia went to Austria, and the greater part of Ukraine was left to Russia.

We have seen that Ukrainian Nationality is a Reality

with at least a thousand years of authentic history behind it. No nation has struggled more valiantly to assert its independence than it has done; the soil of Ukraine is soaked in blood. Because of its gifts, its lovely climate and its unique situation on one of the world's great cross-roads, it has been continually invaded and oppressed; dismembered and divided. Allying itself first with this nation and then with that in the hope that it might survive it has always been betrayed.

## II.

Throughout the nineteenth and the early part of the present century up to the War, the Ukrainians found no relief from their sufferings. Persistently they were slandered by their neighbours. Professor Clark of Cambridge University who visited these parts in 1800 related that he was told by Russians that the Ukrainians were unprincipled, but when he went to Ukraine he found, to use his own words, that "the Ukrainians are superior to the Russians in everything that can exalt one man above another," and that they were distinguished for their scrupulous cleanliness and high artistic qualities. In 1812 the Ukrainian problem occupied Napoleon who was counselled by Talleyrand to create a Ukrainian State under the name Napoleoneed.

The first Ukrainian National Movement of modern times which began in 1846 had modest federalist aims but it was mercilessly suppressed by the Russian Police, its leaders being arrested and sent into exile. From the beginning crude attempts were made to uproot Nationality from

the hearts of the people. Ukrainian literature and to a large extent also the Ukrainian language, were prescribed, and even adherence to simple national customs was forbidden. As late as February 24, 1914, Miliukov, the Russian Statesman, was moved to protest "In reality," he said, "we have here to deal with a National Movement, the object of which is autonomy, the rebuilding of Russia on federalistic lines. . . . The Ukrainian Movement is thoroughly democratic. It is impossible to crush it."

The deliberate policy of Russia was to avoid and discourage mention of Ukraine abroad. From the Middle Ages down to the eighteenth century Ukraine figured largely in European literature. But after the first half of the nineteenth century the West was made to forget that there was or had been such a nation.

The fate of the Ukrainians in Galicia under Austria-Hungary was also not too happy; but it was better than that of Ukrainians in Autocratic Russia. They were permitted to use their own language, and although they were handed over to their hereditary enemy, the Polish aristocracy, their Nationality was allowed for, and a basis for its progressive recognition was secured.

Each of the two great Powers between whom Ukraine was divided stimulated the National Movement in the territory of the other. In particular, Russia was alarmed at the awakening of Ukrainian Nationality in Galicia. Her semi-official newspapers pointed out that its effect was to render all the more difficult the suppression of the Ukrainian National Movement within Russia. Thereupon a hypocritical agitation began for the liberation of the millions of Ukrainians languishing in Galicia under a heavy foreign yoke.

A fact not so widely known as it should be is that one of the major causes of the War was the conflict between

Russia and Austria over the Ukrainian question. Another fact also not generally recognised, is that the discontent of the Ukrainians contributed largely to bring about the defeat and downfall of Russia.

Beginning with the first rising against the Tsarist Government, as far back as 1825, that of the Decembrists, they have been active participators in all revolutionary movements, associating at different times with groups of Russians, Poles, Caucasians, or any other Nationality who sought to overthrow the Autocracy, and not infrequently masquerading as revolutionary socialists that they might thereby further their Nationalist aims. During the Crimean War they made an attempt to revive their ancient Cossack military organization, with a view to taking the field against the Tsar's forces; and they gave support to the Polish Rising in 1831.

Their heart was not in the Great War for which their whole man power was conscripted and which was fought for the self-determination of Nationalities but not of the Ukrainian. And, finally, it was their implacable hostility to the Chauvinistic slogan of a one and indivisible Russia that was directly responsible for the collapse of the White Armies in the Civil War, that followed the Bolshevik seizure of power.

After the revolution the Ukrainians proclaimed their independence, set up a National Assembly, and fought desperately against Whites and Reds, being eventually overcome by Bolshevik Muscovy. The Treaty of Versailles effected the dismemberment of Ukraine outside Soviet Russia and, while agreeing to the independence of Poland, handed over the Ukrainians in Galicia to the rule of their ancient enemy. An old Cossack proverb says: "As long as the Dnieper flows friendship between Cossack and Pole will be impossible," a sentiment re-echoed by Mazeppa in

these words: "As long as the world will be the world, Pole will not know how to be brother to Ukrainian."

In 1923, the Council of Ambassadors affirmed what Poland herself had already recognised that as far as Eastern Galicia was concerned the ethnographical conditions necessitated an autonomous regime; so far, in spite of frequent representations to the League of Nations and other quarters, nothing has been done to give effect to this decision. The point of view of the Poles now appears to be that there is no such thing as a Ukrainian, and that Poles and Ukrainians are and always have been one. As attempts were once made to Russify them which they resisted with all their strength, so they are striving to Polonize the Ukrainians, and alternately to depress and submerge them by starving them of educational, land-acquisition and other facilities; and the Ukrainians too are resisting with all their strength.

Nor does repression of Ukrainians always take such open forms. By various subtle and subterranean devices it is conveyed to minor officials as, for instance, railway employees, that if they do not change their religion from the Ukrainian Uniate Church to the Polish Roman Catholic Church they will lose their posts, and consequently they and their families will become destitute. One instance of the effect of this pressure may be cited from the town of Lemberg. From 1926 to 1930 the number of Ukrainians who reluctantly abandoned the Faith of their people to adopt that of their rulers increased from 174 to 586, and each year there was a steady rise.

Deeds such as I have mentioned are of course contrary to the Treaty of Versailles, which was intended to safeguard the rights of Minorities; and they have been the subject of many petitions to the League of Nations. But

so far that body has not been able to take any steps to secure justice for the Ukrainians.

At the meeting of the Assembly of the League of Nations on September 13th, 1934, M. Beck, speaking on behalf of Poland, repudiated her obligations under the Minority treaties. The actual words he used were that the Polish Government

"finds itself compelled to refuse as from to-day all co-operation with the international organizations in the matter of the supervision of the application by Poland of the system of Minority protection."

To which the British representative, I am glad to say, replied with a strong protest. Yet it would appear that the Polish Government is living up to M. Beck's repudiation, for at a later meeting of the Council, the Polish delegate walked out when a Minority question was being discussed.

Lastly, it is deliberately sought to eliminate the Ukrainians as a political factor. Recently a fundamental measure frankly discriminating against the Ukrainians was introduced by the Polish Government. It took the form of a new Constitution, the effect of which will be practically to exclude the Minorities as such from representation in the Polish Parliament, and any Ukrainian representation will be at the discretion of the Polish authorities.

Methods of struggle which the Poles regarded as virtuous when they themselves employed them against the Tsarist Government they now condemn when they are used by Ukrainians. These methods have been at times conspiratorial and even terroristic. But how else can the Ukrainians act since they are abandoned by the rest of the world? It should be noted that the Poles, too, were frequently unwise, cruel and aggressive.

Nor in Rumania are the Ukrainians any better off.

In spite of the safeguards of the Minorities Treaty signed at Paris in December 9th, 1919, these members of a proud and gifted Nation are treated as a despised community. Their schools have been closed; and they are prohibited from speaking their own language, one of the most beautiful of all Slav tongues.

The Ukrainians in Czechoslovakia are probably better treated than in any other country. This assertion was, I think, borne out in the article written by Dr. Hugh Dalton, late Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in the "New Statesman and Nation" of May 18th, 1935.

Lastly we come to Soviet Ukraine where two-thirds of the total Ukrainian population live. Here the question will be asked: Is there really a Ukrainian National Movement under Bolshevism? It is one that may best be answered in the words of the Soviet leaders themselves. At the seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party held in January, 1934, Stalin used these words:

"Only very recently in the Ukraine the deviation towards Ukrainian Nationalism did not represent the major danger; but when we ceased to fight against it and enabled it to grow to the extent that it joined up with the interventionists this deviation became the major danger."

and still later in a speech reported on February 14th of this year, Lubchenko, Chairman of the Council of Commissars of the Ukraine said:

"There was a period when the Ukrainian Nationalists carried on their work in the Ukraine not without success. This was in 1931-32. Taking advantage of the weakening of class vigilance the nationalist elements, enemies of the Ukrainian people, wormed their way at that time into the collective farms, the agrarian organs and the system of public education. They came into close alliance with the adherents of the nationalist deviators within the Party who were led by Skrypniuk.

They came out in a united front with the white-guards, the Trotskyites and the Rights, having united on a platform of secession of the Ukraine from the Soviet Union."

In the year alluded to it was discovered that numerous Ukrainian Communists were Nationalists in disguise, and that they had got control of newspapers and important institutions, including the Commissariats of Education and Agriculture, the only two departments of consequence left to the Ukrainians. Mass executions followed.

I have given but one example of the assertion of the National spirit in Soviet Ukraine. Actually, ever since the Revolution this spirit has been in revolt against a tyranny much more cruel than that of which it was the successor. No one knows how many Ukrainian patriots have been shot or exiled; but there is reason to believe that the number is very large.

Nor must it be supposed that Nationalism was manifested only by the educated classes. Ninety per cent. of the Ukrainian population consists of peasantry; and to them Western Europe is indebted for having saved it from Bolshevism.

Before the Revolution the Ukrainian peasants were for the most part individual farmers and, unlike the peasants of Russia, did not belong to the primitive commune which Marx foresaw might serve as a starting point for World Communism and revolution. It was thanks chiefly to this national peculiarity that after the Revolution they resisted so vigorously the Government requisitioning of grain, of which Ukraine was the chief source of supply. The deep and widespread impoverishment which resulted was an effectual frustration of the malevolent aims of Bolshevism. Millions of lives were lost in the struggle; and in 1932-33 a great famine desolated Ukraine. Of this famine

the Soviet Government denied the existence, though the evidence of its occurrence and severity was overwhelming. It was clear that, when the enormous growth of the population of the Soviet Union—three millions annually—was taken into account, when also the officially admitted heavy losses of grain during and subsequent to harvesting—from thirty to fifty per cent. were considered, then severe hunger was bound to occur. It could not be otherwise.

The MANCHESTER GUARDIAN, which certainly cannot be considered an anti-Soviet organ, in a leading article on December 27th, 1934, referring to the famine said:

"For a long time the Russian Dictatorship was able to conceal from the eyes of the world what was incomparably the biggest economic calamity that had afflicted Europe for more than a decade."

Some idea of the extent of the calamity may be gained from the evidence of Mr. W. H. Chamberlin, for many years and until recently Moscow Correspondent of the "Christian Science Monitor." Writing in that paper on May 29th, 1934, he said:—

"It would seem highly probable that in 1932-33, between 4,000,000 and 5,000,000 people over and above the normal mortality rate, lost their lives from hunger and related causes."

At the acutest period the central authority took no relief measures; thus the conclusion appeared to be unavoidable that this indifference of Red Moscow was a reprisal to the Nationalism of Ukraine, and it is strengthened by the statement made at the time by Kalinin (President of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R.): "The peasants have this year passed through a good school. For some this school was quite ruthless."

Yet according to the terms of its Constitution Soviet Ukraine is an independent and sovereign State. In treaty

relations with it even the Moscow Government recognized it as such, but that did not deter them from reducing it to vassalage, and thus repeating the great Muscovite treachery of the seventeenth century. As in the Tsarist epoch everything is done that can be done to bind Ukraine to Russia. Ukrainian enterprises have been incorporated in All-Union Trusts, with headquarters at Moscow. The Donetsk coal region has been connected with Moscow by a main line, and a continuous system of waterways is being created from Leningrad to the Black Sea.

Moscow says to-day as it said in the days of the Tsars: "We cannot live without Ukraine. It is the most fertile part of the Soviet Union. It feeds us. Moreover, we depend upon it for coal and iron."

We need not stop to discover whether in this era one Nation is justified in crushing another because it has need of its resources; for there are other means of gaining access to minerals and grain than by conquest. In the Urals and Siberia, Soviet Russia possesses enormous reserves of coal and iron-ore; which she is now exploiting on a great scale; and as for grain supplies it is necessary only to quote this passage from the speech which Stalin delivered at the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party last year: "First of all," he said, "we must bear in mind that the old division of our regions into industrial regions and consuming regions has now become obsolete. This year consuming regions like the Moscow and Gorky regions delivered nearly 80,000,000 poods of grain to the State. This, of course, is not a bagatelle. In the so-called Consuming zone there are about 5,000,000 hectares of soil. If this land were cleared of scrub it would be possible to obtain a supply of commodity-grain not less than now produced in the Lower and Middle Volga. Finally, there is the question of combating drought in the Trans-Volga region.

We must have a large and stable grain-base on the Volga capable of producing 200,000,000 poods yearly. This is absolutely necessary in view of the growth of towns on the Volga on the one hand, and the possibilities of complications in the sphere of international relations on the other."

Can it be that Moscow fears that the day may come when she will be forced to withdraw her army of occupation from Ukraine and that she is making preparation to survive as a great Eurasian Power?

The apprehension of Stalin is based upon what is common knowledge, that Germany and Poland have designs upon Ukraine, and that they will be ready to march Eastwards before the Red Army is prepared to march into Europe in the still cherished cause of World Revolution.

In "Mein Kampf," Hitler plainly said that Germany must turn away from the West, and that her first aim must be to expand Eastwards into Russian lands. Since he came to power all his declarations and many of his actions have been in harmony with the passage cited. One of his chief lieutenants, Rosenberg, himself a Baltic German, is an open advocate of annexing Ukraine to Germany. Then support is given to General Skoropadsky, formerly A.D.C. to the Tsar and Commander of an Imperial Russian Army Corps, whose forefather was set up as Hetman by Peter the Great after Mazeppa's attempt to free Ukraine from Russian domination; rather similarly General Skoropadsky was set up as Hetman under the protection of the invading German armies in 1918, a position to which he aspires again at the present time. What then occurred is fully described in an official handbook prepared under the direction of the Foreign Office and published by the Stationery Office.

It appears to me that any purely German sphere of influence of Ukraine would be contrary to the political and

economic interests of the British Commonwealth of Nations. If I interpret Ukrainian Nationalism rightly it desires a democratic regime and real independence not dictatorship and tutelage. It is of the West and has always longed to be with the West. I imagine that our sympathies will be with these aspirations. Half-a-million Ukrainians are British subjects in Canada, and 10,000 of them voluntarily enlisted in the Great War. But apart from sentiment, important British interests are involved in the Ukrainian problem. Ukraine with its coast-line on the Black Sea lies on the last stretch of the highway from the North to South of Europe. Through it also passes the nearest land route from Central Europe to Persia and India. The possession of Ukraine enabled Tsarist Russia to cast eyes upon the Balkans and the Straits, to threaten Turkey, control the Caucasus and bring pressure upon Persia.

England is not concerned to play the role of a conspiratorial power backing an irredentist effort. But the conditions in Ukraine, where the independence movement has assumed great proportions, are such that something is bound to happen. Many times in the past years, as I have shown, Ukraine has proved the danger spot of Europe. It has again become so. Britain must therefore be informed and have ready a policy to meet her own interests in any emergency which may arise. She must not be caught un-awares.

Thus it would be hypocrisy to deny that an independent Ukraine is as essential to this country as to the tranquility of the world. Merely because it is inconvenient to consider it and highly so to attempt its solution, the problem has too long been ignored. But it is a problem which has deep and intricate roots in history and in its modern form has assumed extreme urgency. Voltaire noted

admiringly the persistence with which Ukrainians aspired to freedom and remarked that being surrounded by hostile lands, they were doomed to search for a Protector.

Until they are assured of liberty they will be faithless to whichever State they are bound and will continue freely to shed their own blood and that of their conquerors. So long, too, as this situation continues other nations will be tempted to exploit it. What then is the use of pretending that there is peace when there is no peace? Nor will there be any until this Ukrainian question is satisfactorily disposed of.

## APPENDIX.

### *Memorandum of the juridical position of Ukraine.*

The ethnographically Ukrainian peoples occupy a more or less contiguous block of territory now divided between the U.S.S.R., Poland, Czechoslovakia and Rumania.

The juridical position of the Ukrainians in these territories is well defined by international treaties and agreements to many of which this country is a signatory, and this fact justifies the interest of the British people quite apart from the fact that the conditions in that part of Europe are extremely critical.

The juridical position of these territories is as follows :

#### UKRAINIANS IN THE U.S.S.R.

The independence of Ukraine was proclaimed by its Parliament, the Central Rada, on January 22nd, 1918. France was the first country to recognise Ukraine sending M. Tabouis as her representative. She was followed by Great Britain whose representative was Mr. Picton Bagge, and subsequently by Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey. Later, Ukraine was recognised by Finland,

Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Argentine. Diplomatic missions were sent by the State of Ukraine to all European capitals. On December 17th, 1917, the Ukrainian government received a document signed by Lenin and Trotsky, which contained at the same time both a recognition of Ukraine and an ultimatum. The letter read as follows :—

“Taking into consideration the fraternal bond and the unity of interests of the working classes in their struggle for the realisation of socialism as well as the principles constantly proclaimed by the resolutions of the organisations of the revolutionary democracy—the Soviets—and by the Second General Congress of the Russian Soviets—the Russian Socialist government—the Council of the People’s Commissaries recognise once again the right of the free disposition of all nations oppressed by Czarism and the Russian bourgeoisie even to the separation of these nations from Russia.”

“Thus we, the Council of Commissaries of the Russian people, recognise the democratic Ukrainian Republic, its right to separate from Russia or to begin pourparlers with the Russian Republic with a view to entering into federal or other relations with the latter.”

“We the Council of People’s Commissaries, recognise everything that concerns the national rights and national independence of the Ukrainian people without limitation or conditions.”

Dated December 4th, 1917, and published in the official Organ of the Provisional government of workers and soldiers, No. 26 of December 6th, 1917, and at Geneva in the documents of the First Assembly of the League of Nations, No. 88/20.

On the 3rd January, 1918, discussions were commenced, but at the same time fighting continued in certain parts; but the recapture of Kiev in March, 1918, by the Ukrainian army and the presence in Ukraine of Austrian

and German troops resulted on June 12th, 1918, in an armistice between Russia and Ukraine, and a conference took place at Kiev at which Mr. Christian Rakovsky was the appointed first delegate and Mr. Manouilsky the second delegate on behalf of the Soviets. In the letter of credentials signed by Lenin, Karahan and others, delegates were definitely appointed to meet "with the representatives of the Ukrainian government to conclude peace between the Socialist Federal Republic of Soviet Russia and the Ukrainian government." This was a further indication that the government of Moscow recognised Ukraine as an independent country.

It must be further pointed out that technically, at any rate, according to the Soviet Constitution Ukraine is permitted to secede. The Constitution of the U.S.S.R. explicitly states that: "each United Republic retains the right to free withdrawal from the Union."

The Treaty of Riga signed on March 18th, 1921, between Poland on the one hand and Russia on the other, acting on behalf of the White Ruthenian and Ukrainian governments, contained clauses for the reciprocal protection of their minorities, of which details are given below.

#### UKRAINIAN TERRITORY IN POLAND.

So far as Poland is concerned the territory of Eastern Galicia was only included within the Polish State as a result of definite undertakings entered into by the Polish government which have not been carried out.

Eastern Galicia could not have been included within Poland had this State conformed with President Wilson's thirteenth point that "an independent Polish State should

be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations."

The British delegation at the Paris Peace Conference, feeling strongly the necessity of securing a free expression of the will of these border peoples, put forward the view that sooner or later the Ukrainians must be given a real opportunity for self-determination.

Circumstances placed Poland in possession of Eastern Galicia and the Allied and Associated Powers were presented with the *fait accompli* of Polish occupation.

In spite of strong protests from the British delegation, the Supreme Council on June 25th, 1919, permitted the Poles to occupy Eastern Galicia in the military sense, whilst, however, reserving to this area the right of self-determination.

The British suggestion that a High Commissioner should at the same time be appointed by the Allies to safeguard Ukrainian interests was rejected.

The decision of the Supreme Council was as follows:

"In order to safeguard the persons and property of the peaceful population of East Galicia against the dangers to which they were exposed by Bolshevik bands, the Supreme Council of the Allied and Associated Powers has decided to authorise the forces of the Polish Republic to pursue their operations as far as the River Zbrucz. This authorisation does not in any way prejudice the decisions that the Supreme Council may take ultimately to regulate the political status of Galicia."

The decision was conveyed to the Ukrainian Delegation in the following form on July 11th, 1919:—

"The Polish government will be authorised to establish civil government in Eastern Galicia after having concluded with the Allied and Associated Powers an agreement of which the clauses shall, as far

as possible, safeguard the autonomy of the territory as well as the political, religious and personal liberty of the inhabitants."

"This agreement will rest on the right of self-determination which in the last resort the inhabitants of East Galicia will exercise as to their political allegiance; the time when this right shall be exercised shall be fixed by the Allied and Associated Powers or by the body to which they may delegate this power." Paris, July 11th, 1919.

A Statute which would have given a mandate over Eastern Galicia to Poland for only twenty-five years with a considerable measure of Home Rule and a provision that at the end of that time the League of Nations should consider the whole question afresh, was agreed to by the Paris Conference on November 25th, 1919, but, on French initiative, was shelved on December 22nd, 1919.

On March 15th, 1923, the Conference of Ambassadors at Paris decided to recognise as the frontier of Poland towards the East, a line which assigned Eastern Galicia to the Polish government subject to certain very definite limitations and safeguards.

The two relevant, consecutive and dependent paragraphs embodying the provisos upon which this decision was based are as follows:—

"Whereas it is recognised by Poland, that as far as the Eastern part of Galicia is concerned, the ethnographical conditions necessitate an autonomous regime";

"Whereas the Treaty concluded between the Principal Allied and Associated Powers and Poland, on June 28th, 1919, provided for all the territories placed under the sovereignty of Poland, special guarantees in favour of the minorities either of race, language or religion."

The decision was signed by the representatives of

Great Britain, Italy, France and Japan and countersigned by Mons. Maurice Zamoyski on behalf of the Polish government.

Thus at the urgent request of the League of Nations a new area had been defined by this solemn international treaty, definitely based upon the double guarantees of autonomy and the Polish Minorities Treaty of 1919, whose provisions had already been placed under the guarantee of the League of Nations. (For details of Minorities Treaty see below.)

The conditions under which Eastern Galicia was placed under Polish sovereignty were emphasised by Mr. Bonar Law, then Prime Minister of Great Britain, when on March 20th, 1923, in the British House of Commons, he said in reply to Sir John Simon, who asked for details concerning the decision of the Conference of Ambassadors:—

"The conditions are that Poland, which has been in occupation of the country for three or four years, has recognised that the ethnographical conditions make autonomy necessary in that region."

Many years have elapsed since this decision was taken by the Conference of Ambassadors. There is no Home Rule in Eastern Galicia. The Polish government have made no effort whatever to honour their signature to the decision, by fulfilling the obligation which was the condition under which the Allied and Associated Powers accepted the inclusion of Eastern Galicia within the Polish frontiers.

The attitude of the British Government to this question has recently been restated. As recently as April 26th, 1933, Sir John Simon said that "The views of His Majesty's Government on the desirability of an autonomous regime in Eastern Galicia are expressed in that sentence and still remain unchanged." (The sentence referred to is the Decision of the Conference of Ambassadors.)

In addition to the above-mentioned question of autonomy, Poland signed the Treaty of Versailles on June 28th, 1919, and by Article 93 Poland accepted and agreed to embody in a treaty with the Principal Allied and Associated Powers such provisions as might be deemed necessary by the Powers to protect the interests of the inhabitants of Poland who differ from the majority of the population in race, language or religion. In pursuance of this article a separate Minorities Treaty bearing the same date—June 28th, 1919, was signed at Versailles by the United States of America, the British Empire, France, Italy and Japan on the one hand; and Poland. This Treaty gave or was intended to give, special protection to minorities in general. The relevant articles were as follows:—

*Article 2.*—“Poland undertakes to assure full and complete protection of life and liberty to all inhabitants of Poland without distinction of birth, nationality, language, race or religion.

“All inhabitants of Poland shall be entitled to the free exercises, whether public or private, of any creed, religion or belief, whose practices are not inconsistent with public order or public morals.”

*Article 7.*—“All Polish nationals shall be equal before the law and shall enjoy the same civil and political rights without distinction as to race, language or religion.

“Differences of religion, creed or confession shall not prejudice any Polish national in matters relating to the enjoyment of civil or political rights, as, for instance, admission to public employments, functions and honours, or the exercise of professions and industries.

“No restriction shall be imposed on the free use by any Polish national of any language in private intercourse, in commerce, in religion, in the press or in publications of any kind, or at public meetings.

“Notwithstanding any establishment by the Polish

Government of an official language, adequate facilities shall be given to Polish nationals of non-Polish speech for the use of their language, either orally or in writing, before the courts.”

*Article 8.*—“Polish nationals who belong to racial, religious or linguistic minorities shall enjoy the same treatment and security in law and in fact as the other Polish nationals. In particular, they shall have an equal right to establish, manage and control at their own expense charitable, religious and social institutions, schools and other educational establishments with the right to use their own language and to exercise their religion freely therein.”

*Article 9.*—“Poland will provide in the public educational system in towns and districts in which a considerable proportion of Polish nationals of other than Polish speech are residents adequate facilities for ensuring that in the primary schools the instruction shall be given to the children of such Polish nationals through the medium of their own language. This provision shall not prevent the Polish Government from making the teaching of the Polish language obligatory in the said schools.

“In towns and districts where there is a considerable proportion of Polish nationals belonging to racial, religious or linguistic minorities, these minorities shall be assured an equitable share in the enjoyment and application of the sums which may be provided out of public funds under the State, municipal or other budget, for educational, religious or charitable purposes.

“The provisions of this Article shall apply to Polish citizens of German speech only in that part of Poland which was German territory on August 1st, 1914.”

This Treaty has been the subject of many petitions from the Ukrainian Minority to the League of Nations.

The Treaty of Riga signed on March 18th, 1921, between the Government of the Polish Republic and the

Government of the Federal Socialist Republic of the Russian Soviets "on its own behalf and with the authorisation of the Government of the White Ruthenian Socialist Republic of Soviets and of the Government of the Ukrainian Socialist Republic of Soviets" is also of interest because this Treaty also contains clauses for the protection of Minorities, but differs from the previous Treaty because in the Treaty of Riga, the terms are reciprocal and the religious provisions are fuller.

The relevant clauses are as follows:—

*Article VII (1).*—"Russia and the Ukraine undertake that persons of Polish nationality in Russia, the Ukraine and White Ruthenia shall, in conformity with the principles of the equality of peoples, enjoy full guarantee of free intellectual development, the use of their national language and the exercise of their religion. Poland undertakes to recognise the same rights in the case of persons of Russian, Ukrainian and White Ruthenian nationality in Poland. Persons of Polish nationality in Russia, the Ukraine and White Ruthenia shall, so far as is in conformity with the domestic legislation of these countries, have the right to make full use of their own language, to organise and maintain their own system of education, to develop their intellectual activities and to establish associations and societies for this purpose; persons of Russian, Ukrainian and White Ruthenian nationality in Poland shall enjoy the same rights so far as is in conformity with the domestic legislation of Poland."

*Article VII (2).*—"The two contracting Parties mutually undertake not to interfere directly or indirectly in questions concerning the organisation and work of the Church and of the religious associations within the territory of the other Party."

*Article VII (3).*—"The churches and religious associations in Russia, the Ukraine and White Ruthenia, of which Polish nationals are members, shall, so far as is in conformity with the domestic legislation

of these countries, have the right to independent self-determination in domestic matters.

"The churches and religious associations above-mentioned shall, so far as is in conformity with domestic legislation, enjoy the right of employing and acquiring the movable and real property necessary for the practice of their religion and for the support of the clergy and the upkeep of ecclesiastical institutions.

"In accordance with the same principle they shall have the right of using the churches and institutions which are necessary for the practice of their religion. Russian, Ukrainian and White Ruthenian nationals shall enjoy similar rights in Poland."

On September 13th, 1934, at the Meeting of the Assembly of the League of Nations, M. Beck, the Polish Foreign Minister, said that: "Pending the putting into force of a general and uniform system for the protection of minorities, my Government is compelled to refuse as from to-day, all co-operation with the international organs in the matter of the supervision of the application by Poland of the system for minority protection."

On the following day the British Foreign Secretary, Sir John Simon, protested against the declaration saying that it was clear that it was not possible for any State to release itself from Minority obligations by unilateral action. M. Barthou for France and Baron Aloisi for Italy associated themselves with this statement.

#### UKRAINIAN TERRITORY IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

So far as Czechoslovakia is concerned, the Treaty of Peace between the Allied and Associated Powers and

Austria signed at St. Germain-en-Laye on September 10th, 1919, contained an Article 57, similar to Article 93 of the Versailles Treaty, in which the Czechoslovak State agreed to conclude a Minorities Treaty with the Principal Allied and Associated Powers. In pursuance of this article a separate Minorities Treaty was signed at Saint-Germain-en-Laye on the same date—September 10th, 1919, between the United States of America, the British Empire, France, Italy and Japan, and Czechoslovakia. The relevant articles dealing with the Ukrainians are as follows:—

*Article 10.*—"Czechoslovakia undertakes to constitute the Ruthene territory south of the Carpathians within frontiers delimited by the Principal Allied and Associated Powers as an autonomous unit within the Czechoslovak State, and to accord to it the fullest degree of self-government compatible with the unity of the Czechoslovak State."

*Article 11.*—"The Ruthene territory south of the Carpathians shall possess a special Diet. This Diet shall have powers of legislation in all linguistic, scholastic and religious questions, in matters of local administration, and in other questions which the laws of the Czechoslovak State may assign to it. The Governor of the Ruthene territory shall be appointed by the President of the Czechoslovak Republic and shall be responsible to the Ruthene Diet."

*Article 12.*—"Czechoslovakia agrees that officials in the Ruthene territory will be chosen as far as possible from the inhabitants of this territory."

*Article 13.*—"Czechoslovakia guarantees to the Ruthene territory equitable representation in the legislative assembly of the Czechoslovak Republic, to which Assembly it will send deputies elected according to the constitution of the Czechoslovak Republic. These deputies will not, however, have the right of voting in the Czechoslovak Diet upon legislature questions of the same kind as those assigned to the Ruthene Diet."

More recently M. Benes made an important speech at Kosice on May 3rd, 1934, in which he dealt with the subject of autonomy in Podkarpatska Rus. In the course of his remarks he said:—

"The government of Czechoslovakia has never forgotten its obligations and will never forget them. Czechoslovakia will carry through Autonomy, as she has pledged herself to do, and as is embodied in the Constitution of the Republic, honorably and indeed at no distant time. Already at the General Election for the Prague Parliament which will take place next year, some of the laws relating to the carrying out of Autonomy will be put to the vote, and after the next elections the individual laws and regulations will be transformed into a reality. On this matter, how quickly matters will advance, will be decided in Podkarpatska Rus itself. This does not depend only on the Government and on Prague, but on how Podkarpatska Rus will be able to stand united on the individual question and how her various elements will be able to make their political preparations among them. With the entry into Czechoslovakia with autonomous rights, the territory of Podkarpatska Rus, for the first time in the history of the people of Podkarpatska Rus, will become an administrative and nationally independent unit. This is, for the people of Podkarpatska Rus, a terrific revolution, as up to the War they possessed no political or cultural rights whatsoever."

(PRAGER PRESSE, May 4th, 1934.)

#### UKRAINIAN TERRITORY IN RUMANIA.

So far as the Ukrainians in Rumania are concerned, they are safeguarded by the Minorities Treaty between the United States of America, the British Empire, France, Italy, Japan and Rumania, signed at Paris on December

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9th, 1919, which contained the usual safeguard for racial, religious and linguistic minorities.

These extracts show the juridical basis upon which the Ukrainian peoples within the four different States take their stand. There appears to be very little attempt to give justice to the Ukrainians and it is felt that continued neglect of this question may involve all Europe.

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