

Re : General Situation in the Ukraine, 1964 -1965 and before

Source: HALYTSIA, Maria Petrovna of Khmelnytske, obl. Khmelnytska, Ukr SSR, since Apr 1965 in Charlerois, Pa

Date : 30 Aug 1965

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
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1. Source is Ukrainian, aged 64, widow, dressmaker, graduate of primary school, of average intelligence, with quite a good memory, and willing to talk. In April 1965 she joined for good her brother ZEL, Ivan of 45 Petrach St., Charlerois, Pa. Prior to her arrival to this country Source lived in KHMELNYTSKE, Ukr SSR from 1954 on. Her application to emigrate to the States was being rejected for several times in recent years. She wrote 3 letters to KHRUSHCHEV but to no avail. Twice her letter was answered negatively and the third one was not answered at all as Khrushchev had been in the meantime removed. Then she decided to write a plea to BREZHNEV, KOSYGIN and MIKOYAN and got permission to emigrate. As soon as she had ^{had} her papers many people began to visit her and militia and local administration changed completely in their attitude to Source. Whereas previously they (officials) treated her as some sort of a nuisance now they were showing even a reverence to her as "a future American".

Until 1943 Source lived with her husband, a cobbler, in ROPYTSIA RUSKA, near HORLUTSI, Poland. In 1943 Source and her husband were brought as forced labor to KREMS, Austria. In 1945 they were overrun by the Soviet Army and in order to escape the repatriation to the Ukraine, registered with the Polish Mission. Repatriated thus to their Lemkivshchyna in 1945, next year already, they were handed over to the Soviet Repatriation Mission in Poland and via TERNOPOL brought to LISNYKY, r-n BEREZHANY, obl. Ternopol, Ukr SSR.

In 1954 Source and her husband went voluntarily to KHMELNYTSKE (at that time PROSKURIV) where Source's husband got a relatively good job at the local shoes factory. However, after 3 months he died and Source had to work either as a private dressmaker or at the artils and factories. It was, as a rule, almost impossible to work as a private dressmaker but being sickly and a widow she could take advantage of "official connivance".

2. While in LISNYKY, r-n BEREZHANY Source lived at a house that had belonged to a deported to Siberia farmer. The life was very hard, there was a terrible food shortage. From the very beginning the Soviets made all the effort to introduce as soon as possible kolhospy but with no success until 1949. They were prevented by intense activities of the UPA operating at that time in "big units" in Berezany rajon, and other parts of West Ukraine.

One of preventive means of the Underground was the threat of capital punishment to any peasant agreeing to enlist with the kolhosp. In their collectivization drive, the Russians, on their part used all kind of pressure including imprisonment of peasants for several days without ^{any food and} permission to go to restrooms. But even such chicanes could not break the peasants, for quite a long time. Finally in 1949 there was organized a kolhosp in LISNYKY. Its chairman became IVANIV, Hryhori, a local honest Ukrainian. After two weeks, however, he resigned. The KGB summoned him to their office, told him "they knew why he had done so" and sentenced to two years. /Incidentally, Source seldom used the expression "KGB" but mostly substituted it with "Okhranka". According to her, the term "Okhranka" is generally used by the population in the countryside and in towns, "KGB" is being used prevailingly only in "formal situations". /

IVANIV'S successor was a new appointee by the name ISKRA, Ivan who retained his ~~post~~ chairmanship until now. He was also a local honest Ukrainian who obviously had made a deal with the UPA and thus saved his skin. "Okhranka" must have known about his "contacts" with the Underground, too, but was happy to have more or less stabilized situation in the kolhosp. According to Source this was not an exceptional case because there were many "tacit" and ~~formal~~ deals between local populace and the Underground. Moreover that among UPA-members were mostly local people and they did not harm innocent and honest peasants. No wonder that until now the UPA retained a good reputation among local population and the Russian propaganda and provocations remained helpless against it.

For some time after kolhosps had been established peasants continued to sabotage their functioning. At one time, on order of the UPA, peasants had to clandestinely thresh the corn, hide on themselves, and leave empty sheaves "for the state". The authorities knew about it but as long as the UPA "ruled" over the countryside, ^{they personally} did not take any measures against it. Enlisted for harvest campaigns party and administrative officials from the city, and even the military, were also helpless and preferred not to stick out their neck. ~~They~~ Also strybki were used during harvests but as they mostly were local people and mostly sympathising with the Underground, peasants continued to stuff with corn their boots and shirts in the field.

At one time in 1940's those in service of the Sovs had a really hard time and preferred to insure themselves with some kind of a deal with the Underground. Otherwise they had little chances to survive in the countryside. Actually, the same could apply also to towns - in 1949, at daylight, in BEREZHAN itself a local lawyer collaborating with Russians, by the name SHAIHAI, fnu, was shot dead by the UPA in the street. He stemmed from LISNYKY and denounced many people who were then deported to Siberia.

However, later on, after the Russians were succeeding more and more in their liquidation of the UPA, proportionately they were strengthening their grip on peasants.

3. In late 1940's the KGB terror was evidently at its peak and the UPA's activities at their low. In 1950 there was killed in Lisnyky area a famous komandyr of UPA by the name KIZYMA, Ivan. The population was told about his death by a Red soldier who sympathized with Ukrainians. The oblavy continued, caught partisans were usually shot on the spot, their bodies tied to trees or poles, and shown to local people for identification. As a rule, no one "recognized" the dead though often among them were close relatives.

In 1951 the UPA was finally liquidated, but until today people talk about UPA groups and individual fighters, both - in West and East Ukraine, as Source heard ~~in~~ ^{those stories also} in Khmelnytske and not only in Berezhany area. So are also remembered the KGBists whose "deeds" had been deeply engraved in people's memory due to their ruthlessness and terror. Thus, in Berezhany area people talk even now about a POPOV, fnu, a KGB officer who had earned his "fame" by his sadism.

After the liquidation of the UPA ~~the~~ military garrisons were withdrawn from villages, and only in BEREZHANY there remained an artillery unit which was stationed there all the time. It consisted mostly of Russian and other nationalities of Northern Soviet Union.

4. The composition of population in areas where Source was living had little changed. It remained "local" with some additions of Russian element which settled down mainly in cities. These were usually officials, teachers, and "specialists."

.. Many Russians learned Ukrainian and when addressed in that language, talked Ukrainian. Their womenfolk was quite eager to adopt some of local "bourgeois" manners and liked to be addressed with Pani.

In Berezhany area, together with Russians there was also an influx of "Eastern Ukrainians", but again mainly to towns. Thus, chairman of the Kolhosp in BEREZHANY was a Ukrainian from Eastern oblasts.

At schools the language of instruction is Ukrainian but Russian is taught, too;

5. In 1953, after Stalin's death, in the spring, the situation was very "tense". Source lived at that time at LISNYKY and heard many rumors about forthcoming changes. "The air was filled with expectation of new changes". There were also "tangible indicators". Thus, one day, a Russian who rented a room at Source's neighbor's and paid well, told her that he will go away. His name was SHYSHKIN, fnu. When Source's neighbor asked him why he wanted to go away, he replied that all Russians will have to leave Ukraine because Ukraine and other Republics will get their independence their own armies, money; that also churches will be reopened and people will have to return to kostely pictures they have taken from them. This all is being done on orders of Comrade Beria. At the same time there were rumors coming from LVIV that also Jews will have to leave Ukraine. After a few days, however, or so, the rumors died "and all remained more or less as before".

In 1960's there was again the situation very "tense". Rumors and news spread about uprisings in DNIPROPETROVSK, ZAPORIZHIA, NOVOCHERKASOK, and KUIBYSHEV. As Source "explained" this was the main reason why Khrushchev had to buy corn in Canada.

6. The Roman catholic church (kostel) in BEREZHANY had been turned into a storage. In LISNYKY the Ukrainian catholic priest - Rev. CHYKALO, fnu - was deported to Siberia and returned only in 1958. He "converted" to Orthodoxy and beside LISNYKY served also for ADAMIVKA and LAPSHYN. In 1958 churches at ADAMIVKA and LAPSHYN were closed and Rev CHYKALO moved to BEREZHANY where he was serving as an Orthodox priest until now.

In KHMELNYTSKE the Sobor was open until 1960. The priest was^a Russian, x Father KYRYLO, lnu. He read mass in Russian only. There were also some other orthodox priests but they went now to work on constructions and only Father KYRYLO remained. Mostly ^{only} old people go to church.

In BEREZHANY there were lately cases when the military baptised their children.

7. In 1954 in KHMELNYTSKE Source found Russian prevailing in the streets, though schools were Ukrainian. Since then the situation changed remarkably in favor of Ukrainians though most films were still Russian, the theater only partly Ukrainian, and militia and court "fully in Russian hands".

8. In KHMELNYTSKE there is stationed an Air force unit. Among the military there were quite a few Ukrainians. In 1950's there was also

an artillery unit but then it was withdrawn.

9. The population is very dissatisfied with existing situation, mainly because of continuous shortage of food and other consumer goods; and low incomes. After Khrushchev's removal ~~life~~ has somewhat improved but people demand more. Some hope the situation will slowly improve, they don't expect WW III. All have pretensions to the United States "for not caring for their lot". Feelings ^{& hopes} ran high during the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 and during unprisings in 1960's, but they never reached the peak of "the eve of Beria's forthcoming reforms".