LENIN AND THE UKRAINIAN QUESTION, 1912-1924

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This thesis is an attempt to describe and analyze Lenin's theoretical and practical approaches to the Ukrainian question in particular and the nationality question in general. It seeks to ascertain the role and importance of the Ukraine, Ukrainian institutions and, to some extent, Ukrainian personalities, in Lenin's published work both before and after the revolution. Furthermore, this thesis attempts to discover the role of the national and Ukrainian questions in relation to Lenin's other concerns of expediting the proletarian revolution and of maintaining organizational and governmental unity.

Several conclusions of a general and particular nature have been reached. The national question in Lenin's works is a part of the general question of the socialist revolution, however, it is definitely a subordinate one: socialist concerns inevitably predominate over nationalist ones. It is also evident that Lenin stressed unity and centralism above any other organizational attribute. The highest degree of unity was mandatory if the revolution was to be made and consumated. Nationalism, however, was particularistic and by its very nature contradictory to Lenin's centralist views.

Lenin was aware of Ukrainian peculiarities but he preferred to ignore them in most instances until he felt that to continue so
doing would retard the revolution. It is for this reason that his attitude on the Ukrainian question seemed ambivalent. Lenin was willing to make concessions of form rather than substance: he advocated the right to national self-determination while ensuring that this right could never be exercised, he established federal relations with the Ukrainian government while arrogating all real power in the center, and he promoted Ukrainization in all Ukrainian organizations and institutions with the exception of the party. The ultimate goal of all these concessions was invariably unity and centralization.

This thesis argues that, in order to be fully understood, Lenin's nationality theory and his application of it to the Ukraine must be conceptualized at two levels. At one level Lenin was concerned with the reality of making a revolution and this required allies from the nationalities. For this reason he conducted a propaganda campaign calculated to appeal to the nationalities and especially the Ukrainians. At the same time, while he was ostensibly demonstrating the similarities between the aims of the Bolsheviks and the nationalities, Lenin never lost sight of the concrete historical conditions of that period. His attitude to the nationalities and Ukrainians was a function of the progress of the revolutionary movement. At this level Lenin's nationality theory and practice was historically relative and in his work he
allowed for the possibility that his views would change as the historical situation changed.

Lenin saw nationalism as an ephemeral phenomenon and essentially negative concept. The national movement in general and the Ukrainian one in particular was viewed in instrumental terms. Lenin hoped that he could use this movement as a means to more quickly achieve the goals of unity and assimilation in the most expeditious manner.
# Table of Contents

**Abstract**

P. II

**Acknowledgment**

P. VI

**Chapter I:** Introduction: Lenin and the National Question

P. 1

**Chapter II:** Perceptions of the Ukraine and Ukrainians

P. 10

**Chapter III:** The Ukrainian Question: Self-Determination

P. 41

**Chapter IV:** The Ukrainian Question: Autonomy and Federalism

P. 75

**Chapter V:** The Ukrainian Question: National Equality, Assimilation, Annexations, and Defence of the Fatherland

P. 98

**Chapter VI:** Relations with Ukrainian Marxists

P. 118

**Chapter VII:** The Ukrainian National Governments

P. 128

**Chapter VIII:** The CP(B)U and the Ukrainian SSR

P. 162

**Chapter IX:** Conclusion

P. 215

**Bibliography**

P. 238

**Glossary**

P. 249
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION: LENIN AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION

LENIN'S UNDERSTANDING OF NATIONALISM AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION WAS RATHER SIMPLISTIC. LIKE MARX, LENIN SAW NATIONALISM AS A SIGNIFICANT FORCE ONLY IN THE EARLY BOURGEOIS ERA UNDER A CAPITALIST SYSTEM—IT WAS VIEWED AS THE PRODUCT OF A CERTAIN STAGE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND AS SUCH WAS TEMPORALLY LIMITED TO THAT STAGE. HOWEVER, THIS ECONOMICALLY DETERMINED INTERPRETATION OF NATIONALISM PAYS INSUFFICIENT ATTENTION TO VARIOUS OTHER DIMENSIONS OF THE CONCEPT SUCH AS THE HISTORICAL, POLITICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, CULTURAL AND OTHERS. LENIN'S RELIANCE ON ECONOMIC DETERMINANTS TO THE EXCLUSION OF THESE OTHERS IN DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM PROVIDES SIGNIFICANT EVIDENCE THAT TO A LARGE EXTENT HE FAILED TO COMPREHEND THE ESSENCE OF THE PHENOMENON OF NATIONALISM, ALTHOUGH IT MUST BE NOTED THAT THIS QUESTION WAS ONLY OF SECONDARY IMPORTANCE TO HIM. LENIN WAS MORE INTERESTED IN USING NATIONALISM TO FURTHER HIS GOALS THAN IN ATTEMPTING TO UNDERSTAND IT.

Consequently, his approach to the national question can only be understood if it is viewed within the context of his primary goal—the seizure of power by the proletariat and its corollary, the creation and establishment of the socialist state. Thus from the Leninist perspective the national question was nothing more nor less than an obstacle which had to be overcome on the road to the creation of the proletarian state, and if possible, used as a tool to facilitate attainment of this state.

It was not until 1912, however, that Lenin decided to use the national problem in the Russian Empire to promote Bolshevik aspirations and it was at this time that he began expounding his rapidly developing theories on the right of nations to self-determination. Although his theories on national-

LENIN'S SUPPORT OF NATIONAL MOVEMENTS, AND THUS NATIONALISM, WAS CONDITIONAL. SO LONG AS THIS SUPPORT SERVED TO UNDERMINE THE EXISTING SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ORDER IN THE PRE-REVOLUTIONARY ERA IT WAS TO BE SUPPORTED, REGARDLESS OF THE FACT THAT THESE MOVEMENTS WERE OF A BOURGEOIS CHARACTER. NATIONALISM, WHEN AN ALLY OF THE PROLETARIAT, WAS TO BE PROMOTED SINCE IT WAS THEN A DEMOCRATIC DEMAND. "THE PROLETARIAT," LENIN NOTED, "CANNOT BE VICTORIOUS EXCEPT THROUGH DEMOCRACY..."3

LENIN'S APPROACH TO NATIONALISM WAS BASED UPON MARX'S VIEW OF THE PHENOMENON. LIKE MARX, LENIN ASSUMED THAT NATIONALISM WAS MERELY A TEMPORARY MANIFESTATION RESTRICTED TO THE CAPITALIST STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT AND, SINCE ITS ORIGIN AND EXISTENCE WAS PREDICATED UPON THE EXISTENCE OF CAPITALISM, THE COLLAPSE OF THIS SYSTEM WOULD PERMANENTLY DESTROY THE ROOTS OF NATIONALISM. THIS PROVED TO BE AN EXTREMELY NAIVE VIEW. NEVERTHELESS, IT SEEMB
THAT THIS VIEW PREVAILED IN LENIN'S MIND UNTIL SHORTLY AFTER THE REVOLUTION.

IF NATIONALISM WAS RESTRICTED TO THE CAPITALIST STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT, IT COULD BE SUPPORTED AND, AS A 'CREATIVE' MARXIST, LENIN SOUGHT NOT MERELY TO SUPPORT THIS PHENOMENON BUT TO CHANNEL AND DIRECT IT IN THE INTERESTS OF SOCIALISM. THE QUESTION OF NATIONALISM WAS ANCILLARY TO THE QUESTION OF SOCIALISM. IT WAS TO BE USED PRIMARILY TO ACCELERATE THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL DISMEMBERMENT OF BOURGEOIS SOCIETY BY ALLAYING THE FEARS AND SUSPICIONS OF OPPRESSED NATIONAL MINORITIES. UNDER THE BENEFITS OF SOCIALIST EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC PLANNING NATIONALISM WAS SUPPOSED TO 'WITHER' AWAY AND DISAPPEAR IN THE RESULTANT INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY.  

LENIN'S INTEREST IN THE NATIONALITIES SPRANG FROM HIS DESIRE TO MAINTAIN THE UNITY OF THE PARTY. WITH THIS NEED FOR UNITY UPPERMOST IN MIND, HE NOTED THAT "A DIFFICULTY IS TO SOME EXTENT CREATED BY THE FACT THAT IN RUSSIA THE PROLETARIAT OF BOTH THE OPPRESSED AND OPPRESSOR NATIONS ARE FIGHTING, AND MUST FIGHT, SIDE BY SIDE." HE WENT ON TO MAKE HIS POINT VERY CLEARLY:

**The Task Is to Preserve the Unity of the Proletariat's Class Struggle for Socialism, and to Resist All Bourgeois and Black Hundred Nationalist Influences.** Where the oppressed nations are concerned, the separate organization of the proletariat as an independent party leads to such a bitter struggle against local nationalism that the perspective becomes distorted and the nationalism of the oppressor nation is lost sight of.

Thus unity and centralization in the worker's party and state were mandatory and it was only the capitalists and landowners who wished to keep the workers of different nations apart. By implication, therefore, a nationally conscious worker could not be a truly socially and politically conscious one.

But this conclusion created a logical difficulty—one which Lenin tended to ignore for he propounded a theory of dualism in national culture. This theory purported to show that each nation had a dominant bourgeois culture and that it was with this culture that the general concept of nation was identified. But, since every nation contained toiling and exploited masses whose mode of life naturally gave rise to a social and democratic ideology, there was in fact a 'proletarian' culture as well. It was only this culture with its democratic and socialist elements that was to be supported by Marxists. In his essay *Critical Remarks on the National Question* Lenin noted that "...we take from each national culture only its democratic and socialist elements; we take them only and absolutely in opposition to..."
THE BOURGEOIS CULTURE AND BOURGEOIS NATIONALISM OF EACH NATION. " LENIN

HAD THIS IN MIND WHEN HE OBSERVED THAT

THE MARXIST FULLY RECOGNIZES THE HISTORICAL LEGITIMACY OF NATIONAL MOVEMENTS. BUT TO PREVENT THIS RECOGNITION FROM BECOMING AN APOLgia OF NATIONALISM, IT MUST BE STRICTLY LIMITED TO WHAT IS PROGRESSIVE IN SUCH MOVEMENTS, IN ORDER THAT THIS RECOGNITION MAY NOT LEAD TO BOURGEOIS IDEOLOGY OBSCURING PROLETARIAN CONSCIOUSNESS.

LEININ'S APPROACH TO THE NATIONAL QUESTION CAN ONLY BE UNDERSTOOD IF IT IS REMEMBERED THAT HE UNCONDITIONALLY SUBORDINATED THIS QUESTION, AS HE DID ALL "THE BASIC DEMANDS OF POLITICAL DEMOCRACY DIRECTLY TO THE REVOLUTIONARY MASS STRUGGLE FOR THE OVERTHROW OF THE BOURGEOIS GOVERNMENTS AND FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SOCIALISM." CRITICIZED BY THE LEFT COMMUNISTS FOR MAKING A FETISH OUT OF THE NATIONALITIES ISSUE, LENIN ADMITTED THAT "MARX HAD NO DOUBT AS TO THE SUBORDINATE POSITION OF THE NATIONAL QUESTION AS COMPARED WITH THE 'LABOR QUESTION'." BUT, HE ADDED, MARX'S "THEORY IS AS FAR FROM REMOVING NATIONAL MOVEMENTS AS HEAVEN IS FROM EARTH." THE CORRECT MARXIST NATIONALITIES PROGRAM, IN LENIN'S INTERPRETATION, BOUTH "COMPLETE EQUALITY OF RIGHTS FOR ALL NATIONS; THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION; AND THE UNITY OF THE WORKERS OF ALL NATIONS." HE ALSO UNCEASINGLY STRESSED THAT

NATIONAL SELF-DETERMINATION IS THE SAME AS THE STRUGGLE FOR COMPLETE NATIONAL LIBERATION, FOR COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE, AGAINST ANNEXATIONS, AND SOCIALISTS CANNOT—WITHOUT CEASING TO BE SOCIALISTS—REJECT SUCH A STRUGGLE IN WHATEVER FORM, RIGHT DOWN TO AN UPRISING OR WAR.

LENIN WAS ADAMANT ON ONE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT POINT. "ONE THING ALONE IS CERTAIN," HE DECLARED, QUOTING ENGELS LETTER OF SEPTEMBER 12, 1882 TO KAUTFKY, "THE VICTORIOUS PROLETARIAT CAN FORCE NO BLESSINGS OF ANY KIND UPON ANY FOREIGN NATION WITHOUT UNDERMINING ITS OWN VICTORY BY SO DOING.

IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT LENIN'S WRITINGS DO NOT CONTAIN A DEFINITION OF
NATIONALITY, NOR DO THEY CONTAIN A DISCUSSION OR DESCRIPTION OF ITS ESSENCE OR CHARACTER. THE CLOSEST BOLSHEVIK DEFINITION OF NATIONALITY IS CONTAINED IN STALIN’S MARXISM AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION WRITTEN IN 1913. IN IT HE DEFINED A NATIONALITY AS AN HISTORICALLY EVOLVED GROUP WITH A COMMON LANGUAGE AND CULTURE, COMMON PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAITS, A TERRITORIAL BASE AND BOUND TOGETHER BY ECONOMIC TIES. THERE WAS NOTHING ORIGINAL IN THIS DEFINITION BUT, SINCE IT WAS COMPOSED UNDER LENIN’S GUIDANCE, IT MAY BE ASSUMED THAT HIS POSITION WAS QUITE SIMILAR TO STALIN’S. LENIN WAS INTERESTED PRIMARILY IN THE TACTICAL AND STRATEGIC ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM RATHER THAN WITH THE ABSTRACT AND THEORETICAL. HE WAS INTERESTED, FIRST AND FOREMOST, WITH THE IMMEDIATE PRACTICAL PROBLEM OF ALLYING THE FORCES OF NATIONALISM WITH THOSE OF THE PROLETARIAT.

MOST IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, LENIN’S WORK ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION SUFFERED EITHER FROM HIS INABILITY OR REFUSAL TO UNDERSTAND HUMAN NATURE AND HIS BELIEF IN THE ROLE OF ECONOMIC DETERMINANTS. FIRST, HE SEEMED UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND THAT PEOPLE WERE OPPRESSED BY ANYTHING BUT THE CAPITALIST ORDER; AND SECOND, IT SEEMED HE COULD NOT COMPREHEND THE FACT (UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE) THAT A RUSSIAN WORKER COULD BE JUST AS INTOLERANT OF THE NATIONALITIES AS COULD ANY MEMBER OF THE “EXPLOITING CLASSES.” HE FIRMLY BELIEVED THAT A PEACEFUL “FRATERNAL UNION” OF THE NATIONALITIES WAS POSSIBLE IF ENOUGH PROPAGANDA WAS CONDUCTED IN ITS FAVOR. THUS LENIN’S APPROACH TO THE NATIONAL QUESTION IN BOTH ITS THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ASPECTS WAS OFTEN CHARACTERIZED BY A BEWILDERING MIXTURE OF REALISM AND IDEALISM.

LENIN VIEWED THE NATIONAL QUESTION IN TERMS OF SEVERAL CONCEPTS: SELF-DETERMINATION, AUTONOMY, FEDERATION, NATIONAL EQUALITY, ASSIMILATION, ANNEXATION, AND DEFENCE OF THE FATHERLAND. THE CONCEPT OF THE RIGHT OF
Nations to self-determination is probably the single most important element in his nationality theory, followed by the inter-related concepts of autonomy and federalism, and then by the remainder. These concepts will be analyzed both in general terms and in terms of their relation to the Ukraine in Chapters III, IV, and V.

Chapter VI will discuss Lenin's relations with non-Bolshevik Ukrainian Marxists of the pre-revolutionary period. His relations with Ukrainian Marxists both Bolshevik and non-Bolshevik will be incorporated into Chapters VII and VIII. Chapter VII deals with Lenin's approach to the various Ukrainian nationalist governments in both the pre-October and post-October periods. Chapter VIII is concerned with Lenin's theoretical and practical views on several aspects of the relationship between the CP(B)U and the Ukrainian SSR.

First, however, Lenin's perceptions of the Ukraine and Ukrainians will be discussed in Chapter II. This is deemed fruitful because it serves to illuminate some of his assumptions—many implicit, some explicit—about the Ukraine as a geographic entity and of the Ukrainians as an ethnic group.
CHAPTER 1: FOOTNOTES


2. Lenin, XIX, p. 245. (The edition of Lenin's works used throughout this study is V. I. Lenin, Collected Works. 40 vols. Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House/ Progress Publishers, 1960-1968.)

3. Ibid., XXI, p. 408. Lenin continued this observation by saying that "it is absurd to contrast the socialist revolution and the revolutionary struggle against capitalism to a single problem of democracy, in this case the national question. We must combine the revolutionary struggle against capitalism with a revolutionary programme and tactics on all democratic demands..." See A. D. Low, Lenin on the Question of Nationality (New York: Bookman Associates, 1958), pp. 50-51; R. S. Sullivant, Soviet Politics in the Ukraine, 1917-1957 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), p. 10.


7. Pipes, The Genesis..., p. 54, notes that most social democrats even in 1903 viewed nationalism as reactionary and that their response to most national aspirations differed insignificantly from parties of the right.


9. Lenin, XXI, pp. 102-03. 10. Ibid., XX, pp. 451.
11. See T. B. Ciuciura, "Lenin’s Idea of a Multinational Commonwealth," The Annals of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S.A., X (1962-1963), 13, for the development of this point. Also see Borys, p. 31.


13. Ibid., XIX, p. 34. In the following paragraph Lenin expands his statement: "The awakening of the masses from their feudal lethargy and their struggle against all national oppression, for the sovereignty of the people, of the nation, are progressive. Hence it is the Marxists' bounden duty to stand for the most resolute and consistent democratism on all aspects of the national question. This task is largely a negative one. But this is where the proletariat can go in supporting nationalism, for beyond that begins the 'positive' activity of the bourgeoisie striving to fortify nationalism." Ibid., pp. 34-35.


15. Lenin, XX, p. 436. 16. Ibid., p. 494. 17. Ibid., XXIII, p. 34.

CHAPTER II: PERCEPTIONS OF THE UKRAINE AND UKRAINIANS.

There can be little doubt that Lenin was conscious of Ukrainian peculiarities long before this awareness manifested itself in his numerous articles and before he openly attempted to come to terms with the implications of this distinctness. When he finally did, however, it was with the hope that these differences could be profitably exploited by his party. Measured by volume, Lenin's published work on the Ukraine is most impressive although a careful perusal of this work indicates some discrepancy between quantity and a reasonably expected quality. There is, of course, an excellent reason for this—at least in Leninist terms. For someone who favored the eventual assimilation of nationalities, Ukrainian distinctness could hardly be viewed as a positive attribute. Thus Lenin never even bothered to define what he meant by the term “Ukraine” in either a geographic, political, social, or economic sense. National peculiarities, except as they related to and could be used to facilitate socialist objectives, were treated with indifference.

In 1913 Lenin stated that “all areas of the state that are distinguished by social peculiarities or by the national composition of the population” were to enjoy extensive self-government and autonomy. This chapter will demonstrate how Lenin perceived and understood Ukrainian social, economic, and political peculiarities while the succeeding chapters will focus on his attempt to come to terms with these differences.

It should be noted at the outset that Lenin never visited the Ukraine and consequently had no first-hand knowledge of that part of the Russian
Empire. Until 1911 he never spoke or wrote of the Ukraine in any but purely economic terms and often used the pejorative epithet of "Little Russians." Manifestations of what he considered ethnocentrism were consistently condemned by him and he treated the Ukrainian national area (which roughly corresponds to the present territory of the Republic with the exception of territory acquired in 1939) not as an entity, but as a composite of cities and provinces.

Until the October revolution Lenin had almost totally ignored the peasant question in the Ukraine. There are probably two reasons for this. On the one hand, he may have been unaware of the particular social-agricultural structure of the area with its accentuated urban-rural polarity. This polarity was maintained to a large degree by the non-Ukrainian bourgeoisie, bureaucracy and aristocracy on the one side, and the provincial Ukrainian peasant, whose embryonic political consciousness precluded the development of a sense of nationalism before 1905, on the other. On the other hand, Lenin may have been aware of the situation but preferred not to commit himself specifically to a definite stand and course of action. This latter explanation may be correct because the peasant problem, although seldom mentioned explicitly, is implicit in all his work on the national question (and, it may be argued, in the socio-economic conditions prevailing in the Russian Empire it could hardly have been otherwise).

It is probably due basically to the distribution of ethnic Ukrainians (90 percent rural and ten percent urban) that the essentially socio-economic antagonism between the urban Russians and Jews and the rural Ukrainians began to assume nationalistic overtones. Although Ukrainians formed by far the largest ethnic group in most provinces, they constituted only 36 percent
OF THE URBAN POPULATION TO THE RUSSIANS 44 PERCENT. 4

By 1911, however, Lenin must have become aware of the distinctness of the Ukrainian peasantry. For in this year there were, according to Soviet sources, over 2,000 manifestations of peasant discontent in the Ukraine. 5

But it was not until January 1917 in a letter to Inessa Armand that he discussed the Ukrainian peasant; yet even at this time it was merely in an anecdotal manner about a single peasant who had visited him. Significantly Lenin did not refer to his nationality but simply to his geographic origin. According to Lenin, the man was "a Voronezh peasant, a man of the soil, from an Old Believers' family. A breath from the Black Earth. It was extremely interesting to watch him and listen." Lenin then went on to note that the peasant had

spent a year in a German prison camp...with 27,000 Ukrainians. The Germans build up their camps according to nations and do their utmost to break them away from Russia; for the Ukrainians they send in skillful lecturers from Galicia. The results? Only 2,000, according to him, were for "self-rule" (independence in the sense more of autonomy than of separation) after months of effort by the agitators!! The remainder, he says, were furious at the thought of separation from Russia and going over to the Germans or Austrians.

A notable fact! One cannot but believe him. 27,000 is a big number. A year is ample time. The conditions for the Galician propaganda were exceptionally favourable. And yet closeness to the Great Russians got the upper hand! 6

Overjoyed with this news, Lenin concluded that this was the result of Bolshevik propaganda in support of "freedom of separation" and thought that as a consequence Russia might be freed "from the 'Austrian type' of development." 7

It is interesting to note that he was so willing to give credence to the peasant's tale and one suspects that Lenin desperately hoped the man was telling the truth.

Little more time was spent on the Ukrainian question until after Denikin's rout of the Bolsheviks; after this episode Lenin decided to re-
EXAMINE CERTAIN UKRAINIAN PECULIARITIES SUCH AS THE UNIQUE SITUATION AND ROLE OF THE PEASANTRY. HE BEGAN TO REALIZE THAT THE PEASANTRY WOULD NEVER WILLINGLY SUPPORT THE BOLSHEVIKS—EVEN IF THEY, AS A CLASS, DID SUPPORT THEM IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST DENIKIN—UNLESS A MODIFIED, BUT NEVERTHELESS BOLSHEVIK, APPROACH WAS TAKEN WHICH WOULD CONSIDER AT LEAST SOME ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM.8

LENIN COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY THE UKRAINIAN PEASANT WOULD NOT APPROPRIATE LAND FOR HIMSELF AND REPROACHED HIM FOR THIS CONSERVATISM. SPEAKING ABOUT THE UKRAINE ON APRIL 3, 1919 HE NOTED THAT "THE PEASANTS HAVE BEEN SO INTIMIDATED BY THE GERMANS THAT ALTHOUGH THEY KNOW WHAT THE POSITION OF THE SOVIET POWER IS HERE, THEY STILL HESITATE TO SEIZE THE LANDED ESTATES."9 A FEW WEEKS LATER HE AGAIN STATED THAT "THE PEASANTS, INTIMIDATED BY THE BRUTAL RULE OF THE GERMANS, ARE AFRAID TO SEIZE THE LANDED ESTATES."10 IN BOTH THESE STATEMENTS HE MANAGED, PERHAPS UNWITTINGLY, TO PROVIDE THE CLUE TO THIS SEEMINGLY INCOMPREHENSIBLE PHENOMENON BY MENTIONING THAT "PARTISAN WARFARE IS STILL RAGING THERE."11 HIS PERPLEXITY ABOUT THIS LATENT UKRAINIAN PEASANT CONSERVATISM WAS SOON REPLACED BY ANXIETY OVER THE FACT THAT DENIKIN WAS RAPIDLY ADVANCING NORTHWARD WITH MINIMUM PEASANT RESISTANCE. MOST IMPORTANT IN POLITICAL TERMS, IT SEEMED THAT THE PEASANT WAS ACTUALLY HOSTILE TO BOTH THE REDS AND THE WHITES.12

BY NOW LENIN HAD LEARNED TO "READ" THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE UKRAINE. HE CORRECTLY REASONED THAT DENIKIN'S METHODS WOULD ULTIMATELY MEET WITH INSURMOUNTABLE PEASANT RESISTENCE JUST AS HAD KOLCHAK'S. SPEAKING TO A JOINT MEETING OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND NUMEROUS SOVIET ORGANIZATIONS ON JULY 4, 1919 AT THE HEIGHT OF THE DENIKIN OFFENSIVE HE DECLARED PERSPICACIOUSLY THAT
UNIVERSAL MOBILISATION WILL BE THE RUIN OF DENIKIN AS IT WAS OF KOLCHAK; AS LONG AS HE HAD A CLASS ARMY OF VOLUNTEERS WHO HATED SOCIALISM IT WAS STRONG AND SOUND, BUT WHEN HE BEGAN UNIVERSAL RECRUITMENT HE DID, OF COURSE, GET AN ARMY TOGETHER MORE QUICKLY, BUT THE ARMY BECAME THE WEAKER, AND ITS CLASS CHARACTER LESS PRONOUNCED. PEASANTS RECRUITED INTO DENIKIN’S ARMY WILL DO THE SAME IN THAT ARMY AS THE SIBERIAN PEASANTS DID IN KOLCHAK’S ARMY—THEY BROUGHT COMPLETE DISINTEGRATION INTO THE ARMY.13

BOLSHEVIK MOBILIZATION AGAINST DENIKIN WAS THUS TO BE OF THE SAME CHARACTER AS THAT USED TO RAISE THE FORCES TO DESTROY KOLCHAK. MOBILIZATION WOULD BE RESTRICTED TO NON-AGRICULTURAL, INDUSTRIAL REGIONS AND WOULD BE CONCEIVED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO INSURE BOTH MILITARY AND POLITICAL GOALS. MOBILIZATION WOULD HAVE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT NOT ONLY "THE INTERESTS OF THE WAR, BUT ALSO...THE INTERESTS OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SUPPLIES. PEOPLE WERE [TO BE] TRANSFERRED FROM THE STARVING GUBERNIAS TO THE GRAIN-PRODUCING REGIONS."14 IN ORDER TO INSURE THE FIGHTING QUALITY OF THESE TROOPS LENIN DECLARED THAT "ALL MOBILISED MEN WOULD BE ALLOWED TO SEND THEIR FAMILIES AT HOME TWO FOOD PARCELS A MONTH, AND IN THIS WAY THE WORKING POPULATION WOULD BE ABLE TO OBTAIN BREAD FROM THEIR RELATIVES AT THE FRONT."15 NOT ONLY WOULD THIS REINFORCE THE SOLDIERS’ WILL TO FIGHT BUT IT WOULD HAVE THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT OF INTERMINGLING WHAT WAS ESSENTIALLY A "FOREIGN CAMPAIGN" (I.E., RUSSIAN SOLDIERS WERE USED TO INVADE AND CONQUER THE UKRAINE) WITH THE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION OF FOOD. THE RUSSIAN SOLDIER MAY NOT HAVE BEEN SO ANXIOUS TO FIGHT IF HIS SUCCESSES WERE NOT REWARDED BY FOOD SENT TO HIS STARVING FAMILY IN THE NORTHERN CITIES.

LENIN, AS IT LATER BECAME EVIDENT, WAS WELL AWARE OF THE FACT THAT PEASANT SUPPORT OF THE BOLSHEVIKS DID NOT IMPLY APPROVAL OF THE BOLSHEVIK PROGRAM; THEIR SUPPORT WAS OF A PURELY TACTICAL NATURE DESIGNED TO DESTROY A FORCE WHICH THEY HATED ONLY SLIGHTLY MORE THAN THE COMMUNISTS. "WHEN KOLCHAK AND DENIKIN WERE ADVANCING FROM SIBERIA AND THE SOUTH," HE OB-
SERVED IN THE AUTUMN OF 1920,

THE PEASANTS WERE ON THEIR SIDES. THEY DID NOT LIKE BOLSHEVISM BECAUSE THE BOLSHEVIKS TOOK THEIR GRAIN AT A FIXED PRICE. BUT WHEN THE PEASANTS IN SIBERIA AND THE UKRAINE EXPERIENCED THE RULE OF KOLCHAK AND DENIKIN, THEY REALISED THAT THEY HAD ONLY ONE ALTERNATIVE: EITHER TO GO TO THE CAPITALISTS, WHO WOULD AT ONCE HAND THEM OVER TO SLAVERY UNDER THE LAND-OWNERS; OR TO FOLLOW THE WORKERS....

A YEAR EARLIER, IN THE LIGHT OF DENIKIN'S SUCCESSES, LENIN HAD CONCLUDED THAT "UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES THE PEASANTS COULD NOT BE WON OVER BY ENTHUSIASM ALONE—SUCH A METHOD IS NOT RELIABLE." FINALLY AWARE THAT THE DIFFERENCES OF THE UKRAINIAN PEASANTRY REQUIRED A CERTAIN DEGREE OF BOLSHEVIK ADAPTABILITY, LENIN WARNED THE UKRAINIAN COMRADES A THOUSAND TIMES THAT WHEN IT IS A MATTER OF THE MOVEMENT OF MILLION-STRONG MASSES WORDS ARE NOT ENOUGH; THEY MUST HAVE THEIR OWN DAY TO DAY EXPERIENCE SO THAT PEOPLE CAN VERIFY INSTRUCTIONS THEMSELVES, SO THAT THEY BELIEVE IN THEIR OWN EXPERIENCE.

Perhaps the greatest contrast between the Russian and Ukrainian peasant was the latter's will and ability to fight. The Ukrainian peasant was not handicapped by a lack of arms and, unlike the Russian peasant, he was not fighting merely a class war but in some ways a national one as well. Trotsky, in a candid moment in the summer of 1919, observed that everyone in the Ukraine except the soldiers possesses rifles and ammunition. The state of the soldier is the state in which the Ukrainian peasant finds himself until such times as he receives a rifle with which to return back to his own village....

The Ukrainian peasant presented Lenin with a very perplexing puzzle. He mused that in two years the Bolsheviiks have won the full sympathy and support of the overwhelming majority of the workers and labouring peasants of Great Russia, including the Urals and Siberia, but as yet we have not won the full support and sympathy of the working peasants (as distinct from the peasant exploiters) of the Ukraine.

Thus from the summer of 1919 onward Lenin took a great interest in attempting to solve the Ukrainian peasant enigma and this interest bore
FRUIT AT THE DECEMBER 1919 CONFERENCE OF THE PARTY, WHERE UNDER HIS GUIDANCE, A NEW LAND LAW FOR UKRAINE WAS DRAFTED. BUT EVEN THIS WAS EXECUTED IN A CHARACTERISTICALLY LENINIST MANNER. IT WAS DONE IN MOSCOW AND THE LEADER OF THE BOLSHEVIKS EXPRESSED NO DESIRE TO OBSERVE THE EXISTING SITUATION IN UKRAINE. RAKOVSKY NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT AT THIS TIME LENIN CAUTIONED HIM TO PAY CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION TO THE PEASANT PSYCHOLOGY. IN THE END LENIN SEEMS TO HAVE DECIDED THAT THE UKRAINIAN (AND OTHER NON-RUSSIAN PEASANTS) WERE OF AN INDIVIDUALISTIC ORIENTATION BECAUSE THEY HAD NEVER EXPERIENCED THE PRIVATIONS OF THE RUSSIAN PEASANT. SOMEWHAT ENVIOUSLY HE NOTED THAT THEIR PRESENT AND PAST GRAIN SURPLUSES HAVE NEVER BEEN MATCHED IN CENTRAL RUSSIA, NOR HAVE THEY EVER EXPERIENCED SUCH A PLIGHT. THE PEASANTS OF THE UKRAINE, SIBERIA AND NORTHERN CAUCASUS HAVE NEVER KNOWN SUCH DESTITUTION AND HUNGER AS THE PEASANTS OF MOSCOW AND PETROGRAD GUBERNIAS (WHO RECEIVED FAR LESS THAN THE UKRAINIAN PEASANTS) HAVE Endured FOR THREE YEARS.

Perhaps a more objective observer would also have taken account of the unique historical evolution of the Ukrainian peasantry. Lenin's objectivity was, however, bounded by the Marxist framework; consequently he tended to focus his attention on the existing economic conditions rather than their derivatives.

Lenin was bent on destroying the kulak because he thought this particular layer of the peasantry to be the most dangerous for the Bolshevik regime. "There must be no let-up in the fight with the kulaks," he emphasized, "and no deals must be made with them." In the Ukraine this straightforward approach boded ill for Lenin because the kulaks comprised a very large section of the peasantry. By his own admission middle peasants in parts of the Ukraine were like kulaks. But his inability to understand the peasant mentality or, equally likely, his refusal to do so, compelled him to arrive at some rather naive conclusions. "Over there [in the Ukraine] they have had 120 governments," he noted with a trace of contempt,
AND THE RICH PEASANTS HAVE BEEN CORRUPTED. THEY CANNOT UNDERSTAND THAT THERE IS A WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' GOVERNMENT AND THAT, IF IT CONFISCATES GRAIN, IT DOES SO IN ORDER TO EASE THE POSITION OF THE WORKERS AND PEASANTS. UNTIL WE ARE ABLE TO ACHIEVE FULL CLARITY ON ALL THESE QUESTIONS IN THAT AREA WE SHALL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE NEWS OF DISTURBANCES, BANDITRY AND REVOLTS. THIS IS INEVITABLE BECAUSE WE HAVE INHERITED FROM CAPITALISM A PEASANT WHO IS ISOLATED AND CANNOT HELP BEING IGNORANT AND FULL OF RESENTMENT, AND IT WILL TAKE US YEARS TO RE-EDUCATE HIM.27

THREE YEARS BEFORE LENIN MADE THIS STATEMENT HE HAD EXHIBITED A GREATER DEGREE OF REALISM. THEN, IN NOVEMBER 1918, HE NOTED THAT EVEN THE MIDDLE PEASANTS WERE UNLIKELY TO BECOME ENAMOURED OF SOCIALIST AGRICULTURE "BUT EXPERIENCE WILL TEACH THEM THE ADVANTAGES OF SOCIALISED FARMING AND THE MAJORITY OF THEM WILL NOT RESIST."28 BASICALLY LENIN COULD ONLY INTERPRET THE PEASANTS' RELUCTANCE TO PART WITH THEIR PRODUCE WITHOUT BEING RE-IMBURSED AS DUE TO THE LACK OF POLITICAL EDUCATION. HE REALLY DID NOT CONSIDER THE FACT—AT LEAST IN HIS PUBLIC UTTERANCES—that the Ukranian peasant was not interested if his Russian city cousin was starving and that "POLITICAL EDUCATION" WOULD PROVIDE RESULTS ONLY IF FORCE WAS PART OF THE "EDUCATIONAL" PROGRAM.

BY THE TIME OF THE EIGHTH CONGRESS OF THE RCP(B) IN MARCH 1919, IT WAS EVIDENT THAT A MODIFIED APPROACH TO THE UKRAINIAN PEASANT WAS IMPERATIVE. LENIN CORRECTLY NOTED THAT IN GENERAL THE BOLSHEVIKS, WHEN IN THE PROCESS OF ASSUMING POWER, HAD THE SUPPORT OF THE MAJORITY OF THE PEASANTRY BECAUSE THE AIM OF THE PEASANT WAS TO DESTROY THE LANDOWNER. HE THEN IMPLIED, INCORRECTLY IT MAY BE ARGUED, THAT THE PEASANT WAS MERELY PREJUDICED AGAINST LARGE-SCALE FARMING RATHER THAN THE SOVIET COLLECTIVE FARM AS SUCH.29 AT ANY RATE HE CONCLUDED THAT THE MIDDLE PEASANT COULD BECOME A PILLAR OF SOVIET POWER IF PROPERLY GROOMED. FOR THIS REASON HE CAUTIONED AGAINST USE OF FORCE.

THE BOURGEOISIE HAD TO BE CRUSHED BY FORCE BUT IF WE WERE TO ACT IN THE SAME WAY TOWARDS THE MIDDLE PEASANT IT WOULD BE
SUCH IDIOCY, SUCH STUPIDITY, IT WOULD BE SO RUINOUS TO OUR CAUSE, THAT ONLY PROVOCATEURS COULD DELIBERATELY ACT IN SUCH A WAY.... YOU CANNOT CREATE ANYTHING HERE BY COERCION. COERCION APPLIED TO THE MIDDLE PEASANTS WOULD CAUSE UNTOLD HARM. THIS SECTION IS A NUMEROUS ONE, IT CONSISTS OF MILLIONS OF INDIVIDUALS.

LENIN THEN PROCEEDED TO EXPLAIN THAT THE URBAN UPPER LAYER OF CAPITALISTS HAD NO PARALLEL IN THE VILLAGE (ALTHOUGH ONE IS PROMPTED TO ASK WHAT HAPPENED TO THE KULAK IN THE CURRENT LENINIST APPROACH). AGAIN HE STRESSED THAT "HERE COERCION WOULD RUIN THE WHOLE CAUSE. PROLONGED EDUCATIONAL WORK IS REQUIRED. WE HAVE TO GIVE THE PEASANT...CONCRETE EXAMPLES TO PROVE THAT 'COMMUNIA' IS THE BEST POSSIBLE THING."

SUDDENLY LENIN HAD DECIDED THAT THE BOLSHEVIKS HAD MUCH TO LEARN ABOUT, AND INDEED, FROM THE PEASANTRY. COMMUNES WERE STILL TO BE ENCOURAGED "BUT THEY MUST BE SO ORGANISED AS TO GAIN THE CONFIDENCE OF THE PEASANTS. AND UNTIL THEN WE ARE PUPILS OF THE PEASANTS AND NOT THEIR TEACHERS," HE WROTE. PARTY WORKERS WERE URGED TO OBSERVE THE SPECIFIC CONDITIONS IN WHICH THE PEASANT LIVED AND "TO LEARN FROM HIM METHODS OF TRANSITION TO A BETTER SYSTEM, AND NOT TO DARE GIVE ORDERS!" A RESOLUTION ON THE ATTITUDE TO THE MIDDLE PEASANTS WAS PRESENTED BY LENIN TO THE EIGHTH CONGRESS WHICH COMPELLED THE PARTY BUREAUCRACY TO DISTINGUISH CAREFULLY BETWEEN THE MIDDLE PEASANT AND THE KULAK AND WHICH RECOGNIZED THAT THE MIDDLE PEASANT WOULD EXIST IN THE SOVIET SYSTEM FOR A LONG TIME TO COME AND THUS INSISTED ON COOPERATION WITH HIM. THE RESOLUTION FURTHER STATED THAT THE MIDDLE PEASANTS DO NOT PROFIT BY THE LABOR OF OTHERS, THAT NO DIRECT OR INDIRECT COMPELION WOULD BE PERMITTED IN BRINGING THEM TO THE COMMUNE, THAT RULES OF REQUISITIONING WOULD BE STRICTLY OBSERVED AND THAT PARTY WORKERS WOULD HAVE TO BE LENIENT TO THIS STRATA OF THE PEASANTRY WHEN COLLECTING TAXES EVEN IF IT REDUCED THE TOTAL REVENUES.

IN UKRAINE EVEN THE LOWEST STRATA OF THE PEASANTRY PROVIDED SOME
PROBLEMS FOR LENIN WHO DECLARED IN THE WINTER OF 1919 THAT ONE OF THE TASKS OF SOVIET POWER WAS TO WIN THE CONFIDENCE OF THE POOR PEASANTS WHO WERE EXTREMELY DISORGANIZED AT THIS TIME. APPARENTLY THE POOR PEASANTS WERE SUSPICIOUS OF THE SOVIET ADMINISTRATION AND LENIN URGED THAT PARTY OFFICIALS MAKE SPECIAL EFFORTS TO INCLUDE THEM, AS WELL AS MIDDLE PEASANTS, IN THE WORK OF THE GOVERNMENT. IN ORDER TO INSTIL SOME REVOLUTIONARY FERVOR INTO THE POOR PEASANTRY LENIN HAD DECIDED TO TRANSFER THE LARGEST POSSIBLE NUMBER OF PEOPLE FROM THE STARVING CITIES TO AGRICULTURAL WORK IN THE RURAL DISTRICTS—TO VEGETABLE GARDENS, TO THE UKRAINE, TO THE DON REGION, AND SO FORTH, SO AS TO INCREASE THE OUTPUT OF GRAIN AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE.

SINCE RURAL UKRAINE SUFFERED FROM AGRICULTURAL OVER-POPULATION THE SAGACITY OF LENIN’S ACTION IS QUESTIONABLE UNLESS IT IS VIEWED IN POLITICAL-MILITARY TERMS. IF THE PARTY WAS TO LEARN ABOUT AGRICULTURE FROM THE PEASANTRY IT MAY BE REASONABLY ASKED WHAT HELP A MEMBER OF THE PETERGRAD PROLETARIAT COULD BE ON A FARM.

WHY THESE RUSSIAN WORKERS WERE SENT TO THE UKRAINE IS EXPLAINED RATHER ESOTERICALLY BY LENIN WHO COMPLAINED THAT NOT ONLY WERE THE PEASANTS ANTIPATHETIC TO THE BOLSHEVIKS BUT THAT THEY WERE BECOMING SUSPICIOUS THAT THEIR CONFISCATED GRAIN WAS NOT STAYING IN THE UKRAINE BUT WAS GOING TO RUSSIA. HE NOTED LACONICALLY THAT “IT IS ESSENTIAL TO EXPOSE TO THE UKRAINIAN PEASANTRY THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY DEMOGOGY THAT TRIES TO IMPRESS ON THEM THAT THE PURPOSE OF SOVIET RUSSIA IS TO CHANNEL GRAIN AND OTHER FOOD PRODUCTS FROM THE UKRAINE INTO RUSSIA.” COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY THIS PROPAGANDA MAY HAVE BEEN BUT BY LENIN’S OWN NUMEROUS ADMISSIONS IT WAS IN FACT QUITE ACCURATE.

the Ukraine, due to its large number of middle and higher peasantry and due
to the questionable aims and motives of the Bolsheviks these committees had
only a limited success. Adams suggests what was perhaps the basic reason
for the Bolshevik lack of success with the poor peasant in Ukraine. Discussing
the civil war he concludes that

contrary to a popular Bolshevik myth, this twentieth-century haidamak-
and-Cossack rising was not provoked primarily by well-to-do Cossacks,
nor by the lust of the rich peasant, the kulak, for more land. Peas-
ants who had always been landless dreamed now of obtaining some land;
peasants who owned a little dreamed of getting more.

Lenin attributed this fundamental peasant desire to own land to the
influence of the bourgeoisie.

In Siberia and in the Ukraine the counter-revolution was able to
gain a temporary victory because there the bourgeoisie had the peas-
antry on its side, because the peasants were against us. The peasants
frequently said, "We are Bolsheviks but not Communists. We are for
for the Bolsheviks because they drove out the landowners; but we are
not for the Communists because they are opposed to individual farming."

It seems that this is all the Ukrainian peasant wanted, i.e., his own plot
of land. Bukharin was aware of this inclination and labelled it "agrarian
peasant socialism." According to him, agrarian peasant socialism

...assumes various forms and at all times resembles peasant anarchism.
Its most distinctive feature is the way in which it habitually fails to
look upon socialism as a system of large-scale production, and the way
in which it inclines towards dividing up and towards equalisation. Its
main distinction from anarchism is that it demands the creation of a
strong central authority which shall protect it, on the one hand from
the landlords and on the other from the proletariat. In this form of
socialism we have the "socialisation of the land" advocated by the so-
cial revolutionists, who desire to establish small scale production in
perpetuity, who dread the proletariat, and who oppose the formation of
a great and united co-operative commonwealth.

This is probably very close to what the Ukrainian peasant really wanted.

Lenin had decided in 1919 that an "alliance" with the peasantry was
a precondition to the success of the revolution and in 1921 at the Third
Congress of the Comintern he spelled out the aim of the alliance. This
Alliance was to be interpreted in the following way: "The proletariat emancipates the peasantry from the exploitation of the bourgeoisie, from its leadership and influence, and wins it over to its own side in order to jointly defeat the exploiters." The first step in "emancipating" the peasantry was, of course, the liquidation of the kulak. But this was to be done under the leadership of the proletariat, the urban class, which, as Chamberlin notes, was nowhere hated as much as in the Ukraine. In other words what Lenin gave the peasant with one hand he took away with the other.

Further complicating the Ukrainian predicament, from a socialist standpoint, was the conspicuous lack of an indigenous proletariat. The overwhelming majority of proletariat in the Ukraine, as has already been noted, was of Russian origin. This class was but a tiny minority in a sea of peasantry and even though Lenin could say that "the workers living in the towns...assimilate our ideas..." he had to conclude that in the Ukraine there existed a "low level of proletarian class-consciousness." But this was not the only vexatious problem for he also observed that "what proletariat there is, has been corrupted by petty-bourgeois habits." This probably meant that the majority of whatever proletariat existed in the Ukraine was pro-Menshevik rather than Bolshevik in political orientation.

Circumstantial evidence for this assumption is provided by a current Soviet source which shows that before and during the war a viable worker's movement in the Ukraine manifested itself in numerous strikes and protests. Gurzhii and Leshchenko, perhaps inadvertently, provide further evidence of the existence of a dynamic workers movement in the Ukraine. In enumerating cities in which strikes occurred, Moscow and Petrograd are usually the only Russian cities mentioned while cities in the Ukraine consistently referred to include Kiev, Kharkov, Nikolaev, Kherson, Ekaterinoslav and Odessa.
FURTHERMORE, PRAVDA PUBLISHED TWO SPECIAL EDITIONS (THE MINER'S LEAFLET) FOR THE DONETS WORKERS BETWEEN 1912-1914. 53

NEVERTHELESS, THERE WAS A DEFINITE NEED FOR MORE AND MORE PRO-BOLSHEVIK PROLETARIAT IN THE UKRAINE AND LENIN INTENDED TO SUPPLY IT. "FROM ALL PARTS OF THE UKRAINE WE HEAR THE CRY 'SEND US WORKERS!'" HE INFORMED A GATHERING IN PETROGRAD IN MARCH 1919. 54 A FEW DAYS LATER HE NOTED THAT

THE UKRAINIAN COMRADES ARE COMPLAINING BITTERLY ABOUT THE LACK OF PEOPLE, LACK OF FORCES WITH WHICH TO BUILD UP THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT. THEY HAVE NO MACHINERY OF ADMINISTRATION, THEY HAVE NO PROLETARIAN CENTRE LIKE PETROGRAD OR MOSCOW, FOR THE UKRAINIAN PROLETARIAN CENTRES ARE OCCUPIED BY THE ENEMY. KIEV IS NOT A PROLETARIAN CENTRE. 55

HE THEN PROCEEDED TO FULFILL THEIR REQUESTS WITH BUDDING PARTY APPERATCHIKS.

NOT ONLY WAS THE PROLETARIAT IN THE UKRAINE EXCEPTIONALLY SMALL, HE INFORMED THE NINTH CONGRESS OF THE RCP(B) IN THE SPRING OF 1920, BUT

THERE CAN BE NO QUESTION ... THAT THE PROLETARIAN ELEMENT IN THE UKRAINE DIFFERS FROM THE PROLETARIAN ELEMENT IN PETROGRAD, MOSCOW AND IVANOVO-VOZNESENSK—NOT BECAUSE IT IS NO GOOD, BUT FOR PURELY HISTORICAL REASONS. THEY DID NOT HAVE OCCASION TO BECOME SO STEELED BY HUNGER, COLD AND STRIFE AS THE PROLETARIANS OF MOSCOW AND PETROGRAD. 56

THIS STATEMENT WAS MADE NOT BECAUSE LENIN WAS IGNORANT OF THE DEVASTATION IN THE UKRAINE, RATHER IT WAS A BLATANT FALSIFICATION FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES. AFTER ALL, ONE YEAR EARLIER HE HAD STATED THAT THE RUSSIANS MUST COME TO THE AID OF THE UKRAINIAN COMRADES BECAUSE THEY FACED THE TASK OF CREATING A SOVIET ADMINISTRATION "ON A SITE THAT WAS CLEARED AND LAID WASTE BY SUFFERING AS NO OTHER PLACE HAS BEEN!" 57 AND SIX MONTHS AFTER THE NINTH CONGRESS HE AGAIN SPOKE OF THE "UNPARALLELED SUFFERINGS" IN THE UKRAINE. 58 IT WOULD APPEAR THAT LENIN COULD DO AS HE WISHED WITH THE "UKRAINIAN" PROLETARIAT AND HE HAD LITTLE RESPECT FOR IT.

LENIN'S WORK ON THE UKRAINE INCLUDES NOTHING OF SIGNIFICANCE WITH REGARD TO A UKRAINIAN INTELLIGENTSIA OR EVEN A UKRAINIAN BOURGEOISIE. IF THE BOURGEOISIE WAS DISCUSSED IT WAS NEVER DONE SO AS AN END IN ITSELF.
For example, Lenin declared that it was the party’s task “to prevent Soviet institutions from being flooded with Ukrainian urban petty bourgeoisie, who have no conception of the living conditions of the peasant masses and who frequently masquerade as Communists.” But even here the term “Ukrainian” is probably being used as a regional designation of urban Russians and Jews since it is questionable that enough urbanized ethnic Ukrainians existed to flood the Soviet apparatus. To further complicate the issue, Lenin began referring to the peasantry as petty bourgeoisie. “It is the petty bourgeoisie,” he affirmed in March 1921, “the small proprietors, which in Russia constitute the overwhelming majority of the population—the peasantry. They are mainly small proprietors and small farmers.”

In his pre-revolutionary writings Lenin never dealt specifically with the uniqueness of Ukrainian culture or the political and cultural orientations of its intelligentsia other than as a political club with which to subdue his opponents. For example, he took advantage of the tsarist government’s ban of the Shevchenko day celebrations in the Ukraine. He wrote a speech for the Duma deputy, H. Petrovsky, which condemned the government’s action in strong terms. There is no indication, however, that he was familiar with Shevchenko’s work and he made it plain that he disapproved of the government’s action primarily because it provided new impetus for the Ukrainian separatists.

In fact the only Ukrainian literary work that Lenin mentioned was a book by Vinnychenko which he read in 1914. His comments were hardly flattering:

There’s balderdash and stupidity. To combine together as much as possible of every kind of “horror”, to collect in one story “vice” and “syphilis” and romantic crime!... But this pretentious, crass idiot Vinnychenko, in self-admiration, has from such things compiled a collection that is nothing but horrors—a kind of “twopenny dreadful”. Brrr.... Muck, nonsense, pity I spent so much time reading it.
GURZHI AND LESHCHENKO, HOWEVER, STATE THAT LENIN "UNDERSTOOD THE UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE WELL AND HAD READ THE CLASSICS OF UKRAINIAN LITERATURE." According to them, Lenin stated that he had read the works of Shevchenko, Franko and other Ukrainian writers and that he told a delegation of Ukrainian poor peasants that he understood and loved the Ukrainian language.

No evidence exists to corroborate these statements and it would not be unreasonable to disregard them. LENIN'S WRITINGS ARE DEVOID OF REFERENCES TO UKRAINIAN AUTHORS OTHER THAN THE TWO DISCUSSED.

IN THE LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION ISSUES LENIN SHOWED NO SPECIAL INTEREST IN THE UKRAINE. HE CONSTANTLY STATED THAT IT WAS NOT FOR THE PROLETARIAT TO ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL CULTURE BUT, ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY WOULD NOT RETARD IT EITHER. HE CONTINUALLY STRESSED THAT "THE WORKERS OF ALL NATIONS HAVE BUT ONE EDUCATIONAL POLICY: FREEDOM FOR THE NATIVE LANGUAGE, AND DEMOCRATIC AND SECULAR EDUCATION." Nevertheless, once the Bolsheviks assumed power and Lenin was casting about for ways to consolidate it, he quickly decided to foster Ukrainian culture, even though his views on Ukrainian nationalism and culture were undoubtedly similar to Rosa Luxemburg's. She summed up Ukrainian nationalism and culture thus:

"UKRAINIAN NATIONALISM IN RUSSIA WAS SOMETHING QUITE DIFFERENT FROM, LET US SAY, CZECHISH, POLISH OR FINNISH NATIONALISM IN THAT THE FARMER WAS A MERE WHIM, A FOLLY OF A FEW DOZEN PETTY-BOURGEOIS INTELLECTUALS WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST ROOTS IN THE ECONOMIC, POLITICAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL RELATIONSHIPS OF THE COUNTRY; IT WAS WITHOUT HISTORICAL TRADITIONS, SINCE THE UKRAINE NEVER FORMED A NATION OR GOVERNMENT, WAS WITHOUT ANY NATIONAL CULTURE, EXCEPT FOR THE REACTIONARY-ROMANTIC POEMS OF SHEVCHENKO."

LENIN, HOWEVER, WAS NOT GOING TO LET HIS NEGATIVE VIEWS ON NATIONALISM IN GENERAL AND UKRAINIAN NATIONALISM IN PARTICULAR IMPEDE HIS PRACTICAL EFFORTS TO AMELIORATE THE UKRAINIAN POPULATION. HE WAS AWARE OF THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE UKRAINE. "IF YOU RECALL OUR TWO YEARS OF STRUGGLE," HE REMINDED A SESSION OF VARIOUS SOVIET ORGANIZATIONS IN 1919.
You will see that in the Ukraine too, and even in some parts of Russia proper, where the population was of a specific composition... the movement to victory was not so rapid and did not follow the same road as in Petrograd and in Moscow, in the heart of Russia.

Chamberlin said much the same thing but without Leninist euphemisms. He concluded that "the Ukrainian peasantry showed itself far more conscious of its interests, far more ready to fight for them effectively than did the peasants of Russia. There was perhaps something of a nationalist temper here..." There can be no doubt that Lenin was aware of the greater political consciousness of the Ukrainian peasant as compared to his great Russian counterpart. Implicit in all his work with the national question is Lenin's recognition that the revolution among the nationalities would not be simply of a class character but would assume a marked nationalist coloration as well.

In economic terms, Lenin tended to view the Ukraine as part of Russia and it was not until after the revolution that he wrote anything of a specific economic nature about the area as a whole. Some of his post-revolutionary statements, however, reflected certain preconceived notions formed well before October 1917.

Lenin first noted the existence of a "Ukrainian group" in the Second Duma in the last two months of 1907. This group had wanted to establish a number of separate Ukrainian institutions such as a Ukrainian school system and a separate Ukrainian national land fund. At the same time, the group charged that the Ukraine was being exploited by Russia. Lenin concerned himself only with the establishment of the land fund. He praised the speech of a Poltava deputy to the First Duma, who, although "an ardent advocate of Ukrainian autonomy" and one who wanted the agrarian question to be settled...
BY UKRAINIANS, NEVERTHELESS RECOGNIZED THE ULTIMATE AUTHORITY OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. DELIGHTED, HE QUOTED THE DEPUTY TO THE EFFECT THAT...

...PART OF THE STATE LANDS SHOULD BE AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT... THE SENSE OF ESTABLISHING A STATE STOCK OF DISTRIBUTABLE LAND, AND THE SENSE OF CALLING IT SUCH, IS THIS! ALTHOUGH THE LOCAL BODIES WILL BE FREE TO DISPOSE OF THAT LAND IN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS, THEY WILL BE ABLE TO DO SO ONLY WITHIN CERTAIN LIMITS.

THIS, OF COURSE, CAME FAIRLY CLOSE TO AN AGRARIAN APPLICATION OF LENIN'S NASCENT THEORY OF POLITICAL AUTONOMY AND HE ADDED THAT "THIS PETTY-BOURGEOIS AUTONOMIST UNDERSTANDS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF STATE POWER IN A SOCIETY CENTRALISED BY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FAR BETTER THAN OUR MENSHEVIK SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS."

EVEN AT THIS EARLY DATE LENIN WAS AWARE THAT THE AGRICULTURAL QUESTION IN THE UKRAINE HAD ACQUIRED A NATIONAL FORM AND THAT THE UKRAINIAN PEASANTS "ESPECIALLY THE RURAL MIDDLE CLASS, FOUND IT ADVANTAGEOUS... IN VIEW OF THE SUPERIORITY OF THE SOIL IN THEIR PROVINCES, TO SOLVE THE LAND QUESTION INDEPENDENTLY OF RUSSIA PROPER." Thus Lenin declared that THE CONCLUSION TO BE DRAWN FROM OUR REVIEW OF THE DUMA SPEECHES ON THE AGRARIAN QUESTION DELIVERED BY THE "NATIONALS" IS OBVIOUS. THOSE SPEECHES FULLY CONFIRM WHAT I SAID IN OPPOSITION TO MASLOV... ON THE QUESTION OF THE RELATION BETWEEN MUNICIPALISATION AND THE RIGHTS OF THE NATIONALITIES, NAMELY, THAT IT IS A POLITICAL QUESTION, WHICH IS FULLY DEALT WITH IN THE POLITICAL SECTION OF OUR PROGRAMME...

THIS PERHAPS EXPLAINS THE PAUCITY OF LENIN'S WORK ON THE AGRARIAN QUESTION IN THE UKRAINE! HE CONSIDERED IT TO BE MORE A PURELY POLITICAL PROBLEM RATHER THAN AN ECONOMIC ONE AND AS SUCH ONLY DEALT WITH IT IMPLICITLY AS PART OF A MUCH LARGER ISSUE.

EVEN AFTER THE REVOLUTION THERE WAS LITTLE INTEREST ON LENIN'S PART IN THE UNIQUE AGRICULTURAL SITUATION EXISTING IN THE UKRAINE APART FROM HIS PRACTICAL CONCERN WITH HOW TO BEST USE THE UKRAINIAN MIDDLE PEASANT TO PRODUCE GRAIN FOR SOVIET RUSSIA. HIS REFERENCES TO THE "RICH UKRAINE" ARE MAN-
I FOLD AND HE OFTEN NOTED THAT IT WAS ONE OF THE MAIN GRAIN-GROWING REGIONS. However he was not interested in the area in any but the most pragmatic terms, i.e., how it could be used to strengthen the socialist state. This became apparent in August 1921 when, speaking of "the Volga area and South Ukraine" he noted that "several gubernias in Russia have been hit by a famine whose proportions are apparently only slightly less than those of the 1891 calamity." At the same time, in his "Appeal to the Peasants of the Ukraine," he observed that the Ukraine west of the Dnieper had an excellent harvest and that "the workers and peasants in the famine-stricken Volga-area... look to the Ukrainian farmers for help. Help must come quickly. Help must be abundant. No farmer must refrain from sharing his surplus with the starving Volga peasants." The Ukrainian peasant was to give his grain to the starving Volga peasant but, by implication, not to the starving South Ukrainian which Lenin had stated was in an equally dire need of grain. Of course, it was also the duty of the Ukrainian peasant to supply the Hungary North.

In discussing the alliance between the proletariat and peasantry, Lenin remarked that "the peasants received from the workers' state all the land and were given protection against the landowners and the kulaks; the workers have been receiving from the peasants loans of food supplies until large scale industry is restored." In summing up his thesis, however, there appeared a subtle change in the peasants' role in this alliance. Lenin concluded that "the basis of our economic alliance with the peasantry was, of course, very simple, and even crude. The peasant obtained from us all the land and support against the big landowners. In return for this, we were to obtain food." There was now no question of the peasant loaning or selling his food. He was to give it to the Bolsheviks in return for land.
which, Lenin alleged, only the Bolsheviks made available to him. But this "crude" alliance soon had to be redrawn because the peasant was well aware that this "partnership" was most disadvantageous for him and this was one of the reasons that forced Lenin to lay plans for the introduction of the New Economic Policy.

Lenin did not perceive Ukrainian industry as a distinct entity but instead regarded it as part of the Great Russian complex. There were two reasons for this. First, the Ukraine, especially after the secession of Poland, Finland and the Baltic states, was the only industrial region left in Russia outside Moscow and Petrograd. Even before the revolution it was a major and indispensable source of coal and iron. From the economic standpoint then, Lenin was strongly compelled to include the Ukraine in any new, post-revolutionary Russia. Secondly, not only did Lenin insist on the unity of the proletariat of all nations, but he categorically demanded the complete integrity of all Russian workers and the proletariat in the Ukraine was primarily of Russian origin. Thus, from the political standpoint as well, Ukrainian industry had to be viewed by Lenin as one with the Russian.

Lenin treated any manifestation of distinctly Ukrainian political activity with silence. He preferred to ignore the Ukrainian political scene and his comments seldom went beyond a perfunctory, programmatic statement on the right of nations to self-determination when he felt compelled to speak out. This approach was part of Leninist policy, for, as it became evident some years later when the Borot'bisty were to join the CP(B)U, he constantly insisted on minimizing any differences with national groups of a socialist orientation (until, of course, he was in a position to liquidate them). Lenin was certainly aware of a genuinely Ukrainian political movement soon
AFTER THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE RSDLP AND HAD MET A FUTURE MEMBER OF AN
AUSTROPHIL UKRAINIAN PARTY IN 1906. 

THE THREE MAJOR UKRAINIAN PARTIES—SOCIAL REVOLUTIONARIES, SOCIAL
DEMOCRATS AND SOCIAL FEDERALISTS—WERE ALL ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE POLITICAL
SPECTRUM. LENIN WAS WILLING TO USE THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT TO SUIT HIS PUR­
POSES AS IS EVIDENCED BY HIS ATTACK ON BOBRINSKY AND PURUSKEVICH, TWO RUS­
SIAN NATIONALISTS OF THE EXTREME RIGHT, IN THE DUMA SPEECH HE WROTE FOR
PETROVSKY. BY 1916 IT HAD BECOME LENIN'S POLICY TO USE MOVEMENTS WITHOUT
FORMING ALLIANCES WITH THEM. HE EMPHASIZED THAT

THE GENERAL STAFFS IN THE CURRENT WAR ARE DOING THEIR UTMOST TO
UTILISE ANY NATIONAL AND REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN THE ENEMY CAMP: THE
Germans utilise the Irish rebellion, the French— the Czech movement, etc. They are acting quite correctly from their own point of view. . . .
WE WOULD BE VERY POOR REVOLUTIONARIES IF. . . . WE DID NOT KNOW HOW TO UTI­
LISE EVERY POPULAR MOVEMENT AGAINST EVERY SINGLE DISASTER IMPERIALISM
BRINGS IN ORDER TO INTENSIFY AND EXTEND THE CRISIS.

IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT LENIN IGNORED THE UKRAINE FOR HE WAS AWARE THAT THE
Germans and Austrians were trying to utilize its national movement. THIS
CAN PERHAPS BE EXPLAINED BY THE FACT THAT LENIN PLANNED TO USE THIS MOVEMENT
HIMSELF AND DID NOT WANT TO HAVE IT ASSOCIATED WITH AUSTRO-GERMAN IMPERIALISM.

LENIN GENERALLY LOOKED AT THE NATIONAL UKRAINIAN POLITICAL MOVEMENT
AS INFERIOR TO THE RUSSIAN BECAUSE IT LACKED THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND NEEDED
TO UNITE ALL REAL PARTIES AND BECAUSE IT WAS, BY DEFINITION, SUSCEPTIBLE TO
BOURGEOIS AND IMPERIALIST INFLUENCE.

DURING THE CIVIL WAR HE CONTINUALLY EMPHASIZED THAT RUSSIA WAS MORE
POLITICALLY ADVANCED. IN THE UKRAINE, FOR INSTANCE, HE IMPLIED THAT THE
MASSES HAD NOT YET GONE THROUGH THE PHASE OF COOPERATING WITH THE BOURGEOISIE
AND THAT THIS WAS PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WAR. FURTHERMORE, HE
NOTED THAT EVEN THE UKRAINIAN BOLSHEVIKS WERE INSUFFICIENTLY MATURE POLITI­
CALLY WHEN HE SPOKE ABOUT THE LACK OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE APPARATUS IN THE
Ukraine. The "Comrades in the Ukraine" were still in the stage of guerilla war, he observed, and there was no apparatus because they had "not yet passed out of the phase of partisan warfare and spontaneous insurrection into the regular army phase, which is always characteristic of the consolidated power of every class, including the proletariat." Although he further stated that the Russian Bolsheviks created their apparatus after many difficult months, thereby implying that the Ukrainian Bolsheviks ought to do the same in a short time, he failed to causally connect the fact that in Russia the provincial government's apparatus was inherited by the Bolsheviks while in the Ukraine the old machinery had been completely destroyed.

Lenin's impatience with the Ukrainian Bolsheviks was prompted by the fact that, without the necessary party and government machinery, they could not export sufficient food to Russia. He was not interested in the establishment of the Ukrainian Bolsheviks as an end in itself. "It is obvious that under prevailing conditions," he noted in Moscow at the end of July 1919,

when the railways are working badly, when typical of the chief grain-growing districts is what is happening in the Ukraine, where we have not succeeded in getting an apparatus going, where the remnants of guerilla methods prevent any possibility of organisational work, where the population has not yet been able to abandon guerilla methods—obviously all this ... makes it more difficult for us to make use of the rich grain markets where there are stocks of grain that could easily get us out of our difficulties.91

Thus the Ukrainian Bolsheviks were soon to become the executors of Bolshevik policy formed in Moscow.

Lenin was displeased with the Ukrainian Bolsheviks for a number of reasons. First, they continually fought among themselves—especially the Kiev and Kharkov groups. Second, their organization and propaganda were not so appealing to the Ukrainians as was that of the Mensheviks.92 Third, they
were letting purely Ukrainian organizations appropriate sections of the Bolsheviki program. Fourth, and most important from Lenin's viewpoint, the regional dispute was further complicated by a political disagreement. He declared that among the Bolsheviki there are advocates of complete independence for the Ukraine, advocates of a more or less close federal tie, and advocates of the complete amalgamation of the Ukraine with Russia. There must be no differences over these questions.

The thought that a Bolshevik would consider the secession of the Ukraine must have deeply disturbed Lenin.

Lenin had deliberately and consistently glossed over any real differences between the social, economic and political composition of Ukraine and Russia primarily because he did not believe they would outlive the revolution. He insisted on maintaining his Ukrainian versus Russian dialogue at the theoretical level of abstract principles as long as possible. It was not until after the defeat of Denikin in December 1919 that Lenin carefully noted the substantial dissimilarities between the two countries.

At this time Lenin had carefully analyzed the Constituent Assembly elections of November 1917 and became acquainted with the role and importance of peasant national feeling in the Ukraine. He remarked that at the last conferences on the Ukrainian question some comrades accused the writer of these lines of giving too much "prominence" to the national question in the Ukraine. The returns of the Constituent Assembly elections show that in the Ukraine, as early as November 1917, the Ukrainian Socialist-Revolutionaries polled a majority (3.4 million votes + 0.5 = 3.9 million against 1.9 million polled by the Russian Socialist-Revolutionaries, out of a total poll in the whole of the Ukraine of 7.5 million votes). Less than 10 percent (754,000) of the Ukrainian vote went to the Bolsheviki and Lenin decided that the continued neglect of what had now become a critical political question could be disastrous for the Bolsheviki. It would be,
HE CONCLUDED, A GREAT AND DANGEROUS MISTAKE. THE DIVISION BETWEEN THE RUSSIAN AND UKRAINIAN SOCIALIST-REVOLUTIONARIES COULD NOT HAVE BEEN ACCIDENTAL. IT IS OUR DUTY, PRECISELY ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION, WHICH IS A RELATIVELY MINOR ONE (FOR AN INTERNATIONALIST THE QUESTION OF STATE FRONTIERS IS A SECONDARY, IF NOT A TENTH-RATE QUESTION), TO MAKE CONCESSIONS.

AWARE NOW OF THE MANIFEST DIFFERENCES OF THE UKRAINE FROM RUSSIA, LENIN WAS NOW READY TO EXPLOIT THEM IN AN EFFORT TO ENHANCE PROLETARIAN POWER. HIS GOAL HAD ALWAYS BEEN, AND STILL REMAINED, THE CREATION OF A VAST MONOLITHIC STATE BUT DUE TO THE OBVIOUS DISAPPROVAL OF HIS AIM BY A LARGE SECTION OF THE UKRAINIAN PEASANTRY HE WAS FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO MAKE TEMPORARY AND CONDITIONAL CONCESSIONS WITH THE VIEW OF PERSUADING THE UKRAINE VOLUNTARILY TO RE-JOIN RUSSIA AND THE NEW SOVIET STATE SOMETIME IN THE NEAR FUTURE. THUS HIS PERCEPTION AND RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL HETEROGENEITY IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE RESULTED IN LITTLE MORE THAN A SHIFT OF EMPHASIS AND A CHANGE OF TACTICS. THE GOAL OF UNITY AND EVENTUAL ASSIMILATION REMAINED.
Chapter II: Footnotes

1. Lenin, XIX, p. 246.


4. At least one scholar has argued that it was a deliberate tsarist policy to perpetuate a gulf between the Ukrainian peasantry and the Ukrainian intellectuals. This policy, he suggests, was quite successful until the revolution of 1905 at which time the peasantry began to develop a modern political consciousness—less local and more national. I. L. Rudnytsky, "The Intellectual Origins of Modern Ukraine," The Annals of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S., VI (1957), 197.

This was probably due to the fact, as Maynard pointed out, that "the Ukrainian-speaking population is one of peasants, and measures which caused discontent among peasants in general were particularly resented by national sentiment in Ukraine." J. Maynard, The Russian Peasant and Other Studies (London: Victor Gollancz, 1943), p. 398. See M. Shapoval, Zasybo ukrainsk'kooi vyzvol'noi programy (Prague: Vyl'na Spilka, 1927). Shapoval also perceives the class difference between Ukrainian and Russian to be of the greatest importance. Also see J.S. Reshetar, The Ukrainian Revolution, 1917-1920 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952), pp. 324-25, for a discussion of Shapoval's views.

To some extent the Ukrainian peasantry was unique because it was the only Ukrainian class with a long historical tradition and part of this tradition was a dislike or hatred for Poles, Jews and Russians. Carr notes that the primary targets of peasant hatred were Poles and Jews. E. H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917-1923, Vol. I (London: Macmillan, 1950), pp. 289-90. See H. P. Vowles, Ukraine and Its People (London: W. and R. Chambers, 1939), p. 164, for an explanation of why Ukrainians disliked Poles. Also see Lenin, XXI, p. 348. Although Lenin says that the Polish landed proprietor oppresses the Ukrainian peasant, he says nothing of the Russian proprietor.

At any rate, it is possible to understand why Majstrenko concludes that before the 1917 revolution "the concepts of 'Ukraine' and 'Ukrainian' tended to be treated as synonymous with 'peasant.'" I. Majstrenko, Borot'bis: A Chapter in the History of Ukrainian Communism (New York: Research Program on the U.S.S.R., 1954), pp. 7-10. In this respect also see B. Dmytryshyn, Moscow and the Ukraine, 1918-1953 (New York: Bookman, 1956), pp. 59-60.

Figures on the rural-urban dichotomy are provided by Sullivant, p. 24, and Borys, p. 271. In some industrial centers the Russians comprised between 70 to 80 percent of the urban ethnic group.

7. Lenin, XXXV, pp.279-80.
8. See Sullivan, pp.23-24; Dmytryshyn, p.44.
10. Ibid., p.317.
11. Ibid., p.317; Ibid., pp.259-60. Perhaps another reason was the fact that a state grain monopoly was established in Bolsheviki held territory and this gave little incentive to the peasant. He would rather fight for the freedom to trade in grain. See especially Ibid., p.570.
12. See Ibid., p.460. Lenin's euphemism for the expansion of this peasant xenophobia was "the development of guerilla methods."
13. Ibid., p.460.
14. Ibid., p.321. Lenin also believed that this mobilization of the industrial areas would relieve some of the food shortage since the men were being transferred to agricultural regions.
15. Ibid., p.321.
16. Ibid., XXXI, p.296. Also see Carr, p.303 and Dmytryshyn, p.192.
17. Lenin, XXIX, p.461.
18. Ibid., p.461. Lenin added that Trotsky "who himself saw the incredible losses suffered there, stated definitely that the experience of the Ukrainians cannot pass without leaving a trace ...."
20. Ibid., p.60. The latter part of this appraisal is interesting for Lenin implies that the Bolsheviki may have received support from certain elements of the peasantry (perhaps the kulaks?) but not from the poor or working peasant. There seems to be no other way to interpret the remark that the Bolsheviki had "not won the full support and sympathy of the majority of the working peasants (as distinct from the peasant exploiters) of the Ukraine." As will be seen later, this statement could not have applied to the middle peasant.
22. Ibid., p.10. 23. Lenin, XXXII, pp. 154-55.

25. LENIN, XXVIII, P. 177. SEE Ibid., XXVII, P. 394.

26. Ibid., XXIX, P. 492. SEE Allen, P. 351; Menier, pp. 651-53. Nevertheless the kulak was to be liquidated as a class. Trotsky, in August, 1919, stated rather pointedly that "THE DISARMING OF THE KULAK IS A PRE-/REQUISITE FOR GETTING ANY SORT OF WORK WHATSOEVER DONE IN THE UKRAINE, WHETHER ON THE MILITARY SIDE OR ON THE SIDE OF THE SOVIET APPARATUS." Ibid., p. 653.

27. Lenin, XXXI, pp. 156-57. 28. Ibid., XXVIII, p. 177.


31. Ibid., p. 211.

32. Ibid., p. 211. THIS IS AN UNCHARACTERISTIC STATEMENT FOR LENIN BECAUSE HE WAS ACTUALLY SAYING THAT THE PARTY WAS NOT THE LEADER OF THE PEASANT MASSES. ITS VANGUARD ROLE WAS TO BE SET ASIDE FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES. HE HAD, IN FACT, ADMITTED THAT THE PARTY HAD RUN OUT OF ANSWERS ON THIS PROBLEM.

33. Ibid., p. 211. WHEN LENIN DECIDED THAT SOMETHING COULD BE LEARNED FROM THE PEASANT HE DID NOT STOP WITH HALF-WAY MEASURES. THUS HE FURTHER NOTED THAT "NOTHING IS MORE STUPID THAN PEOPLE WHO KNOW NOTHING ABOUT FARMING AND ITS SPECIFIC FEATURES, RUSHING TO THE VILLAGE ONLY BECAUSE THEY HAVE HEARD OF THE ADVANTAGES OF SOCIALISED FARMING, ARE TIRED OF URBAN LIFE AND DESIRE TO WORK IN RURAL DISTRICTS--IT IS MOST STUPID FOR SUCH PEOPLE TO REGARD THEMSELVES AS TEACHERS OF THE PEASANTS IN EVERY RESPECT. NOTHING IS MORE STUPID THAN THE VERY IDEA OF APPLYING COERCION IN ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH THE MIDDLE PEASANT." Ibid., p. 211. Thus spoke Lenin in March 1919.


35. Lenin, XXX, pp. 164-65.


38. ESPECIALLY SEE Allen, PP. 351-52. HE STATES THAT DUE TO AGRICULTURAL OVER-Population 1,610,000 PEASANTS LEFT THE AREA OF THE UKRAINIAN GOVERNMENTS BETWEEN 1906 AND 1914.
39. LENIN, XXX, p.164.

40. BETWEEN 1918 AND 1921, LENIN SCARCELY EVER MENTIONED THE UKRAINE WITHOUT PAYING PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE AREA'S GRAIN SUPPLIES AND OTHER RAW MATERIALS. HE CONTINUALLY STRESSED THAT SOVIET RUSSIA COULD NOT EXIST WITHOUT THESE SUPPLIES. SEE Ibid., XXVII-XXXII. FOR JUST TWO SPECIFIC EXAMPLES SEE Ibid., XXIX, pp.156-57; Ibid., XXXI, p.317. FOR A MORE SUBTLE APPROACH SEE Ibid., XXIX, pp.50-51.


43. LENIN, XXXII, p.486. DMYTRYSHYN, p.44. CHAMBERLIN STATES THAT "THE UKRAINIAN PEASANTS DISLIKED BOTH REDS AND WHITES. THEY DISLIKED THE REDS BECAUSE OF THEIR INSULTS TO RELIGION, THEIR HABIT OF REQUIRING FOOD WITHOUT PAYING FOR IT, THEIR ATTEMPTS, IN SOME CASES, TO IMPOSE COMMUNES ON THE PEASANTS. THEY DISLIKED THE WHITES BECAUSE THEY TRIED TO BRING BACK THE OLD REGIME, WITH ITS EXPLOITATION OF THE PEASANTS BY THE LARGE LANDED PROPRIETERS. THEY DISLIKED BOTH AS PREDOMINANTLY RUSSIAN AND ALIEN TO THE UKRAINE." W. H. CHAMBERLIN, THE UKRAINE: A SUBMERGED NATION (NEW YORK: MACMILLAN, 1944), p.47.

44. BUKHARIN, p.79.

45. LENIN, XXXII, p.485. SPEAKING ABOUT THE PEASANTRY IN 1921 LENIN SAID THAT THE PARTY "MUST NOW FIND A PRACTICAL SOLUTION FOR THE PROBLEM OF THE RELATIONS THE PROLETARIAT SHOULD ESTABLISH WITH THIS LAST CAPITALIST CLASS IN RUSSIA. ALL MARXISTS HAVE A CORRECT AND READY SOLUTION FOR THIS PROBLEM IN THEORY. BUT THEORY AND PRACTICE ARE TWO DIFFERENT THINGS.... FROM THE INTERNATIONAL STANDPOINT, IT IS A SIGN OF GREAT PROGRESS THAT WE ARE NOW TRYING TO DETERMINE THE ATTITUDE THE PROLETARIAT IN POWER SHOULD ADOPT TOWARDS THE LAST CAPITALIST CLASS--THE ROCK-BOTTOM OF CAPITALISM--SMALL PRIVATE PROPERTY, THE SMALL PRODUCER." Ibid., pp.484-85.


(Cont.) Ukrainians did not have any classes with which their democracy could cooperate and stated that the bourgeoisie in Ukraine was "not ours" but rather was "South Russian." O. S. Pidhainy, The Formation of the Ukrainian Republic (Toronto: New Review Books, 1966), p. 37.

48. Lenin, XXIX, p. 492.

49. Ibid., p. 460. One is at a loss to explain this "low level of proletarian class-consciousness" since it is claimed that between 1912-1914 Pravda received at least 1,500 letters from the Ukraine. Gurzhii and Leshchenko, p. 29.

50. Lenin, XXX, p. 461.

51. Gurzhii and Leshchenko, pp. 26-37. According to this source there were 54 workers' strikes in 1911 (compared, incidently, to over 2,000 manifestations of peasant discontent), in 1912 there were 350 strikes and in 1913 there were over 300 strikes involving almost 100,000 workers. The first year of war saw few labor disturbances, but in 1915 there were 113 strikes with 48,000 workers.

52. Ibid., pp. 26-29. Rosa Luxemburg, writing of the period before 1905, serves to at least partially corroborate this. She writes that before 1905 "the Ukraine was the stronghold of the Russian revolutionary movement. From there, from Rostov, from Odessa, the Donets region flowed out the first lava—streams of the revolution (as early as 1902-04) which kindled all South Russia into a sea of flame, thereby preparing the uprising of 1905." R. Luxemburg, The Russian Revolution and Leninism or Marxism? (University of Michigan Press, 1961), p. 52.

53. Ibid., pp. 26-29.

54. Lenin, XXIX, p. 51.

55. Ibid., p. 84.

56. Ibid., XXX, p. 478. See Ibid., pp. 522-23 for an elaboration of this statement.

57. Ibid., XXIX, p. 84.

58. Ibid., XXXI, p. 314.


60. Ibid., XXXII, p. 276. See Ibid., pp. 276-79.


63. Lenin, XX, p. 220. For a Soviet interpretation of Petrovsky's speech, see Gurzhii and Leshchenko, pp. 32-33.

64. Lenin, XXXV, pp. 144-45.

65. Gurzhii and Leshchenko, p. 47.
68. *Luxemburg, P.*, p.54.
69. *Lenin, XXX*, p.137.
74. Pipes, *The Formation of the Ukrainian Republic*, p.51. This is substantiated by Pidhainyi. In June 1917 a group of 170 delegates arrived from Kiev to take part in the first All Russian Congress of Soviets held in June 1917. Pidhainyi states that "its one achievement was to force the Congress to add the amendment 'federation' as part of the slogan of the Russian Democratic Republic. Most other demands were totally ignored; eventually, the All-Russian Council (initiated by the Congress) decided on one Soil Fund to be centrally controlled, with an expected smaller share of the soil where he was settled to the Ukrainian peasant, since immigrants from the more land hungry Russia were to be brought into the Ukraine to be settled. This issue brought the break...; no other delegates were ever sent by the peasants to Russia." Pidhainyi, *The Formation of the Ukrainian Republic*, p.75.
81. See Carr, p.373. The views of Bolsheviks on the state of Ukrainian industry are both interesting and contradictory. Trotsky speaks of the "industrially backward Ukraine" in L. Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution*, Vol. III, trans. by Max Eastman (London: Gallancy, 1933), p.8. Stalin, as quoted by Towster, p.78, stated that the Ukraine had "...in a more or less degree... passed through the period of industrial capitalism..." Postyshev is somewhere in between Stalin and Trotsky. He declared that at the time of the revolution "...the Ukraine was, comparatively speaking, an industrial country." P.P. Postyshev and S.V. Kobzior, *Soviet Ukraine Today* (Moscow and Leningrad: Co-operative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the U. S. S. R., 1934), p.36. Also see Borys pp.55-60, who discusses the state of industrial development in the Ukraine.
82. See Shaheen, pp.87-89. See Rudnytsky, p.1399, for an interesting comment on the growth of economic regionalism in the Ukraine.
84. See Reshetar, The Ukrainian Revolution, pp. 3-44, 51; Rudnytsky, pp. 1397-1403. The Ukrainian Marxist parties tried to adapt Marxism to Ukrainian conditions but this was a most difficult task since a Ukrainian proletariat was almost non-existent. Lenin, of course, refused to recognize the existence of another "real" Marxist party on what he considered to be Russian territory.

85. Lenin, XX, pp. 219-20.
86. Ibid., XXII, p. 357.

87. See Ibid., XXV, pp. 155-59, 283-84; and especially Ibid., XXXV, pp. 279-81, where he discusses the indoctrination of Ukrainian prisoners-of-war by pro-Austrian Galicians.

88. Ibid., XXVII, p. 89.
89. Ibid., XXIX, p. 292. See Ibid., p. 462.

90. Ibid., p. 292. Ibid., p. 222.

91. Ibid., p. 222.

92. See the quote by Skrypnik in M. Stakhiv, Persha sovets’ka respublika v Ukraini (Scranton: Ukrainian Free Society of America, 1956), p. 179.

94. Lenin, XXX, p. 295.

95. Ibid., p. 270.

96. Ibid., pp. 255, 267; Ciuciura, p. 43.
97. Ibid., p. 270.

98. Two English sources, both of whom do not qualify as Ukranophiles, attest to the existence of Ukrainian peculiarities in tsarist Russia. Writing before the turn of the century MacKenzie Wallace observed: "The city (Kiev) and the surrounding country are, in fact, Little Russian rather than Great Russian, and between these two sections of the population there are profound differences—differences of languages, customs, tradition, popular songs, proverbs, folk-lore, domestic arrangements, mode of life, and the communal organization. In these and other respects, the Little Russians... differ from the Great Russians of the North... Indeed, if I did not fear to ruffle unneceessarily the patriotic susceptibilities of my Great Russian friends who have a pet theory on the subject, I should say that we have here two distinct nationalities, further apart from each other than the English and Scotch. The differences are due, I believe, partly to ethnographic peculiarities and partly to historic conditions." D.M. Wallace. Russia (New York: Henry Holt, 1905), p. 347.

Writing about the Ukrainians in 1915, Toynbee says: "This wide flung ribbon of population has a strong national feeling of its own. The 'Great
Russian can claim that it was he who freed the race from the Moslem yoke, and that the living Russia of the present, with its glories of arms and of letters, is solely his creation; but the "Little Russian" looks back to the day before the Mongol appeared in the land, when the Dnieper, not the Volga, was the holy river of Russia, and Kiev...her holy city, the meeting place of the "strong-government" and the world religion that came up to her from opposite quarters, out of the Baltic and the Black Sea. He regards himself as the true heir to this primitive tradition, and his loyalty to it is all the keener because so many centuries lie between the Golden Age and his present obscurity." A. J. Toynbee. Nationality and the War. (London and Toronto: Dent, 1915), p. 310. Also see Reshetar, The Ukrainian Revolution, p. 5.
CHAPTER III: THE UKRAINIAN QUESTION: SELF-DETERMINATION

Although Lenin, in his published material largely ignored the national question until two years prior to the war, he was aware of the problem and its implications for the future revolution. He saw the problem primarily in terms of the right of national groups to secede and form independent states and this view was summed up in the phrase "the right of nations to self-determination." As early as 1902-1903 he showed that self-determination, a bourgeois-democratic demand, could, if skilfully manipulated, be used as a catalyst to promote the destruction of the bourgeois-democratic system. Thus the right of nations to self-determination was advocated by the RSDLP but this right was definitely subordinated to the interests of the class struggle. "In including in its programme recognition of the right of nations to self-determination," Lenin emphasized that

[Russian Social Democracy] takes into account all possible, and even all conceivable, combinations.... The programme merely demands that a genuine socialist shall not corrupt-proletarian class-consciousness, or slur over the class struggle, or lure [the] working class with bourgeois-democratic phrases, or break the unity of the proletariat's present-day political struggle. This reservation is the crux of the matter, for only with this reservation do we recognize self-determination.  

Lenin, of course, kept this reservation uppermost in his mind for it was, indeed, the "crux of the matter."

Encouragement of national self-determination had four major goals. First, it was designed to palliate the suspicions of the nationalities with regard to the Bolshevik Party; second, it was intended to undermine the foundations of particularist bourgeois movements among the nationalities and entice nationalist intellectuals to the party; third, by encouraging secession it aimed at hastening dismemberment of the Empire; and fourth, and most
IMPORTANT, IT WAS TO PROVIDE FOR THE REUNION OF ALL THESE NATIONALITIES AFTER COMPLETION OF THE REVOLUTION.³ Obviously this four-point formula was designed primarily for nations which had not yet completed the bourgeois-democratic revolution.⁴ To this degree the demand for self-determination can be viewed in its larger context which is that self-determination is but one of the demands of political democracy.⁵ An alliance of the proletariat with bourgeois-democratic, and therefore nationalist, elements was viewed as a step that would hasten the bourgeois-democratic revolution. It is most important to remember that the proletariat was conceived as the leading member of this alliance and this would, of course, create the preconditions for the establishment of the proletarian state. Under socialism the national question would be solved.⁶

Thus the party's national self-determination program was linked with the proletarian revolution and in fact had been developed only to accelerate and facilitate this revolution.⁷ But what exactly did the slogan of the right of nations to self-determination mean? Lenin clearly spelled out its meaning in his Theses on the National Question written during June 1913. In it he emphatically stated in the opening sentence that "the article of our programme (on the self-determination of nations) cannot be interpreted to mean anything but political self-determination, i.e., the right to secede and form a separate state."³ Three years later he repeated and expanded the previous statement:

The right of nations to self-determination implies exclusively the right to independence in the political sense, the right to free political separation from the oppressor nation. Specifically, this demand for political democracy implies complete freedom to agitate for secession by the seceding nation. This demand, therefore, is not the equivalent of a demand for separation, fragmentation and the formation of small states. It implies only a consistent expression of struggle against all national oppression.⁹
THE CLUE TO LENIN'S STAND ON SELF-DETERMINATION, WHICH IN FACT MEANT
SECESSION, WAS THAT IF THE NATION IS GIVEN THIS RIGHT, ITS DESIRE TO SEPARATE
WOULD BE NEUTRALIZED.

THE CLOSER A DEMOCRATIC STATE SYSTEM IS TO COMPLETE FREEDOM TO SECEDE
THE LESS FREQUENT AND LESS ARDENT WILL THE DESIRE FOR SEPARATION BE IN
PRACTICE, BECAUSE BIG STATES AFFORD INDISPUTABLE ADVANTAGES, BOTH FROM
THE STANDPOINT OF ECONOMIC PROGRESS AND FROM THAT OF THE INTERESTS OF
THE MASSES....

LENIN, BASING HIS CONCEPT OF 'NATION' ON A MARXIST FOUNDATION, SEEMED COM­
PLETELY UNAWARE OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ROOTS OF NATIONALISM. HE BELIEVED THAT
A NATION, GIVEN THE RIGHT TO SECEDE, WOULD NOT EXERCISE THE RIGHT SOLELY
BECAUSE IT WOULD NOT BE TO ITS ECONOMIC ADVANTAGE TO DO SO.

THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION WAS, LENIN STRESSED, "AN EXCEPTION
TO OUR GENERAL PREMISE OF CENTRALIZATION. THIS EXCEPTION IS ABSOLUTELY
ESSENTIAL IN VIEW OF REACTIONARY GREAT RUSSIAN NATIONALISM...." SINCE
THIS NON-MARXIST CONCEPT WAS NECESSITATED ONLY BY GREAT-RUSSIAN NATIONALISM,
IT IS NOT DIFFICULT TO SEE THAT ONCE THIS NATIONALISM WAS LIQUIDATED BY THE
PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION THERE WOULD BE NO REASON TO MAINTAIN SUCH A POLITICALLY
EXPLOSIVE EXCEPTION. FURTHERMORE, HE WARNED THAT "EXCEPTIONS MUST NOT BE
TOO BROADLY INTERPRETED. IN THIS CASE THERE IS NOT, AND MUST NOT BE
ANYTHING MORE THAN THE RIGHT TO SECEDE." THE CONCEPT OF SELF-DETERMINATION
WAS SOMEWHAT VAGUE AND COULD BE INTERPRETED IN SEVERAL WAYS (FOR EXAMPLE,
AS PERMITTING VARIOUS GRADATIONS OF CENTRALIZATION SUCH AS FEDERATION) BUT
SECESSION MEANT ONLY COMPLETE POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE, AND THUS TO LENIN'S
WAY OF THINKING WAS MORE MANIPULABLE. IN 1919 THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION
WAS DELETED FROM THE PARTY PROGRAM AND WAS REPLACED BY THE RIGHT TO
SECESSION.

MULTIFARIOUS CONDITIONS WERE ATTACHED TO THE ACTUAL EXERCISE OF THE
RIGHT OF SECESSION BUT ON ONE POINT, LENIN WAS ADAMANT. ALTHOUGH THE PROLE-
TARIAT AND ITS PARTY WERE TO WORK AGAINST SECESSION OF NATIONAL TERRITORIES, THEY MUST NEVER USE FORCE TO RETAIN THEM—they must "be unconditionally hostility to the use of force in any form whatsoever by the dominant nation.... in respect of a nation that wishes to secede politically...." LENIN categorically proscribed the use of force in solving the national question.

In answer to critics of his stand on the national question, who included the leading Social-Democratic theorists (foremost among whom were Rosa Luxemburg, Bukharin, Radek and Piatakov), Lenin, in one sentence provided the reason for his un-Marxist approach. "In Russia," he observed,

WHERE THE OPPRESSED NATIONS ACCOUNT FOR NO LESS THAN 57 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION... WHERE THEY OCCUPY MOSTLY THE BORDER REGIONS, WHERE THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IS ESPECIALLY BARBAROUS AND MEDIEVAL, WHERE THE BOURGEOIS-DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION HAS NOT BEEN CONSUMMATED--there, in Russia, recognition of the right of nations oppressed by tsarism to free secession from Russia is absolutely obligatory for Social-Democrats, for the furtherance of their democratic and socialist aims.

If his critics thought, however, that Lenin was advocating the disintegration of the Russian Empire they could not have been more wrong. In his "Revision of the Party Programme" written just before the revolution, he stated his objective in the most lucid terms:

WE DESIRE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTIONARY UNITY, UNIFICATION, AND NOT SECESSION. WE DESIRE REVOLUTIONARY UNIFICATION.... WE WANT FREE UNIFICATION; THAT IS WHY WE MUST RECOGNIZE THE RIGHT TO SECede (WITHOUT FREEDOM TO SECede, UNIFICATION CANNOT BE CALLED FREE)....

But we want unification and this must be stated; it is so important to state it in the programme of a party of a heterogeneous state that it is necessary to abandon custom and to incorporate a declaration.

Even Stalin could not have put this statement in more simple and blunt terms. Unification is mandatory; free unification is preferable. This can only imply that force may be used if it is used in the 'interests' of the proletariat. And yet, Lenin never tired of repeating Marx's aphorism that "no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations."
When Lenin advocated the right to national self-determination he never clearly defined who was to exercise this prerogative. It is here that one finds Leninist dialectics operating at their finest level of sophistication. As early as 1903 he stated very precisely that the right must be subordinated to the interests of the proletarian struggle and that, unlike some Social Democratic parties which perceived national distinctions, the Russian Social Democrats gave "first place to the contrast—'we' the proletariat, and 'they' the bourgeoisie." More than ten years later, in 1914, he still maintained this position. "In the question of the self-determination of nations, as in every other question," he asserted, "we are interested, first and foremost, in the self-determination of the proletariat within a given nation." Thus at the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets in January, 1918, Stalin expressed what he knew to be Lenin's real view when he declared that the principle of self-determination must be interpreted as the "right to self-determination not of the bourgeoisie, but of the labouring masses of the given nation." Bukharin had always interpreted the question in this manner and in 1919 wrote that "the proletariat must be ready to grant complete national self-determination, must be ready, that is, to concede to all workers who form the majority in any nation the full right to decide the question..." In the pre-revolutionary era Lenin had bitterly opposed the views of Bukharin and the stand which Stalin had taken in 1918 but now he expressed no immediate overt disapproval until the Eighth Congress of the RCP(B) in the spring of 1919. Here, in a debate with Bukharin he stated that to reject the self-determination of nations and insert the self-determination of the working people would be absolutely wrong, because this manner of settling the question does not reckon with the difficulties, with the zigzag course taken by differentiation between nations.

Our programme must not speak of the self-determination of the work-
ing people, because that would be wrong. Since nations are at different stages on the road from medievalism to bourgeois democracy and from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy, this thesis of our programme is absolutely correct. 25

It is obvious that Lenin did not have in mind the internal situation of Russia at this time, but rather was thinking ahead to the world revolution and how to expedite it. After all, the theory expressed by Bukharin which Lenin had tacitly approved by actually using it, had served its purpose in maintaining the unity of Russia.

By conceding the right to self-determination only to the proletariat, Lenin in fact conceded nothing because in the Leninist theoretical schema the proletariat inevitably gravitated toward the large, centralized state. If, however, the working class ever exercised its right to secession it could only mean that it was still under bourgeois influence and thus it would not be a truly proletarian decision. It would be reactionary and it could be dealt with accordingly.

Lenin, like Marx and Engels, recognized the "historically conditioned importance" of the national question. 26 Thus every social or political problem, if it was to be solved in a Marxist manner, had to be placed within its specific historical framework. 27 The Communist Party, Lenin candidly observed, "must base its policy, in the national question..., not on abstract and formal principles but, first, on a precise appraisal of the specific historical situation and, primarily of economic conditions..." 28 Placing the solution of the national question within the "specific historical situation" was of the greatest importance because, according to Lenin, only the party could accurately perceive the situation. In 1913 he noted that just because the RSDLP recognized the right to self-determination it did not mean that Social Democrats reject "an independent appraisal of the advisability of the
STATE SECESSION OF ANY NATION IN EACH SEPARATE CASE. The right of nations
to self-determination, he continued in another article, must under no cir-
cumstances be confused with the expediency of a given nation's secession. The party was to
decide this question exclusively on its merits in each par-
ticular case in conformity with the interests of socialismo.

The right to self-determination of a nation was further qualified
during the war years when he stated that the interests of nations were always
to be subordinated to those of socialism. At this time he wrote that "the
several demands of democracy, including self-determination are not an abso-
lute, but only a small part of the general democratic world movement. In
individual concrete cases, the party may contradict the whole; if so, it must
be rejected." If there ever were any doubts as to who had the necessary
qualifications to decide when in the "concrete historical situation" the
"part may contradict the whole" and when it may not, they were soon dispelled.
Quite clearly it was only the highly centralized party that was deemed compe-
tent for this task. At the April Conference of 1917 Lenin said:

The right of nations freely to secede must not be confused with the ad-
vissability of secession by a given nation at a given moment. The party
of the proletariat must decide the latter question quite independently
in each particular case, having regard to the interests of social de-
velopment as a whole and the interests of the class struggle of the pro-
etariat for socialism.

This is the most candid exposition of Lenin's thought on the question of
self-determination. It had now only to be transformed from the realm of
theory to that of practice.

Two subsidiary questions still exist (in the theoretical sphere at
any rate): how is the right to secession to be exercised and how were the
borders of the hypothetically seceding area to be determined? Before ans-
swering these questions it is necessary to emphasize that, according to Lenin's
dictum, the Social-Democratic party was "duty bound not to vote for sece-
... but to vote for the right of the seceding region to decide the question itself.  

The right to secession was to be exercised by a vote of the people who wished to withdraw from the Empire. Lenin was emphatic on this point. "The right to self-determination..." he explained, "does not imply the solution of the problem by a central parliament, but by a parliament, a diet, or a referendum of the seceding minority." In his Theses on the National Question he again stressed that the question of secession could only be settled on "the basis of a universal, direct and equal vote of the population of the given territory by secret ballot..." But as has been shown above, this right had in fact been effectively reduced and limited so that in the territories of the former Russian Empire it could only apply to the proletariat. Even after the revolution, however, Lenin continued to maintain that "the right to self-determination shall be realised through a referendum of the whole population of the territory seeking self-determination..." However, by ensuring the primacy of the party he had effectively blocked development of the possibility he had advocated in theory, i.e., that the right to secession could be exercised by any regional-national section.

Superficially, the delimitation of frontiers of the seceding nation posed no problem for Lenin. In a polemic aimed at the Economists who argued that frontiers be established according to the dictates of production, he asserted that the seceding area's frontiers will be delineated democratically, i.e., in accordance with the will and sympathies of the population. In fact, of course, popular frontier delimitation was effectively circumscribed because it was always a function of the interests of social development and the class struggle.

The proletariat of both the oppressed and oppressor nations had, according to Lenin, only one goal—the complete unity of all socialist forces.
To achieve this unity the proletariat must, however, employ tactics that at first seem diametrically opposed. It was the task of the proletariat of the oppressor nation to struggle against the enforced retention of oppressed nations within the bounds of the given state, which means that they must demand freedom of political separation for the colonies and nations oppressed by "their own" nation. Otherwise, the internationalism of the proletariat would be nothing but empty words; neither confidence or class solidarity would be possible between the workers of the oppressed and the oppressor nations.

By advocating freedom of secession for the oppressed nations, the proletariat of the oppressor nation would, according to the Leninist scheme, allay the suspicions of the people in the oppressed nation who would then be able to view the potential economic benefits of the unitary state with the objectivity they allegedly deserved. On the other hand, the task of the proletariat of the oppressed nations was to defend and implement the unconditional unity, including organizational unity, of the workers of the oppressed nation and those of the oppressor nation. Without this it is impossible to defend the independent policy of the proletariat and their class solidarity with the proletariat of other countries in face of all manner of intrigues, treachery and trickery on the part of the bourgeoisie.

Such were the tasks of "national proletarians." It would seem, however, that the great Russian proletariat needed constant agitation if it was to live up to its part of the bargain and to this end Lenin, in the spring of 1916, specifically charged that "Russian socialists who do not demand freedom to separate for Finland, Poland, the Ukraine, etc. . . . act as chauvinists and lackeys of . . . filthy imperialist monarchies and the imperialist bourgeoisie."

Advocacy of the right of nations to self-determination was to perform the magic that would result in the ultimate integrality of the future Soviet Russia. When this had manifestly failed, Lenin warned party members that the question was being exaggerated and that it was "of less than secondary impor-
tance ... in the sum total of programme demands. By December 1921, Lenin's position had changed even more radically as evidenced by a speech which began with his standard argument in favor of the right to secession. But this time he added that "as long as no nationalities engage in intrigues against us which bind them to the imperialist oppression, as long as they do not help to crush us, we shall not be deterred by formalities." This was a warning in Aesopian terms that secession would not be tolerated because, in Leninist esoteric jargon, a nation was "bound to imperialist oppression" the moment it became independent and, as a tool of the imperialists, it would be forced to aid in the crushing of Soviet Russia.

The party's role, according to Lenin, was that of the vanguard of the proletariat and as such it was to lead the masses in all their social, economic and political endeavors. Since he firmly believed that a genuine social-democratic consciousness could not spontaneously arise among the masses, he concluded that "it would have to be brought to them from without." This fundamental assumption provided the rationale for the Bolsheviks to enter into polemics on the national question and their subsequent attempt to lead the nationalities both before and after the revolution.

It has been shown in the preceding chapter that Lenin was cognizant of the nationalities and national feelings even before the 1905 revolution and certainly this awareness must have been reinforced and amplified by the events of that year. It was not, however, until October 1913 that he definitely decided on a course of action, but once this decision was made, the question was given prominence in his work. At this time he wrote that it is obvious that the national question has now become prominent among the problems of Russian public life. The aggressive nationalism of the reactionaries, the transition of counter-revolutionary bourgeois liberalism to nationalism (particularly Great Russian, but also Polish, Jewish, Ukrainian, etc.) and lastly the increase of nationalist
vacillations among the different *national* (i.e., non-Great-Russian) Social-Democrats, who have gone to the length of violating the Party Programme—all these make it incumbent on us to give more attention to the national question than we have done so far.

Lenin then began his attempt to gain the sympathy and confidence of the Ukrainian masses.

In one of his frequent polemics with the Cadets on the national question Lenin rather candidly noted that "the advocacy of the right to self-determination is very important in the fight against the abysses of nationalism in all its forms." Lenin believed that the Ukrainian masses were unwittingly becoming victims of what he considered a gross deviation—nationalism.

As early as 1903 he had formulated the general outline of the policy that was to apply to the Ukraine when he posed a question, the answer to which became the fundamental tenet of Bolshevik national policy:

...is Social-Democracy in duty bound to demand national independence always and unreservedly, or only under certain circumstances? ... It is to the interests of the class struggle that we must subordinate the demand for self-determination.

Not only was the right of self-determination to be subordinated to the class struggle but according to Lenin the party was obliged to undertake an "independent appraisal of the advisability of the state secession of any nation in each separate case." This party appraisal was mandatory because the capitalists and landlords want at all costs to keep the workers of different nations apart while the powers that be live splendidly together as shareholders in profitable concerns; Orthodox Christians, and Jews, Russians and Germans, Poles and Ukrainians, everyone who possesses capital, exploit the workers of all nations in company.

Thus the Ukrainians, who, as an ethnic group, were oppressed by the tsarist administration, were also oppressed by their own bourgeoisie. In accordance with this reasoning, the Ukrainian proletariat and peasantry suffered
from both a national and a class oppression although Lenin hoped that they could be "educated" and convinced to ignore the former and stress the latter.

It was for this reason that Lenin insisted on a centralized party. A national socialist party would inevitably emphasize the national issue to the detriment of the class issue and this could only result in the general impairment and decline of the socialist movement in the Russian Empire. 51

Lenin was keenly aware of the growth of Ukrainian nationalist feeling among the intelligentsia and the miniscule indigenous bourgeoisie because they occasionally managed to raise the Ukrainian question in the Duma. 52

This cognizance of the developing Ukrainian national temperament must have been one of the major factors which persuaded Lenin to attempt to discover a solution to the problem. He rapidly determined that repressive tsarist measures served to promote the growth of nationalism and that these measures could only be counteracted by outright opposition. It is

by persecuting the Ukrainians and others for their "separation", for their secessionist strivings, [that] the nationalists are upholding the privilege of the Great-Russian landlords and the Great-Russian bourgeoisie to have "their own" state. The working class is opposed to all privileges; that is why it upholds the right of nations to self-determination. 53

If the fact that Lenin stressed the "right" to the detriment of "self-determination" itself did not make his position apparent, it should have become quite lucid by his addition of the proviso that "class-conscious workers do not advocate secession." 54 Thus, as early as 1913-1914 Lenin had decided that if a Ukrainian worker advocated secession for the Ukraine he was merely a tool of the bourgeoisie, i.e., he suffered from an insufficiently developed class consciousness.

Lenin clearly distinguished between the right of secession for Ukrainians and the exercise of this right.

whether the Ukraine, for example, is destined to form an independent state is a matter that will be determined by a thousand unpredictable
FACTORS. WITHOUT ATTEMPTING IDLE "GUESSES", WE FIRMLY UPHOLD SOMETHING THAT IS BEYOND DOUBT: THE RIGHT OF THE UKRAINE TO FORM SUCH A STATE. WE RESPECT THIS RIGHT; WE DO NOT UPHOLD THE PRIVILEGES OF GREAT RUSSIANS WITH REGARD TO UKRAINIANS; WE EDUCATE THE MASSES IN THE SPIRIT OF THE RECOGNITION OF THAT RIGHT....

The masses were to be educated in the "spirit of the recognition of that right" but only of the "right" and nothing more. In order to make himself more easily understood Lenin compared the concept of self-determination to that of divorce. He argued that "to accuse those who support freedom of self-determination, i.e., freedom to secede, of encouraging separation, is as foolish and hypocritical as accusing those who advocate freedom of divorce of encouraging the destruction of family ties." Furthermore Lenin thought it was rather foolish to fear that advocacy of the right of secession would have any sort of emotional impact on the people of the nationalities because from their daily experience the masses know perfectly well the value of geographical and economic ties and the advantages of a big market and a big state. They will, therefore, resort to secession only when national oppression and national friction make joint life absolutely intolerable and hinder any and all economic intercourse.

Lenin added that "in this case, the interests of capitalist development and of the freedom of the class struggle will be best served by secession." Thus, while not saying so directly, Lenin effectively limited the application of his self-determination theory to the period before the socialist revolution, since it could only be in the prerevolutionary era that the Bolsheviks would have been interested in the accelerated development of capitalism in Russia.

Lenin believed that the polyglot Russian Empire impeded the development of capitalism and at the same time reinforced hostility between its composite national groups. "In no country in the world are the majority of the population oppressed so much as in Russia," he observed in the summer of 1915. Imperial dismemberment was preferable to imperial oppression of the
UKRAINIANS, POLES AND OTHER PEOPLES OF RUSSIA because it would decrease the hatred which the nationalities had for the Great-Russians and thus bring the ultimate re-integration closer to fruition. "The interests of the unity of the proletarians, the interests of their class solidarity call for recognition of the right of nations to secede..." Lenin emphasized, adding that "the abandonment of this point, no matter for what motives, is actually a shameful concession to Great-Russian nationalism." This was Lenin's incessant theme during the war years and was his main argument against Rosa Luxemburg and the Polish Social Democrats. He firmly believed that all those who do not want to back the freedom of nations, the right of nations to self-determination, hypocritically... but want to do this sincerely, must oppose the war over the oppression of Poland; they must stand for the right of the nations Russia is now oppressing, namely, the Ukraine, Finland, etc., to secede from Russia.

Unlike the Polish Social-Democrats he believed that secession under capitalism was possible and he constantly used the example of Norway's secession from Sweden to prove his point.

Lenin perceived the Ukraine as a colony of Russia but it was not an ordinary colony because capitalism was "undoubtedly developing the productive forces more vigorously, rapidly and independently in Poland, Finland, the Ukraine and Alsace than in India, Turkestan, Egypt and other straightforward colonies." In Leninist terms, therefore, being a colony of Russia was objectively positive for the Ukraine because its productive forces were being developed. But because the methods used in developing production fostered national hatred, he was willing to advocate the right of secession for this territory. It must be remembered, however, that he supported this right for Ukrainians only because he believed it would hasten and ensure future unity and amalgamation. In his polemic with Piatakoy he stated this quite honestly:

We demand from our governments that they quit the colonies, or, to put it in precise political terms... that they grant the colonies full freedom of secession, the genuine right to self-determination, and we
OURSSELVES ARE SURE TO IMPLEMENT THIS RIGHT, AND GRANT THIS FREEDOM AS
SOON AS WE CAPTURE POWER.66 WE DEMAND THIS FROM EXISTING GOVERNMENTS,
AND WILL DO THIS WHEN WE ARE THE GOVERNMENT, NOT IN ORDER TO "RECOMMEND
SECESSION," BUT, ON THE CONTRARY, IN ORDER TO FACILITATE AND ACCELERATE
THE DEMOCRATIC ASSOCIATION AND MERGING OF NATIONS.67

HE FURTHER LECTURED PIATAKOV TO CONSIDER CAREFULLY ALL THE NUANCEs OF
BOLSHEVIK NATIONALITY THEORY AND WARNED HIM THAT HE HAD GIVEN NO THOUGHT
TO THE FACT THAT A "SOCIALIST SOCIETY" WILL WISH TO "GET OUT OF THE COLONIES"
ONLY IN THE SENSE OF GRANTING THEM THE RIGHT TO SECEDE, BUT DEFINITELY NOT
IN THE SENSE OF RECOMMENDING SECESSION.68 IF PIATAKOV COULD NOT UNDER­
STAND LENINIST SUBLTITIES IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT THE POLITICALy
UNSOPHISTICATED UKRAINIAN PEASANT OR WORKER WOULD ACCEPT THEM AT FACE VALUE.

HOWEVER, LENIN WAS ALSO FOND OF SIMPLISTIC, POLITICALLY VOLATILE
STATEMENTS ADDRESSED DIRECTLY TO THE NATIONALITIES—ESPECIALLY THE UKRAINIANS.
STATEMENTS SUCH AS "TSARISM IS WAGING WAR TO SEIZE GALICIA AND FINALLY CRUSH
THE LIBERTIES OF UKRAINIANS..."69 MUST HAVE APPEALED TO THE UKRAINIAN MASSES
TO SOME EXTENT AND MAY HAVE HAD THE EFFECT OF HEIGHTENING ANTI-TSARIST
FEELINGS WHILE AT THE SAME TIME CREATING SOME DEGREE OF SYMPATHY FOR THE
BOLSHEVIKS. THIS WAS, OF COURSE, ONE OF LENIN'S PRIME OBJECTIVES. HE TRIED
VERY HARD TO EFFECT THE DISMEMBERMENT OF THE TSARIST EMPIRE BECAUSE HE
THOUGHT THAT BY DOING SO AND BY ASSURING THAT THE UKRAINIANS AND OTHER
NATIONALITIES IDENTIFIED THIS PROPAGANDA WITH THE BOLSHEVIKS AND THE PROLE­
TARIAT, HE COULD CREATE THE REQUISITE PRE-CONDITIONS FOR EVENTUAL VOLUNTARY
REINTEGRATION AND PEACEFUL ASSIMILATION INTO THE PROSPECTIVE SOVIET RUSSIA.

SOON AFTER THE FEBRUARY REVOLUTION LENIN WAS EXHORTING THE RUSSIAN
MASSES AGAINST THE NATIONAL POLICIES OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT. HE
URGED ALL RUSSIANS NOT TO

BE INFLUENCED BY THE ANNEKATIONIST POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN CAPITALISTS...
AND THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT TOWARDS FINLAND, KURLAND, UKRAINE, ETC.
Do not fear to recognise the right of all these nations to secede.
Nations must be won over to the idea of an alliance with the Great Russians not by force, but by a really voluntary and really free agreement, which is impossible without the right of secession.

At the April Conference of the party Lenin became the most ardent advocate of Ukrainian secession. At the Conference he even dropped the word "right" (albeit only once) in his support of Ukrainian self-determination. This is significant because he had always carefully distinguished between the "right to secession" and the actual realization of this "right".

Our attitude to the separatist movement is indifferent, neutral. If Finland, Poland or Ukraine secede from Russia, there is nothing bad in that. What is wrong with it? Anyone who says that is a chauvinist. One must be mad to continue Tsar Nicholas's policy.

Lenin bitterly assailed the views of Piatakov, Bukharin and Dzierzhinsky at the Conference because they were tactically suicidal to the party. They, of course, failed to comprehend the necessity of this temporary compromise with the nationalists and they failed to see that their policy of indifference to the national movements (this was especially so in the case of Piatakov) would be interpreted as merely another manifestation of Great Russian chauvinism by a Great Russian party. For this reason Lenin emphatically insisted on the inclusion of the right to separation in the Party Program and added that

anyone who does not accept this point of view is an annexationist and a chauvinist. We are for a fraternal union of all nations. If there is a Ukrainian republic and a Russian republic, there will be closer contact and a greater trust between the two. If the Ukrainians see that we have a Soviet republic, they will not secede, but if we have a Milyukov republic, they will.

Lenin had, of course, banked his entire nationality policy on the belief that the Ukrainians would not secede if a Soviet republic was established.

It is interesting to note that at the April Conference it was Stalin rather than Lenin who was the main speaker on the nationality question and
At least one author notes that this was unusual. Since Stalin's speech was a mere recitation of Lenin's ideas, it would seem that Lenin, who was isolated on this issue from most leading party members, sought someone of relatively major stature in the party to present his views and thus show his critics that he was not completely removed from the mainstream of Bolsheviki thinking on this important question. Stalin had also opposed Lenin's views on this problem but with less vehemence than Platakov, Bukharin and Dzierzhinsky and he probably jumped at the opportunity to ingratiate himself with Lenin. At any rate Stalin did manage to present Lenin's views in their least sophisticated form and he surely could not have been misunderstood.

It would be impermissible to confuse the question of the right of nations freely to secede with the question of whether a nation must necessarily secede at any given moment. This latter question must be settled quite separately by the party of the proletariat in each particular case, according to the circumstances. When we recognize the right of oppressed peoples to secede, the right to decide their political destiny, we do not thereby settle the question whether particular nations should secede from the Russian state at a given moment. A people may have the right to secede, but it may or may not exercise that right, according to the circumstances. Hence the question of secession must be determined in each particular case independently, in accordance with the existing situation.

This effectively circumscribed, if it did not completely negate, the exercise of the right to secession and if Platakov, Bukharin and Dzierzhinsky still disagreed with this formulation it was not because they did not understand it but because they denied its validity and usefulness for the party. Although the exercise of the right to secession was now practically negated, Lenin sought to take some of the sting out of it for the benefit of the nationalities by admonishing party members that "any Russian socialist who does not recognise Finland's and Ukraine's right to freedom will degenerate into a chauvinist. And no sophisms or references to his "method" will ever help him to justify himself."
These verbal prophylactics were to be of small comfort to the Ukraine after October 1917 but before this time they may have had some positive effect on the Ukrainian masses. After all the Bolsheviks were the only group who openly and consistently supported a majority of Ukrainian demands. Chernov gives a revealing picture of the attitude of the Russian non-Bolshevik socialists in the All-Russian Congress of Soviets of June 1917:

In the Soviet each side heaped accusations on the other. The Russian Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks accused the Ukrainian socialists of abandoning socialism for nationalism and joining the chauvinist bourgeoisie. The Ukrainian socialists hurled back the same accusation: the coalition with the Russian bourgeoisie in the Provisional Government had infected the Russian socialists with the spirit of bourgeois centralization and Great Russian nationalism.79

Both the Bolsheviks and Ukrainians withdrew from the Soviet when they were left in the minority on numerous major issues. Soon thereafter, Lenin, sensing the urgency of the political situation, insisted that Russian bourgeois democracy "must immediately satisfy the demands of the Ukrainians and the Finns [and] ensure them... full freedom, including freedom of secession...."80

Again, on October 1, Lenin stressed the necessity of the "immediate restitution of full freedom for Finland, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, for the Moslems and so on."81 He had once more dropped the Leninist qualifier "right" from his concept of secession but this did not mean that he had changed his mind about self-determination for the Ukraine. Lenin's intracetable stance on self-determination was again underlined in his article on the "Revision of the Party Programme", written during October 6-8, 1917, when he reintroduced his original theoretical distinction between the "right" and the application of this right. "After six months of the 1917 Revolution", he remarked,

it is hardly possible to dispute that the party of the revolutionary proletariat of Russia, the party which uses the Great Russian language,
IS OBLIGED TO RECOGNISE THE RIGHT TO SECEDE. WHEN WE WIN POWER, WE SHALL IMMEDIATELY AND UNCONDITIONALLY RECOGNISE THE RIGHT FOR FINLAND, THE UKRAINE, ARMENIA AND ANY OTHER NATIONALITY OPPRESSED BY TERRORISM .... ON THE OTHER HAND, WE DO NOT AT ALL FAVOUR SECESSION.

WITHIN A FEW WEEKS LENIN'S NATIONALITY THEORY WAS TO BE TESTED IN A REAL POLITICAL SITUATION.

SOON AFTER THE ASSUMPTION OF POLITICAL POWER BY THE BOLSHEVIKS A DEGREE ON THE "RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLES OF RUSSIA TO SELF-DETERMINATION" WAS PUBLISHED. THE FOUR POINTS OF THE DEGREE PROCLAIMED THE EQUALITY OF THE PEOPLES OF RUSSIA, ABOLITION OF ALL PRIVILEGES FOUNDED ON NATIONALITY OR RELIGION, FREE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONALITIES WITHIN RUSSIA AND THE RIGHT TO FREE SELF-DETERMINATION OF PEOPLES EVEN TO THE POINT OF SEPARATING AND FORMING INDEPENDENT STATES. IT WAS SIGNED BY LENIN AND STALIN.

THIS DECLARATION, AS IT SOON BECAME OBVIOUS, WAS NOT TO APPLY TO THE UKRAINE. SKRYPNIK REMARKED THAT "FOR THE MAJORITY OF OUR PARTY MEMBERS THE UKRAINE AS A NATIONAL UNIT DID NOT EXIST. THERE WAS ONLY LITTLE RUSSIA, AN INSEPACERABLE PART OF ONE UNBREAKABLE RUSSIA ...." HE CONTINUED, AND LENIN IMMEDIATELY SET OUT TO SUBSTANTIATE THIS OBSERVATION. A DIALECTICAL TRANSFORMATION HAD OCCURRED IN LENIN'S APPROACH TO THE UKRAINIAN QUESTION. ON DECEMBER 5, 1917 HE DECLARED THAT THE PARTY WAS COGNIZANT OF A NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN THE UKRAINE AND THAT THE PARTY STOOD UNCONDITIONALLY FOR THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE'S COMPLETE AND UNLIMITED FREEDOM. BUT HE THEN APPENDED THE CONDITIONS WHICH WOULD PRECLUDE THE PEACEFUL FORMATION OF AN INDEPENDENT UKRAINIAN STATE AND WHICH WOULD JUSTIFY BOLSHEVIK AND RUSSIAN MILITARY INTERVENTION IN UKRAINIAN AFFAIRS:

WE ARE GOING TO TELL THE UKRAINIANS THAT AS UKRAINIANS THEY CAN GO AHEAD AND ARRANGE THEIR LIFE AS THEY SEE FIT. BUT WE ARE GOING TO STRETCH OUT A FRATERNAL HAND TO THE UKRAINIAN WORKERS AND TELL THEM THAT 10-
GETHER WITH THEM WE ARE GOING TO FIGHT AGAINST THEIR Bourgeoisie and Ours. Only a socialist alliance of the working people of all countries can remove all ground for national persecution and strife.86

Thus Lenin was subtly restricting the right of self-determination to the Ukrainian workers who, by definition, could not but wish for a closer unity with Russia. It became manifest that the secession of the Ukraine would not be tolerated.

Lenin, however, left the task of explicitly circumscribing the meaning of the right to self-determination to Stalin. This was a task for which the Commissar of Nationalities was well-suited. In a speech at the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets on January 15, 1918 Stalin demonstrated how the principle of self-determination was being exploited and perverted by the Ukrainian Rada and the "bourgeois chauvinist" elements in the Ukraine.87 Because of this, he said, it was necessary to interpret "the principle of self-determination as the right to self-determination not of the bourgeoisie, but of the labouring masses of the given nation."88 This new formula of Stalin's had first been propounded on December 12, 1917 in connection with the Ukrainian question and Pipes states outright that "such an interpretation of the principle of national-determination had nothing in common with Lenin's views."89 This statement, however, can be disputed.

While it is true that Lenin was adamant that the party program "must not speak of the self-determination of the working people," he was equally adamant that the program "must speak of what actually exists."90 He had always insisted, and he repeated it in his draft program for the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P. (B), that

On the question of who expresses the will of the nation on the matter of secession, the R.C.P. upholds the historical class view and takes into consideration the level of historical development of the nation concerned—in the way from the Middle Ages to bourgeois democracy, or from bourgeois to Soviet or proletarian democracy, etc.91

In his polemic with Piatakov in 1916 Lenin stressed that "it is not
STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALISM THAT WE SHOULD SUPPORT. WE WILL NOT SUPPORT A STRUGGLE OF THE REACTIONARY CLASSES AGAINST IMPERIALISM; WE WILL NOT SUPPORT AN UPRISING OF THE REACTIONARY CLASSES AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND CAPITALISM. 92

Since Lenin had declared that the Ukraine was in the capitalist period of development and since he had limited the support Socialists could give to "reactionary" classes in their struggles with imperialism and capitalism, to say nothing of socialism, it is evident that he had implicitly created a theory to provide support only for the proletariat. With regard to the Ukraine, however, this becomes clearer because of Lenin's definition of "what actually exists." According to this "historical class view" the right to self-determination had to be limited to the proletariat because it was claimed that the Ukraine had experienced capitalism and bourgeois democracy and therefore all other classes were reactionary. However, this attempt to prove that Lenin had effectively limited the exercise of the right to self-determination to the working class in general and the Ukraine in particular is hardly necessary since he had written as early as 1903 that "...concern ourselves with the self-determination of the proletariat in each nationality rather than with self-determination of peoples or nations." 93

Thus, Stalin's pronouncements could not have been fundamentally different from the views to which Lenin actually subscribed, although tactically the two were at variance. Lenin, for propaganda purposes, preferred to retain the slogan of the right to self-determination of nations with as few explicit qualifications as was practicable. However, it should not be forgotten that he resolutely believed that "for the class-conscious workers every democratic demand (including self-determination) is subordinated to the supreme interests of socialism." 94 And with respect to the Ukraine he noted that there is not a single Marxist who while adhering to the foundations of Marxism and socialism, would not say that the interests of socialism are
By January 1918 Lenin had definitely decided that self-determination was possible only for the proletariat. He made this quite evident by proclaiming that the party "had not planned to attract other nations—the Ukraine or Finland—by force or imposition but by allowing them to set up their own socialist system, their own Soviet republics." No one but the proletariat could establish a Soviet republic and socialist system. Once Lenin had resolved this problem he became more generous as to the forms a future Ukrainian state might take and of its relations with Soviet Russia. He observed that the question of whether the Ukraine would be a separate state was of relatively little importance and noted that the Bolsheviks must not be in the least surprised, or frightened, even by the prospect of the Ukrainian workers and peasants trying out different systems, and in the course of, say, several years, testing by practice union with the R.S.F.S.R., or seceding from the latter and forming an independent Ukrainian S.S.R., or various forms of their close alliance, and so on, and so forth.

Apparently the only reason for the possibility of this vacillation of the future Ukrainian SSR outlined by Lenin was the fact that it had an overwhelming majority of "non-proletarian working people," i.e., peasants, and he cautioned that the proletariat must be tolerant of this Ukrainian indecisiveness.

After the defeat of Denikin, Lenin never seriously discussed the possibility of the Ukraine's secession from the new Russia. The Ukrainian peasantry had become more or less neutralized and were no longer as willing to fight the Bolsheviks, while the Russianized towns preferred the Bolsheviks to the Ukrainian nationalists. Mazeppa notes that the Russian Socialist Revolutionaries and the Russian Social Democrats (Mensheviks) in the Ukraine would rather ally themselves with the Bolsheviks or even the reactionary
Whites than the Ukrainian separatists. Lenin was undoubtedly aware of this.

Relations between the RSFSR and the Ukrainian government also underwent fundamental political changes. Rakovsky stated in 1920 that the borders between the two socialist republics were no longer of a political character but had been transformed into simple administrative boundaries. Zinoviev also spoke of the relations between the RSFSR and the republics. Russians were no longer exploiting the peoples of the former Russian Empire, he said, "but we can not do without the petroleum of Azerbaijan or the cotton of Turkestan. We take these products which are necessary for us, not as the former exploiters but as older brothers bearing the torch of civilization." Although the Ukrainian SSR was not explicitly included in this Kiplingesque statement, perhaps because it may have offended the more politically developed Ukrainians, it nevertheless applied to the Ukraine as well.

Lenin now tended to view the Ukraine as a region of Russia in which the progress of the revolution was not fundamentally different from that of Central Russia. In March 1921 he remarked that "events ran the same course, with some modifications, in the Ukraine, the Don and the Kuban regions, and the result was exactly the same." He neglected to mention at this time, however, that the proletarian revolution was brought to the Ukraine by Russian soldiers, although he had admitted this previously. In fact it was this bringing of the Russian revolution to the Ukrainians and other nationalities by the Russian army which was at first a tactical necessity from the Bolshevik point of view that was now raised to the level of party policy. Lenin, in the summer of 1920, began to argue that

It is unquestionable that the proletariat of the advanced countries can and should give help to the working masses of the backward countries, and that the backward countries can emerge from their present stage of development when the victorious proletariat of the Soviet Republics extends a helping hand to these masses and is in a position to give them support.
WITH SOVIET AID IT WOULD "BE MISTAKEN TO ASSUME THAT THE BACKWARD PEOPLES
MUST INEVITABLY GO THROUGH THE CAPITALIST STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT," LENIN
ANNOUNCED. 104 THIS ARGUMENT ADROITLY SILENCED CRITICS WHO MAINTAINED THAT
THE UKRAINE WAS NOT YET READY FOR PROLETARIAN RULE. WITH BOLSHEVIK HELP
THE UKRAINE WOULD NOT HAVE TO GO THROUGH THE NORMAL PERIOD OF CAPITALIST
DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD HAVE INCLUDED THE FORMATION OF A NATIONAL STATE.
ALTHOUGH LENIN HAD CLAIMED THE UKRAINE WAS IN THE CAPITALIST STAGE OF
DEVELOPMENT, HIS NEW FORMULATION EFFECTIVELY PARRIED THE CHARGE OF SOME
CRITICS THAT THIS WAS MANIFESTLY NOT SO. ACCORDING TO THIS NOVEL FORMU­
LATION HE WAS RIGHT IN EITHER CASE.

THUS THE QUESTION OF THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE UKRAINE
LOST PRESTIGE BECAUSE ANY NATIONALIST MANIFESTATION BY DEFINITION COULD
ONLY BE REACTIONARY AND THE RESULT OF BOURGEOIS AND IMPERIALIST MACHINATIONS.

THIS HAD NOT ALWAYS BEEN SO. "THE FACT THAT THE STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL
LIBERATION AGAINST ONE IMPERIALIST POWER MAY, UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS,"
LENIN OBSERVED IN 1916,

BE UTILISED BY ANOTHER "GREAT" POWER FOR ITS OWN, EQUALLY IMPERIALIST
AIMS, IS JUST AS UNLIKELY TO MAKE THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS REFUSE TO
RECOGNISE THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION AS THE NUMEROUS
CASES OF BOURGEOIS UTILISATION OF REPUBLICAN SLOGANS FOR THE PURPOSE
OF POLITICAL DECEPTION AND FINANCIAL PLUNDER...ARE UNLIKELY TO MAKE
THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS REJUGATE THEIR REPUBLICANISM. 105

THIS STATEMENT HAD BEEN CONVENIENTLY FORGOTTEN AFTER OCTOBER 1917.

LENIN'S THEORIES AND PROPAGANDA ON THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION
PROVED UNWORKABLE IN PRACTICE AND ROSA LUXEMBURG TRIUMPHANTLY, BUT PERHAPS
WITH A NOTE OF SADNESS, OBSERVED THAT

THE BOLSHEVIKS WERE TO BE TAUGHT TO THEIR OWN GREAT HURT AND THAT OF THE
REVOLUTION, THAT UNDER THE RULE OF CAPITALISM THERE IS NO SELF-DETERMIN­
ATION OF PEOPLES, THAT IN A CLASS SOCIETY EACH CLASS OF THE NATION STRIVES
TO "DETERMINE ITSELF" IN A DIFFERENT FASHION, AND THAT, FOR THE BOURGEOIS
CLASSES, THE STANDPOINT OF NATIONAL FREEDOM IS FULLY SUBORDINATED TO THAT
OF CLASS RULE. THE FINNISH BOURGEOISIE, LIKE THE UKRAINIAN BOURGEOISIE,
WERE UNANIMOUS IN PREFERING THE VIOLENT RULE OF GERMANY TO NATIONAL
FREEDOM, IF THE LATTER SHOULD BE BOUND UP WITH BOLSHEVIISM. 106
A more objective observer would have noted that self-determination was also impossible under Bolshevism and for the very same reasons that were advanced for its impracticability under capitalism. And, of course, one wonders just what Luxemburg meant by "national freedom" under Bolshevism for at this time there could hardly have been much difference between the unwelcome imperialist or socialist occupants of Ukrainian territory. The Ukrainian peasant quite unmistakably disliked both.

If there still remained any doubt about the future relations of the borderlands with the RSFSR it was certainly dispelled by Stalin in his article on the "Policy of the Soviet Government on the National Question in Russia" which was published in October 1920. Centralization was now the order of the day:

The demand for the secession of the border regions from Russia as the form of relations between the centre and the border regions must be rejected not only because it runs counter to the very formulation of the question of establishing a union between the centre and the border regions... The secession of the border regions would undermine the revolutionary might of central Russia...107.

Lenin quite obviously agreed with this formulation and a search was initiated to find new forms of state union in order to legitimize and rationalize the forcible retention of the Ukraine and other republics within Soviet Russia.
1. In an article written in October 1902 Lenin argued that Finland had been turned into a Russian province. The Governor-General was given immense power which converted Finland "... into one of those numerous Russian provinces which enjoy no rights and are abused." Lenin, VI, p.294. In this statement is the implication that Lenin recognized other nationalities in the Russian Empire. That Lenin was interested in the national question before the second congress of the party is evidenced by a questionnaire which he was asked to prepare. These questions were to be answered in the reports of committees at the congress. There were eight major divisions in the questionnaire and the fifth division was entitled "Attitude towards Revolutionary (Especially Social-Democratic) Groups of Other Rases and Nationalities." His questions were as follows: "Are there any workers of other nationalities and races? Work among these? Organised or sporadic? In what languages? Attitude toward Social-Democratic groups working in same locality and using some other language? A precise and detailed account of these relations are desirable. Are there differences of opinion? On question of principle as to the national programme? On tactics? On organisation? Relations desirable for joint work. Possibility of a single Party organ? Is federation desirable, and of what type?" Lenin, VI, p.297. Not only was the national question recognized by Lenin but he was willing to seek opinions on federation towards which he was strongly antipathetic.

2. Ibid., VI, p.460.

3. V.V. Aspaturian, "The Theory and Practice of Soviet Federalism," Journal of Politics XII (Feb., 1950), 22; see Towsrer, pp.57-60, for amplification of these points.

4. Sneheen, p.123; Lenin, XXI, pp.151-52. Lenin divided countries into three main types. First there were the advanced capitalist countries of Western Europe and the United States in which the progressive bourgeois movements had been completed and oppression of other nations was begun. Eastern Europe (Russia in particular) provided most members for the second type. Here the bourgeois-democratic movements were intensifying the national struggle and the tasks of the proletariat in these countries, which were the completion of bourgeois-democratic reforms and the rendering of aid to the socialist revolution in other countries, could not be properly executed without championing the right of nations to self-determination. Semi-colonial countries composed the third type. Here the bourgeois-democratic revolution had only begun and the task of socialists was to demand the immediate liberation of these colonies without compensation and to support the "more revolutionary elements" in the bourgeois-democratic movements for national liberation, i.e. national self-determination.

5. Low, pp.39-40; Lenin, XXIX, p.248; Ibid., XXI, p.156.

6. See Low, pp.35-43.

7. See the discussion in Ibid., pp.44-46, 79.
8. Lenin, XIX, p. 243. He then stated that "this article in the Social-Democratic Programme is absolutely essential to the Social Democrats of Russia."

9. Ibid., XXI, p. 146; also see Ibid., XIX pp. 243-44, 342; Ibid., XX, p. 451.

10. Ibid., XXI, p. 146. For elaboration see especially Ibid., XXI, p. 339.

11. Ibid., XIX, p. 501.

12. Ibid., XIX, p. 501.

13. During April-May, 1917 Lenin, in his article "Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Programme", dropped "the right of self-determination for all member nations of the state" (paragraph 9) from the Programme and replaced it with "the right of all member nations of the state to freely secede and form independent states." Ibid., XXIV, p. 472. Also see Roucek, pp. 45-58 and Committee on Un-American Activities, Facts on Communism, p. 110. It is interesting to note, however, that Lenin in a speech to the Second Congress of Soviets on the very day of the Coup d'Etat spoke of "the genuine right to self-determination" rather than the right to secession. Lenin, XXVI, p. 247. See Ibid., XXVI, pp. 175-76.


15. My emphasis.

16. Lenin, XIX, p. 244; see Y. Boyko, "Russian Historic Traditions in the Bolshevist Solutions of the Nationality Problem", in Y. Boyko, et al., eds., Russian Bolshevism (Munich: Bong, n.d.), pp. 91-92. Lenin had formulated this view before the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. when he wrote that "the demand for recognition of every nationality's right to self-determination simply implies that we, the Party of the Proletariat, must always and unconditionally oppose any attempt to influence national self-determination from without by violence or injustice." Lenin, VI, p. 329. Also see Ibid., p. 454.

17. Rosa Luxemburg was an especially harsh critic of Lenin's approach to the nationality problem. She wrote that "the formula of the right of various nationalities of the Russian Empire to determine their fate independently, even to the point of the right of governmental separation from Russia, was proclaimed again with doctrinaire obstinacy as a special battle cry of Lenin's..." R. Luxemburg, p. 47.


19. Ibid., XXVI, p. 176; Ibid., XXII, p. 150. See the following for discussion of Lenin's rebuttal to the charge that his slogan threatened the dismemberment of the Russian Empire: Pipes, The Formation..., pp. 43-45; Shaheen, pp. 104-05; Low, pp. 84-86.

20. For several examples of Lenin's use of this statement, see Lenin, XX, p. 440; Ibid., XXI, p. 104; Ibid., XXII, pp. 149, 341, 343.

21. Ibid., VI, pp. 461-62. He continued: "We, the Proletariat, have seen dozens of times how the bourgeoisie betrays the interests of freedom, motherland, language, and nation, when it is confronted with the revolu-
TIONARY PROLETARIAT." IN HIS ARTICLE ON THE "MANIFESTO OF THE ARMENIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS" LENIN STATED IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS THAT "WE ON OUR PART CONCERN OURSELVES WITH THE SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE PROLETARIAT IN EACH NATIONALITY RATHER THAN WITH SELF-DETERMINATION OF PEOPLES OR NATIONS." 186.

22. ibid., XX, p. 428.


28. LENIN, XXXI, p. 145; see Sullivant, pp. 13-14 for Stalin's approach to this question.

29. ibid., XIX, p. 244.

30. ibid., XIX, p. 429. This approach of Lenin's was being formulated as early as 1903. See ibid., VI, p. 455.

31. ibid., XXI, p. 341; see Towster, pp. 60-61 for his interpretation of this qualification; also see Lenin, XXII, pp. 349-50, where he uses Poland as an example.

32. ibid., XXIV, pp. 302-03. 33. ibid., XIX, p. 543.

34. ibid., XIX, p. 542. For a discussion of this point see low, pp. 96-97, and Cuiciura, p. 38.

35. LENIN, XIX, p. 244. 36. ibid., XXVI, p. 349.

37. See low, pp. 100-01. 38. LENIN, XXII, p. 324.


40. ibid., XXII, p. 154. Lenin had expressed an identical view one year earlier. Then he wrote that "THE SOCIALISTS OF THE OPPRESSED NATIONS MUST UNFAILINGLY FIGHT FOR COMPLETE UNITY OF THE WORKERS OF THE OPPRESSED AND OPPRESSOR NATIONALITIES (THIS INCLUDING ORGANISATIONAL UNITY)." ibid., XXI, p. 316. Also see ibid., XXII, pp. 155-56; Meyer, pp. 152-54; low, pp. 16-19.
41. **Ibid.,** XXI, p. 154. Lenin was precise in enumerating the nations oppressed by Russia in 1916. "All those who do not want to back the freedom of nations, the right of nations to self-determination, hypocritically..." he admonished, "must oppose the war over the oppression of Poland; they must stand for the right of the nations Russia is now oppressing, namely, the Ukraine, Finland, etc., to secede from Russia." **Ibid.,** XXII, p. 140.

42. **Ibid.,** XXIX, p. 193. Lenin was speaking at the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B).

43. **Ibid.,** XXXIII, p. 149.

44. **Ibid.,** V, p. 375. Lenin had reached this conclusion by 1901-02. At that time in what is to be done? he wrote that "the history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade-union consciousness..." **Ibid.,** p. 375.


47. **Ibid.,** VI, pp. 455-56. 48. **Ibid.,** XIX, p. 244.

49. **Ibid.,** p. 92.

50. Lenin thought this to be one of the most salient differences between the workers of the oppressor nation and those of the oppressed: "Is the actual condition of the workers in the oppressor and the oppressed nations the same, from the standpoint of the national question? No, it is not the same.

(1) Economically, the difference is that sections of the working class in the oppressor nations receive crumbs from the superprofits the bourgeoisie of these nations obtain by extra exploitation of the workers of the oppressed nations. Besides, economic statistics show that here a larger percentage of the workers become 'straw bosses' than is the case in the oppressed nations, a larger percentage rise to the labour aristocracy. That is a fact. To a certain degree the workers of the oppressor nations are partners of their own bourgeoisie in plundering the workers (and the mass of the population) of the oppressed nations.

(2) Politically, the difference is that, compared with the workers of the oppressed nations, they occupy a privileged position in many spheres of political life.

(3) Ideologically, or spiritually, the difference is that they are taught, at school and in life, disdain and contempt for the workers of the oppressed nations." Lenin, XXIII, pp. 55-56.

Thus Lenin admitted that the Russian masses were in a superior position economically, politically and ideologically vis-a-vis the Ukrainian masses. Why they should or would willingly surrender this dominance is not satisfactorily explained by Lenin other than within the Marxist analytical framework.

51. See Ciuciuara, p. 12.
52. See especially Borys, pp. 82-83. He notes that there were 44 deputies in the First Duma elected by the Russian-Ukrainian Jewish bloc and that during the Duma sessions of 1914 at least 25 deputies took part in the debate on the Ukrainian question. Also see Reshetar, "Lenin on the Ukraine," pp. 4-7; Dmytryshyn, pp. 19-20.


54. Ibid., p. 110.


56. Lenin, XX, p. 422. Also see Ibid., XXIII, p. 72.


59. Lenin, XXI, p. 306. Lenin added that "Great Russians constitute only 43 percent of the population, i.e., less than half; the non-Russians are denied all rights. Of the 170 million inhabitants of Russia, about 100 million are oppressed and denied their rights." Ibid., p. 306.

60. Lenin stressed that it was "the first and foremost task of Russian Social-Democrats to wage a ruthless and all out struggle against Great-Russian and tsarist-monarchist chauvinism.... From the viewpoint of the working class and the toiling masses of all peoples of Russia, the defeats of the tsarist monarchy and its army, which oppresses Poland, the Ukraine, and many other peoples of Russia, and foments hatred among the peoples so as to increase Great-Russian oppression of the other nationalities, and consolidate the reactionary and barbarous government of the tsar's monarchy, would be the lesser evil by far." Ibid., p. 18. Lenin cogently argued that the championing of the right to self-determination was the quickest way to achieve Bolshevik goals and that "far from encouraging the formation of states, leads, on the contrary, to the freer, fearless and therefore wider and more universal formation of large states and federations of states which are more to the advantage of the masses and ... in keeping with economic development." Ibid., p. 316.

61. Ibid., XX, p. 443.

62. Lenin, although fundamentally agreeing with Rosa Luxemburg's stand on the national question, took violent exception to her tactics. She and the Polish Social Democrats denied the validity and usefulness of the slogan of the right to self-determination. In 1916 Lenin wrote that "the introduction into the International of the viewpoint of certain small nations, especially that of the Polish Social Democrats, who have been led by their struggle against the Polish bourgeoisie, which deceives the people with its nationalistic slogans, to the incorrect denial of self-determination, would be a theoretical mistake, a substitution of Proudhonism for Marxism implying in practice involuntary support for the most dangerous chauvinism and opportunism of the Great-Power nations." Lenin, XXI, p. 156. See Ibid., p. 341.

Luxemburg and a few other European socialists also argued that the national question could not be solved under imperialism because self-deter-
mination for small nations was impossible during the capitalist era. Furthermore, they argued that socialist recognition and support of the right was directly aiding the bourgeois nationalists of the oppressed nations. See Towster, p. 93.

Lenin answered thus: "All democratic demands are unachievable under imperialism in the sense that politically they are hard to achieve or totally unachievable without a series of revolutions. It is fundamentally wrong, however, to maintain that self-determination is unachievable in the economic sense.

That has been our contention. It is the pivotal point of our theoretical differences...." Lenin, XXIII, p. 40. See ibid., p. 44; ibid., XXIV, pp. 297-300.

For a history of the development of the question of the right to self-determination in the Polish Social-Democratic Party, see Gankin and Fisher, pp. 500-06. For a statement on this topic by the official organ of Polish and Lithuanian Social-Democracy, see ibid., pp. 507-14.

63. Lenin, XXII, p. 140.

64. For an example of Lenin's argument about the practicability of self-determination under capitalism and the use of Norway as a model, see ibid., XXIII, pp. 48-56. See ibid., pp. 28-76, for Lenin's attack on P. Kievy's (Piatakov) stand on the right to self-determination. Piatakov, who later played a leading role in the establishment of Soviet rule in the Ukraine, had views similar to those of Rosa Luxemburg. Also see Low, pp. 45-46.

65. ibid., XXII, p. 338. Emphasis added.

66. Stakhiv comments bitterly on this point: "PRAVO MOZHE BOSO BUTI PRAVOM, ALN BEZ REALIZATSII...." Stakhiv, ZVIDKY VZIALASIA SOVETS'KA VLADA ..., p. 84.

67. Lenin, XXIII, p. 67.

68. ibid., p. 66. Lenin continued: "If we grant freedom of secession for the Mongolians, Persians, Egyptians and all other oppressed and unequal nations without exception, we do so not because we favour secession, but only because we stand for free, voluntary association and merging as distinct from forcible association. That is the only reason!" ibid., p. 67.

See Borys, pp. 33-34.

69. Lenin, XXI, p. 306. For another example see ibid., XXII, p. 154. Also see Reshetar, "Lenin on the Ukraine," p. 8; Ciuciura, p. 35.

70. Lenin, XXIV, p. 338. 71. ibid., p. 300.

72. The Kiev organization of the party under the leadership of Piatakov had for a long time rejected Lenin's formula of national self-determination. See Borys, pp. 128-30; Ciuciura, p. 40. Piatakov attacked Stalin's report on the national question at the April Conference.

Emphasis supplied: With respect to Finland Lenin noted that "all the Finns want now is autonomy. We are for Finland receiving complete freedom, because there will be greater trust in Russia democracy and the Finns will not separate." \(\text{Ibid.}\), p. 300. Lenin was also aware that the Ukrainians were (in April 1917) seeking autonomy within the borders of Russia but that this demand was being raised even by the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party must have given him cause for concern about the attitudes of the more nationalist groups and parties. See "From the Resolution on the National Question of the Conference of the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party, April 1917" in Brodzer and Kersky, pp. 371-72. Also see Shaheen, pp. 137-39; Sullivant, pp. 16-17; B. M. Dimanshtein, "Etapy rasoty Lenina po natsional'nomu voprosu v dooktiabr'skii period," \(\text{Revolution'\ 8iia  i  Natsional'nost'}\), VI (Oct., 1930), 117.

74. Lenin, XXIV, p. 301.
75. Borysh, p. 42.
76. Stalin, \(\text{Works}\), vol. III, p. 55. See Borysh, p. 44; Stakhin, \(\text{Zvichy zialiasia sovetskii \text{ekonomiki}}\), pp. 84-85.
77. Reshetar, \(\text{A Concise History}\), p. 121, asserting that they had forgotten that Lenin regarded the right to self-determination as merely a tactical concession. However, it is quite plain that they rejected it even as an ephemeral compromise.
78. Lenin, XXIV, p. 301. 79. Chernov, p. 278.
80. Lenin, XXVI, p. 62.
81. \(\text{Ibid.}\), p. 99. Chernov, commenting on Bolshevik tactics after June 1917, notes that "it was now discovered, unexpectedly that the Bolsheviks were trying to shift their stand. Instead of a "sitter struggle" against separation, they decided to "support the direct action proclaimed by the Ukrainians in the Revolution." They were fiercer even than the Ukrainians in attacking the ban on the [Ukrainian] Army Congress, and the "imperialist policy of the central government." They urged the Ukrainians to break with their national bourgeoisie and to join the Bolsheviks in fighting for power." Chernov, p. 279. Lenin supported the Ukrainians because at this point their interests and those of the Bolsheviks coincided. See Lozov, p. 73.
82. Lenin, XXVI, pp. 175-76.
84. \(\text{Ibid.}\), pp. 24-25.
85. Lenin, XXVI, p. 344. Lenin also added that the Bolsheviks were obligated "to wipe out that old bloodstained and dirty past when the Russia of the capitalist oppressors acted as the executioner of other peoples. We are determined to wipe out that past and leave no trace of it." \(\text{Ibid.}\), p. 344.
86. Ibid., p. 344. It is most interesting to note that Lenin used this same rationale to justify Bolshevik interference in Finland. He stated rather bluntly that "if the Finnish bourgeoisie are buying arms from the Germans in order to use them against their workers, we offer the latter an alliance with the Russian working people." Ibid., p. 344.

87. Stalin, Works, IV, p. 32.

88. Ibid., p. 33. Stalin lost no love over the Ukraine or Ukrainians. In B. D. Wolf, Khrushchev and Stalin's Ghost (New York: Praeger, 1957), p. 190, Khrushchev states that if there were not so many Ukrainians and if there was somewhere to put them, Stalin would have had them all deported. That Stalin either completely ignored the Ukrainians or treated them as little Russians is borne out in A. Rybakoff, The National Policy of the Soviet Union (New York: International Publishers, n.d.), 71 p. This book was published sometime after 1931 (probably 1932 or 1933) and is remarkable only for its adherence to the strict party line of Stalin. Most significant is the fact that the Ukraine is totally ignored (three references with regard to literacy and one with regard to opera) while other republics, such as Belorussia, have seven pages devoted entirely to their development under Soviet rule as well as numerous references throughout the entire book. Of further significance is the fact that not only the Ukrainian republic is ignored but also the Transcaucasian republics.


90. Lenin, XXIX, p. 174.

91. Ibid., p. 128.

92. Ibid., XXIII, p. 63.

93. Ibid., VI, p. 329. Also see Ibid., pp. 461-62; Ibid., XX, p. 428.

94. Ibid., XXIII, p. 57.


See Dmytryshyn, pp. 162-63.

96. Ibid., p. 495. See Batstell, pp. 114-16.

97. Lenin, XXX, p. 271.

98. With respect to the Ukraine Lenin wrote that "to attempt to settle this question of the form of union in advance, once and for all, 'firmly' and 'irrevocably,' would be narrow-mindedness or sheer stupidity, for the vacillation of the non-proletarian working people on such a question is quite natural, even inevitable, but not in the least frightful for the proletariat. It is the duty of the proletariat who is really capable of being an internationalist to treat such vacillation with the greatest caution and tolerance, it is his duty to leave it to the non-proletarian masses themselves to get rid of this vacillation as a result of their own experience." Ibid., p. 271. Lenin believed, of course, that the Ukrainian peasantry had been taught an appropriate lesson by the Denikin occupation and would now be more favorable towards Soviet Russia and the Bolsheviks. See Dmytryshyn, pp. 46-47; W. R. Batstell, Soviet Rule in Russia (New York: Macmillan, n.d.), p. 117.
99. I. Mazepa, Bolsheviki i okupatsiia Ukrainy (Lviv and Kiev: M. Gankevych, 1922), p. 72. Chernov remarks that "the representatives of the immigrant nationalities, predominant in the cities, found it difficult, with their Russian orientation, to cease considering themselves masters of the situation, and to accept the position of national minorities content with the usual guarantees of minority rights." Chernov, p. 276.

100. Kh. Rakovskii, "Rossiia i Ukraina," Kommunisticheskii internatsional, XII (1920), 2199.

101. Quoted in Batbell, p. 117.

102. Lenin, XXXI, pp. 278. 103. Ibid., XXXI, pp. 243-44.

104. Ibid., p. 244. 105. Ibid., XXI, p. 148.

106. Luxemburg, pp. 50-51.

107. Stalin, Works, IV, p. 364. Further in his article Stalin began to sound very much like his mentor on the national question in drawing the proper Leninist distinction between the "right" and the exercise of this "right." "Of course," he sagely noted, "the border regions of Russia, the nations and races which inhabit these regions, as all other nations do, the inalienable right to secede from Russia, as was the case with Finland in 1917, Russia, presumably, would be obliged to take note of the fact and sanction the secession. But the question here is not about the rights of nations, which are unquestionable, but about the interests of the mass of the people both in the centre and in the border regions... And the interests of the masses render the demand for secession of the border regions at the present stage of the revolution a profoundly counter-revolutionary one." Ibid., pp. 365-66. Emphasis supplied.
The concepts of autonomy and federalism, like that of self-determination, were for Lenin basically negative ones. Nevertheless he sought to shape and use this aspect of the national question for the benefit of the party and for the hastening of the proletarian revolution. Lenin always viewed federalism with suspicion because of its anti-centralist bias and before the revolution even cultural national autonomy was rejected by the RSDLP because it was argued that national culture was contrary to the international culture sought by the proletariat.

First raised by the Jewish Bund, the demand for cultural national autonomy did not find significant support in the RSDLP. Lenin in February 1903 concluded that the Jewish proletariat did not need an independent political party because, according to the party rules adopted in 1898, the Jewish working class movement was given sufficient autonomy. This autonomy, noted Lenin, provided the Jewish working class movement with the right to use Yiddish in agitation and propaganda, to publish its own literature, to convene its own congresses, to satisfy local needs and requirements arising out of the special features of Jewish life and, it provided of course, the right to advance separate demands to supplement a single general social-democratic programme. Lenin then added the Bolshevik canon which would admit no compromise:

...we must act as a single and centralised militant organisation, [and] have behind us the whole of the proletariat, without distinction of language or nationality; a proletariat whose unity is cemented by the continual joint solution of problems of theory and practice, of tactics and organisation; we must not set up organisations that would march separately, each along its own track; we must not weaken the force of our offensive by breaking up into numerous independent political parties...

There was to be only one, unitary communist party in the Russian
Empire. All other national "communist" groups were nothing but dupes of the bourgeoisie, wrote Lenin. He emphasized this point:

Working-class democracy counterposes to the nationalist wrangling of the various bourgeois parties over questions of language, etc., the demand for the unconditional unity and complete solidarity of workers of all nationalities in all working-class organisations—trade union, cooperative, consumers', educational and all others—in contradistinction to any kind of bourgeois nationalism.

And a short time later, at the August Conference of 1913, he insisted once more that the interests of the proletariat necessitate the "amalgamation of the workers of all the nationalities in a given state in united proletarian organisations—political, trade union, co-operative, educational, etc." In this manner Lenin dismissed the Bund's demands and, by implication, all potential demands of similar nature from other national groups. He firmly believed that the concept of autonomy, and its organic derivative, cultural national autonomy, were part of a conscious, sophisticated bourgeois plot to destroy the RSDLP. The idea, however, refused to disappear and finally Lenin decided to attempt to come to terms with it.

As late as November 1913, Lenin wrote that "a clear grasp of the essence of the 'cultural-national' programme is sufficient to enable one to reply without hesitation—it is absolutely impermissible." The "essence" to which Lenin referred was the establishment of separate schools for each nationality. He protested that "the division of the educational affairs of a single state according to nationalities is undoubtedly harmful from the standpoint of democracy in general, and of the interests of the proletarian class struggle in particular." Cultural national autonomy was abhorred by Lenin because, he noted, it "implies precisely the most refined and, therefore the most harmful nationalism, it implies the corruption of the workers by means of the slogan of national culture and the propaganda of the profoundly harmful and even anti-democratic segregating of schools according to
Previous definitions of the essence of national cultural autonomy as being only the division of educational affairs notwithstanding, Lenin soon broadened his description of this phenomenon. "The gist of this programme," he remarked, "is that every citizen registers as belonging to a particular nation, and every nation constitutes a legal entity with the right to impose compulsory taxation on its members, with national parliaments... and national secretaries of state..."

Not only did advocacy of national cultural autonomy directly stimulate the most pernicious nationalism but it completely ignored the economic forces operating in the multinational state. Since the nations living in the Russian Empire were bound by economic ties "any attempt to divide them permanently in 'cultural' and particularly educational matters would be absurd and reactionary." Educational division would also be reactionary because along with the democratic and socialist elements to be found in every national culture (because toiling masses exist in every nation), there is also a bourgeois culture. This bourgeois culture is the dominant general national culture and if education were segregated this anti-proletarian culture would be instilled in the masses of the nationalities. The aim of the party and "the aim of socialism is not only to end the division of mankind into tiny states..., it is not only to bring the nations closer together but to integrate them," wrote Lenin. Cultural national autonomy, which Lenin, in December 1913-January 1914, began to identify as extra-territorial autonomy would have an exactly opposite effect.

It soon became clear, however, that Lenin was only against the idea of extra-territorial or individual-personal autonomy first introduced by the Austrian Marxists. In the article "On the Question of National Policy" written in the summer of 1914, Lenin categorically stated that
A democratic state must grant autonomy to its various regions, especially to regions with mixed populations. This form of autonomy in no way contradicts democratic centralism; on the contrary, it is only through regional autonomy that genuine democratic centralism is possible in a large state with a mixed population.¹⁷

Regional autonomy is compatible with democratic centralism because the central government retains ultimate control. Federalism, on the other hand, is not compatible with democratic centralism because central controls are inadequate.¹⁸

Although the local national population will have the right to indicate the boundaries of autonomous regions and areas (subject, of course, to central approval) economic and social conditions must be placed on par with the national factor. Thus Lenin further circumscribed the possibility of a genuine national autonomy. In his "Critical Remarks on the National Question" he reasoned that "to cut the towns off from the villages and areas that economically gravitate toward them for the sake of the 'national' factor, would be absurd and impossible." The Bolshevik solution of the problem is "far more correct" than the Austrian, opines Lenin, because "the national composition of the population is placed on the same level as the other conditions (economic first, then social, etc.) which must serve as a basis for determining the new boundaries that will meet the needs of modern capitalism, not of bureaucracy and Asiatic barbarism."¹²⁰ Economic factors were the most important consideration in the granting of autonomy, although two years after the revolution when Finland had seceded in spite of the Bolshevik's best efforts to prevent it, Lenin, always the practical politician, allowed that "in dealing with the national question one cannot argue that economic unity should be effected in all circumstances."²¹

The language issue had always been intimately connected with the question of autonomy and here too Lenin's centralist concepts prevailed. He was more careful with this problem, however, and vehemently argued against
IMPOSITION OF A SINGLE STATE LANGUAGE BECAUSE HE BELIEVED THAT THE POWER OF ECONOMICS WOULD DETERMINE THE LANGUAGE WITH NO POLITICAL OR LEGAL COMPULSION WHATSOEVER. IN HIS LETTER TO SHAUMIAN HE EXPRESSED WHAT WERE PROBABLY HIS REAL SENTIMENTS: "THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE HAS UNDOUBTedly BEEN OF PROGRESSIVE IMPORTANCE FOR THE NUMEROUS SMALL AND BACKWARD NATIONS. BUT SURELY YOU MUST REALISE THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN OF MUCH GREATER PROGRESSIVE IMPORTANCE HAD THERE BEEN NO COMPULSION." 22 IN AN ATTACK ON THE LIBERALS 9 AND REACTIONARIES 8 STAND ON THE LANGUAGE QUESTION LENIN CLAIMED THAT ALTHOUGH THE BOLSHEVIKS WANTED ONE STATE LANGUAGE, WHAT THEY DID NOT WANT IS "THE ELEMENT OF COERCION. WE DO NOT WANT TO HAVE PEOPLE DRIVEN INTO PARADISE WITH A CUDGEL ...." 23

AS USUAL LENIN PREFERRED A SOPHISTICATED, PERSUASIVE APPROACH IN THE SOLUTION OF POLITICALLY VOLATILE QUESTIONS. TO THIS END, IN HIS "MATERIALS RELATING TO THE REVISION OF THE PARTY PROGRAMME" WRITTEN AFTER THE FEBRUARY REVOLUTION, HE PROPOSED THE FOLLOWING AS POINT 8 OF THE PROGRAM:

THE RIGHT OF THE POPULATION TO RECEIVE INSTRUCTION IN THEIR NATIVE TONGUE IN SCHOOLS TO BE ESTABLISHED FOR THE PURPOSE AT THE EXPENSE OF THE STATE AND LOCAL ORGANS OF SELF-GOVERNMENT; THE RIGHT OF EVERY CITIZEN TO USE HIS NATIVE LANGUAGE AT MEETINGS; THE NATIVE LANGUAGE TO BE USED IN ALL LOCAL PUBLIC AND STATE INSTITUTIONS; THE OBLIGATORY OFFICIAL LANGUAGE TO BE ABOLISHED. 24

LENIN WAS COGNIZANT OF THE FACT THAT TSARIST LINGUISTIC REPRESSION COULD NOT ELIMINATE THE LANGUAGES OF THE NATIONALITIES AND THAT OTHER, MORE SUBTLE METHODS WOULD BE REQUIRED.

ALL THE PERPLEXING QUESTIONS OF NATIONALITY WERE VIEWED WITHIN A RELATIVE HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK AS PERCEIVED BY LENIN. THE PROLETARIAT HAD A SPECIAL TASK WITHIN THIS SPECIFIC FRAMEWORK, WHICH WAS BEST SUMMARIZED WHEN HE SAID THAT

TO THROW OFF THE FEUDAL YOKE, ALL NATIONAL OPPRESSION, AND ALL PRIVILEGES ENJOYED BY ANY PARTICULAR NATION OR LANGUAGE, IS THE IMPERATIVE DUTY OF THE PROLETARIAT AS A DEMOCRATIC FORCE, AND IS CERTAINLY IN THE
INTERESTS OF THE PROLETARIAN CLASS STRUGGLE, WHICH IS OBSCURED AND RETARDED BY BICKERING ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION. BUT TO GO BEYOND THESE STRICTLY LIMITED AND DEFINITE HISTORICAL LIMITS IN HELPING BOURGEOIS NATIONALISM MEANS BETRAYING THE PROLETARIAT AND SIDING WITH THE BOURGEOISIE. THERE IS A BORDER-LINE HERE, WHICH IS OFTEN VERY SLIGHT AND WHICH THE BUNDISTS AND UKRAINIAN NATIONALIST-SOCIALISTS COMPLETELY LOSE SIGHT OF.25

Then the crux of the Leninist approach to the question of autonomy was bluntly stated: "COMBAT ALL NATIONAL OPPRESSION? Yes, of course! FIGHT FOR ANY KIND OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, FOR 'NATIONAL CULTURE' IN GENERAL? --OF COURSE NOT."26

Lenin was aware that the concept of autonomy appealed to many Ukrainian Social Democrats and to many members of the rapidly developing Ukrainian nationalist elite. Although this group was small, it was vociferous and was beginning to challenge the rudimentary national consciousness of literate Ukrainians into overt political activity.27

Before the revolution Lenin was irrevocably opposed to national cultural autonomy as advocated by the Austrian Social Democrats because "UNDER THE SLOGAN OF 'NATIONAL CULTURE' THE BOURGEOISIE OF ALL NATIONS, BOTH IN AUSTRIA AND IN RUSSIA, ARE IN FACT PURSUING THE POLICY OF SPLITTING THE WORKERS, EMASTITATING DEMOCRACY, AND HAGGLING WITH THE SERF-OWNERS OVER THE SALE OF THE PEOPLE'S RIGHTS AND THE PEOPLE'S LIBERTY."28 Russian Social Democracy was internationalist in orientation, Lenin maintained, and while it favored national equality it was definitely against national culture. The Bolsheviks, however, did support international culture which included "ONLY PART OF EACH NATIONAL CULTURE—ONLY THE CONSISTENTLY DEMOCRATIC AND SOCIALIST CONTENT OF EACH NATIONAL CULTURE."29 Lenin emphasized that the slogan of Social Democracy must be "THE UNITY OF WORKERS OF ALL NATIONALITIES COUPLED WITH THE FULLEST EQUALITY FOR THE NATIONALITIES AND THE MOST CONSISTENTLY DEMOCRATIC STATE SYSTEM..."30 On this point Lenin at no time allowed any
DOCTRINAL COMPROMISE, ALTHOUGH IT MUST BE UNDERSTOOD WITHIN A BOLSHEVIK CONTEXT.

THE SLOGAN OF NATIONAL CULTURE WAS NOTHING BUT A CLERICAL AND BOURGEOIS DECEPTION AS FAR AS LENIN WAS CONCERNED AND IT MATTERED LITTLE WHETHER IT CONCERNED THE GREAT RUSSIAN, UKRAINIAN, JEWISH OR ANY OTHER CULTURE. HE NEVER TIRED OF REPEATING THAT "ONLY THE UNITY AND SOLIDARITY OF WORKERS OF ALL NATIONS IN ALL WORKING CLASS ORGANISATIONS IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST CAPITAL WILL LEAD TO THE SOLUTION OF THE NATIONAL PROBLEM." THUS THE PARTY WAS TO REMAIN CENTRALIZED BECAUSE THIS WAS THE ONLY WAY THE HIGHLY UNIFIED INTERNATIONALIST BOURGEOISIE COULD BE EFFECTIVELY COMBATED. "LOOK AT THE CAPITALISTS!" HE CRIED.

THEY TRY TO INFLAME NATIONAL STRIFE AMONG THE 'COMMON PEOPLES', WHILE THEY THEMSELVES MANAGE THEIR BUSINESS AFFAIRS REMARKABLY WELL—RUSSIANS, UKRAINIANS, POLES, JEWS AND GERMANS TOGETHER IN ONE AND THE SAME CORPORATION. AGAINST THE WORKERS THE CAPITALISTS OF ALL NATIONS AND RELIGIONS ARE UNITED, BUT THEY STRIVE TO DIVIDE AND WEAKEN THE WORKERS BY NATIONAL STRIFE.

WHILE LENIN WOULD ADMIT NO PARTICULARIST GROUPING IN THE PARTY OR ANY OTHER WORKING CLASS ORGANIZATION, HE PERMITTED, IN THEORY AT LEAST, A CERTAIN DEGREE OF DECENTRALIZATION WITHIN THE STATE APPARATUS. IN HIS LETTER TO SHAUMAN HE CAME OUT STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF SOME FORM OF REGIONAL AUTONOMY. IN HIS THESIS ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION PUBLISHED IN 1913 LENIN DECLARED THAT "ALL AREAS OF THE STATE THAT ARE DISTINGUISHED BY SOCIAL PARTICULARITIES OR BY NATIONAL COMPOSITION OF THE POPULATION, MUST ENJOY WIDE SELF-GOVERNMENT AND AUTONOMY..." AND INSISTED THAT ALL INSTITUTIONS IN THESE AUTONOMOUS AREAS BE DEMOCRATICALLY ORGANIZED. LENIN WAS AWARE THAT THE UKRAINE WAS JUST SUCH AN AREA FOR IT DIFFERED FROM GREAT RUSSIA BOTH IN SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND ETHNIC COMPOSITION.

IN A CRITIQUE OF A PAPER PRESENTED BY THE DUMA DEPUTY, SAVENKO, LENIN LAUGHED AT THE LATTER'S SUGGESTION THAT THE INTEGRITY OF RUSSIA WAS
ENDANGERED BY UKRAINIAN AUTONOMY. INSTEAD, LENIN SUGGESTED THAT AN EXACTLY OPOPOSITE RESULT WOULD OCCUR BY ASKING IF IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE "TO CEMENT THE INTEGRITY OF RUSSIA BY GRANTING AUTONOMY TO THE UKRAINE ..."35 AS WITH THE CONCEPT OF SELF-DETERMINATION, SO WITH THE CONCEPT OF AUTONOMY; LENIN BELIEVED THAT IF AUTONOMY WAS GRANTED THE UKRAINE IMMEDIATELY UPON THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE: EXPRESSED DESIRE FOR IT, THEY WOULD ASK FOR NO MORE. THEY WOULD BE SATISFIED WITH LIMITED AUTONOMY AND NOT SEEK THE NEXT STEP—POLITICAL SECESSION AND THE CREATION OF A SEPARATE STATE. THUS THE RIGHT OF AUTONOMY WAS ADVANCED BY LENIN AS A NEGATIVE SLOGAN. HE SUPPORTED IT BECAUSE HE BELIEVED IT WAS NECESSARY TO DO SO IN ORDER TO RETAIN THE NATIONALITIES OF THE EMPIRE IN A CENTRALIZED STATE AFTER THE REVOLUTION.

ALTHOUGH THE DEMAND FOR COMPLETE NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE WAS RAISED IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE FEBRUARY REVOLUTION ONLY IN POLAND AND FINLAND, WARNINGS THAT THE UKRAINE WAS SOON TO FOLLOW THEIR LEAD WERE BECOMING PREVALENT.36 BY APRIL 1917, UKRAINIAN PARTICULARISM WAS BECOMING EVER MORE EVIDENT.37 LENIN MUST HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY ANGERED BY THE RESOLUTION ON UKRAINIAN AUTONOMY PASSED BY THE UKRAINIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY FOR, ALTHOUGH IT OFFICIALLY REQUESTED ONLY AUTONOMY, IT DECIDED "TO PERMIT THE COMRADES OF THE PARTY TO SUPPORT THE PRINCIPLE OF A FEDERATED ORGANIZATION OF THE RUSSIAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC ..."38 LENIN DECIDED TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF THIS IDEA BY STRESSING THE BOLSHEVIK'S PROGRAM OF REGIONAL AUTONOMY AT THE APRIL CONFERENCE OF THE RSDLP. STALIN DELIVERED THE REPORT ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION. "I BELIEVE THAT NOW, AFTER THE OVERTHROW OF TSARISM," HE BEGAN,

NINE-TENTHS OF THE NATIONALITIES WILL NOT DESIRE TO SUCCEED. THE PARTY THEREFORE PROPOSES TO INSTITUTE REGIONAL AUTONOMY FOR REGIONS WHICH DO NOT DESIRE TO SUCCEED AND WHICH ARE DISTINGUISHED BY PECULIARITIES OF CUSTOMS AND LANGUAGE, AS, FOR INSTANCE, TRANSCAUCASIA, TURKESTAN AND THE UKRAINE. THE GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES OF THESE AUTONOMOUS REGIONS MUST BE DETERMINED BY THE POPULATIONS THEMSELVES WITH DUE REGARD FOR ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, CUSTOMS, ETC.39
A year later Stalin noted that the Bolsheviks could support only such autonomy in which power belonged exclusively to the workers and peasants and in which the bourgeoisie were "debarred not only from power, but even from participation in the election of government bodies." Thus even autonomy, like self-determination, was to be made inoperative without the party's sanction.

It is interesting to note that, with respect to the Ukraine, Lenin never specifically discussed the cultural aspect of autonomy. Again this was something he left until it became absolutely necessary to deal with it. He supported the use of the Ukrainian language but believed that the requirements of economics would exert sufficient pressure for the ultimate "victory" of Russian. At the Eighth Party Congress, however, he noted rather cynically that "as regards the language it is not clear . . . whether the Ukrainian language today is the language of the common people or not." If Ukrainian was not the language of the Ukrainian people, what was? Lenin did not say.

In the field of education Lenin was vehemently set against its division among the nationalities because "the school must be the vehicle, not merely of the general principles of communism but also of the ideological, organisational and educational influence of the proletariat on the semi-proletarian and non-proletarian sections of the working people, in order to train a generation that is fully capable of building communism." In 1914 Lenin had decided that "the workers of all nations have but one educational policy: freedom for the native language, and democratic and secular education."

But after the lessons of the Ukraine, after the defeat of Denikin and the year of anarchy, Lenin was willing to modify his position on regional autonomy. With the inception of Ukrainization (to be discussed in
A later chapter) it had become obvious that Lenin had turned full circle and had now become an advocate of the formerly much despised cultural autonomy.  

While autonomy in a limited form was acceptable, federalism was for Lenin an essentially negative concept as it was incompatible with the centralist goal of the proletariat. It was primarily in order to counteract federalist tendencies that Lenin was forced to introduce the prophylactic concept of self-determination. After the revolution, however, Lenin deemed it wise to introduce his sharply circumscribed version of federalism as a palliative to those nations who had occasion to discover the true meaning of the Bolshevik theory of self-determination (secession).

Prior to the revolution Lenin believed that the federal idea was anti-historical because it served to dismantle the unitary multinational state. Long before the Second Congress of the RSDLP he warned the Armenian Social-Democrats that it was "not the business of the proletariat to preach federalism and autonomy; because these demands... inevitably amount to a demand for the establishment of an autonomous class state." Lenin was absolutely faithful to the belief that the task of the proletariat was solely "to rally the greatest possible masses of workers of each and every nationality more closely." At the Second Congress, speaking primarily with regard to the party but including the state forms of federalism as well, he warned that

*** federation is harmful and runs counter to the principles of Social-democracy as applied to existing Russian conditions. Federation is harmful because it sanctions segregation and alienation, elevates them to a principle, to a law. Complete alienation does indeed prevail among us, and we ought not to sanction it, or cover it with a fig-leaf, but combat it and resolutely acknowledge and proclaim the necessity of firmly and unswervingly advancing towards the closest unity.

It should be noted, however, that in this speech Lenin was careful to state
THAT FEDERALISM WAS INCONCEIVABLE "AS APPLIED TO THE EXISTING RUSSIAN CONDITIONS." THIS WAS TO BECOME AN IMPORTANT QUALIFICATION.

TEN YEARS LATER, IN HIS THESIS ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION, LENIN SHOWED THAT HE WAS STILL UNALTERABLY OPPOSED TO FEDERALISM. AN OVERALL VIEW OF RUSSIAN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS, HE DECLARED,


IN THE LETTER TO SHAUMIAN, LENIN EMPHASIZED THAT THE PARTY WAS OPPOSED TO FEDERATION IN PRINCIPLE BECAUSE IT LOOSENED ECONOMIC BONDS AND THEREFORE WAS UNACCEPTABLE FOR A UNITARY STATE.

NEVERTHELESS, THE EXISTING CONDITIONS IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE COMPelled LENIN TO ADOPT A MORE CONCILIATORY ATTITUDE TOWARD FEDERALISM AND IN THE SUMMER OF 1914 HE NOTED THAT MARX HAD ADVOCATED THE SEPARATION OF IRELAND FROM ENGLAND EVEN THOUGH FEDERATION MIGHT COME AFTER THIS DIVISION. MARX'S THEORETICAL BASIS FOR THIS CONCLUSION WAS HIS ANALYSIS OF THE CONCRETE HISTORICAL CONDITIONS PREVAILING IN BOTH ENGLAND AND IRELAND.52 LENIN, RATHER SURPRISINGLY, HASTENED TO APPLY THIS MARXIAN CONCEPTION TO THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE AND ANNOUNCED THAT

THE ECONOMIC TIES BETWEEN IRELAND AND ENGLAND IN THE 1860'S WERE, OF COURSE, EVEN CLOSER THAN RUSSIA'S PRESENT TIES WITH POLAND, THE UKRAINE, ETC.74.75 THOUGH, IN PRINCIPLE, AN ENEMY OF FEDERALISM, MARX IN THIS INSTANCE GRANTED THE POSSIBILITY OF FEDERATION, AS WELL, IF ONLY THE EMANCIPATION OF IRELAND WERE ACHIEVED IN A REVOLUTIONARY, NOT REFORMIST WAY, THROUGH A MOVEMENT OF THE MASS OF THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND SUPPORTED BY THE WORKING CLASS OF ENGLAND. THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT ONLY SUCH A SOLUTION OF THE HISTORICAL PROBLEM WOULD HAVE BEEN IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE PROLETARIAT AND MOST CONducIVE TO RAPID SOCIAL PROGRESS.53
Superficially this statement seems to be a significant concession to federalism. If, however, it is read in the Leninist context, it denotes only the slightest shift in his former anti-federal stance. The essence of the above statement is that federation is possible only if emancipation is achieved in a revolutionary way. But if it is achieved in a "revolutionary way" then there would be no need for secession and the consequent federalism because, by Lenin's own admission, only the proletariat could do this in a revolutionary, non-reformist manner and, by definition, the proletariat could never wish to secede.

With the advent of the war, Lenin's attitude toward federalism became slightly more favorable. "Never in favor of petty states, or the splintering up of states in general, or the principle of federation," Lenin noted that Marx considered the separation of an oppressed nation to be a step towards federation, and consequently, not towards a split, but towards concentration, both political and economic, but concentration on the basis of democracy. Lenin also invoked the aid of Engels on the federal question. In The State and Revolution, published in the late summer of 1917, Lenin remarked that "...Engels reckoned with the plain fact that the national question [even in Britain] was not yet a thing of the past, and recognized in consequence that the establishment of a federal republic would be a "step forward"."55

After the revolution, the concept of federalism was included in the party program. However, the party's goal was not federalism but centralism. At the Extraordinary Seventh Congress of the RCP(B) in March 1918 Lenin perceived federalism "as a transition to a conscious and closer unity of the working people, when they have learnt voluntarily to rise above national dis-sension ...."56 As a result federalism was adopted by the party "as a tran-
sitional step towards complete union" at the Eighth Congress. In preparing a draft theses on the national and colonial question for the Second Congress of the Communist International, Lenin in point seven of the draft stated that

Federation is a transition to the complete unity of the working people of different nations. The feasibility of federation has already been demonstrated in practice both by the relations between the R.S.F.S.R. and other Soviet Republics (the Hungarian, Finnish and Latvian in the past, and the Azerbaijani and Ukrainian at present)... In this manner federalism not only became acceptable to Lenin but was to become the instrument through which the unitarian state was to be achieved. After the disruption of the Empire the concept of federalism was dialectically transformed from a disintegrating to a unifying force and Lenin, always cognizant of a new tactical weapon, was willing to utilize it in the quest of his ultimate goal. As a student of Soviet federalism has pointed out, there were no real concessions to the republics and "federalism, as an idea, was able to survive because it was merely a formal institution...."

Federalism, was, for Lenin and the Bolsheviks, an essentially unfruitful concept. At the Second Congress it has been noted that Lenin argued that federalism was harmful because it ran "counter to the principles of Social Democracy as applied to existing Russian conditions ..." because it sanctions segregation and alienation, elevates them to a principle, a law." But Lenin was not to be trapped into making an unconditional statement; it should be stressed that he said federalism was harmful "as applied to existing Russian conditions."

Ten years later, in 1913, these "conditions" must not have significantly changed because Lenin, in his letter to Shaumian, while expressing approval of the concept of autonomy, declared that the Bolsheviks were "in
FAVOUR OF DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM and were therefore opposed to federalism. In this letter it became clear that Lenin approved autonomy and opposed federalism because the central parliament determined the limits of autonomy while, by implication, it did not have any similar control with respect to federalism. Thus Lenin rejected federalism because, unlike autonomy, it was incompatible with the degree of centralism he believed was required for the socialist state. "The right to federalism is simply meaningless," asserted Lenin in his polemic with Rosa Luxemburg, since federalism implies a bilateral contract. It goes without saying that Marxists cannot include the defence of federalism in general in their programme. Again Lenin had qualified his statement in order that he might meet exceptional circumstances in the most expedient manner without being unnecessarily restricted by past theoretical pronouncements.

There can be no doubt that Lenin was opposed to federalism at all times but he also tried to use the concept when he saw that no other alternative was available. Again, it should be emphasized that Lenin never considered federalism for the party or other working class organizations but admitted some conditional usefulness only with regard to the state.

Although it is true, as Chernov observes, that only the Socialist Revolutionaries of all the great Russian parties programmatically adopted the federal form of state structure, it should be noted that already in 1914 Lenin raised the question, albeit rather haltingly, of the possibility of the Ukraine's federation with post-revolutionary Russia. In his attack on Savchenko he noted that federalism was "no obstacle to the integrity" of the United States and Switzerland and implied that it might act as a centripetal force in future Ukrainian-Russian relations. Soon after his assault on Savchenko, Lenin observed that Marx had admitted the possibil-

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ity of federal relations between England and Ireland and added that economic ties between them in the 1860's were "even closer than Russia's present ties with Poland, the Ukraine, etc. ...." Later in his article on "Socialism and the War" he also implied that federalism was permissible in certain circumstances although he did insist that it be "achieved in a revolutionary, not reformist way...." The stipulation that federalism be achieved in a "revolutionary" way was not insignificant.

After the October Revolution the Bolsheviks were faced with the problem of a rapidly disintegrating empire. The advocacy of federalism was supposed to not only stem the secessionist tide but actually reverse it. Federalism was thus adopted by the party for purely tactical reasons and in Bolshevik theory it remained as a more or less ephemeral concept. At the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets of January 1918 Lenin declared that "the new system of the socialist Soviet Republic, as a federation of free republics of the different nations inhabiting Russia, has been finally accepted in this country in the sphere of domestic politics." In his draft theses for the Second Congress of the Comintern, however, Lenin candidly announced what federalism meant for him with respect to the Ukraine: it was nothing but a transitional form on the way to complete unity.

On December 30, 1917 Lenin proclaimed that the Council of People's Commissars recognized "the national demands of the Ukrainians, the independence of their People's Republic, and its right to federate ...." But since he stated "People's Republic" it would seem that he was not referring to the recognition of any demand of this nature by the Central Rada because this was, in Lenin's view, a bourgeois democratic institution. Even at this early date he distinguished between the acceptability of federalism for a bourgeois republic and a People's (Soviet) republic. By December 1919 this
DISTINCTION BECAME PART OF THE PARTY PROGRAM WHEN THE EIGHTH PARTY CONGRESS ADOPTED A RESOLUTION ON FEDERATION. IT SIMPLY STATED THAT "AS ONE OF THE TRANSITORY STAGES ON THE ROAD TO COMPLETE UNITY, THE PARTY PROPOSES A FEDERAL COMMONWEALTH OF STATES ORGANIZED ON THE SOVIET TYPE."71

AS EARLY AS JANUARY 1918 LENIN ALLEGED THAT BOLSHEVIK THEORY OF FEDERALISM HAD WON THE SUPPORT OF THE UKRAINIAN MASSES AND RESULTED IN THE AWAKENING OF THEIR CLASS-CONSCIOUSNESS AND OF MOLDING THEM INTO A SOLID ALLIANCE (PRESUMABLY WITH RUSSIA).72 AT THE EIGHTH CONGRESS, WHICH ADOPTED FEDERALISM AS PARTY POLICY, IT WAS MADE CLEAR WHO WAS TO GIVE EFFECT TO THE FEDERAL IDEA. SOON AFTER THE CONGRESS, LENIN, IN A LETTER TO THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE, INFORMED THEM THAT


LENIN HAD ALREADY DETERMINED THE RELATIONSHIP THAT WAS TO EXIST BETWEEN THE TWO REPUBLICS AND HE HAD ALSO DETERMINED THE TYPE OF GOVERNMENT THE UKRAINE WOULD HAVE. THE FOLLOWING QUOTATION SHOWS THAT LENIN DID NOT DISTINGUISH IN FACT BETWEEN THE EXTERNAL FORMS OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE REPUBLICS BECAUSE THE FORM MATTERED LITTLE:

SOVIET POWER IN THE UKRAINE HAS ITS OWN SPECIAL TASKS. ONE OF THESE SPECIAL TASKS DESERVES THE GREATEST ATTENTION AT THE PRESENT MOMENT. IT IS THE NATIONAL QUESTION, ... THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE UKRAINE IS TO BE A SEparate AND INDEPENDENT UKRAINIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC BOUND IN ALLIANCE (FEDERATION) WITH THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE SOVIET REPUBLIC, OR WHETHER THE UKRAINE IS TO AMALGAMATE WITH RUSSIA TO FORM A SINGLE SOVIET REPUBLIC.74

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT LENIN WOULD HAVE PREFERRED THE LATTER ALTERNATIVE BUT, SINCE THE RESULT WAS ESSENTIALLY THE SAME IN EITHER CASE, IT WAS NOT AN IMPORTANT DISTINCTION. FEDERATION WOULD ONLY RESULT IN THE CREATION OF
formal administrative machinery to deal with the Ukraine and the creation of a Ukrainian government which would be centrally directed.

In his address to the Ukrainian people Lenin also restated his theoretical canon that the Bolsheviks wanted a voluntary union of nations—a union which precludes any coercion of one nation by another.... But in the very next paragraph, apparently in disregard of the above statement and his numerous strictures on coercion, he recommended the use of violence against any manifestation of Ukrainian nationalism. "We must," he lectured, "... strive persistently for the unity of nations and ruthlessly suppress everything that tends to divide them, and in doing so we must be very patient, and make concessions to the survival of national distrust." The meaning of this statement probably was that any political manifestation of independence would be destroyed while particularistic cultural manifestations would be tolerated in order to gain the confidence of the Ukrainian masses.

Before the Bolshevik revolution Lenin was generally opposed to federalism. Since it would lead to the disintegration of the Russian Empire and the formation of small states and small economic units it was viewed as a reactionary concept. But after October, when the Ukraine had proclaimed its independence, the concept of federalism was dialectically transformed into a revolutionary force because it became a transitional stage on the road to the complete unity of the Ukraine and Russia. Federalism was not permitted for the party, however, and the CP(B)U remained only a regional branch of the party. Thus Lenin's countenance of federation did not mark a change in his political beliefs but was merely the reflection of a changed political situation.

2. See Shaheen, pp. 37-38, 81-83; Kohn, p. 80.

3. Lenin, VI, p. 334. Emphasis added. See ibid., VII, p. 97, where Lenin states that "not only in 'some' questions of the Programme, but in all without exception you are allowed independence, gentlemen, but only as far as concerns their application to the specific features of the Jewish proletariat.

4. Ibid., VI, p. 335.

5. See ibid., IX, pp. 248-50; ibid., XX, pp. 38, 100. Also see Borys, p. 50; B.D. Wolfe, Three Who Made a Revolution, (Boston: Beacon, 1959), p. 579.

6. Ibid., XIX, p. 357; see ibid., XIX, p. 116.


8. Ibid., p. 503.

9. Ibid., p. 428.

10. Ibid., p. 542. In ibid., p. 505, Lenin says that cultural national autonomy is "the absolutely pure and consistent segregating of education according to nationality ...." Also see ibid., XX, p. 43.

11. Ibid., pp. 33-34.

12. Ibid., XIX, p. 504. See ibid., XX, p. 36-39, and especially the article entitled "The Nationality of Pupils in Russian Schools" of December 14, 1913, in ibid., XIX, pp. 531-33. For further discussion see Shaheen, pp. 84-86; Borys, p. 31; Ciuciura, pp. 24-25.


14. Lenin, XXII, p. 146. 15. Ibid., XX, p. 37.

16. See the following for a discussion of this point: Wolfe, pp. 580-81; Pipes, The Genesis..., p. 77; Low, pp. 55-59; J.S. Reshetar, A Concise History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (New York: Praeger, 1964), pp. 101-03. As Ciuciura, p. 18, points out, however, Lenin did in fact accept the fundamentals of Renner's and Bauer's theory which was "the division of a multinational empire into a number of 'national', linguistic...

17. LENIN, XX, P. 224. IN MAY 1914, IN A LETTER TO SHAUMIAN, LENIN’S REASONS FOR FAVORING REGIONAL AUTONOMY ARE RATHER CANDIDLY ADVANCED. THE GIST OF THE LETTER STATES THAT BOLSHEVIK SUPPORT OF REGIONAL AUTONOMY, ESPECIALLY IN THE OUNA, WILL NEUTRALIZE “THE STUPIDITY OF CULTURAL-NATIONAL AUTONOMY AND KILL THE SUPPORTERS OF THIS STUPIDITY FOR GOOD.” Ibid., XXXV, PP. 142-43.


19. LENIN, XX, P. 50.


22. Ibid., XIX, P. 499.


24. Ibid., XXIV, P. 472. COMPARE THIS WITH LENIN’S STATEMENT ON THE BASHKIRS, IN Ibid., XXIX, P. 516. IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT THE OLD PARTY PROGRAM INCLUDED THE OFFICIAL STATE LANGUAGE BUT GAVE THE NATIVE LANGUAGE EQUALITY IN THE NATIONAL AREA. Ibid., XXIV, P. 472. FOR MORE ON THE LANGUAGE QUESTION SEE Pipes, The Formation..., PP. 45-46; Shaheen, PP. 109-10; Kohn, P. 80.
25. LENIN, XX, p. 35.
26. Ibid., p. 35. Also see Ibid., p. 42.

27. For a history of the development of this Ukrainian national consciousness see Rudnytsky, pp. 1381-1405.

29. Ibid., p. 116. Lenin continued: "We are against national culture as one of the slogans of bourgeois nationalism. We are in favour of the international culture of a fully democratic and socialist proletariat." Ibid., p. 116. See Reshetar, "Lenin on the Ukraine," p. 5.

31. Ibid., p. 381.

32. Ibid., p. 308. See Ibid., XX, p. 23.

33. Ibid., XIX, p. 500.
34. Ibid., pp. 245.


36. See Carr, pp. 286-89. Reshetar states that Vinnychenko criticized those who drew analogies with the Finnish independence movement and argued that the Finns were at a more advanced stage of political development than were the Ukrainians. Reshetar, The Ukrainian Revolution, pp. 70-75. Rudnytsky argues that tsarist Russia appeared almost omnipotent to the young advocates of the Ukrainian idea and that they "contented themselves with the traditional call for an autonomous Ukraine in a decentralized and federative Russia." Rudnytsky, p. 1402. Expanding on this point, Rudnytsky alleged that at the start of the World War the Ukrainian movement presented a real power factor but still retained the characteristics of a "movement." It had not yet approached the level of development of national consciousness as had the Poles, Czechs and Finns and it was only during the Revolution that this occurred. Ibid., p. 1404. Even this, however, is a moot point.

37. Paleologue wrote on March 30, 1917 that "the most dangerous germ involved in the revolution has been developing during the last few days with the most alarming rapidity." This germ was the demand by the nationalities, including the Ukraine, for "independence, or, failing that, complete autonomy." What is most interesting is Paleologue's interpretation of this phenomenon. "The present movement is separatist much more than particularist, secessionist rather than federalist; it tends to nothing less than national disintegration." M. Paleologue, An Ambassador's Memoirs, Vol. III, translated by F.A. Holt. (New York: George H. Doran Co.), pp. 276-77.

40. Ibid., IV, p. 89.

41. See Lenin, XIX, pp. 354-56.
42. Ibid., XXIX, p. 194.

43. Ibid., p. 111. For an earlier statement see Ibid., XX, p. 224.

44. Ibid., p. 224. See Borys, p. 31; Ciuciura, pp. 24-25.

46. Ibid., VI, p. 328.

47. Ibid.

48. Lenin was fond of referring to federation as a "fig-leaf". See Ibid., p. 463.

49. Ibid., p. 486.

50. Ibid., XIX, p. 249. Lenin, in the next paragraph, noted that at the December 1908 conference of the RSDLP a special resolution was adopted "confirming the demand for the unity of workers of all ... nationalities, on a principle other than federation" and that this was still in effect in 1913. Ibid., p. 249.

51. Ibid., p. 500. For a discussion of the foregoing, see Wolfe, pp. 589-90; Shaheen, 76-77; Low, pp. 89-90, 105-10; Towster, pp. 61-63.

52. Lenin, XX, p. 440.

53. Ibid., p. 441.

54. Ibid., XXI, p. 410.

55. Ibid., XXV, p. 447. Lenin also added that "it is extremely important to note that Engels, armed with facts, disproved by a most precise example the prejudice which is very widespread, particularly among petty bourgeois democrats, that a federal republic necessarily means a greater amount of freedom than a centralized republic. This is wrong." Ibid., p. 448. See Ciuiciura, pp. 26-27; Borys, pp. 33-34.

56. Lenin, XXVII, p. 155. Later, speaking on "International Policy," Lenin said that federation was "a transition to voluntary fusion." Ibid., p. 158.


58. Lenin, XXXI, pp. 146-47.

Autonomy. In his article, "The Policy of the Soviet Government on the National Question in Russia," published in October 1920, he stated that "Soviet autonomy is not a rigid thing fixed once and for all time; it permits of the most varied forms and degrees of development. It passes from narrow administrative autonomy (the Volga Germans, the Chuvash, the Karelians) to a wider, political autonomy (the Bashkirs, the Volga Tartars, the Kirghiz); from wide political autonomy to a still wider form of it (the Ukraine, Turkestan); and lastly, from the Ukrainian type of autonomy to the highest form of autonomy—to contractual relations (Azerbaijan)." Stalin, Works, IV, p. 367. Lenin, of course, strongly disapproved of this political crudeness and often reproached Stalin for his refusal to distinguish between autonomy and federalism. Pipes, The Formation..., pp. 111-12, implies that Stalin was merely Lenin's mouthpiece on many aspects of the national question.

60. Lenin, VI, p. 486. 61. Ibid., XIX, p. 500.


63. See Chernov, pp. 264-65. Chernov points out that the federal idea gradually penetrated Russian Social Democratic thinking—both Bolshevik and Menshevik.


65. Lenin, XX, p. 441.

66. Ibid., p. 441. See Ibid., XXI, p. 316; Ciuiri, pp. 26-27; Borys, p. 34.


72. Lenin, XXI, pp. 480-81. 73. Ibid., XXX, p. 292.

74. Ibid., p. 292. See L. Schapiro, The Communist Party of the Soviet Union (London: Methuen, 1963), pp. 221-22; Borys, p. 328. In 1914 in his article entitled "On the Question of National Policy" Lenin declared: "We Social-Democrats are opposed to all nationalism and advocate democratic centralism. We are opposed to particularism and are convinced that, all other things being equal, big states can solve the problems of economic progress and of the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie far more effectively than small states can. But we value only voluntary ties, never compulsory ties." Ibid., XX, pp. 222-23.

75. Ibid., XXX, p. 293. Emphasis supplied.

76. An editorial in the June 16, 1917 edition of Izvestia expressed a view similar to that held by Lenin. Explicitly, the editorial dealt
WITH AUTONOMY BUT IT WAS EQUALLY APPLICABLE TO FEDERALISM SINCE IT OBVIOUS-LY PERCEIVED THE TWO CONCEPTS AS BEING ALMOST IDENTICAL AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME AND IN THIS SITUATION. THE EDITORIAL ATTACKED THE PROVISIONS OF THE FIRST UNIVERSAL WHICH WAS ISSUED BY THE RADA. IN PART IT STATED: "... TO DEMAND THE IMMEDIATE REALIZATION OF ALL THE POINTS OF THE NATIONAL PROGRAM INDICATES THE INABILITY TO MAKE INTELLIGENT USE OF THE ... REVOLUTION....

IN SUCH A TRANSITIONAL PERIOD, ONE SHOULD FEAR MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE A SPLITTING UP OF THE REVOLUTIONARY FORCES.

THAT IS WHY THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT WAS RIGHT WHEN IT INSISTED ON POSTPONING THE DECISION ON THE SCOPE AND FORM OF UKRAINIAN AUTONOMY UNTIL THE NATIONAL CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, AT WHICH TIME THE REVOLUTIONARY GAINS WILL BE FIRMLY SECURED AND IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE ACTUAL WILL OF THE UKRAINIAN MAASSES.

THE UKRAINIAN WORKERS AND PEASANTS WILL, OF COURSE, UNDERSTAND AND WILL PLACE THE COMMON INTERESTS OF THE REVOLUTION ABOVE EVERYTHING ELSE. THEY WILL GO ARM IN ARM WITH THE ENTIRE REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRACY OF RUSSIA ...." BROWDER AND KERENSKY, PP. 388-89.
CHAPTER V: THE UKRAINIAN QUESTION: NATIONAL EQUALITY, ASSIMILATION, ANNEXATION, AND DEFENCE OF THE FATHERLAND.

The concepts of national equality, assimilation, annexation, and defence of the fatherland are to a greater or lesser degree connected with that of self-determination. When Lenin wrote on these subjects he did so with an awareness of their importance for, and their affect on, his advocacy of the right of nations to self-determination. They developed out of his concern with self-determination in the sense that his interest in them became increasingly evident as he attempted to create a program acceptable to both the Bolsheviks and the nationalities through the explication of the concept of self-determination.

Lenin had always been an advocate of national equality. He had often declared that in the proletarian state there could be "absolutely no privileges for any one nation or any one language ..." and that "guaranteeing the rights of a national minority was inseperably linked with the principle of complete equality." He never tired of pointing out that the lot of the nationalities was even worse than that of the Russians and, of course, tried to gain political advantage through exploitation of this unfortunate fact. The tsarist policy of national oppression served to divide nations and corrupt the people's minds and was thus incompatible with socialism. "The working class needs unity, not division," stressed Lenin, and with the hope of achieving this unity within the Bolshevik party, as well as attracting new members, he saw that the RSDLP group in the Duma introduced a national equality bill aimed primarily against tsarist persecution of the Jews but including all non-Russian nationalities within its terms. "The proletarian
REVOLUTION CALLS FOR A PROLONGED EDUCATION OF THE WORKERS IN THE SPIRIT OF THE FULLEST NATIONAL EQUALITY AND BROTHERHOOD, DECLARED LENIN.6

NATIONAL INEQUALITY IS PERPETUATED BY THE LANDOWNERS, CAPITALISTS AND BOURGEOISIE IN ORDER TO PERPETUATE CLASS PRIVILEGES AND CREATE DISUNITY AMONG THE WORKERS AND THUS, NOTED LENIN, "THE REAL MEANING OF THE DEMAND FOR EQUALITY CONSISTS IN ITS BEING A DEMAND FOR THE ABOLITION OF CLASSES."7 IT WAS WITH THIS THOUGHT IN MIND THAT LENIN COMPOSED POINT SEVEN OF THE DRAFT REVISION OF THE PARTY PROGRAM IN SUCH A WAY AS TO LUMP CLASS AND NATIONAL INEQUALITY TOGETHER. IT SIMPLY REQUIRED THE ABOLITION OF THE SOCIAL ESTATES; EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL CITIZENS IRRESPECTIVE OF SEX, CREED, RACE, OR NATIONALITY.8

Lenin insisted that amalgamation must be voluntary but, because it negated nationalism, he left no doubt the assimilation was his goal. In "Critical Remarks on the National Question" he maintained that "the proletariat cannot support any consecration of nationalism; on the contrary, it supports everything that helps to obliterate national distinctions and remove national barriers; it supports everything that makes the ties between nationalities closer and closer, or tends to merge nations." By the spring of 1920, however, Lenin recognized that the mere recognition and proclamation of a fraternal union of the working people would have to be supplanted by something more positive. He thus urged that "a policy be pursued that will achieve the closest alliance, with Soviet Russia, of all the national and colonial liberation movements." There can be no doubt that the assimilation of nations was one of Lenin's primary objectives.

Lenin had always and consistently propounded the necessity of national equality. This meant that in practice there were to be no national privileges and he declared that his slogan of the right of nations to political self-determination was in fact the ultimate in national equality: "to insist upon, to advocate, and to recognize this right [to secession] is to insist on the equality of nations, to refuse to recognize compulsory ties, to oppose all state privileges for any nation whatsoever, and to cultivate a spirit of complete class solidarity in the workers of the different nations." Lenin put considerable faith in the centripetal effects which would be created by his advocacy of equality. "The masses of working people, as they liberate themselves from the bourgeois yoke," he pro-
PHILOSOPHISED,

WILL GRAVITATE IRRESISTIBLY TOWARDS UNION AND INTEGRATION WITH THE GREAT, ADVANCED SOCIALIST NATIONS..., PROVIDED YESTERDAYS OPPRES­SORS DO NOT INFRINGE ON THE LONG-OPPRESSED NATIONS' HIGHLY DEVELOP­ED DEMOCRATIC FEELING OF SELF-RESPECT, AND PROVIDED THEY ARE GRAN­TED EQUALITY IN EVERYTHING, INCLUDING ... EXPERIENCE IN ORGANISING "THEIR OWN" STATE. 17

But, as usual, Lenin added a proviso to his idea of national equality which became of great importance for the Ukraine. He contended that the "democratic interests of one country must be subordinated to the demo­cratic interests of several and all countries"18 and after the revolution, he made it very clear that the Ukraine would have to make certain na­tional sacrifices in order to maintain the integrity of the world's first proletarian state. It was not the socialist state that made these sac­rifices necessary but the tyrannical demands of capitalism, he insisted. 19

Speaking for the party, Lenin declared that the Bolsheviks were "opposed to Great Russian privileges", and asserted that this guided their entire propaganda and agitation. 20 It was for this reason that he bitterly attacked Bishop Nikon who had asked the tsarist government to grant privileges to Ukrainians because they were fellow Slavs while the Jews were foreigners.

What Bishop Nikon refuses to understand is that the Ukrainians cannot be protected from oppression, unless the concept "people of foreign extraction" is completely expunged from the life of the state, unless the complete equality of rights of all nationalities is upheld. 21

It was ostensibly for this reason that he assailed the Russian nationalists who were against the secession of the Ukraine. "By perse­cuting the Ukrainians and others for their "separations", for their se­cessionist strivings", he wrote, "the nationalists are upholding the pri­vilege of the Great-Russian landlords and the Great-Russian bourgeoisie to have "their own" state." 22
Although Lenin was against any national privileges, their elimination was not his real goal. He believed that it was only through actual national equality that real state centralization could come to pass without resorting to force. Aware of the "national distrust among the broad masses of peasants and small owners" in the Ukraine of the Russian Levian than, he warned that any evidence of racial inequality would "jeopardize the cause of complete and ultimate unity."^23

It should also be noted that Lenin was strangely silent on national equality within the party. He never dealt with this issue directly but within the larger context of class and class parties. Since only the class conscious worker would join the Bolsheviks, the national problem could not be a viable issue with him. If the worker was conscious of his nationality he usually gravitated toward national socialist groups and was, as far as Lenin was concerned, a dupe of the bourgeoisie. It is not surprising therefore that when he decided to "declare war to the death on dominant nation chauvinism" it was only the government with which he was seriously concerned:

It must be absolutely insisted that the Union Central Executive Committee should be presided over in turn by a Russian, Ukrainian, Georgian, etc. Absolutely^24

The party was never treated in this cavalier manner. Lenin never insisted that party leadership be rotated on an ethnic basis because he believed that it had already achieved that "complete and ultimate unity" for which the various republics were now allegedly struggling.

Lenin constantly identified national equality with assimilation. Unity, as he conceived it, was also identified with assimilation and for this reason Lenin insisted that "class-conscious workers stand for full unity among the workers of all nations in every educa-
TIONAL, TRADE UNION, POLITICAL, ETC., WORKERS ORGANIZATION..." and specifically emphasized that "THE GREAT-RUSSIAN AND UKRAINIAN WORKERS MUST WORK TOGETHER..." in fact the propensity of capitalism to destroy national peculiarities and thus create the pre-conditions for assimilation was perhaps the greatest service it rendered socialism. Lenin fondly spoke of "capitalism's world-historical tendency to break down national barriers, obliterate national distinctions, and to assimilate nations—-a tendency which manifests itself more and more powerfully with every passing decade, and is one of the greatest forces transforming capitalism to socialism." Since capitalism was objectively aiding socialism by assimilating nations, and consequently consolidating unity, "it would be a downright betrayal of socialism and a silly policy even from the standpoint of the bourgeois "national aims" of the Ukrainians to weaken the ties and the alliance between the Ukrainian and Great-Russian proletariat that now exist within the confines of a single state."出租

In his critique of Piatkov's views on the national question Lenin declared with regard to nations that the Bolsheviks "favour their merger", although this merger was not to be influenced by force. This merger was to be advocated by the workers of the nationalities while the Great-Russian proletariat agitated for the freedom of secession. That a contradiction of sorts existed in this dualistic proposal was recognized by Piatkov and he asked, "what is a worker to think when he asks a propagandist how the proletariat should regard samostiiinost (political independence for the Ukraine), and gets this answer: socialists are working for the right to secede, but their propaganda is against secession?" Lenin haughtily dismissed the question by declaring that "every sensible worker will think that Kievsky (Piatkov) is not capable of
In fact Piatakov struck a weak point in Lenin's nationality theory but he could not, for tactical reasons, seek a more direct approach towards the merging of nations. Any other approach would have made the Ukrainians even more distrustful of Russians—or so Lenin believed at any rate. As he told Piatakov, the Bolsheviks, as consistent socialists and democrats, must advocate the right to secession because without it "there is no path to complete voluntary rapprochement and merging of nations."

As a result Lenin maintained this approach without change in his quest of amalgamation and assimilation. He was firmly convinced that national distrust between Russian and Ukrainian could only be combated successfully in this manner. In 1920 he announced that "if a Great-Russian Communist insists upon the amalgamation of the Ukraine with Russia, Ukrainians might easily suspect him of advocating this policy not from the motive of uniting the proletarians in the fight against capitalism, but because of the prejudices of the old Great-Russian nationalism, of imperialism." On the other hand he declared that "if a Ukrainian Communist insists upon the unconditional state independence of the Ukraine, he lays himself open to the suspicion that he is supporting this policy not because of the temporary interests of the Ukrainian workers and peasants in their struggle against the yoke of capital, but on account of the petty-bourgeois prejudices of the small owner." After the revolution Lenin maintained that unity was essential for the preservation of victory and warned that "he who undermines the unity and closest alliance between the Great-Russian and Ukrainian workers and peasants is helping ... the capitalist bandits of all countries."

Assimilation was one of Lenin's major objectives both before and after the revolution. In his draft program for the Eighth Party
Congress he stated that the policy of the RCP(B) on the national question was that of steadily drawing together and merging the proletarians and the working masses of all nations37 and at the Congress itself he remarked that "Comrade Pyatakov is a thousand times right when he says that we need unity."38 At the same time, Lenin warned of the necessity to exercise special caution in respect of national feelings and to ensure the pursuance of a policy of actual equality and freedom to secede so as to remove the grounds for this mistrust and achieve the close voluntary union of the Soviet republics of all nations.39 Almost in the same breath, however, he made it clear that no other choice but union was available for the Ukrainians. "In this long and hard fight we Great-Russian and Ukrainian workers must maintain the closest alliance," he lectured threateningly, "for separately we shall most definitely be unable to cope with the tasks."40 The Ukraine was bound to lose more than it gained in this alliance for, as Carr observes, "centralization meant standardization; and the standards adopted were naturally Great Russian standards.41 Of all republics the Ukraine had least to gain from this unity since she was relatively developed industrially and had a level of culture approaching that of the Russians.42 If the Leninist theory of equality and assimilation is carried to its logical conclusion, the Ukraine, because it was most developed, should for this reason have been the easiest to assimilate. This was not so.

In the prerevolutionary era Lenin had consistently maintained that a struggle against annexations was of fundamental concern to the true socialist. Any socialist of an oppressor nation who did not conduct unrelenting propaganda both in peacetime and wartime against retention of oppressed nationalities was classed as a social chauvinist.43
The Leninist concept of annexation included three main points: (1) the concept of force (joining by means of force); (2) the concept of oppression by another nation (the joining of "alien" regions, etc.), and, sometimes (3) the concept of violation of the status quo. Accordingly, said Lenin, "to be against annexations means to be in favor of the right to self-determination" and he also declared that "annexation is violation of the self-determination of a nation, it is the establishment of state frontiers contrary to the will of the population." Perhaps Lenin made his most categorical statement on annexations when he declared that "if a socialist party declares that it is against the forcible retention of an oppressed nation within the frontiers of an annexing state, it is thereby committed to renounce retention by force when it comes to power." Furthermore, noted Lenin, this meant that all revolts of the annexed regions against the bourgeoisie must be supported by socialists provided, of course, it is not the revolt of a reactionary class. By withholding this support socialists would objectively become annexationists, he insisted.

As on the subject of self-determination, Lenin distinguished the tasks of the proletariat of the oppressed and oppressor nations. Workers of the oppressor countries were to advocate freedom for the oppressed nations to secede. They were forced to propagate freedom for the nationalities because, Lenin declared, "without this there can be no internationalism. It is our right and duty to treat every social-democrat of an oppressor nation who fails to conduct such propaganda as a scoundrel and an imperialist." It was the party's duty to teach workers to be "indifferent" to national distinctions but not in the sense that annexationists were indifferent. Lenin explained:

A member of an oppressor nation must be "indifferent" to whether
SMALL NATIONS BELONG TO HIS STATE OR TO A NEIGHBOURING STATE, OR TO THEMSELVES, ACCORDING TO WHERE THEIR SYMPATHIES LIE: WITHOUT SUCH "INDIFFERENCE" HE IS NOT A SOCIAL-DEMOCRAT. TO BE AN INTERNATIONALIST SOCIAL-DEMOCRAT ONE MUST NOT THINK ONLY OF ONE'S OWN NATION, BUT PLACE ABOVE IT THE INTERESTS OF ALL NATIONS, THEIR COMMON LIBERTY AND EQUALITY.


IN THE GIVEN SITUATION, SAID LENIN, THIS APPARENTLY CONTRADICTORY APPROACH WAS THE ONLY POSSIBLE PATH TOWARD "INTERNATIONALISM AND THE AMALGAMATION OF NATIONS."


THE DEGREE EVEN STATED THAT ANY MANIFESTATION OF NATIONAL DISSENT SHOULD BE TESTED BY A DEMOCRATIC VOTE WITHOUT ANY PRESSURE BEING BROUGHT UPON THE LOCAL INHABITANTS. ANY PRESSURE WHATSOEVER WOULD BE EQUIVALENT TO THE SEIZURE AND COERCION THEORETICALLY PROSCRIBED BY LENIN.
LENIN BECAME SERIOUSLY CONCERNED WITH THE QUESTION OF ANNEXATION IN 1915 AND MAINTAINED INTEREST IN THE PROBLEM UNTIL SHORTLY AFTER THE REVOLUTION. HE ASSIDUOUSLY EMPHASIZED THAT "THERE CAN BE NO CORRECT DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPT OF ANNEXATION UNLESS IT IS SEEN IN CONTEXT WITH SELF-DETERMINATION" AND DECLARED ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS THAT "TO BE AGAINST THE RIGHT OF SECESSION IS TO BE FOR ANNEXATIONS." LENIN THEN CONVENIENTLY PROVIDED A DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPT: "ANNEXATION MEANS KEEPING AN ALIEN PEOPLE BY FORCE WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF A GIVEN STATE." ALIEN PEOPLE, HE DECLARED, WERE THOSE WHO HAD PRESERVED THEIR DISTINCTIVE FEATURES AND WHO DESIRED INDEPENDENCE FROM THE OCCUPYING POWER.


THE UKRAINIAN QUESTION, AS PERCEIVED BY LENIN, WAS INTIMATELY CONNECTED WITH THE CONCEPT OF ANNEXATIONS. AFTER THE REVOLUTION RUSSIA WOULD NOT FORCIBLY KEEP THE UKRAINE WITHIN THE NEW STATE, SAID LENIN, AND URGED THAT RUSSIAN SOCIALISTS MUST ADVANCE THE DEMAND THAT TSARIST RUSSIA GET OUT OF THE UKRAINE. IN FACT HE ATTACKED THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST REVOLUTIONARIES AND MENSHEVIKS AS BEING IN FAVOR OF ANNEXATIONS BECAUSE THEY TREATED FINLAND AND THE UKRAINE AS IF THEY WERE ANNEXED NATIONS AND NOT REALLY FREE, REALLY EQUAL NATIONS HAVING AN INDISPUTABLE
RIGHT BOTH TO自主 AND TO SECESSION.63

The phrase quoted above from the "Decree on Peace" which dealt with annexations and stated that Bolsheviks would consider lands to be annexed "irrespective of the time such forcible incorporation took place" was particularly applicable to the Ukraine. Lenin was aware of this fact and used it in his polemics with other Russian parties. He taunted the Cadets and Socialist-Revolutionaries on their views of the Ukraine and annexation, charging that the annexation of the Ukraine was the same as the British annexation of Ireland and the French annexation of Algeria.64

It is quite obvious, however, that the concept of annexations with respect to the Ukraine was used primarily as a political club with which to beat first the tsarist bureaucracy and later the Provisional Government. Lenin was not interested in the Ukraine per se but used its predicament as a tactical instrument in his larger and more important concern of expediting the socialist revolution.

The concept of "the defence of the fatherland" had an historical meaning and for a proper understanding of this notion it must be viewed within its concrete historical framework. Defence of the fatherland, in the context of World War I, was reactionary because it "calls the throttling of Poland and the Ukraine, etc., a 'defence of the fatherland' of the Great Russians..."65 and Lenin declared that the advocacy of this idea during the course of this war was pure social chauvinism.66

Lenin had some trouble explaining that the defence of the fatherland was a historical concept and was to be understood as such. Many Bolsheviks had accepted Marx's statement that the working man had no country at face value but Lenin saw it as much more than that. In a letter to Inessa Armand, he agreed with Marx's statement but added that
not only this is stated there. It is stated there also that when national states are being formed the role of the proletariat is somewhat special. To take the first proposition (the working men have no country) and forget its connection with the second (the workers are constituted as a class nationally, though not in the same sense as the bourgeoisie) will be exceptionally incorrect.

He also reminded her that the whole spirit and system of Marxism demanded that each problem be considered (a) only historically, (b) only in connection with others, (c) only in connection with the concrete experience of history.

Thus Lenin was against defencism until the October revolution. From October 25 onward, Lenin began to repeat over and over that the Russian proletariat are defencists. He now declared that the proletariat were "all for the defence of the fatherland" and if the German imperialists initiate an aggressive war against Soviet Russia, "then the majority of Soviets will most certainly be in favour of war."

The Russian workers were now defencists because "[they] have shown by deeds that ... [they] have broken away from imperialism," and noted Lenin, "now our defencism is honourable."

What Lenin was trying to say, quite simply, was that the proletariat now had a "fatherland" and, since they had renounced all forms of imperialism and national oppression, it was honorable for them to defend their nation against imperialist aggressors. Bukharin summed this up well:

... under capitalism the workers have no power; ... under capitalism everything is in the hands of the bourgeoisie; ... under capitalism the state is merely an instrument for the suppression and oppression of the working class. We have already seen that the task of the proletariat is to destroy the bourgeoisie state, not to defend it. Then only will the proletariat have a country. Then and only then will it be the duty of the proletariat to defend its fatherland; for then it will be defending its own authority and its own cause ... .

Defence of the fatherland was a historical concept, insisted
LENIN, AND COULD BE CORRECTLY UNDERSTOOD ONLY IF IT WAS CONSIDERED WITH-
IN A HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK. WHAT LENIN ALSO MEANT HOWEVER WAS THAT DE-
FENCE OF THE FATHERLAND WAS A CLASS CONCEPT—AT LEAST HIS DEFINITION OF
IT—AND THAT PROPER COMPREHENSION OF IT WAS POSSIBLE ONLY IF IT WAS VIEW-
ED WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE CLASS ISSUE. FOR THIS REASON LENIN WAS VIRU-
LENIENTLY OPPOSED TO THE "IMPERIALIST WAR" WHICH HE SAID

STEMS FROM THE GENERAL CONDITIONS OF THE IMPERIALIST ERA AND IS NOT
ACCIDENTAL, NOT AN EXCEPTION, NOT A DEVIATION FROM THE GENERAL AND
TYPICAL. TALK OF DEFENCE OF THE FATHERLAND IS THEREFORE A DECP-
TION OF THE PEOPLE, FOR THIS WAR IS NOT A NATIONAL WAR. IN A GENU-
INELY NATIONAL WAR THE WORDS "DEFENCE OF THE FATHERLAND" ARE NOT
A DECEPTION AND WE ARE NOT OPPOSED TO IT.73

IN THE CURRENT WAR, HE NOTED, DEFENCE OF THE FATHERLAND WAS ACTUALLY NO-
THING MORE THAN THE "THROTTLING OF POLAND AND THE UKRAINE."74

A SOCIALIST COULD REGARD WARS FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE FATHERLAND
AS LEGITIMATE AND PROGRESSIVE IF THEY WERE FOUGHT WITH THE AIM OF OVER-
THROWING ALIEN OPPRESSION SINCE "ALL NATIONAL OPPRESSION CALLS FORTH THE
RESISTANCE OF THE BROAD MASSES OF THE PEOPLE; AND THE RESISTANCE OF A NA-
TIONALLY OPPRESSED POPULATION ALWAYS TENDS TO NATIONAL REVOLT."75 IT
COULD NOT BE OTHERWISE, DECLARED LENIN, "SINCE EVERY 'NATION IN REVOLT'
'DEFENDS' ITSELF, ITS LANGUAGE, ITS TERRITORY, ITS FATHERLAND, AGAINST
THE OPPRESSOR NATIONS."76 THIS THEORY COULD EASILY BE APPLIED TO THE
UKRAINIAN SITUATION AND ACTUALLY WAS BY LENIN. IT WOULD BE "ABSURD NOT
TO RECOGNIZE THE LEGITIMACY OF WARS OF OPPRESSED NATIONS AGAINST THEIR
OPPRESSORS, WARS THAT MIGHT BREAK OUT TODAY—REBELLION OF THE IRISH
AGAINST ENGLAND, FOR INSTANCE, REBELLION OF MOROCCO AGAINST FRANCE, OR
THE UKRAINE AGAINST RUSSIA, ETC...."77 OF GREATEST SIGNIFICANCE HERE IS
THE FACT THAT LENIN, IN THE PRE-REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD, CONSIDERED THE
UKRAINE TO BE AN OPPRESSED NATION AND THEREFORE SANCTIONED A NATIONAL RE-
BELLION BY UKRAINIANS. WHEN THE REBELLION ACTUALLY OCCURRED, HOWEVER,
HE IGNORED THE NATIONAL ISSUE, AND CONCEIVED IT ALMOST PURELY IN CLAS
LENIN HAD THOUGHTFULLY PROVIDED THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR HIS POST-REVOLUTIONARY POSITION ON THE REACTIONARY NATURE OF UKRAINIAN ATTEMPTS TO SECEDE FROM WHAT HE HIMSELF TERMED THE ALIEN AND OPPRESSING RUSSIANS. A CORRECT MARXIST APPROACH TO THE DEFENCE OF THE FATHERLAND QUESTION PRESCRIBED THE DEFINITION OF THE POLITICAL CONTENT IN EACH INDIVIDUAL WAR. THIS 'SUBSTANCE' OF A WAR WAS, ACCORDING TO LENIN, EASILY DETERMINED:

WAR IS THE CONTINUATION OF POLICY. CONSEQUENTLY, WE MUST EXAMINE THE POLICY PURSUED PRIOR TO THE WAR, THE POLICY THAT LED TO AND BROUGHT ABOUT THE WAR. IF IT WAS AN IMPERIALIST POLICY... THEN THE WAR STEMMING FROM THAT POLICY IS IMPERIALIST. IF IT WAS A NATIONAL LIBERATION POLICY... THEN THE WAR STEMMING FROM THAT POLICY IS A WAR OF NATIONAL LIBERATION.

AFTER THE REVOLUTION ANY NATIONAL WAR BY THE UKRAINE AND UKRAINIANS WOULD HAVE TO BE REACTIONARY, ACCORDING TO THIS SCHEME, BECAUSE THE REVOLUTION ITSELF WOULD HAVE LIBERATED THE NATIONALITIES OF THE EMPIRE.

BEFORE THE REVOLUTION LENIN NOTED THAT THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT HAD NOT BEEN CONSUMMATED IN THE UKRAINE AND THAT THE MASSES WERE JUST BECOMING AWARE OF THE POTENTIAL OF THEIR LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE. DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS "... IS STILL GOING ON THERE. THE 'FATHERLAND' IS HISTORICALLY NOT YET QUITE A DEAD LETTER THERE. THERE THE 'DEFENCE OF THE FATHERLAND' CAN STILL BE DEFENCE OF DEMOCRACY, OF ONE'S NATIVE LANGUAGE, OF POLITICAL LIBERTY AGAINST OPPRESSOR NATIONS, AGAINST MEDIEVALISM...." BUT AFTER THE REVOLUTIONS OF FEBRUARY AND OCTOBER, THE UKRAINE, BY DEFINITION BECAME A FREE NATION AND THUS, ACCORDING TO LENINIST THEORY, THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT HAD BEEN CONSUMMATED. ANY STRUGGLE BY THE UKRAINE AGAINST THE SOCIALIST STATE WOULD BE OBJECTIVELY IMPERIALIST AND THEREFORE REACTIONARY. AFTER ALL, ONLY A BOURGEOIS STATE WOULD STRUGGLE WITH A SOCIALIST ONE AND SINCE THE PROLETARIAT NOW HAD A FATHERLAND IT WOULD BE OBLIGED TO DEFEND IT. LENIN EXPLAINED THAT A
SOCIALIST STATE COULD HAVE NO IMPERIALIST OBJECTIVES; ANY WAR IT FOUGHT
W OULD BE DEFENSIVE AND SINCE THE UKRAINE THREATENED THE SOCIALIST STATE
IT WOULD BE A DEFENCE OF THE FATHERLAND TO DESTROY A BOURGEOIS DEMOCRATIC
UKRAINE.
CHAPTER V: FOOTNOTES

1. Lenin, XIX, p. 356. 2. Ibid., XX, p. 42.

3. See especially the article "National Equality", Ibid., pp. 237-38. Also see Shaheen, pp. 100-106.


5. Ibid., pp. 172-73. It is most interesting that Lenin, in polemicing with the Jews and the Bund for ten years, had always insisted that the Jews were not a nationality but a caste. In his explanation of the "National Equality Bill", however, he states that "no nationality in Russia is so oppressed and persecuted as the Jewish." Ibid., p. 172. In the same article he urged that Marxists devote more time to the Jewish question.

6. Ibid., XXI, p. 105.

7. Ibid., XXXI, p. 145. Also see Ibid., XXIV, p. 302.

8. Ibid., XXIV, p. 472.


10. Lenin, XX, p. 223. 11. Ibid., p. 223.


19. Lenin reasoned that "...Marxists know that democracy does not abolish class oppression. It only makes the class struggle more direct, wider, more open and pronounced. ...The fuller national equality..., the clearer will the workers of the oppressed nations see that the cause of their oppression is capitalism, not lack of rights, etc." Ibid., XXIII, p. 73.


22. Ibid., XX, p. 110.
23. *Ibid.*, XXX, p. 294. In practice, Carr remarks that "equality between nations meant breaking down the line of demarcation between industrial and agricultural nations." Commenting on the Soviet attempts at equalization, he states that the actual equalizing process faced many difficulties and observes that while "intentions were sincere, and achievements real; ...progress could only be gradual.

Existing inequalities always have a natural tendency to perpetuate themselves and to resist every effort to overcome them." Carr, pp. 365-67. Carr speaks primarily of economic and political inequalities but Lenin also stressed the necessity of eradicating cultural inequality.


25. Lenin defined assimilation as "the shedding of national features, and absorption by another nation..." *Ibid.*, XX, p. 27.


29. *Ibid.*, p. 30. See Shaheen, pp. 88-89; Low, pp. 60-64; Reshetar, "Lenin on the Ukraine," p. 6. Borys insists that Lenin never openly advocated assimilation of Ukrainians. See Borys, pp. 85-86. This may be true, but as the two preceding quotations demonstrate, he was not overly circumspect in this demand either.


34. Lenin, XXX, p. 295. 35. *Ibid*.


45. *Ibid.*, p. 328. In fact Lenin completely identified the concept of self-determination with that of annexation. In the "Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up" he stated that "If there is a party that says in its programme...that it is against annexation, against the forcible retention of oppressed nations within the frontiers of its state, we declare our complete agreement in principle with that
PARTY. IT WOULD BE ABSURD TO INSIST ON THE WORD "SELF-DETERMINATION"...
IBID., p. 329. ALSO SEE IBID., PP. 335-47.

46. IBID., p. 329. SEE IBID., XXIV, p. 433.

47. IBID., XXII, p. 333. 48. IBID., p. 346.

49. IBID., p. 347. 50. IBID., p. 347.


52. IBID., XXIV, p. 73. ALSO SEE IBID., PP. 302, 434.

53. MEISEL, PP. 15-16.


55. LENIN, XXIII, p. 70. SEE IBID., XXIV, p. 302 AND ESPECIALLY IBID., XXII, PP. 147-48.

56. IBID., XXIV, P. 337. 57. IBID., P. 433.

58. IBID., p. 434. 59. MEISEL, P. 16.

60. LENIN, XXVI, p. 349. LENIN EXPLAINED THAT "THE DEFINITION OF ANNEXATION UNDER WHICH ONLY LANDS INTEGRATED AFTER THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WAR ARE REJECTED." IBID., p. 349.

61. IBID., p. 349.

62. IBID., XXII, PP. 147-48, 337; IBID., XXIV, P. 355; CIUCIURA, PP. 33-34.

63. LENIN, XXV, p. 106. SEE CARR, P. 289, FOR AN APPRAISAL OF THE COMPARISON OF THE UKRAINE WITH FINLAND AND POLAND OF WHICH LENIN MADE GREAT USE.

64. LENIN REMARKED THAT IT WOULD BE INTERESTING TO HEAR THE VIEWS OF KERENSKY, TSERETELI, CHERNOV AND OTHERS ON SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE UKRAINE AND OTHER NATIONAL GROUPS IN THE EMPIRE. HE THEN TURNED TO THE QUESTION OF ANNEXATIONS BY NOTING THAT IRELAND AND ALGERIA WERE ANNEXED CENTURIES BEFORE THE OUTBREAK OF WORLD WAR I. THEN HE ASKED:
"What are you, Kerensky, Tsereteli, Chernov, Skobelev, if not 'tamed socialists'? Did you raise the question of the Russian Ireland and the Russian Algeria, i.e., of Turkestan, Armenia, Ukraine, Finland, etc., before the government of the 'Russian bourgeoisie' now in power? When did you raise this question? Why don't you tell the Russian 'people' about it? Why don't you qualify as 'sleight of hand' the Russian Narodniki and Mensheviks' blether about 'peace without annexations' in the Soviet, in the government and before the people, without raising, clearly and unambiguously, the question of all Russian annexations of the same type as Ireland and Algeria?" Lenin, XXIV, p. 566.

65. Ibid., XXI, p. 104.
66. See Ibid., pp. 306-07; Shameen, p. 129.
67. Lenin, XXXV, p. 251. Lenin also pointed out that Marx favored national war on several occasions. Ibid., Also see two other letters to Inessa Armand on this question in Ibid., pp. 264-65, 272-74.
68. Ibid., p. 250. See Ibid., XXVII, pp. 64, 332, 378.
69. Ibid., XXVII, p. 58. See Low, pp. 74-75.
70. Lenin, XXVII, p. 64.
71. Ibid., p. 191.
73. Lenin, XXIII, p. 31.
75. Lenin, XXIII, p. 61. See Ibid., p. 31; Meyer, pp. 151-52.
76. Lenin, XXIII, p. 66.
77. Ibid., p. 196. Lenin repeated this within a few pages: "Our Party is not afraid to declare publicly that it will sympathize with wars or uprisings which Ireland might start against England; Morocco, Algeria and Tunis against France; Tripoli against Italy; the Ukraine, Persia, China against Russia, etc."
78. Ibid.
79. Ibid., p. 33. See Ibid., p. 196; Ibid., XXXV, pp. 244-45.
80. Ibid., XXIII, p. 39.
CHAPTER VI: RELATIONS WITH UKRAINIAN MARXISTS.

LENIN NEVER RECOGNIZED THE NON-BOLSHEVIK UKRAINIAN SOCIALISTS AS BONA FIDE MARXISTS AND POLEMICIZED WITH TWO OF THEM, DMYTRO DONTSOV AND LEV YURKEVICH, AT SOME LENGTH. ETHNIC UKRAINIAN BOLSHEVIKS, LENIN DISCOVERED TO HIS DISMAY, WERE VIRTUALLY NON-EXISTENT IN THE UKRAINE—AT LEAST IN THE PRE-WAR YEARS. DURING THE EARLY YEARS OF THE WAR THERE SEEMED TO BE LITTLE IMPROVEMENT IN THIS RESPECT FROM THE BOLSHEVIK STAND-POINT.

DONTSOV, AT THE CONGRESS OF UKRAINIAN STUDENTS IN LVIV, PROPOSED A RESOLUTION ADVOCATING UKRAINIAN INDEPENDENCE; IT WAS ADOPTED WITH ONLY TWO DISSENTING VOTES.¹ LENIN PARTICULARLY DEFENDED DONTSOV'S RESOLUTION FROM THE ATTACKS OF THE CADETS WHO WERE "PITIFUL DEMOCRATS" BUT AT THE SAME TIME WARNED THAT IT WAS NOT FOR UKRAINIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATS TO ADVANCE DEMANDS FOR UKRAINIAN INDEPENDENCE. "ONE CAN AND MUST DISPUTE WITH SOCIAL-NATIONALISTS OF THE DONTSOV TYPE...," HE DECLARED.² DONTSOV HAD ATTACKED THE CADET INTERPRETATION OF SELF-DETERMINATION AND HERE HIS IDEAS WERE SIMILAR TO LENIN'S. THEY BOTH AGREED THAT THE CADETS DID NOT ENVISION ANY SORT OF POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE IN THEIR CONCEPT OF SELF-DETERMINATION BUT MERELY WERE CONCERNED WITH ITS CULTURAL ASPECTS—PRIMARILY FREEDOM OF LANGUAGE.³

LENIN WAS ALARMED BY THE CADETS ATTACKS ON DONTSOV'S SECESSIONIST PROPOSALS BECAUSE HE BELIEVED IT UNNECESSARILY EMPHASIZED GREAT-RUSSIAN CHAUVINISM, EVEN OF RUSSIAN LIBERALS, THUS MAKING UKRAINIANS SYMPATHETIC TO RUSSIA UNDULY SUSPICIOUS AND CREATING EVEN GREATER DIS-TRUST AMONG THOSE ALREADY ANTIPATHETIC TOWARDS MOSCOW. "WHILE IN NO WAY IDENTIFYING ITSELF WITH MR. DONTSOV," LENIN EXPLAINED, "AND DECLARING
EXPLICITLY THAT HE WAS A NATIONAL-SOCIALIST AND THAT MANY UKRAINIAN MARXISTS DID NOT AGREE WITH HIM, RABOCHAYA PRAVDA STATED THAT THE TONE OF RECH, OR, RATHER, THE WAY IT FORMULATED THE QUESTION IN PRINCIPLE WAS IMPROPER AND REPREHENSIBLE FOR A GREAT-RUSSIAN DEMOCRAT, OR FOR ANYONE DESIRING TO PASS AS A DEMOCRAT. He then remarked that RECH COULD REPUDIATE THE DONTSOVS IF IT SO WISHED BUT NOTED THAT "FROM THE STANDPOINT OF PRINCIPLE, A GREAT-RUSSIAN ORGAN OF DEMOCRACY, WHICH IT CLAIMS TO BE, CANNOT BE OBLIVIOUS OF THE FREEDOM TO SECEDE, THE RIGHT TO SECEDE."5 DONTSOV GREW PROGRESSIVELY BITTER TOWARD THE BOLSHEVIKS AND MAZEPA QUOTES HIM TO THE EFFECT THAT THE OCCUPATION OF THE UKRAINE BY THEM DURING THE CIVIL WAR RESULTED FROM "A STRUGGLE NOT BETWEEN CLASSES, NOT BETWEEN INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM AND INTERNATIONAL CAPITALISM, BUT BETWEEN RACES, A STRUGGLE OF TWO EXCLUSIVE NATIONALITIES."6 IT WAS TO PREVENT THE DEVELOPMENT OF ATTITUDES LIKE THIS THAT LENIN RELENTLESSLY FOUGHT THE CADETS ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION. HE NOTED THAT "EVEN THE UKRAINIANS ARE DECLARED TO BE AN 'ALIEN' PEOPLE AND THEIR VERY LANGUAGE IS BEING SUPPRESSED"7 BY THE TSARIST BUREAUCRACY AND PUZZLED OVER THE QUESTION OF "WHY RUSSIA CANNOT TRY TO 'STRENGTHEN' HER TIES WITH THE UKRAINIANS THROUGH THE SAME METHOD USED BY AUSTRIA..., I.E., BY GRANTING THE UKRAINIANS FREEDOM TO USE THEIR OWN LANGUAGE, SELF-GOVERNMENT AND AN AUTONOMOUS DIET."8

BUT IT IS ONLY IN HIS POLEMICS WITH YURKEVICH THAT LENIN PROVIDES MATERIAL ABOUT HIS REAL VIEW OF THE UKRAINE, UKRAINIANS AND THE UKRAINIAN WORKER'S MOVEMENT. LENIN RESERVED HIS MOST ACRIMONIOUS INVECTIVE FOR YURKEVICH TO WHOM HE WAS FOND OF APPLYING HIS MOST REPULSIVE EPITHETS. YURKEVICH WAS CALLED, AMONG OTHER APPpellATIONS, "PETTY-SOUR-GEois, NATIONALIST-SOCIALIST, NATIONALIST PHILISTINE, TWISTER, DISGUSTING AND ROTTEN" BY LENIN.9 YURKEVICH, ACCORDING TO LENIN, HAD SET HIMSELF
THE TASK OF POPULARIZING THE "ERRORS OF ROSA LUXEMBURG". HE THEN ADDED THAT SHE COULD NOT BE PUT IN THE SAME CATEGORY WITH PEOPLE LIKE YURKEVICH "BUT THE FACT THAT IT WAS THIS KIND OF PEOPLE WHO SEIZED UPON HER ERROR SHOWS WITH PARTICULAR CLARITY THE OPPORTUNISM SHE HAS LAPSED INTO." LENIN ATTACKED YURKEVICH, THEORETICALLY AT LEAST, BECAUSE HIS CONCEPT OF A NATIONAL UKRAINIAN WORKERS' MOVEMENT WAS ANTI-HISTORICAL, I.E., IT ATTEMPTED TO REVERSE THE INEVITABLE PROGRESS OF HISTORY BY ADVOCATING PARTICULARISM AT THE EXPENSE OF CENTRALIZATION AND ASSIMILATION. THESE VIEWS, IT SHOULD BE NOTED, WERE ALSO HELD BY THE BUNDISTS AND LENIN OFTEN CRITICIZED BOTH IN THE SAME BREATH. ACCORDING TO LENIN, YURKEVICH ADMITTED THAT DESPITE THE GROWTH OF UKRAINIAN NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS AMONG THE WORKERS, ONLY A MINORITY WERE NATIONALLY CONSCIOUS WHILE THE MAJORITY REMAINED UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF RUSSIAN CULTURE. WHAT REALLY ANNOYED LENIN WAS THE FACT THAT YURKEVICH DREW AN ALLEGEDLY NON-MARXIST CONCLUSION FROM THIS FACT BY CLAIMING IT WAS THE DUTY OF THE UKRAINIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATS TO INSTIL A GREATER NATIONAL AWARENESS AMONG THE MASSES AND EXPLAIN UKRAINIAN NATIONAL AIDS TO THEM.

THESE VIEWS, LENIN CHARGED, WERE "WHOLLY BOURGEOIS-NATIONALISTIC" AND REPROACHED YURKEVICH FOR BETRAYING NOT ONLY THE INTERESTS OF DEMOCRACY IN GENERAL BUT ALSO THE INTERESTS OF THE UKRAINE. HE THEN DECLARED IMPERIOUSLY: "GIVEN UNITED ACTION BY THE GREAT-RUSSIAN AND UKRAINIAN PROLETARIANS, A FREE UKRAINE IS POSSIBLE; WITHOUT SUCH UNITY, IT IS OUT OF THE QUESTION." LENIN THEN REMARKED THAT FOR SEVERAL DECADES "A WELL-DEFINED PROCESS OF ACCELERATED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN GOING ON IN THE SOUTH, I.E., THE UKRAINE..." AND THAT THIS DEVELOPMENT WAS "ATTRACTING HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEASANTS AND WORKERS FROM GREAT RUSSIA..." TO THE UKRAINE. HE THEN POINTED OUT TO YURKEVICH THAT "THE AB..."
SIMILATION within these limits—of the Great Russian and Ukrainian proletariat is an indisputable fact. And this fact is undoubtedly progressive. Capitalism was progressive in this respect, he lectured Yurkevich, because it replaced the ignorant, conservative, settled muzhik of the Great-Russian or Ukrainian backwoods with a mobile proletariat whose conditions of life break down specifically national narrow-mindedness, both Great-Russian and Ukrainian. Even if we assume that, in time, there will be a state frontier between Great Russia and the Ukraine, the historically progressive nature of the "assimilation" of the Great-Russian and Ukrainian workers will be undoubted as the progressive nature of grinding down of nations in America.

Lenin also pointed out to Yurkevich, (whom on this occasion he labelled the "disgusting, rotten nationalist philistine, who under the flag of Marxism is preaching the division of the workers by nationalities, a special national organisation of the Ukrainian workers") that each modern nation actually contains two nations and every national culture has two cultures—the reactionary and the progressive; this reactionary—progressive dualism also existed in the Ukraine, Lenin maintained. It was the duty of the leaders of the Ukrainian proletariat to stress the socialist culture at the expense of the bourgeois. "In fighting the latter kind of 'culture'," declared Lenin, the Ukrainian Marxist will always bring the former into focus, and say to his workers: "We must snatch at, make use of, and develop to the utmost every opportunity for intercourse with the Great-Russian class-conscious workers, with their literature and with their range of ideas; the fundamental interests of both the Ukrainian and the Great-Russian working-class movements demand it.

It is quite obvious that Lenin was demanding of Ukrainian Marxists much more than he was of their Russian counterparts who only had to show tolerance toward the Ukraine and Ukrainians. Lenin also warned that if a Ukrainian Marxist allows himself to be swayed by his quite legitimate and natural hatred of the Great-Russian oppressors to such a degree that he transfers even a particle of this hatred, even if it be only estrangement, to the proletarian culture and proletarian cause of the Great-Russian workers, then such a Marxist will get
BOGGED DOWN IN BOURGEOIS NATIONALISM. 19

With respect to the Marxist of Russian extraction, Lenin cautioned that he too "will be bogged down, not only in bourgeois, but also in Black-Hundred nationalism, if he loses sight, even for a moment, of the demand for complete equality for the Ukrainians, or of their right to form an independent state." 20

Lenin accused Yurkevich of "actually following in the wake of the national-liberals, and corrupting the working class with national-liberal ideas" 21 but what he feared most was that Yurkevich's justifiable suspicion of the real meaning of the Bolshevik concept of the right to self-determination would spread to those of the Ukrainian population who were politically conscious. Yurkevich's "awareness" that the Bolshevik concept of self-determination "can only mean the right to secession...does not prevent him from spreading slander about the Russian Marxists among the Ukrainian petty bourgeoisie, alleging that they stand for the 'state integrity' of Russia..." declared Lenin. 22 He angrily continued that "the Yurkevich's...could not have invented a better method than such slander to alienate the Ukrainian democrats from the Great-Russian democrats." 23 This attempt at alienation, Lenin acridly concluded, was "in line with the entire policy of the group of Dzvin publicists who advocate the separation of the Ukrainian workers in a special national organisation." 24

Lenin's vituperative approach to separatist oriented Ukrainian Social Democrats was prompted primarily by the fact that they appealed especially to what otherwise would have been potential converts to Russian Bolshevism among the Ukrainian workers. Apparently Lenin believed that it was the particularism of Dontsov and Yurkevich which kept his party from gaining anything but the most miniscule number of ethnic
UKRAINIANS AS MEMBERS. THE ALMOST TOTAL LACK OF UKRAINIAN BOLSHEVIKS WAS MADE EVIDENT BY LENIN ON TWO OCCASIONS.

AS NOTED ABOVE, AT THE SECOND ALL-UKRAINIAN STUDENT CONGRESS HELD IN LVIV ON JUNE 19-22, 1913, A RESOLUTION ADVOCATING THE INDEPENDENCE OF UKRAINE INTRODUCED BY DONTSOV WAS PASSED WITH ONLY TWO DISSENTING VOTES. LENIN OPTIMISTICALLY CONCLUDED: "IT FOLLOWS, THEREFORE, THAT THERE IS NO QUESTION OF ALL SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS AGREING WITH DONTSOV." 25

IF LENIN WAS INCLINED TO BE SO OPTIMISTIC ABOUT TWO CENTRALISTS IN A SEA OF SEPARATISTS, THE AFFAIRS OF THE BOLSHEVIKS MUST HAVE BEEN IN A POOR STATE IN THE UKRAINE. THIS CONCLUSION IS JUSTIFIED BY A LETTER HE WROTE TO INESSA ARMAND DATED APRIL 24, 1914 WHICH ASKED, IN PART, "I BEG YOU VERY MUCH...[TO] DO YOUR UTMOST TO SEE THE UKRAINIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS, ASCERTAIN THEIR ATTITUDE ON THE QUESTION OF A SEPARATE NATIONAL-UKRAINIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC ORGANISATION AND TRY AND ORGANISE EVEN A LITTLE GROUP OF ANTI-SEPARATISTS." 26

IN A LETTER TO THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF DZVIN ON APRIL 26, 1914 LENIN DECLARED THAT HE WAS "PROFOUNDLY INDIGNANT AT THE PREACHING OF SEPARATION OF THE UKRAINIAN WORKERS INTO A SPECIAL SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC ORGANIZATION" 27 BY DZVIN IN GENERAL AND YURKEVICH IN PARTICULAR. LENIN HAD DECIDED ALMOST A MONTH EARLIER TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS SEPARATION. ALMOST A YEAR EARLIER, IN THE SUMMER OF 1913, LENIN APPARENTLY BECAME ACQUAINTED WITH A UKRAINIAN CENTRALIST O.N. LOLA (V. STEPANYUK) THROUGH AN ARTICLE THE LATTER HAD WRITTEN. "THE UKRAINIAN'S ARTICLE IS VERY GOOD," WROTE LENIN, BUT "THE MAIN THING IS THAT HE IS A CENTRALIST." 28 UKRAINIAN CENTRALISTS WERE RARE AND EVEN THOUGH LENIN CONCLUDED THAT "LOLA IS NAIVE" HE BECAME LENIN'S UKRAINIAN CONTACT BECAUSE "IT IS TERRIBLY IMPORTANT THAT A VOICE SHOULD BE HEARD FROM AMONGST THE UKRAINIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS FOR UNITY AGAINST DIVIDING UP THE WORKERS BY NATIONS." 29
Lola was used merely as a tool in Lenin's attempts to destroy Yurkevich and Lenin seemed to have little confidence in Lola's intelligence or abilities. An "Appeal to the Ukrainian Workers" directed at countering Yurkevich's propaganda was drafted by Lenin and sent to Inessa Armand for rewriting. She was then to pass it on to Lola who was to "accept and translate it into Ukrainian, and then send it through me [Lenin] to Pravda in his name or (better) on behalf of a group (though it be of two or three people) of Ukrainian Marxists (still better, Ukrainian workers)." Lenin not only published "Lola's Appeal" but commented on it editorially as the appeal of an "Ukrainian Marxist to the Ukrainian class-conscious workers" for "unity irrespective of nation." "This call is particularly urgent in Russia at the present time," remarked Lenin, because "the petty-bourgeois intellectuals of Dzvin, the worker's evil counsellors, are trying as hard as they can to drive a wedge between the Ukrainian and the great-Russian Social-Democratic workers." Only Bolshevism, Lenin insisted, could serve the international workers' cause by uniting and merging the workers of all nations and he cheered the "close fraternal alliance" of the Ukrainian and great-Russian workers. The Ukrainian Social-Democrats, he maintained, were subverting this great, inexorable and definitely progressive movement and he thus refused to recognize their separate existence in a non-Bolshevik, Marxist party.
Chapter VI: Footnotes


3. Lenin, XX, p. 56. Lenin quoted the Cadet paper Rech to
the effect that "the Cadets have never pledged themselves to advocate
the right of "nations to secede" from the Russian state" and called the
Cadets "national-liberals" because of their position on the question of
self-determination. He then wrote: "A democrat could not remain a de-

cocrat (let alone a proletarian democrat) without systematically advo-
cating, precisely among the Great-Russian masses and in the Russian lan-
guage, the 'self-determination' of nations in the political and not the


not clear that the more liberty the Ukrainian nationality enjoys in any
particular country, the stronger its ties with that country will be?...
Can there be greater freedom of nationality, as such, than the freedom
to secede, the freedom to form an independent national state?" *Ibid.*, p. 422.

Borys, p. 86-87.


11. According to Borys, Yurkevich "connected the animosity
of the Bolsheviks towards the Bund with the beginning of the Bund's activi-

12. Lenin, XX, p. 30. See Borys, pp. 87-88, who explains that
Yurkevich had a distinct tactical approach towards workers and peasants.
Ukrainian Marxists, he thought, should work for the harmony of the
urban and rural movements.


16. *Ibid.*, p. 31. Lenin also added that "the freer the Ukraine
and Great Russia become, the more extensive and more rapid will be the
development of capitalism, which will still more powerfully attract the
workers, the working masses of all nations from all regions of the state
and from all the neighbouring states... to the cities, the mines, and the
factories."

18. Lenin, XX, p. 32. Lenin insisted that an identical re-
actionary-progressive cultural dualism existed in both Russia and the
Ukraine and within his definition this is certainly correct. What he
failed to point out, (and the omission is significant because he was
aware of it as evidenced by other of his writings) was that the re-
actionary culture in the Ukraine was not merely a class culture but was
distinguished by its national peculiarities as well. Lenin himself had
noted that the bourgeoisie and aristocracy in the Ukraine was not indigene-
ous or ethnically Ukrainian but rather was Great-Russian, Polish,
Jewish, etc. At this time, however, he preferred to ignore the social
and cultural particularity of the Ukraine.


24. *Ibid.*, p. 449. Yurkevich was a leading member of the
Dzyvin group. For a discussion of Yurkevich, see Borys, pp. 83-90, and
for the Soviet interpretation of Lenin's polemics with him, see Bur-
mistrova, pp. 61-62.

25. Lenin, XIX, p. 267. Continuing in this optimistic vein
Lenin wrote that the Social-Democrats (obviously the two dissenters)
"disputed the matter with Dontsov, put forward their own arguments,
discussed the matter from the same platform and attempted to convince
the same audience." *Ibid.*, pp. 266-67. Of interest is a footnote in
*Ibid.*, XXXVI, pp. 650-51, which now calls the two dissenters "a group
of Ukrainian Social-Democrats."

that there were few indigenous Ukrainian Bolsheviks because of the un-
availability and unfamiliarity of Lenin's work in the Ukraine can be
disputed by using current Soviet sources. One such article states that
Lenin's works were widely known and distributed in the Ukraine by the
time of the Party's Second Congress. There were, for example, 150
copies of *What is to be Done*? allegedly distributed by the Kiev party
committee. Some of these even reached the main prison in Kiev. A list
of Lenin's publications, some of which were available in Ukrainian be-
tween 1917-1920 is also provided. P. Zhevakho, "Pobshrennia tvoriv


29. *Ibid.*, XXXV, p. 135. It is interesting to note that the
only Ukrainian centralist Lenin could find was described by Lenin him-
self as being "naive." It seems to follow therefore that intelligent,
politically conscious pro-Bolshevik workers of Ukrainian extraction were
few and far between.

30. In a postscript Lenin remarked: "If my draft could be re-
told in a Ukrainian voice, and with a couple of vivid Ukrainian examples, that would be best of all!"  


32. Apparently Lola is the only one who signed it since in his editorial comment Lenin speaks only of "our comrade," i.e., in the singular. Lenin, XX, p. 494.

33. Ibid., p. 494.  34. Ibid., p. 494.

35. Ibid., p. 494. See Borys, pp. 88-90.
CHAPTER VII: THE UKRAINIAN NATIONALIST GOVERNMENTS

Lenin's awareness of the existence of a nascent national movement in the Ukraine which was developing into something approaching a real political force and his awareness of Tsarism's inability to deal effectively with it compelled him to a particular course of action. In order to retard the growth not only of Ukrainian nationalism but that of other ethnic groups in the Empire, and perhaps with the hope of transforming these nationalist movements into socialist ones, he decided to advocate vociferously his theory of the right to self-determination among nations. This theory had two somewhat contradictory objectives: the ostensibly centrifugal one of hastening the proletarian revolution by promoting the disintegration of the Russian Empire and the fundamentally centripetal one of creating favorable conditions for the nationalities to rejoin voluntarily the new, centralized Soviet Russia.

Politically conscious Ukrainians were suspicious of Lenin's nationality policy to such a degree that even the Marxist groups formed their own national organizations completely independent of their Russian ideological counterparts. It was for this reason that Lenin dealt so severely with Yurkevich and Donskov, and later to maintain this consistency, he trenchantly attacked the national policies of the Provisional Government. It was for this reason, also, that the Bolsheviks proclaimed the right of the peoples of Russia to self-determination on November 15, 1917. Unfortunately for Lenin this decree was accepted at face value rather than in the spirit in which it was given and some nationalities actually attempted to exercise their Bolshevik granted right to secede. Lenin quickly decided that secession was impermissible, for the Ukraine
At any rate, but he took a month to find a politically sound pretext to challenge Ukrainian governmental particularism.¹

Among the politically conscious proletariat and peasantry of the Ukraine the national trend was at least as strong, if not stronger, than the social. Evidence for this view is provided by the existence of national socialist parties before February 1917 and the formation of the Ukrainian Central Rada afterwards. Unlike the pattern in many national regions in the Empire in which the usurped authority of the Provisional Government was almost automatically transmitted to the various Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, the unique situation in the Ukraine militated against such an orderly transfer of political power. Standing in the way of Soviet power in the Ukraine was the Central Rada which had a certain degree of control and authority in right-bank (west of the Dnieper) Ukraine.² This considerably complicated the Bolsheviks' problems in their attempts to establish political control over Ukrainian territory.

Lenin had expected the Provisional Government partially to solve the nationality question for him by granting autonomy to nationalities that requested it. He believed that if this concession was granted the various nationalities—especially the Ukrainians—they would not wish to secede and form independent states. In fact Chernov argues that the growth of Ukrainian separation was a direct cause of the Provisional Government's refusal to deal with the inevitable and he quotes Vinnichenko to the effect that certain ministers in the Provisional Government wanted the Ukrainians to provoke a break.³ Lenin did not even wish to see autonomy granted the Ukrainians. However, when it became apparent they desired it and the Rada began to demand it, he became a firm supporter of Ukrainian regional autonomy.

It is quite probable that the position of the Rada was weakened by this Bolshevik tactic of supporting demands emanating from the Ukraine.
Since Lenin believed that the "national question" was primarily a "peasant question", he had a ready made formula with which to undermine the Rada, whose moderate agricultural policy was beginning to become suspect in the eyes of the poor peasants. The peasants' suspicion of the Rada's agrarian policies, coupled with Bolshevik slogans of expropriation of land without compensation, was soon to have unfavorable consequences for the young Ukrainian nationalist movement. To the politically unsophisticated, Bolshevik verbal support of Ukrainian national and social aspirations was sufficient to convince them that the proletarian party had no designs on the Ukraine. After the revolution, however, the Bolsheviks reversed their support of Ukrainian nationalism and the social issue became the all pervading question of the day.

As has been observed, Lenin vigorously attacked the Provisional Government's policy toward the Ukraine because he realized that the longer they wavered the more insistent, and indeed extremist, the Ukrainian demands would become. Russian bourgeois circles did not trust the Central Rada and these misgivings grew rapidly because of the suspected pro-German orientation of the Ukrainians. Lenin, on the other hand, distrusted the Rada because of its bourgeois composition and compared it to the Provisional Government. He argued that the February regime, because of its bourgeois character, could not give the nationalities full freedom and this by implication included the Rada. In April the Rada increased its membership and broadened the basis of its representation but as late as August 1917 the Ukrainian workers were still unrepresented in this body. Finally, however, 100 deputies were chosen for the Rada by the workers' congress. It was not long, however, before Lenin forgot the alleged bourgeois nature of the Central Rada and decided to
Support its various demands as a device for undermining the authority of the Provisional Government and in an attempt to ingratiate the Bolsheviks with the Ukrainian masses.

An excellent opportunity presented itself for Lenin to appear as the foremost defender of the rights of Ukrainians when Kerensky decided to prohibit the convocation of the Second Ukrainian Military Congress. The First Military Congress met during May 5-8 and supported a demand for national and territorial autonomy for the Ukraine "as the best guarantee of all the national and political rights of the Ukrainian people and of the entire region." This was consonant with Lenin's evolving concept of an acceptable form of relations between Russia and the Ukraine, and he did not wish to see the Ukrainians aggravated in any way because of the possibility of further centripetal demands. "Not so long ago Citizen Kerensky tried to bring Finland to heel", Lenin charged in Pravda, "and now he has decided to bring the Ukrainians to heel. And all this is done in the name of democracy!" He then added:

A. I. Herzen once said that when you look at the antics of Russia's ruling classes you feel ashamed of being a Russian.

Today Russia has overthrown the tsar. Today the Kerenskys and Lvovs speak in the name of Russia. Russia of the Kerenskys and Lvovs treats her subject nations in such a way that one cannot help recalling these bitter words of Herzen's.

Lenin was adamantly set against the formation of a Ukrainian national army and saw Kerensky's attempt to stop the military congress as giving this separatist aim a greater impetus. "...By his 'dominant-nation' policy Citizen Kerensky is merely augmenting and bolstering the very tendencies toward 'separatism' which the Kerenskys and Lvovs are trying to smother," wrote the embittered Lenin. And his worst fears were realized. The Ukrainians ignored Kerensky's ban and the resolutions of the congress proved considerably more radical than those passed
ONE MONTH EARLIER.16 Vinnichenko and some other Ukrainian Social-Democrats warned against extremist demands from the congress. They cautioned that the Ukrainian units should be jointly organized by Ukrainians and Russians in order that it be done in a controlled manner and so that it would not become the goal of chauvinists.17 Apparently it was also Vinnichenko who successfully pleaded at the military congress that the Ukraine was insufficiently prepared to declare itself independent. He was aware, however, that the Constituent Assembly (which he considered the legitimate body to deal with the question) might never meet and the congress voted to uphold Ukrainian autonomy and offered the assistance of its troops to the Central Rada.18

Lenin insisted that Kerensky's attitude and action was inconsistent with both democracy and socialism and even Piatakov, speaking at a meeting of Russian Social-Democrats in Kiev in June, offered conditional support for Ukrainian demands. Piatakov also followed the Leninist line on the military question and declared himself in favor of the formation of a territorial but not a national army in the Ukraine.19 At this time, in May-June 1917, Chernov points out, however, that it was the Ukrainian Social Democrats and Socialist Revolutionaries who attempted to retard the growth of separatist enthusiasm. Their argument was predicated on the class issue and used Leninist reasoning to show pressure must be applied to the Russian bourgeoisie.20

Lenin also dealt harshly with the attitude of the First All-Russian Congress of Soviets (meeting in June) toward the Rada and Ukrainian autonomy. The congress supported Kerensky in his moves against the Ukrainians causing Lenin to charge that the actions of the Provisional Government would only lead "to needless conflicts with the nations which were oppressed by Tsarism (Finland and Ukraine)," as its policy of crea-
TING CONFLICTS WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES. He told the Soviets that even the Peasant Congress was more correct in its attitude on this question when it advanced the call for a "federal" republic, "thereby expressing the idea that the Russian republic does not want to oppress any nation, either in the new or in the old way, and does not want to force any nation, either Finland or the Ukraine, with both of whom the War Minister is trying so hard to find fault and with whom impermissible and intolerable conflicts are being created."

Lenin, of course, had no particular reason to be gentle with the Congress of Soviets at this time because it was not yet under Bolshevik control.

The action of the Congress especially arousing Lenin's anger was its disdainful treatment of the Ukrainian delegation which was sent by the Rada to negotiate some bases for Ukrainian autonomy. Even the Provisional Government showed greater respect and concern, although the demands were rejected by both the Soviet and the Government. However, Lenin preferred to chastize only the Government. He stressed that the Bolsheviks wanted a single and undivided republic of Russia with a firm government. But a firm government can be secured only by the voluntary agreement of all people concerned. "Revolu­tionary democracy" are big words, but they are being applied to a government that by its petty fault-finding is complicating the problem of the Ukraine and Finland, which do not even want to secede. They only say, "Don't postpone the application of the elementary principles of democracy until the Constituent Assembly!"

By June 1917, as one writer has noted, Lenin had become the most ardent supporter of the legitimacy of Ukrainian demands and of their right to self-determination. At the same time, however, Lenin emphasized that "if the proletariat of any one nation gives the slightest support to the privileges of its own national bourgeoisie, that will inevitably rouse distrust among the proletariat of another nation."

On June 10 the Rada issued its First Universal, an official
MANIFESTO ADDRESSED TO THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE, WHICH PROCLAIMED UKRAINIAN AUTONOMY BUT "WITHOUT SEPARATING FROM ALL OF RUSSIA, WITHOUT BREAKING AWAY FROM THE RUSSIAN STATE..."27 The manifesto proclaimed universal suffrage and the right of the Ukrainian people to manage their own affairs. It also announced imposition of a tax in order to have the financial solvency required to manage the affairs of state.28 Lenin waited almost a week before commenting on the Universal and when he did he summed it up as the inevitable consequence of the Provisional Government’s policy failures.29

Lenin viewed the First Universal as being a demand for autonomy but not its realization.30 He was obviously angered at the interpretation of the manifesto and the attitudes adopted towards it by Russian political parties. According to Lenin, the Universal showed that the Ukrainian people at the present time did not wish to secede from Russia and he was probably right. He had a prophetic fear, however, that Ukrainian demands had to be met favorably by the Russians in order not to encourage further and more extreme claims. With these apprehensions uppermost in his mind, he commented on the Ukrainian requests:

They demand autonomy without denying the need for the supreme authority of the "All-Russia Parliament". No democrat, let alone a socialist, will venture to deny the complete legitimacy of the Ukraine’s demands. And no democrat can deny the Ukraine’s right to freely secede from Russia. Only unqualified recognition of this right makes it possible to advocate a free union of the Ukrainians and the Great Russians, a voluntary association of the two peoples in one state.31

It was Lenin’s deeply held belief that only through unconditional recognition of Ukrainian demands could distrust, the legacy of tsarism, be overcome completely. He contended that this approach was the only one which could effectively break with the tsarist past "when everything was done to bring about a mutual estrangement of the two peoples"
SO CLOSE TO EACH OTHER IN LANGUAGE, TERRITORY, CHARACTER AND HISTORY.**32

With respect to the Rada's demands Lenin consistently maintained the theme that Russian socialists were obligated to accede to the demands because it was only in this way that they could regain "the brotherly trust" of the Ukrainian workers and peasants. This trust, he repeated, could not be regained "without full recognition of the Ukraine's rights, including the right to free secession."**33** At the same time, he also repeated that the Bolsheviks "do not favour the existence of small states."**34** But while they looked with disfavor on the creation of these small states which, as economic entities, would become dependent on the capitalists and imperialists, they could not condone a physically enforced union. In order that the inevitable union of Russia and the Ukraine be accomplished voluntarily, the Russian masses must gain the confidence of the Ukrainian masses by treating them as equals and in this manner winning them over to the workers' state. **"...The Russian worker, who does not for a moment trust the Russian or the Ukrainian bourgeoisie in anything," declared Lenin "now stands for the right of the Ukrainians to secede, without imposing his friendship by treating them as an equal, as an ally and brother in the struggle for socialism."**35

Lenin soon decided that all non-Bolshevik parties had suffered an obvious defeat over the Ukrainian issue and he thus concluded that his ostensibly pro-Ukrainian position was vindicated. He gleefully noted that

the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks put up with the fact that the Provisional Government of the Cadets, i.e., of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, had not done its elementary democratic duty, had not declared itself in favour of the Ukraine's autonomy and of her right to freely secede. According to Minister Chernov's report...the Ukrainians demanded far less than that. They only wanted the Provisional Government "to declare by
A SPECIAL ACT THAT IT IS NOT OPPOSED TO THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO AUTONOMY. THIS IS A MOST MODEST AND LEGITIMATE DEMAND. Lenin's joy over the obvious mismanagement of Ukrainian national demands by other parties must have been somewhat tempered by the fact that this might initiate a rapid development of chauvinistic views and demands. It was quite obvious to Lenin that the limited nature of the Ukrainian petition was a reflection of a relatively embryonic national consciousness and he fervently hoped that it would remain in this rudimentary stage.

For a number of reasons, Lenin's attempts at breaking down the national barriers leading to mistrust between Russians and Ukrainians were comparatively successful. Although the views and goals of the Rada and Bolsheviks were essentially contradictory, the Bolsheviks decided to support the Rada temporarily in order to weaken the Provisional Government. Thus Lenin's support of Ukrainian national demands actually did create a favorable disposition toward Bolshevism not only among the politically unsophisticated masses but among members of the Rada as well.

Lenin attacked the Provisional Government's position that "until a constituent Assembly is convened it will be impossible to settle in a 'regular' manner the issue of the Ukraine's boundaries, her freedom, her right to collect taxes, and so on...." He went on to add that this insistence on a "guarantee of regularity" was nothing but a counter-revolutionary lie "for to advance such an argument means actually helping real traitors to the revolution!! Lenin, warming up to his role as defender of Ukrainian rights, charged that the Provisional Government was singling out the Ukraine for special oppressive treatment:

"Guarantees of regularity" ...stop and think for a second. Nowhere in Russia, neither in the central government nor in any local department..., is there any guarantee of regularity. In fact, there is admittedly no regularity."
Nowhere in Russia are there, can there be, or have there ever been at a revolutionary time like the present any "guarantees of regularity."

It is only for the Ukraine that "we" demand "guarantees of regularity."

On October 1 he called for the "immediate restitution of full freedom" for the Ukraine, a plea which implicitly assumed that the Ukraine was once free. This could not but appeal to the Ukrainian nationalists, some of whom were beginning to raise demands for a review of the Pereyaslav Treaty of 1654, which had the effect of binding the Ukraine to Russia.

Lenin's persistent utterances in support of Ukrainian claims were prompted by the fact that a more profoundly nationalist orientation of the Rada and peasantry was bound to result if they were not given certain concessions. The only way to the desired unity, Lenin lectured the Government, is to "accede to the Ukrainians—common sense demands it. For, unless you do, things will be worse. Force will not check the Ukrainians. It will only embitter them. Accede to the Ukrainians, and you will open the way to mutual confidence and brotherly union between the two nations on the basis of equality." Lenin believed that he had solved the national problem, assured everyone that the proletariat was rapidly gaining the confidence of the national masses, and happily noted that the radicalism of the "national" curia at a conference arranged by members of the Provisional Government was second only to that of the curia of the Soviets. His optimism was soon to prove unfounded.

In the days immediately preceding the Bolshevik revolution the paths of the Ukrainian nationalists and Lenin's party came closer together since they both saw the Provisional Government as their chief anta-
The Fourth Congress of the Ukrainian Social-Democrats held in September adopted a number of resolutions similar to those of the Bolsheviks. At the time of the revolution, the Third All-Ukrainian Military Congress and the Second Session of the All-Ukrainian Council of Peasants' Deputies, borrowed many of their resolutions from the Bolsheviks. Thus the politically advanced groups in the Ukraine were travelling an ideological path almost identical with the Bolshevik one. This similarity was, however, seriously impaired by the nationalistic views of these groups.

As a result, when the Bolsheviks came to power they no longer saw the Rada and its ancillary organizations as allies in a common struggle—national Ukrainian bodies were now viewed as reactionary contenders for power. Lenin was no longer an irresponsible revolutionary striving to create dissent among the establishment, for Lenin and the Bolsheviks now were the establishment, and they naturally sought to consolidate their newly won power. A new appraisal of the nationality question and the Ukrainian problem was required. This re-appraisal had to be conducted within the radically different "specific historical conditions" of the immediate post-revolutionary period. Objective conditions had altered and Bolshevik theories had to be re-applied within the new historical context. This did not require a modification of Leninist theories as much as a shift of emphasis as prescribed by the situation defined in terms of Bolshevik objectives.

Three policies, according to Sullivant, were considered by the party. The first, which the Bolsheviks definitely favored, was the conversion of the Central Rada and its General Secretariat into a Bolshevik dominated government. A second alternative would have been a recognition of Ukrainian peculiarities and national goals. This would have been con-
sonant with Lenin's theories on the national question but because of the possibility of losing the Ukraine for the foreseeable future it was probably not considered too seriously by Lenin. The third possibility, actually favored by most of the leadership, supported the formation of a separate Soviet government in left bank (east of the Dnieper) Ukraine based on the Russian proletariat in that area. With Russian aid it could thus gradually become the government of the entire Ukrainian territory.45

Two days after the Bolshevik assumption of power in Central Russia, the Bolsheviks in the Ukraine, with the aid of the Rada's forces, usurped the remaining authority of the Provisional Government in the Ukraine. Friendly relations existed between them until the end of November when the Rada's connections with the Don Cossacks became suspect in the eyes of the Bolsheviks. These suspicions were reinforced when the Rada's General Secretariat arrested some Bolshevik leaders because they were allegedly plotting a coup d'état. Furthermore, the proclamation of the Third Universal in November with its sanctioning of 'national-personal autonomy, must also have annoyed Lenin.46 It was not long therefore before the Rada became—at least for the Bolsheviks—the symbol of counterrevolution in the Ukraine and all of South Russia.47

On December 3 Lenin proceeded to act with respect to the Ukraine and published his "Manifesto to the Ukrainian People with an Ultimatum to the Ukrainian Rada." In it he stated that the Socialist government of Russia reaffirmed the right of all nations oppressed by tsarism and the Great Russian bourgeoisie to secede from Russia.48 As a result, he went on, "the Council of Peoples' Commissars, recognize the People's Ukrainian Republic, and its right to secede from Russia or enter into a treaty with the Russian Republic on federal or similar relations be-
He further stated that the Council of Peoples' Commissars also recognized "at once, unconditionally and without reservations everything that pertains to the Ukrainian people's national rights and national independence." But the recognition of Ukrainian rights by Lenin was one thing and the manifestation of these recognized rights by Ukrainians was quite another. He accused the Rada, which was attempting to exercise its Bolshevik granted right to self-determination,

of conducting, behind a screen of national phrases, a double-dealing bourgeois policy, which has long been expressed in the Rada's non-recognition of the Soviets and of Soviet power in the Ukraine.... This ambiguous policy, which has made it impossible for us to recognize the Rada as a plenipotentiary representative of the working and exploited masses of the Ukrainian Republic has lately led the Rada to steps which preclude all possibility of agreement.

Specifically, Lenin accused the Rada of disorganizing the front, of disarming Soviet troops on Ukrainian territory and of supporting counter-revolutionary generals and parties.

If it is not to be viewed as a logical absurdity, Lenin's manifesto must be analyzed within the framework of his application of Marxist dialectics. Before the revolution Lenin identified the Rada as the representative of the will of the Ukrainian masses and therefore it was a revolutionary body to some degree at least. After the revolution, however, the Rada, according to Lenin, could not be identified with the people since it was reactionary when compared with Soviet power. Thus, because it had not changed, while conditions around it had, the Rada was dialectically transformed into a counterrevolutionary institution.

Lenin could now grant all manner of rights to the Ukrainian people and, without being inconsistent according to his analysis of the situation, he could at the same time proceed to destroy the Rada.

Within six weeks of the revolution Lenin had definitely decided that he could not manipulate the Rada and so decided to oppose it. He
wrote on December 11 or 12 that "recent events in the Ukraine (partly also in Finland and Byelorussia, as well as in the Caucasus) point... to a regrouping of class forces which is taking place in the process of the struggle between the bourgeois nationalism of the Ukrainian Rada... on the one hand, and Soviet power, the proletarian-peasant revolution... on the other."54

Stalin was at the same time also telling the Ukrainians that by representing "the conflict with the Rada as a conflict between the Ukrainian and Russian people" they were "labouring under a certain confusion of ideas."55 He repeatedly insisted that "there is no conflict and there can be no conflict between the Ukrainian and Russian peoples" and reiterated that "it was not between the peoples of Russia and the Ukraine that the conflict arose, but between the Council of Peoples' Commissars and the General Secretariat of the Rada."56 Two days later Stalin explained to the Central Executive Committee that it was not true that the conflict arose over the question of self-determination. He explained:

The Rada proposes the establishment of a federal system in Russia. The Council of People's Commissars, however, goes farther than the Rada and recognizes the right to secession. Consequently, the divergence between the Council of Peoples' Commissars and the Rada is not over that question. Absolutely incorrect likewise is the Rada's assertion that centralism is the point of difference.57

Of course it really was centralism and all its connotations that were the points in dispute. Lenin had decided that the Rada was drifting irrevocably further from Russia and determined that the least costly method of reversing the centrifugal tendency was to replace the Rada with a more pliable and centrally inclined Soviet government.

These were the factors that influenced Lenin in his decision to publish the Manifesto which ended with the following ultimatum:
1. Will the Rada undertake to give up its attempts to disorganise the common front?
2. Will the Rada undertake to refuse transit to any army units on their way to the Don, the Urals or elsewhere, unless it has the sanction of the Commander-in-Chief?
3. Will the Rada undertake to assist the revolutionary troops in their struggle against the counter-revolutionary Cadet-Kaledin revolt?
4. Will the Rada undertake to stop attempts to disarm the Soviet regiments and the workers' Red Guard in the Ukraine and immediately return arms to those who had been deprived of them?

In the event no satisfactory answer is received to these questions within 48 hours, the Council of Peoples' Commissars will deem the Rada to be in a state of open war with Soviet power in Russia and the Ukraine. 58

This reversal of the Bolshevik's formal attitude towards the Rada was probably the most important policy decision taken by them up to that date. Evidence of its importance is the fact that not only Lenin but also Stalin and Trotsky participated in its formulation and that Stalin was given the task of carefully explaining the reasons for the action to the Central Executive Committee. 59

Not unexpectedly, the Rada rejected outright all demands of the Bolsheviks. The ultimatum was designed in such a way that its acceptance would have automatically subordinated the Rada to Soviet control and thus the Ukrainian government really had no other choice. Lenin implied that the Bolsheviks had never recognized the Rada adding that even if it "had received full formal recognition as the uncontested organ of supreme state power of an independent bourgeois Ukrainian Republic, we would have been forced to declare war on it without any hesitation..." 60

Now the Bolsheviks had at least a technical reason to go to war with the Rada because its reply to the ultimatum was "so indefinite and evasive as to verge on mockery." 61

In the manifesto preceding the ultimatum Lenin also charged that the Rada had "refused to convocate a territorial congress of the
Ukrainian Soviets immediately, as the Soviets of the Ukraine had demanded. Unfortunately for the Bolsheviks, however, the Rada, seeing the futility of opposing the projected congress, had decided to reverse its decision. Apparently Lenin had decided to await the results of the Bolshevik inspired congress before making any definite moves against the Ukraine. The results must have shocked even Lenin for the Rada had managed to pack the meeting with its own supporters and of the more than 2,000 delegates there were no more than 150 Bolshevik supporters. The Bolsheviks immediately lost control of the congress and decided to move to the politically more favorable climate in Kharkov where they established the first government of the new Soviet Ukrainian Republic. This new republic was immediately recognized by Moscow as the only legitimate government in the Ukraine and all manner of aid from Soviet Russia was promised it.

The Soviet Government from this point followed a dual policy by offering military support to the Kharkov government while still continuing negotiations with the Rada. In the last week of December, 1917, Soviet forces attacked Kiev and two days later the Rada produced its Fourth Universal in which it proclaimed the complete independence of the Ukraine and the transfer of land without compensation. This, however, did not help the Rada's position in the least and Lenin confidently predicted at the Third Congress of Soviets held during January 10-18, that while the "Ukrainian Kerenskys" still retained some power, their days were definitely numbered. A resolution on Soviet power in the Ukraine was adopted by the Congress which stated that because the Rada would not recognize the new Kharkov government and because of its policies with regard to the agrarian question, workers' control and organizations, democratization of the army, the counterrevolutionaries in the Don and
A NUMBER OF OTHER ISSUES, "ALL THIS PLACED BEFORE REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRACY IN THE UKRAINE NECESSITATED A DETERMINED STRUGGLE WITH THE RADA IN ORDER TO CREATE WORKER AND PEASANT RULE IN THE UKRAINE."

AT ABOUT THIS TIME STALIN ANNOUNCED THAT "PEACE AND TRANQUILITY CAN COME TO THE UKRAINE ONLY AS A RESULT OF THE COMPLETE LIQUIDATION OF THE KIEV BOURGEOIS RADA" AND OF ITS REPLACEMENT BY A SOCIALIST RADA WHICH, HE OBSERVED, HAD ALREADY BEEN FORMED IN KHARKOV. BUT IT WAS PREOBRAZHENSKY WHO MOST LUCIDLY EXPLAINED THE REASON FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE BOLSHEVIKS ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE RADA!


THE "INEVITABLE" WAR WAS PROSECUTED WITH A GOOD DEATH OF SAVAGERY AND BRUTALITY. LENIN WAS NO LONGER EVEN CONCERNED WITH THE DESIRES OF THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE, MUCH LESS THOSE OF THE RADA. NUMEROUS WORKERS' GROUPS PROTESTED THE RUSSIAN ACTION BUT WERE IGNORED BY LENIN. FROM MURAVIEV'S REPORTS TO LENIN IT CAN BE ASCERTAINED THAT HE WAS MADE AWARE OF THE UKRAINIAN PEASANTS' DISLIKE OF RUSSIAN COMMUNISTS.

MURAVIEV, WHO CAPTURED KIEV ON JANUARY 26, INFORMED LENIN THAT ALL SOVIET POWER WAS ESTABLISHED BY BAYONETS AND THAT HE OWE ALL HIS VICTORIES TO THE RED GUARD AND NOT THE REGULAR SOLDIERS. HE THEN ADDED THAT "ALL HOPE IS UPON THE RED GUARD, AND THEREFORE I AM ASKING YOU TO SEND TO THE UKRAINE...SEVERAL (NESKOL'KO) THOUSAND RED GUARDISTS SO I COULD SEND THE REGULAR UNITS BACK AND GENERALLY THE QUICK FORMATION
OF A WORKERS' ARMY—THE ONLY HOPE OF THE REVOLUTION. LENIN who now had a serious problem with the progress of negotiations at Brest-Litovsk probably hoped to obtain as much territory as possible for use in the bargaining at the peace table.

After the conclusion of an armistice with the Germans on December 4, the Bolsheviks were in a stronger position because their major ally was time—they required time to consolidate their gains in Central Russia and they required time to organize and supply an army. Furthermore, Lenin hoped that German territorial demands would intimidate the Ukrainians into forming an alliance with the Bolsheviks. As an afterthought, however, Lenin asked if it might be possible that "the Ukrainians will take advantage of the Great Russians' greater difficulties to step up the struggle against them?" This is exactly what happened.

The Germans welcomed the arrival of the Ukrainian delegation at Brest-Litovsk because they were becoming impatient with Trotsky's delaying tactics and decided that results would be easier achieved if the two Slavic groups were set against each other. The German-Austrian ploy was obviously successful and caused Trotsky to note bitterly that "the Brest-Litovsk delegates of the Rada were never intended by nature for any other fate than to be led by the nose by any capitalist diplomat." In order to counteract the effect of the Rada delegation, Lenin had the Kharkov government send a group of delegates on January 3 with the message that the Kiev Rada was "on its last legs" and therefore implied that it could not be representative of the Ukrainian people. Later, on January 21 and 22 Lenin sent telegrams which prematurely claimed that Kiev had fallen. Nevertheless the Kharkov delegation was not recognized by the Germans.

When Lenin's telegram of January 28 arrived at the Russian peace
DELEGATION HEADQUARTERS IT NOW CORRECTLY STATED THAT KIEV HAD FALLEN. 

But the Germans and Ukrainians had already signed the treaty and were preparing to oust the Bolsheviks from Kiev and the Ukraine. Needless to say, the Ukrainian-German agreement and the German expedition into the Ukraine caused a profound shock among the Soviet leaders in Moscow. On February 18, only three weeks after the Bolsheviks entered Kiev, the city was captured by German troops. Lenin bitterly denounced the Ukrainian action but they did only what he himself had been attempting to do and, in fact, accomplished in the next month. The Bolsheviks had hoped, however, to sign a peace treaty valid for the entire area of the former tsarist empire.

Lenin now saw the necessity of greater flexibility with the Germans and Ukrainians and decided that, for tactical reasons, a peace treaty might have to be concluded with the Ukraine as well as Germany. He insisted that the Bolsheviks would lose nothing by a treaty with Vinichchenko because time was the primary factor. At the Seventh Extraordinary Congress he frankly stated, "To gain time I want to surrender space to the actual victor." He also noted that financial assistance was being given the Ukrainian Soviet government but added that the Bolsheviks could not bind themselves "to not signing any peace treaty."

The treaty between the Bolsheviks and the Central Powers was signed March 10, 1918 and forced upon the former a de facto recognition of the Ukrainian state by its terms which insisted on a peace treaty between the Ukraine and Soviet Russia. The necessity of concluding a treaty with the Ukraine did not unduly concern Lenin because he did not expect it to be binding in any way. "You know that treaties and laws are nothing but a scrap of paper in the face of international conflicts," he told a gathering of Bolshevik leaders in May 1918.
At the end of April the Rada was removed by the Germans and replaced by a more pliable and ideologically sympathetic regime under Hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky. The Germans now insisted that real peace negotiations begin and Lenin sent Manuilsky, who was fluent in Ukrainian, as the chief negotiator. Lenin decided that "as long as there remains even a slight chance of preserving peace or of concluding peace with Finland, the Ukraine and Turkey, at the cost of certain new annexations or losses, we must not take a single step that might aid the extreme elements in the war parties of the imperialist powers." He confidently predicted that the reactionaries were merely looking for an excuse to go to war. Peace negotiations would tend to eliminate many of the possible pretexts for beginning a war so he began to prepare for them, but in a most dilatory manner.

Lenin fervently hated the "bourgeois-landowner monarchism" represented by the Skoropadsky regime not only because of its inherent reactionary qualities but also because this provided a territorial and ideological base for the spread of counterrevolution within Great Russia itself. In a policy statement he warned the "bourgeois gentlemen and their hirelings, who think that just as in the Ukraine, where a coup was brought about so easily, so in Russia it may be possible to give birth to new Skoropadskys, should not forget that the war party in Germany found it very difficult to effect a coup in the Ukraine, and will meet with plenty of opposition in Soviet Russia." By the summer of 1918, as it became obvious to Lenin that German power was waning, he resumed his hostile approach to negotiations and the Ukrainian government. At the same time he sought an understanding with Vinnichenko and agreed to support Ukrainian independence in return for the assurance that the Bolsheviks would have a legal status in the new Ukrainian state. If no-
THING ELSE, THIS AGREEMENT TACITLY IMPLIED LENIN'S LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THE REMNANTS OF THE FORMER UKRAINIAN SOVIET GOVERNMENT NOW SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY OF RUSSIA.

AFTER THE GERMAN COLLAPSE LENIN HAD HOPED TO FILL THE GAP LEFT BY THE RETREATING GERMANS WITH RUSSIAN TROOPS BUT SOON REALIZED THAT A WITHDRAWAL AGREEMENT OF THIS TYPE WAS MORE PROBABLE BETWEEN THE GERMANS AND THE ANGLO-FRENCH FORCES. Skoropadsky fled Kiev on December 14, 1918, and was replaced by the Ukrainian National Union whose executive organ, the Directory, was under Vinnichenko's chairmanship. Almost at the same time that the Directory's troops entered Kiev, rumors of menacing Soviet troop movements became current. Trotsky decided that a Russian military venture in the Ukraine at this time was too risky, so a force under Piatakov, ostensibly Ukrainians, was sent into the Ukraine. Kharkov fell on January 3. When the Directory protested this action, Chicherin blandly stated that Moscow could not be responsible for the actions of Ukrainian troops on Ukrainian territory. He falsely insisted that no Russian forces were in the Ukraine.

Lenin was willing to antagonize the Directory because he needed Ukrainian grain. As he stated on January 26, 1919, "THE GRAIN SURPLUS IN THE UKRAINE IS TRULY ENORMOUS, AND THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT OF THE UKRAINE IS OFFERING TO HELP US." The Directory under Vinnichenko had adopted a program almost identical to that of the Bolsheviks but with the Russian invasion any ideological position that was associated with Bolshevism became suspect. Faced with the necessity of making a choice, the Ukrainian Marxists decided to opt for the nationalist alternative and war was finally declared on Russia on January 16, more than two weeks after the Bolshevik invasion. There is no doubt that this was an unpopular war; at least part of this unpopularity was created by the re-
actionary nature of the Directory's forces under Petliura's command. Petliura's commander of the Kharkov area was vigorously opposed by pro-Bolshevik workers and, because of his crude tactics, they managed to rapidly increase their power. 93

Vinnichenko resigned from the Directory in February 94 and a new cabinet was formed which was less socialist in orientation and which aimed at obtaining Allied aid. This bid for support was unsuccessful and the Directory's troops gradually disintegrated into anarchist bands of looters and pillagers. Lenin now could afford even formally to ignore the existence of any non-Soviet authority in the Ukraine and he began in the latter half of March to transform the national problem into one that better suited his tastes—class conflict. He now began to seek a basis for a firm alliance with the Ukraine's most populous group—the peasantry and especially the middle peasant. 95

Petliura's alliance with the Poles provided only a temporary setback for the Bolsheviks and Lenin treated this compact with the utmost contempt. He was aware how alienated Petliura was from the Ukrainian masses by this time and was confident of an immediate Bolshevik victory. 96 By 1920 Bolshevik control in the Ukraine was almost complete and emphasis was placed on the "right to unite" rather than the "right to secede" and, as Carr observes, with the Soviet victory "the essence of the Bolshevik doctrine of national self-determination passed over almost insensibly from the concept of liberty to the concept of equality ...." 97 In an effort to stem further growth of Ukrainian nationalism, Lenin began to introduce Ukrainization, a concept which was hopefully to neutralize Ukrainian nationalism and nationalists by offering them all the cultural freedoms they would have enjoyed in an independent Ukrainian state. Political independence for the Ukraine was impossible, it
was decided, because it would lead to economic ruin for both the Ukraine and Russia.  

Between 1915 and until the autumn of 1917 Lenin repeatedly linked the Ukraine with Poland and Finland as having equal claims to the right of national self-determination. He insisted, however, that self-determination was a democratic demand and reiterated that "any purely democratic demands are in a certain sense liable to act as a hindrance to the revolution, provided the proletarian attack on the pillars of bourgeois power has begun." For this reason the legitimacy of the Central Rada and its national demands were publicly endorsed by the Bolsheviks after the February revolution. These demands were supported not only because they were democratic but also because they served to weaken the Provisional Government and were thus objectively compatible with immediate Bolshevik aims. Lenin made the conditional nature of this assistance clear as early as 1914 when he asserted that:

The proletariat's policy in the national question (as in all others) supports the bourgeoisie only in a certain direction, but it never coincides with the bourgeoisie's policy. The working class supports the bourgeoisie only in order to secure national peace..., in order to secure equal rights and to create the best conditions for the class struggle.... They always give the bourgeoisie only conditional as support.  

Therefore, from the Leninist viewpoint, it was necessary to re-evaluate the position of the Rada and the support given it by the Bolsheviks after their assumption of power in October.

Tactical considerations vitiated an immediate reversal of the Bolshevik attitude to the Rada and its national demands. First the new Soviet power was not sufficiently secure, either militarily or politically, to challenge the Rada and second, Lenin decided to wait and see if the Rada took a nationalist or a socialist path. By December, how-
ever, with the consolidation of power in Moscow and Petrograd and with
the Rada assuming an increasingly nationalistic form, the time had come
to destroy this Ukrainian institution. Bolshevik troops, preceded by
agitators were sent into the Ukraine immediately after the formal esta-
blishment of a Ukrainian Soviet government in Kharkov. The Rada had
now been designated as a bourgeois and reactionary body by Lenin.
Unfortunately for the Rada, its half-hearted agrarian reforms had not
endeared it to the peasantry and the passing of radical legislation dur-
ing the invasion did not have the desired effect of obtaining unanimous
peasant support.

If it did nothing else, the German supported Skoropadsky regime
probably forced many politically conscious Ukrainians to consider the
Bolshevik alternative. At the same time the peasant masses probably
found Bolshevik agrarian propaganda most appealing. After the abdica-
tion of Skoropadsky and resumption of the Russian-Ukrainian war, the
Directory and its forces became increasingly alienated from the masses
and gradually dissipated. By 1920 the civilian population was ready to
accept almost any government that could provide peace, order and econom-
ic stability. The Bolsheviks credibly promised all three and were thus
accepted in the Ukraine.

Bukharin, in 1919, wrote that a communist system could only be
realized if the proletariat had "all authority and all power in its
hands. The proletariat cannot overthrow the old world unless it has
power in its hands, unless for a time it becomes the ruling class." UKRAI-
NIAN NATIONALISTS EMPHASIZED TO NO AVAL THE ANOMALY OF A SOVIET
SYSTEM IN THE UKRAINE WHERE THE ABSENCE OF AN INDIGENOUS PROLETARIAT
WOUlD MEAN THAT SOVIET RULE WOULD ACTUALLY BE A DICTATORSHIP OF THE RU-
SIAN BOLSHIEVKS.
According to some Bolsheviks, the destruction of the Rada and its replacement by Soviet rule meant that the Ukraine was more advanced than Poland, Lithuania and other nations. Although Lenin subscribed to this view, he did so subtly and in order to justify theoretically the forcible establishment of Bolshevism in the Ukraine. Preobrazhensky was more ingenious:

We are being reproached with the fact that by forcing the Soviet form of government on the territorially organized nationalities...we are contradicting our own principles. Comrade Martov wonders why we demand a referendum in Poland, Courland, and Lithuania, et cetera...and at the same time insist that at home (that is to say in the Ukraine, the Caucasus, Finland, et cetera) the right to vote should be given to the toilers only...The facts are as stated. But those who see in them duplicity and contradiction...do not take into consideration...the other factors. The Ukraine, the Caucasus, et cetera, have passed the political stage of bourgeois parliamentarism; but Poland, Courland, and Lithuania have not yet shaken off the autocratic yoke, have not yet reached the democratic stage.108

Preobrazhensky, in amplification of his statement, noted that every region has to go through two developmental, political stages and that those regions on Russia's western frontiers that had not yet thrown off their monarchist chains could not possibly be ready to adopt the Soviet form of organization.109 Consistent Leninism has seldom led to a more unusual formulation.

However, Lenin's more general theoretical principles, which were to apply to the Central Rada and the Ukrainian nationalist movement, were advanced long before the revolution. In his polemic with Rosa Luxemburg he perspicuously declared that "the interests of the working class and of its struggle against capitalism demand complete solidarity and the closest unity of the workers of all nations; they demand resistance to the nationalist policy of the bourgeoisie of every nationality."110 The Ukraine and the various Ukrainian governments were certainly no exceptions to this Leninist canon. The interests of the working class, as interpreted by the Bolshevists, required the retention of the Ukraine within Soviet Russia and so it was forcibly reintegrated.
1. See Bunyan and Fisher, pp. 281-83; Borys, pp. 41-42, 338-39; Chernov, pp. 266-67; Sullivant, pp. 20-23; Dmytryshyn, p. 25.


5. See Chernov, pp. 278-79; Pidhainy, p. 288.


9. Pidhainy claims that Ukrainian workers were unrepresented in the Rada because of the extremely slow development of Ukrainian working men's associations. This, he says, was the result of a minuscule number of Ukrainians working in industry. Pidhainy, p. 127.

10. According to Khrystiuk, p. 105, 70 of these deputies were Social-Democrats and 30 were Socialist Revolutionaries.

11. For Kerensky's order prohibiting the Congress, see Browder and Kerensky, pp. 379-80.


17. Chernov, pp. 268-69. Chernov also states that "the minority (Russian) elements of revolutionary democracy were too insensitive to what was going on under their eyes: like the army leaders they fanned the fire of nationalist passion by their unrestrained attacks."

18. CHERNOV, P. 277.

19. DUSHNYCK, "THE RUSSIAN PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT...," PP. 68-69; LENIN, XXIV, P. 569; SULLIVANT, P. 17.

20. CHERNOV, PP. 275-76.


22. LENIN, XXV, P. 22.


25. RESHETAR, A CONCISE HISTORY... P. 122.


27. BROWER AND KERENSKY, P. 383.

But the question as to whether it is timely, right now, to carry out a unilateral decision on autonomy, as the Central Rada wants to do, is an entirely different matter.

To this question we answer categorically in the negative."

IBID., p. 388.


29. LENIN, XXV, p. 91.
30. See Pidhainy, p. 103.
31. LENIN, XXV, p. 91.
32. IBID., p. 91. Lenin in his role as defender of Ukrainian rights also stated that "accursed tsarism made the Great Russians executioners of the Ukrainian people, and fomented in them a hatred for those who even forbade Ukrainian children to speak and study in their native tongue." IBID., pp. 91-92.
33. IBID., p. 92.
34. IBID.
35. IBID.
36. IBID., p. 99. Lenin also stated that the other two demands of the Ukrainians (that there be an Ukrainian elected representative in the Central Russian Government and an Ukrainian elected representative of the Central Russian Government in the government of the Rada) as equally legitimate.
38. LENIN, XXV, p. 100. The Provisional Government turned the demands of the Ukrainians over to its Juridical Council to decide if the Government had the authority to grant these demands. The Council decided that the Government could not legally deal with it and that the question was entirely within the competence of the Constituent Assembly. Browder and Kerensky, p. 377; Reshetar, The Ukrainian Revolution, p. 57.
39. LENIN, XXV, p. 100.
40. IBID., pp. 100-01.
41. IBID., XXVI, p. 99.
42. IBID., XXV, p. 101.
43. IBID., XXVI, pp. 79-98.
44. Pipes, The Formation..., pp. 69-70; Majstrenko, pp. 46-47; Browder and Kerensky, pp. 401-02.
45. Sullivant, p. 25.
47. IBID., pp. 118-19; Carr, pp. 293-94; Istorija Derzhavy 1
48. Within the Leninist context this concession really had no meaning because in the Socialist period the nationalities could no longer be oppressed by Tsarism and the Russian bourgeoisie since this state form and this particular class no longer existed. It is notable that in this statement Lenin did not use the past tense but merely said the Soviet government of Russia "reaffirms that the right to self-determination belongs to all nations oppressed by Tsarism and the Great Russian bourgeoisie...." Lenin, XXVI, p. 361.

53. Particularly illustrative of this dialectical transformation was Lenin's interpretation of the role of the Constituent Assembly. From a revolutionary institution it was transformed into a reactionary one without in any way changing its essence. See "Thesees on the Constituent Assembly" written in the second week of December 1917. In part it states:

"1. The demand for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly was a perfectly legitimate part of the programme of revolutionary Social-Democracy, because in a bourgeois republic the Constituent Assembly represents the highest form of democracy....

2. While demanding the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, revolutionary Social-Democracy has ever since the beginning of the Revolution of 1917 repeatedly emphasized that a republic of Soviets is a higher form of democracy than the usual bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly.

3. For the transition from the bourgeois to the Socialist system, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Republic of Soviets ...is not only a higher type of Democratic institution:..., but is the only form capable of securing the most painless transition to Socialism." Lenin, XXVI, p. 379. Also see ibid., pp. 486, 498.

59. See "The Ukrainian Rada", Stalin, Works, IV, pp. 16-19. For a discussion of events leading to the ultimatum and its results see Pipes, The Formation..., pp. 119-23; Dmytryshyn, p. 28-31; Pidhaîny, pp. 404-22; Ciuciura, pp. 44-45; Reshetar, The Ukrainian Revolution, pp. 95-103; Carr, pp. 293-95. For the Rada's reply to the ultimatum, see Bunyan and Fisher, pp. 440-41.

60. Lenin, XXVI, p. 362. See Stakhiv, Persha sovetska..., p. 178. Margolin has reproduced a document signed by the Council of People's Commissars on December 4, 1917 and published in the official
organ of the Provisional Government of Workmen and Soldiers on December 6 which states that "the Council of Commissaries of the Russian people ...recognises, without any limits or conditions, and in all respects, the national rights and independence of the Ukrainian Republic." A.A. Margolin, From a Political Diary: Russia, the Ukraine, and America, 1905-1945. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946), p. 184. See Stakhiv, Persha Soviets'ka ..., pp. 159-61.


62. Ibid., p. 362.

63. For a discussion and various interpretations of these events see the following: Pipes, The Formation ..., pp. 116-24; Istoria Derzhavy i pravy Ukrainy'koj SSR, pp. 154-55; Carr, p. 297; Pap, pp.209-10; Reshetar, The Ukrainian Revolution, pp. 93-95; Sullivan, pp. 36-37; Omytryshyn, pp. 30-31; T. Mackiew, "The 45th Anniversary of 'The Forgotten Peace Treaty' of Brest Litovsk." Ukrainian Quarterly, XIX (Autumn, 1963), 270.


65. Lenin, XXVI, pp. 462-469.


69. See for example the "Wireless Appeal of the Executive Committee of Soldiers', Workers', Sailors', and Peasants' Deputies' of the Romanian Front, the Black Sea Fleet and the Odessa District, of December 26, 1917," in O.S. Pidhaini, "Capture of the Ukrainian Capital by Russian Troops." New Review, IV(March, 1964), 40-41. Part of this appeal was in the form of questions, two of which asked: "Socialist Lenin, who gave you the right to declare war against the Ukrainian people (and) what kind of Socialist teaching gave you the daring to rise against the right of self-determination of the Ukrainian people?" Ibid., pp.40-41.

70. See Pipes, The Formation ..., p. 124.

71. Pidhaini, "Capture of the Ukrainian Capital ...," p.52. For Muraviev's entire report see Ibid., pp. 50-52. This report of Muraviev's conflicts with Lenin's analysis of Bolshevik victories in the Ukraine. In his closing speech at the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets he attributed Bolshevik victory solely to ideological superiority: "And we were right. We see now that our ideas were victorious."
in Finland, in the Ukraine and will be victorious in the Don..." Kommunisticheskaya Partiya--Vokhnovitel' Organizator ob'Edinitel' nogotvizhnenia ukrainskogo naroda za obrazovanie SSSR. Sbornik dokumentov i materialov (Kiev: Politicheskoj literatury USSR, 1962), p. 52. Emphasis supplied. On the other hand, many Bolsheviks in the Ukraine had believed that there really was great enthusiasm for Bolshevik ideas. See Adams, pp. 42, 146-47. But even if Lenin chose to completely believe the reports, the fact that Russian troops were desperately needed in the Ukraine must have made him aware of the real situation there.

72. Lenin, XXVI, p. 396.

73. Trotsky, My Life, p. 376. According to Trotsky, the Germans at Brest-Litovsk encouraged the Ukrainian delegates to denounce the Soviet representatives. Apparently the Ukrainians needed little encouragement and Trotsky says that "for a quarter of an hour their speaker heaped rudeness on arrogance, even embarrassing the conscientious German interpreter..." The Ukrainian delegate read from his notes all the vituperation that his delegation had prepared in forty-eight hours of collective effort. There is no denying it was one of the vilest scenes that I have ever witnessed." Ibid., pp. 376-77. See Rehsetar, The Ukrainian Revolution, pp. 103-09; Chamberlin, The Ukraine, p.43; Mackiw, "The 45th Anniversary....", pp. 270-71.

74. Lenin, XXVI, pp. 427, 510-11. 75. Ibid., p. 517.


77. See Borys, p. 188; Rehsetar, "Lenin on the Ukraine, p. 9.

78. Lenin, XXVII, p. 110. See Ibid., pp. 113-14, 149; Wheeler-Bennett, pp. 115-16.


81. Lenin, XXVII, p. 368.

82. See Margolin, pp. 184-85; Rehsetar, The Ukrainian Revolution, pp. 189-91; Carr, pp. 298-300.

83. Lenin, XXVII, p. 362.

84. Ibid., p. 444. For examples of Lenin's delaying tactics with respect to the initiation of negotiations, see Ibid., pp. 335, 358-59.
85. See Ibid., pp. 360-61, 373-75, 450.

86. Ibid., p. 379. In the concluding sentence he informed all anti-Bolshevik elements that they would "reap the same harvest as the Rada." Ibid., p. 375.


88. See Lenin, XXVII, pp. 128-29; Ibid., XXXV, p. 373.

89. For Trotsky's appraisal of the Ukrainian situation in January 1919 see Meijer, pp. 241-44.

90. See Adams, pp. 100-01; Pap, 212; Pipes, The Formation..., pp. 140-43; Reshetar, The Ukrainian Revolution, pp. 225-57. M. Stakhiv, Druha sovets'ka republika v Ukraini (Scranton: Ukrainian Free Society of America, 1957), pp. 33-40, argues that there were no indigenous communist uprisings in the Ukraine between December 1918 and the first half of January 1919.

91. Lenin, XXVIII, p. 439. With the success of Soviet aspirations in the Ukraine, Lenin confidently noted that "we are now in a position to procure far more grain than is required for semi-starvation food rations." Ibid., p. 439.

92. See Reshetar, The Ukrainian Revolution, pp. 216-29; Adams, pp. 80-81, 101-08.

93. Ibid., pp. 82-83, 88-89; Reshetar, The Ukrainian Revolution, pp. 232-33; Majstrenko, p. 94. Also see S. Petliura, Statti, Lybyts' dokumeti, Tsentral'nyi komitet v shanuvannia pam'iat Symona Petliury v amerytsi (New York: Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences in the United States, 1956), pp. 238-42, for Petliura's political views. For a typical attack on Petliura and his tactics by the Bolsheviks see the article entitled "K sudu nad uibitse! Petliury: materialy o pogromnom deiatel'nosti Petliury," Pravda, September 17, 1926, p. 4. Pravda offers 'proof' that Petliura supported pogroms.

94. When Vinnichenko left the Directory it did not end his political career. He returned to the Soviet Union in May 1920 and remained until the latter part of September in an effort to squeeze some concessions from the Bolsheviks. Lenin refused to see him personally although he did meet Trotsky, Kamenev, Zinoviev, and Chicherin in Moscow and Rakovsky and Manuilsky in Kharkov. According to his diary, the latter two tentatively offered him ministerial positions in the Soviet Ukrainian government on the condition that he join the party. Vinnichenko would agree to this only if he also became a member of the Politburo but the Bolsheviks refused to make this concession. H. Kostiuk, "Misnia V. Vinnichenka v Moskvi i Kharkovi 1920 roku," Novi Dni, XXI (Kviten'-Traven', 1970), 11-15.

The political program Vinnichenko took to Moscow and Kharkov was also unacceptable to the Bolsheviks. It consisted of nine points: 1) the recognition of a Pan-Ukrainian state which would be called the

IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT LENIN REFUSED EVEN TO CONSIDER THESE PROPOSALS AND THAT THE OTHER CENTRALLY ORIENTED BOLSHEVIKS REJECTED THEM OUTRIGHT.

95. See especially Lenin, XXIX, pp. 143-45.
96. Ibid., XXXI, pp. 172-73; Adams, p. 400.
99. See Dmytryshyn, pp. 153. Lenin in a letter to Inessa Armand written in December 1916 stated: "But further in a certain sense for a certain period, all democratic aims (not only self-determination! Note that! You have forgotten that!) are capable of hindering the socialist revolution. In what sense? At what moment? When? How? For example, if the movement has already developed, the revolution has already begun, we have to seize the banks, and we are being appealed to wait, first consolidate, "legitimize the republic, etc." Ibid., XXXV, p. 267. See Reshetar, "Lenin on the Ukraine," pp. 8-9.
100. Lenin, XX, p. 409. Lenin further explained his position: "The demands for a 'yes' or 'no' reply to the question of secession in the case of every nation may seem a very 'practical' one. In reality it is absurd; it is metaphysical in theory while in practice it leads to subordinating the proletariat to the bourgeoisie's policy. The bourgeoisie always places its national demands in the forefront, and does so in categorical fashion. With the proletariat, however, these demands are subordinated to the interests of the class struggle. Theoretically, you cannot say in advance whether the bourgeois-democratic revolution will end in a given nation seceding from another nation, or in its equality with the latter; in either case, the important thing for the proletariat is to ensure the development of its class." Ibid., p. 410.
101. See Sullivant, pp. 28-29; Majstrenko, p. 92; Borys, pp. 339-40; Dmytryshyn, p. 27. Pidhainy states that while the Bolsheviks...


103. IN AN ARTICLE, "ON SLOGANS," WRITTEN IN JULY 1917 LENIN ANTICIPATED THIS SITUATION. AT THAT TIME HE OBSERVED THAT "TOO OFTEN HAS IT HAPPENED THAT, WHEN HISTORY HAS TAKEN A SHARP TURN, EVEN PROGRESSIVE PARTIES HAVE FOR SOME TIME BEEN UNABLE TO ADAPT THEMSELVES TO THE NEW SITUATION AND HAVE REPEATED SLOGANS WHICH HAD FORMERLY BEEN CORRECT BUT NOW LOST ALL MEANING—LOST IT AS 'SUDDENLY' AS THE SHARP TURN IN HISTORY WAS 'SUDDEN.'" LENIN, XXV, P. 183.

104. SEE RESEHTAR, THE UKRAINIAN REVOLUTION, PP. 111-12, ET. SEQQ. COMPARE THE VIEWS OF Ibid., PP. 141-42 AND BORYS, P. 100, ON THE ROLE OF THE SOCIAL AND NATIONAL FACTORS IN THE CIVIL WAR.

105. RESEHTAR, THE UKRAINIAN REVOLUTION, P. 328; CARR, PP. 304-05.

106. BUKHARIN, P. 80.


108. BUNYAN AND FISHER, P. 395.

109. Ibid., P. 395. See Borys, PP. 34-35.

110. LENIN, XX, P. 424.
Lenin, as has been discussed in previous chapters, was anti-pathetic to the small political state primarily because he believed it was exceedingly inefficient as an independent economic unit. So inefficient, in fact, that it would have to seek various forms of assistance from larger states and, as a result, would gradually become completely dependent on this aid and subservient to the more powerful political entity. Nevertheless, he championed the right of nations to self-determination, because it was a revolutionary slogan at the time of tsarist rule in Russia.

At the same time as he was advocating the right to self-determination, Lenin was also boldly proclaiming the necessity of proletarian solidarity and unity. He insisted that the communist party be highly centralized. Federalism within the party was absolutely impermissible although an extremely circumscribed form of autonomy was possible, preferably based on a national-territorial foundation. More flexibility, however, was possible within the Soviet state and even federalism was considered by Lenin as permissible in certain concrete circumstances. Specifically, federalism as a solution to Soviet inter-state relations was acceptable if this form of union was to have an integrating rather than disintegrating effect. Federalism would become a unifying agent, for example, if it united two independent political units.

During and immediately after the October revolution the Ukraine presented Lenin with a chance to apply his theoretical formulations and dicta on party-state relations. The Ukrainian experiment was unique and novel if for no other reason than the scale in which it had to be exe-
CUTED. The Ukraine was the most valuable and most highly populated region (excepting central Russia) in the empire and its industrial capability was second only to that of ethnic Russia. Like most other regions of the Tsarist Empire, however, it had a numerically insignificant indigenous proletariat. As a result, concessions such as a temporary compromise with Ukrainian political parties and the institution of Ukrainization were necessary. For this reason it was also prudent to form a Communist Party (Bolshevik) of the Ukraine. This branch of the Russian party was supposed to lend a Ukrainian national flavor to what was essentially a great Russian undertaking.

The Communist Party (Bolshevik) of the Ukraine held its first congress in July 1918, apparently on Lenin's instructions; its resolutions on the indivisibility of the Russian-Ukrainian economy, on the temporary separation of the two nations due to the efforts of imperialists and capitalists, and its insistence on the reunion of Russia and the Ukraine must certainly have been welcome to the Bolshevik leader. The CP(B)U's espousal of centralist doctrines did not, however, surprise Lenin, for in the spring of 1918 he had effectively subordinated the Ukrainian based party to the RCP.2

Lenin's attitude to national Communist parties was fully developed by 1903 although subtle nuances and variations were added as the situation required. Singling out the Polish workers, fourteen years before the Revolution, he declared that

Only the most complete and intimate alliance with the Russian proletariat can meet the requirements of the present struggle against the autocracy; only such an alliance can guarantee complete political and economic emancipation.

What we have said on the Polish question is wholly applicable
TO EVERY OTHER NATIONAL QUESTION. 3

In 1906 Lenin contentedly commented that "the proletariat of all the nationalities in Russia is becoming more and more united by the common struggle." Not only was the proletariat becoming more united. Lenin declared that the common struggle was also bringing the various national Social Democratic organizations closer together and concluded that "most of the national Social-Democratic parties no longer insist on the principle of federation...." 5

In his article "A Tactical Platform for the Unity Congress of the R.S.D.L.P." written in March 1906, Lenin proposed that the congress should agree:

1. That the most energetic measures must be taken to achieve the speedy amalgamation of all the national Social-Democratic parties in Russia into a united Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party;
2. That the basis of this amalgamation must be the complete merging of the Social-Democratic organisations in each locality;
3. That the party must really ensure the satisfaction of all the party interests and requirements of the Social-Democratic proletariat of each nationality, giving due consideration also to the specific features of its culture and way of life. 6

At the congress, however, there was only one delegate (consultative) from the Ukrainian SDLP. Lenin in his report states that the question of amalgamating with the national Social Democratic parties took up considerable time and that finally amalgamation with the Poles and Latvians was accepted unanimously, while the Bund was also amalgamated. The Ukrainian SDLP was not amalgamated because it was argued that it was not a proletarian party but rather a party of the "petty-bourgeois intelligentsia." 7

Bolshevism and its centralizing ethos were slow to penetrate Ukrainian ethnic territory. That there were few Ukrainian Bolsheviks, indeed few Bolsheviks in the Ukraine as late as 1911, is suggested by the fact that Orzhonikidze worked in the Ukraine as well as in the Caucasus. 8
The Ukrainian SDLP was certainly not anxious to become subordinated to the Russian party and it, no doubt, was one of the prime targets of Lenin's attack on non-cooperative national organizations. At the Prague conference of the RSDLP, Lenin asserted that

in the party we cannot tolerate a situation where non-Russian working in total isolation from Russian organizations have chosen to set up a federation of the worst type and—frequently regardless of whether they wanted to or not—placed key Russian organizations in such a position that without non-Russian national centres, which for all practical purposes do not concern themselves with Russian affairs, the R.S.D.L.P. was unable to effect very essential and important Party work.

National parties thus became a threat to the interests of the proletarian movement because they divided the sympathies of the working class. According to Lenin, it was for this reason that a highly unified party was essential. Bohns laconically concludes that "a decentralized Social Democratic Party was not envisaged in the Bolshevik solution of the nationality problem." This is correct but in practice it sometimes was necessary to create a national party which at least appeared to be independent.

All Bolsheviks in the Ukraine before 1918 belonged to the RSDLP and were under a highly centralized system of control. During the revolution, however, the lack of effective central control led to the formation of several Bolshevik factions with their own prescriptions for winning power in the Ukraine. Disunity was the main characteristic of the Ukrainian party organizations at this time. This disunity was a doctrinal one based on different attitudes toward Ukrainian nationalism. Its major territorial divisions were the Right and Left bank party organizations with their respective centers in Kiev and Kharkov. It seems quite probable that Lenin encouraged this disjunction until he could consolidate power in Russia and have a real influence in forging unity based on his organizational principles. In fact this may have been one of the reasons why
Lenin turned down a request by Ukrainian party organizations in the Ukraine for permission to create a single centre on Ukrainian territory.12

The First Congress of the CP(B)U met in Moscow in July 1918, and the Second Congress also met in Moscow only three months later. Lenin adopted a conciliatory attitude and tried to find a compromise between the Kiev and Kharkov groups at the July Congress. In October, however, Lenin put his weight behind the more pliable group of the Left Bank. Although Lenin at the First Congress bought a compromise among the two main groups, and a small, third group of Federalists, he was adamant on one point—the necessity of complete subordination of the CP(B)U to its Russian mentor. This was necessary because in April 1918, the Kiev group of Piatakov and Skrypnik had in fact formed an independent Communist party which was only to be connected to the Russian one through the Third International.13

The First Congress of the CP(B)U,14 under Lenin's guidance, decided that its task was to struggle for the unification of the Ukraine with Russia on the basis of proletarian centralism. A resolution was passed which stated that "our struggle in the Ukraine is tactically inseparably bound with the struggle of the Russian proletariat for socialism..."15 At the Second Congress16 in October the CP(B)U decided to subordinate all its activities to the Central Committee of the Russian party and, in order to assure central control, Stalin was elected to the Central Committee.17

At the Eighth Congress of the RCP held in March 1919 the role of the CP(B)U was clearly delineated. In a debate with Piatakov on the organizational question Lenin emphasized that "the Ukraine was separated from Russia by exceptional circumstances...," thereby implying that the
Ukraine really was an integral part of Russia. The meaning of this statement was made abundantly clear by the resolution on the organizational question which stated that the Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania and Belorussia were separate republics and underscored the fact that "for the present moment the question of the forms of state union was settled." But the resolution warned that this did not mean that the RCP must "organize itself on the principle of a federation of independent communist parties" and added that "there must be created a single centralized communist party with a single Central Committee leading all party work in all parts of the RSFSR." All decisions of the RCP..." It was further resolved, "were absolutely obligatory for all branches of the party irrespective of their national composition. The Central Committees of the Ukrainian, Latvian, and Lithuanian communists enjoy the rights of Oblast Committees of the party and are completely subordinated to the CC of the RCP." The absolute control that Lenin had demanded of all party organizations was finally achieved in March 1919 and if the Ukrainian party ever had some degree of independence this was now formally obliterated—the Ukrainian party now definitely became a subordinate section of the centralized Russian party.

Resolutions of the Eighth Congress notwithstanding, the disorder and confusion in the Ukraine caused the CP(B)U to act often without definite orders from Moscow. Trotsky declared that in the Ukraine in the summer of 1919 "...anarchy was rampant even in the party ranks ..." and the strong-willed Kiev group often attempted to initiate and execute orders regardless of Lenin's wishes. It was for this reason that on October 2, 1919 the dissolution of the Central Committee of the CP(B)U was ordered by Lenin. All Ukrainian party organizations were brought directly under Moscow's control.
Soon thereafter, however, Lenin became concerned with great Russian chauvinism and at the Eighth Conference of the RCP he raised this question in relation to the Ukraine. At the conference Rakovsky,25 Manuilsky and some others accused Lenin of making too many concessions to the nationalities. Lenin, in effect, told them it was none of their business. It was their task to follow Moscow's orders:

All those who spoke about the national question26...show by their criticism of the C.C. resolution that they are pursuing the very same policy of "independence" we reproved the Kiev people for. Comrade Manuilsky is making a peculiar mistake in thinking that we accused them of independence in the national sense, in the sense of Ukrainian self-determination. We reproved them for their "independence" in the sense of their not wanting to consider Moscow's views, the views of the Central Committee in Moscow.27

After this conference a new party center for the Ukraine was formed in Moscow—one which could more readily assure Lenin that his centralist concepts would in no way be violated. Nevertheless, the party in the Ukraine was still split between three groups—centralists, federalists and independents.28 No one was more aware of this than Lenin and in his "Letter to the Workers and Peasants of the Ukraine Apropos of the Victories over Denikin" he made plain his feelings on the Ukrainian party: "Among the Bolsheviks there are advocates of complete independence for the Ukraine, advocates of a more or less close federal tie, and advocates of the complete amalgamation of the Ukraine with Russia...[but] there must be no differences over these questions.\n
Lenin's contemptuous attitude to the CP(B)U is glaringly evident in some of his dispatches to Russian Bolsheviks working in the Ukraine. When in the spring of 1919 Lenin wanted military operations against Rostov and the Donetz coal fields accelerated, he telegraphed Sokolnikov to "work out practical directives for this purpose,...[adding that] we shall get them adopted by the Central Committee for the Ukrainians, and
equally for our own people." The Ukrainian Bolsheviks accepted this
treatment until the end of 1921 when they rebelled by dismissing central-
ly appointed officials and electing new ones from their party ranks.
This was ideological and organizational blasphemy and Lenin raised the
question at the Eleventh Congress of the RCP. Apparently he was still
uncertain at that time as to what really occurred:

In the end, a Party Congress was held in the Ukraine—I do not know
what happened there; all sorts of things happened. I asked for in-
formation from the Ukrainian comrades, and I asked Comrade Ordjonik-
dize particularly...to go down there and ascertain what had happened.
Evidently there was some intrigue and an awful mess, which the Com-
mission on Party History would not be able to clear up in ten years...31

In the end Lenin concluded "that contrary to the unanimous instructions
of the [Russian] Central Committee, this [Russian appointed] group was
superseded by another group" because of their overzealousness in ad-
ministrative matters.32

Lenin recognized the fact that even the CP(B)U, while certainly
not under Ukrainian nationalist influence, was beginning to develop a
peculiar form of localism based on Ukrainian territory. "The Ukraine
is an independent republic," Lenin coyly informed the Eleventh Congress.

That is quite all right. But in Party matters it sometimes—what is
the politest way of saying it?—takes a roundabout course, and we
shall have to get at them. For the people in charge there are sly,
and their Central Committee I shall not say deceives us, but some-
how edges away from us.33

Apparently it was decided that the Ukrainian comrades had erred by not
being sufficiently enlightened politically and concentrating only on ad-
ministration. The lesson to be learned from the CP(B)U's manifestation
of independence, Lenin lectured the party congress, was the necessity of
recognizing the need "to organise work properly, not to lag behind, to
remove friction in time, not to separate administration from politics."34

Lenin was, of course, attempting to do this very thing! He tried to es-
TABU. I8H—08TEN8 IBLV AT LEAST—A FEDERATED UKRAINIAN REPUBLIC WITH A SUP-
POSEDLY INDEPENDENT GOVERNMENT WHILE AT THE SAME TIME INSISTING ON THE
CLOSEST UNITY AND CENTRALIZATION WITHIN THE COMMUNIST PARTY. AT THE
ELEVENTH CONGRESS HE DECLARED THAT "THE PARTY MACHINERY MUST BE SEPARA-
tED FROM THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT MACHINERY."35

ALTHOUGH PARTY AND GOVERNMENT MACHINERY WERE TO BE SEPARATED
BOTH IN RUSSIA AND THE UKRAINE IT DID NOT MEAN THAT THESE ORGANIZATIONS
SHOULD NOT WORK FOR CLOSER UNITY BETWEEN THEIR RESPECTIVE PARTY AND GOV-
ERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS. CONSEQUENTLY THE FIRST CONGRESS OF THE CP(B)U
RESOLVED THAT IT MUST "FIGHT FOR THE REVOLUTIONARY UNITY OF THE UKRAINE
AND RUSSIA ON THE PRINCIPLES OF PROLETARIAN CENTRALISM WITHIN THE BORD-
ERS OF THE RUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC."36 LENIN MADE IT CLEAR
THAT THIS WAS TO BE THE ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE OF THE UKRAINIAN SOVIET GOV-
ERNMENT WHICH WAS SECRETLY CREATED ON ORDER FROM MOSCOW IN NOVEMBER
1918.37 THE IMMEDIATE TASK OF THIS NEW GOVERNMENT HOWEVER, WAS THE CRE-
ATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY WHICH WOULD FACILITATE THE SUPPLY OF
FOOD TO THE NORTH.

IN THE SPRING OF 1919 LENIN HAPPILY OBSERVED THAT RUSSIA NOW
HAD TWO SOURCES OF SUPPLY—THE UKRAINE AND THE DON REGION. HE THEN AS-
SERTED:

THE UKRAINE IS A FRATERNAL SOVIET REPUBLIC, WITH WHICH WE ARE ON
THE BEST OF TERMS. THIS REPUBLIC IS SETTLING THE QUESTION OF AS-
SISTING US NOT AS A HUCKSTER, NOT AS A PROFITEER; THE UKRAINE IS
GUIDED BY AN ARDENT DESIRE TO ASSIST THE HUNGRY NORTH. THE FIRST
SOCIALIST DUTY OF EVERY CITIZEN OF THE UKRAINE IS TO COME TO THE
AID OF THE NORTH.38

AT THIS TIME LENIN VIEWED THE UKRAINE AND ITS SOVIET GOVERNMENT ALMOST
ENTIRELY IN TERMS OF THE AMOUNT OF GRAIN THAT COULD BE SUPPLIED TO RU-
SIA. IN AN ARTICLE ON "THE ACHIEVEMENTS AND DIFFICULTIES OF THE SOVIET
GOVERNMENT" LENIN WROTE THAT "THE UKRAINIAN GOVERNMENT SAID, 'OUR FIRST
task is to help the starving North. The Ukraine cannot hold out if the North does not hold out. The Ukraine will hold out, and her victory will be certain if she helps the North! It would appear however that the Ukraine was not so willing to help the North for Lenin himself remarked that the Russian government had repeatedly invited Comrade Rakovsky to meet up to discuss the matter, and had sent military men into the Ukraine. Rakovsky, it seems, was not willing to meet with the Central Authorities.

Lenin quickly decided that Rakovsky's reluctance was based on the embarrassing lack of administrative organization in the Ukraine. He gave a cursory sketch of his understanding of the situation which concluded that

...as regards organization matters are in a worse state in the Ukraine than they were here after the October Revolution. In the Ukraine they have no food supply organization whatever. The Ukraine has no officials experienced in handling food supplies, or large working-class centres from which capable men could be drawn. In the Ukraine, there are no purchasing organizations, the peasants have no confidence in our currency, and we have no goods with which to barter.

Lenin admitted that there was no machinery for orderly grain collection in the Ukraine and that the Russian government could not pay for the grain even if it was available. This did not change his decision.

"Notwithstanding all these unfavourable circumstances," he declared,

"we have given the Ukrainian comrades the assignment to ship to Russia 50,000,000 poods of grain by June 1, 1919."

Recognizing that this would be an impossible task under the prevailing conditions Lenin informed the Ukrainians that the Central Committee of the RCP had given instructions that work should be concentrated on the building of administrative machinery in the Ukraine.

In return for this," he magnanimously stated, "when this machinery is
AVAILABLE, IT WOULD] ...SET TO WORK TO OBTAIN 50,000,000 POUNDS OF GRAIN BY JUNE 1. But Lenin still had doubts for, although he noted that "in the Ukraine there are huge stocks of grain," he was also aware that "partisan warfare is still raging there..." A year and a half later, in October 1920, this situation had changed little and Lenin somberly commented that Russia "cannot get grain from the Ukraine because warfare is raging there, and the Red Army has to fight the bands that infest that area." The situation changed little in the following year, according to Lenin, for while the anarchist bands had been eliminated, the food apparatus remained inefficient.

But by December 1919 problems other than those of food gathering were becoming apparent in the Ukraine. Lenin charged that Soviet institutions were "being flooded with Ukrainian urban petty bourgeoisie, who have no conception of the living conditions of the peasant masses and who frequently masquerade as Communists" and declared that measures must be taken to stem this movement. This "fear" was probably an excuse to purge party ranks of undesirables because an ethnic Ukrainian bourgeoisie was almost non-existent. Perhaps Lenin feared the influence of the kulaks for he insisted on more stringent controls to keep certain elements out of party and Soviet institutions stating that in all circumstances undesirable elements "must be placed under the strict class control of the proletariat." He then added that the Bolsheviks knew from experience that due to the unorganised state of the poor the large number of weapons in the hands of the Ukrainian rural population is inevitably being concentrated in the hands of the kulaks and counter-revolutionaries which actually leads to the domination of the kulak bandits instead of the dictatorship of the working people; in view of this a primary task in organising Soviet Ukraine is to withdraw all weapons and concentrate them in the hands of the workers' and peasants' Red Army.

In the military sphere as in the party a high degree of centralization was necessary. In a speech to the Central Executive Committee
IN FEBRUARY 1920 LENIN ASSERTED THAT "UNITY OF THE MILITARY FORCES IS IMPERATIVE; ANY DEVIATION FROM THIS UNITY IS IMPERMISSIBLE." LENIN STEADFASTLY MAINTAINED THAT THE UKRAINIAN COMRADES COULD NOT COMMAND THEIR OWN ARMY BECAUSE THEY WOULD BECOME REGIONALLY ORIENTATED AND FORGET THE LARGER BATTLE THAT MOSCOW WAS WAGING.

BEFORE, IT WAS NOT A MERE MILITARY ACTION THAT LENIN WAGED IN THE UKRAINE. HE ALSO CONDUCTED A POLITICAL OFFENSIVE. THE RUSSIAN ADVANCE OF NOVEMBER 1918 WAS TO BE DISGUISED BY A POLITICAL COVER:

AS OUR TROOPS PUSH ON WESTWARDS AND INTO THE UKRAINE, PROVISIONAL REGIONAL SOVIET GOVERNMENTS ARE BEING FORMED TO BACK UP THE SOVIETS IN THE LOCALITIES. THIS HAS THE ADVANTAGE OF DEPRIVING THE UKRAINIAN, LITHUANIAN, LATVIAN AND ESTONIAN CHAUVINISTS OF A CHANCE TO REGARD OUR TROOP MOVEMENTS AS OCCUPATION AND OF CREATING A FAVOURABLE SITUATION FOR FURTHER ADVANCE.

IN ORDER TO MAKE THIS ADVANCE MORE ACCEPTABLE TO THE UKRAINIAN POPULACE RED ARMIES WERE CREATED WHICH WERE OSTENSIBLY COMPOSED OF UKRAINIANS RETURNING TO THEIR OWN TERRITORY. BUT THIS ARRANGEMENT DID NOT SATISFY EITHER VATSETIB, LENIN'S COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE SOUTHERN FRONT, BECAUSE IT WAS MILITARILY UNSOUND, OR THE PIATAKOV GROUP WHO WERE LEADING THE ADVANCE INTO THE UKRAINE, SINCE THEY WANTED AUTHORITY TO MAKE BOTH POLITICAL AND MILITARY DECISIONS. WITH THE ATTACK OF COUNTER REVOLUTIONARY FORCES FROM THE WEST THE NECESSITY FOR "UKRAINIAN" UNITS DISAPPEARED AND THE TROOPS WERE PUT UNDER THE DIRECT COMMAND OF LENIN. IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT WHILE BOTH THE UKRAINIAN GROUP AND LENIN STRESSED THE NEED FOR MAKING POLITICAL DECISIONS THEY CONSTANTLY DISAGREED AS TO WHAT THESE SHOULD BE.

ALL TROOPS WERE PUT UNDER LENIN'S IMMEDIATE COMMAND ON MAY 31, 1919 WHEN THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RCP ADOPTED A DRAFT DIRECTIVE ON MILITARY UNITY IN WHICH THE UNITS OF THE RSFSR, THE UKRAINE AND THE OTHER REPUBLICS WERE AMALGAMATED. THE DIRECTIVE STATED THAT "AN ESSENTIAL CON-
Dition for success in that war is a single command for all contingents of the Red Army, the strictest centralization of the command of all the forces and resources of the Socialist Republics, especially of the entire army supply apparatus. Not only the army but the entire supply apparatus were simultaneously subordinated to the command of the RSFSR. There is no doubt that this action was at least in part precipitated by the fact that central directives were not being executed by the army in the Ukraine or were being executed in what to Lenin seemed a most dilatory manner.

If Lenin was distrustful of his own commanders in the Ukraine, he was even more inclined to suspect the Ukrainian troops. Not only did he question the sincerity of the territorially based ethnically Ukrainian forces but he even doubted the revolutionary and military value of Ukrainian volunteers living in Russia being sent into the Ukraine. This seems a probable explanation for the strange telegram he sent the Samara Ukrainians in December 1918. In it he stated that:

In view of influx of Ukrainian volunteers and the abundance of conscripts in Ukraine itself still without arms, workers and peasants, Government of Ukraine considers it unnecessary to call up Ukrainians in Russia and dispatch them to Ukraine. In name of Council of People's Commissars propose you stop sending Ukrainian units to Ukraine.

Since troops were needed in the Ukraine it would seem that Lenin decided that Ukrainian units sent from Russia would be susceptible to nationalist ideas or else would not be as ruthless as Russians in collecting grain. This assumption was at least partially confirmed by Lenin the following April when he stated that "we must send no less than three thousand railway men and a number of peasants from starving North Russia to the Ukraine" and at the same time remarked that "the Ukrainian Government has already issued a decree fixing the exact amount of grain that
WE MAY TAKE AT ONCE AT A HUNDRED MILLION POODS."58


LENIN HOPED TO COUNTERACT AND NEUTRALIZE THIS "UNRULY GUERILLA SPIRIT" BY THE INFUSION INTO THE UKRAINE OF THE MORE CLASS-CONSCIOUS PROLETARIAT OF THE NORTHERN INDUSTRIAL CENTERS. AT THE SAME TIME HE NOTED WITH SATISFACTION THAT MANY FORMER DESERTERS WERE VOLUNTARILY RETURNING TO THE RANKS OF THE RED ARMY IN THE SOUTH. THESE TROOPS WERE NOW READY, HAVING LEARNED THEIR LESSON, TO OBEY CENTRAL COMMANDS UNQUESTIONINGLY, HE THOUGHT.62

LENIN, HOWEVER, HELD A RATHER AMBIVALENT ATTITUDE TOWARD THE
question of the need for complete obedience. Some of the tasks assigned to this army were almost guerilla in nature since it was often the chief food collector in an area. Furthermore, for the sake of expediency, he often insisted on the abandonment of routine which must have had particularly notable disintegrating effects on an army already prone to the utmost laxity in discipline. An example of this is Lenin's telegram to Rakovsky in May 1919 stating that "Disaster is absolutely inevitable for the revolution as a whole without a swift victory in the Donbass, to achieve which it is essential that procedural routine be abandoned in the Ukraine." The actual subordination of Ukrainian commissariats to Moscow also caused the greatest confusion since they were expected to both initiate some actions themselves and at the same time obey all directives from Moscow, even if they were contrary or diametrically opposed to those of the Ukrainian government. Moreover, people like Trotsky, Kamenev, Voroshilov and others representing the centre could countermand republican orders and issue their own at will. In part, therefore, the guerilla nature of the army in the Ukraine merely reflected the chaotic organizational situation in both the party and government of the Soviet republic.

Matters were further complicated by the fact that although Lenin adopted an essentially pragmatic approach to Ukrainian affairs at the time of the Civil War and immediately after it, there was one doctrinal principle which he would never violate for the sake of expediency. This was his resolute insistence on unity. The monolithic structure of the RCP was not to be divided in any way and neither was the command of the party's primary organizational unifying agent, the Red Army.

Economically, the Ukrainian SSR was also to be completely sub
ORDINATED TO THE CENTER. ITS DUTY WAS TO SUPPLY FOOD AND RAW MATERIALS TO THE RUSSIAN NORTH. LENIN SAW THAT THE MAJOR TASK FACING THE NEW RUSSIA WAS THE CREATION OF INDUSTRY AND THE UKRAINE WAS TO BE A PRIMARY RESOURCE SUPPLIER IN THE ATTEMPTED ECONOMIC TAKEOFF. SAID LENIN IN A REPORT TO THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN FEBRUARY 1920:

"IF UP TO THE PRESENT, WE WERE ABLE TO BATTLE ON, SURROUNDED ON ALL SIDES AND CUT OFF FROM THE RICHEST AREAS OF GRAIN AND COAL, NOW THAT WE POSSESS ALL THIS, NOW THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT JOINTLY WITH THE UKRAINE, WE CAN SOLVE THE MAIN PROBLEM - TO ACQUIRE LARGE QUANTITIES OF GRAIN AND FOODSTUFFS, DELIVER THEM TO THE INDUSTRIAL CENTRES SO THAT INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CAN BEGIN. WE MUST CONCENTRATE ALL OUR EFFORTS ON THIS TASK. IT IS INADMISSIBLE TO ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE DIVERTED FROM IT TO ANY OTHER PRACTICAL TASK."

"ACCORDING TO LENIN THE SITUATION AT THIS TIME DEMANDED THAT THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT TURN FROM THE OVERRIDING STRESS ON WAR TO "THE CREATION OF A BASIS FOR PEACEFUL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT" BUT, HE WARNED, THIS SUDDEN CHANGE IN PRIORITIES WAS TO BE SOLVED BY MILITARY METHODS, WITH ABSOLUTE RUTHLESSNESS AND BY THE ABSOLUTE SUPPRESSION OF ALL OTHER INTERESTS." It was for this reason that a so-called Labor Army was created to operate on the Ukrainian SSR's territory. "All our forces must be switched to this task," Lenin asserted, "all our military forces which came to the fore in war-time organisation, must be switched on to this new path. This is the specific situation, the specific transition, which engendered the idea of labour armies and led to...the creation of the first labour army in the Urals and of the Ukrainian labour army."

The work of the Ukrainian Council of the Labour Army and the success of the entire project, insisted Lenin, was "to be measured by the daily amount of grain and coal delivered and the number of locomotives repaired." Lenin realized the magnitude of this task which was even further complicated by the extreme dislocation of the Ukrainian economy. It was for this reason that he had Stalin become a member of..."
the Central Committee of the CP(B)U, thus giving Moscow de facto control of the entire operation and ensuring the complete unification of the Ukrainian economy with the Russian. After all, Lenin affirmed, the Donets basin "is the centre, the real basis of our entire economy. It will be utterly impossible to restore large-scale industry in Russia, to really build socialism...unless we restore the Donets Basin and bring it up to the proper level."71

It soon became clear, however, that the only way the preconditions necessary for the efficient exploitation of resources in the Ukraine could be established was to placate the hostile Ukrainian peasant. By the time of the Eighth Party Congress in March 1919 it became apparent that the Russian and Ukrainian peasant differed significantly in their political beliefs. Even Rakovsky noted this difference when, speaking on the kulak in December 1919 he stated that "the Ukrainian kulak and the Russian kulak are two distinct social forces, between them there is a colossal difference."72 For this reason the Eighth Congress decided to adopt a more tolerant attitude towards the middle peasant (serednian) -- a group that was very prominent in Ukraine. The hostile attitude to the kulak remained but the peculiarities of the Ukrainian serednian were to be conditionally and temporarily respected. Although the grain monopoly would remain, a new land policy was to be initiated.73

In his speech at the Congress Lenin admitted that "the relations between the communes and State Farms and the neighbouring peasants is one of the most painful aspects of our entire policy. It will be still more serious in the Ukraine."74 He then bluntly stated the problem and supplied its solution: "The issue is the following. Do we need
A bloc with the Ukrainian peasantry...? I maintain that we do and that for this reason most of the state farms must be handed over for actual distribution. 75 Lenin decided that the tasks of the land policy to be followed in the Ukraine in 1920 should be less doctrinaire than the previously unsuccessful attempts to establish communes and all the ancillary institutions required of a dogmatic application of Marxist theory to the peasant. He outlined them:

(1) The complete abolition of the landed proprietorship re-established by Denikin and the transfer of the landed estates to peasants possessing little or no land.  
(2) State farms to be organised in strictly limited numbers and of limited size and in each case in conformity with the interests of the surrounding peasantry.  
(3) In organising peasants in communes, arthel. etc., the Party policy must be strictly adhered to, which in this respect does not permit any coercion. 76

This was a radical departure from the rather clumsy attempts of the Bolsheviks in the Ukraine to force peasants into the state farms. Lenin realized that this peasant hatred of the state and collective farm created the conditions which Denikin found so favorable and, while Lenin lived, overt coercion directed against the Ukrainian peasant was minimal. He believed that the Ukrainian peasant, on seeing the great successes to be accomplished by collective labor, would gladly join of his own accord. 77

In attempting to establish a firm basis among the Ukrainian peasantry a system of committees of poor peasants (komzba) had been established as early as 1918 to appropriate land but they were relatively unsuccessful primarily because of the large numbers of middle and wealthy peasants. The Ukrainian poor peasantry also exhibited a surprising degree of innate conservatism which Lenin insisted was due to their experience with multifarious foreign occupations. Since the komzba proved relatively unsuccessful, a new course had to be adopted and this was the reason for the new found revolutionary potential of the middle peasant. 78
But apparently even after this middle peasant infusion of theKomned they lacked the expected revolutionary fervor. Even as late as October 1920, when Wrangel had made his move from the south, Lenin doubted the revolutionary qualities of the poorer Ukrainian peasantry.

Informed by the government of the Ukrainian SSR that the poor peasants were in a revolutionary mood, Lenin guardedly answered that "if their temper is really revolutionary, the following should be regarded as a programme: 1) collective cultivation; 2) hiring stations; 3) confiscation of the kulak's land over and above the labour norm; 4) grain surpluses to be collected in full, part of the grain turned over to the poor peasants." He cautioned that the question of communes should be posed last because nothing could be more dangerous than "the formation of pseudo-communes, with the participation of individual militants who thus become detached from the main body of the peasantry." Lenin was finally becoming aware that a few active peasants did not constitute a revolutionary class.

This awareness of the peasants' real dislike for Bolshevism set Lenin looking for a new approach. What was needed in the Ukraine above all else was order. Lenin had to gain the sympathy of the peasant and this was one of the major reasons for the introduction of the New Economic Policy. Concessions were to become the order of the day. Lenin argued that NEP was just as necessary as was Brest-Litovsk. NEP was a temporary, strategic retreat. "Concessions are nothing to be afraid of," Lenin repeated over and over.

One of the major concessions was the substitution of a tax in place of the requisitioning of food. Lenin now cautioned all and sundry that "we must not count on going straight to communism. We must build on the basis of peasants' personal incentive." It was for this
reason that the tax in kind was imposed. "Naturally," remarked Lenin, "the tax in kind means freedom for the peasant to dispose of his after-tax surplus at his own discretion. Since the state cannot provide the peasant with goods from socialist factories in exchange for all his surplus, freedom to trade with this surplus means freedom for the development of capitalism." In the Ukraine the counter revolution was successful, according to Lenin, because the peasantry allied themselves with the bourgeoisie. NEP, however, was to provide the foundation for a permanent alliance between the peasants and the proletariat. "We must try to develop and improve the condition of the peasantry and make a great effort to have this benefit the working class," declared Lenin.

By providing incentives for the peasant—especially the Ukrainian peasant—to produce more, Lenin hoped not only to have enough food for the cities but also for sale abroad in order to get the required machinery and technicians for industry. "Unless we grant concessions," argued Lenin, "we cannot hope to obtain the assistance of well-equipped modern capitalist industry." Thus, in order to industrialize, an alliance between the peasantry and proletariat was mandatory and, Lenin emphasized, "the alliance between the small peasants and the proletariat can become a correct and stable one from the socialist standpoint only when the complete restoration of transport and large scale industry enables the proletariat to give the peasants, in exchange for food, all the goods they need for their own use...." Needless to say, the Ukrainian peasant immediately took advantage of these concessions.

NEP, like all the other Bolshevik concessions, was aimed at strengthening central control. The Ukrainian peasant benefited economically but the Ukrainian SSR gained little in the way of independence as a result of the economic innovations of Moscow. Lenin had made it clear
I AN GROUP INTO THE VARIOUS GOVERNMENTAL ORGANS—CONTRARY TO LENIN'S EXPLICIT INSTRUCTIONS. CP(B)U LEADERS DISLIKED THE NATIONALISM OF THE Borot'bsty, ESPECIALLY THEIR INSISTENCE THAT THE UKRAINIAN SOVIET ARMY BE AUTONOMOUS OR INDEPENDENT WITH RESPECT TO MOSCOW. WHEN LENIN LEARNED OF THE CP(B)U'S APRIL DECISION TO EXCLUDE THE Borot'bsty HE IMMEDIATELY DEMANDED THAT THEY REVERSE IT. ALTHOUGH ORDERS WERE DUTIFULLY ISSUED TO ALL CP(B)U ORGANIZATIONS IN CONFORMITY WITH LENIN'S DIRECTIONS, IT SEEMS THAT, WITH A FEW NOTABLE EXCEPTIONS, THEY WERE LARGELY IGNORED EVEN AS LATE AS THE AUTUMN OF 1919. LENIN FEARED THE CONSEQUENCES OF Borot'-bsty OPPOSITION TO Bolshevik CENTRALISM AND PROBABLY REASONED THAT, IF THEY WERE ACCEPTED IN THE CP(B)U NOT ONLY WOULD THE Bolsheviks GAIN PEASANT SUPPORT, BUT THAT THE SEPARATIST TENDENCIES OF THIS GROUP COULD BE MORE EASILY COMBATED AND CONTROLLED.

BECAUSE OF THE Bolsheviks' PREVIOUS BAD EXPERIENCES IN ATTEMPTING TO ESTABLISH THEMSELVES IN THE UKRAINE, LENIN DECIDED AFTER THE FALL OF Denikin THAT A NEW APPROACH WHICH WOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT BOTH THE PEASANT PROBLEM AND DEAL WITH THE Borot'bsty WAS NECESSARY. AT THE EIGHTH CONFERENCE OF THE RCP HELD IN THE FIRST WEEK OF DECEMBER 1919 LENIN EXPLAINED THAT THE PARTY MUST FORGE AN ALLIANCE WITH THE UKRAINIAN PEASANTRY AND AT THE SAME TIME ELIMINATE THE Borot'bsty:

WHEN SOME OF THE COMRADES SAID THAT I RECOMMENDED A BLOC WITH THE Borot'ba PARTY THEY MISTOOK MY MEANING. HERE I COMPARED THE POLICY THAT MUST BE PURSUED IN RESPECT OF THE Borot'ba PARTY WITH THE POLICY WE HAD PURSUED IN RESPECT OF THE RIGHT SOCIALIST-REVOLUTIONARIES. WE WERE THEN ACCUSED, IN THE FIRST WEEK AFTER OCTOBER—AT PEASANT CONGRESSES, INCIDENTALLY—OF NOT WANTING TO USE THE FORCES OF THE PEASANTRY ONCE WE HAD SEIZED POWER. IN REPLY I SAID THAT WE HAD TAKEN OVER THEIR PROGRAMME IN ITS ENTIRETY SO AS TO USE THE FORCES OF THE PEASANTRY—WE WANT TO DO THAT BUT WE DON'T WANT AN ALLIANCE WITH SOCIALIST-REVOLUTIONARIES.... MY OPINION IS THAT WE MUST DEMONSTRATE THAT WE NEED A BLOC WITH THE UKRAINIAN PEASANTRY, AND IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THAT BLOC WE MUST POLEMISE WITH THE Borot'ba PEOPLE IN A WAY THAT DIFFERS FROM THE PRESENT POLEMICS.

LENIN'S COMPARISON OF THE Borot'bsty TO THE RUSSIAN RIGHT SOCIALIST...
that the Ukrainian economy was indispensable for the continued existence of Soviet Russia and all economic measures were taken with the aim of further strengthening the ties between the two republics until they would become indivisible.

The Borot'bistty were members of the left-wing of the Ukrainian Socialist Revolutionary Party who broke away from the parent body in May 1918. Their ideological position was almost identical with that of the Bolsheviks except for their stand on the national question. Borot'bist support, unlike that of the Bolsheviks, came from the countryside while they were relatively weak in the towns. Since Bolshevik influence was almost non-existent among the Ukrainian peasantry, Lenin sought an alliance with the Borot'bisty, albeit an alliance on Leninist terms.

Ideologically, the grounds for Bolshevik-Borot'bist cooperation were being prepared by Lenin as early as the spring of 1919. At the Seventh Congress Lenin declared that it was the party's duty to involve all working people with the government of the state even though this was a task of tremendous difficulty. "But socialism cannot be implemented by a minority, by the Party," he explained. "It can be implemented only by tens of millions when they have learned to do it themselves." The tasks of the Borot'bisty therefore were to acquaint the Ukrainian peasantry with Bolshevism and to attempt to draw them into pro-Soviet work.

In January 1919 Piatakov was replaced by Rakovsky as government leader in the Ukrainian SSR. Among the most important tasks assigned the latter by Lenin was the winning over of Ukrainian leftist parties, particularly the Borot'bisty, to the Bolshevik cause. But the success of the military operation in the Ukraine created a false sense of confidence among members of the CP(B)U and they refused to admit the Ukrain-
IAN GROUP INTO THE VARIOUS GOVERNMENTAL ORGANS—CONTRARY TO LENIN'S EXPLICIT INSTRUCTIONS. CP(B)U LEADERS DISLIKED THE NATIONALISM OF THE Borot'bizty, especially their insistence that the Ukrainian Soviet Army be autonomous or independent with respect to Moscow. When Lenin learned of the CP(B)U's April decision to exclude the Borot'bizty he immediately demanded that they reverse it. Although orders were dutifully issued to all CP(B)U organizations in conformity with Lenin's directions, it seems that, with a few notable exceptions, they were largely ignored even as late as the autumn of 1919. Lenin feared the consequences of Borot'bizty opposition to Bolshevik centralism and probably reasoned that, if they were accepted in the CP(B)U not only would the Bolsheviks gain peasant support, but that the separatist tendencies of this group could be more easily combated and controlled.

Because of the Bolsheviks' previous sad experiences in attempting to establish themselves in the Ukraine, Lenin decided after the fall of Denikin that a new approach which would take into account both the peasant problem and deal with the Borot'bizty was necessary. At the Eighth Conference of the RCP held in the first week of December 1919 Lenin explained that the party must forge an alliance with the Ukrainian peasantry and at the same time eliminate the Borot'bizty:

When some of the comrades said that I recommended a bloc with the Borotba Party they mistook my meaning. Here I compared the policy that must be pursued in respect of the Borotba Party with the policy we had pursued in respect of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. We were then accused, in the first week after October—at peasant congresses, incidentally—of not wanting to use the forces of the peasantry once we had seized power. In reply I said that we had taken over their programme in its entirety so as to use the forces of the peasantry—we want to do that but we don't want an alliance with Socialist-Revolutionaries.... My opinion is that we must demonstrate that we need a bloc with the Ukrainian peasantry, and in order to achieve that bloc we must polemise with the Borotba people in a way that differs from the present polemics.

Lenin's comparison of the Borot'bizty to the Russian Right Socialist
Revolutionaries, as Majstrenko points out, was quite inaccurate. The latter were an anti-Bolshevik party while the Borot'ibisty supported the Bolshevik program.95

Lenin was also suspicious of the Borot'ibist refusal to denounce the activities of Ukrainian partisans. "...We need a struggle against the guerilla bands," he insisted at the Eighth Conference. "The Borotba people talk a lot about the national question but they say nothing about the guerillas," Lenin complained.96 He had reason to be suspicious because the Borot'ibisty were in fact working within many guerilla bands in an attempt to gain their allegiance. In fact one of the major obstacles to the acceptance of the Borot'ibisty by the Bolsheviks was their insistence on the creation of an independent Ukrainian army.97 A note on the Borot'ibisty in the party documents of December 11-17, 1919 outlines the projected Bolshevik approach to this group:

The Borot'ibists are to be deemed a party that has violated the basic principles of Communism by its propaganda in favour of the separation of armed forces and by the support given by it to banditry, which plays directly into the hands of the Whites and international imperialism. Their struggle against the slogan of a close and still closer alliance with the RSFSR likewise runs counter to the interests of the proletariat. Our entire policy must be systematically and unswervingly directed towards the liquidation of the Borot'ibists.... The moment for their liquidation is to be settled shortly, and this moment will be determined by the Politburo and communicated to the Ukrainian Revolutionary Committee.98

A few days after this note was written, the Borot'ibisty decided to give up their claims for an independent Ukrainian army and an agreement was signed with the Bolsheviks.

According to another party document (most probably written by Lenin) the aim of the alliance was "to win over a young political party to our tried and tested Communist policy in the Ukraine, which was still so lacking in experience of socialist construction."99 No mention was
MADE OF THE FACT THAT THE BOLSHEVIKs ALSO LACKED THE "EXPERIENCE OF SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION" IN THE UKRAINE AND THAT THEY NEEDED BOROT'BIST SUPPORT IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH THE POPULAR BASE REQUIRED FOR THIS CONSTRUCTION. THIS DOCUMENT STATES THAT THE BOROT'BISTY HAVE BEEN STEADILY EVOLVING TOWARDS THE RIGHT BECAUSE THEY FEARED ABSORPTION INTO THE CP(B)U, Fought CENTRALIZATION, ADVOCATED THE CREATION OF AN INDEPENDENT UKRAINIAN ARMY AND SUPPORTED PARTISAN ELEMENTS. ALTHOUGH THE BOROT'BISTY WERE TO BE DESTROYED AS A PARTY, SOME BOROT'BIST MEMBERS COULD BE USEFUL FOR THE CP(B)U AND THEREFORE THE DOCUMENT STATED THAT THE "HONEST SOCIALIST ELEMENTS AMONG THE BOROT'BISTS MUST BE WRESTED AWAY FROM THE SOCIAL-CHAUVINISTS AND FIND THEIR PLACE IN THE RANKS OF OUR PARTY."100 MAKHNO AND PETLIURITE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE BOROT'BIST ORGANIZATION WOULD BE DEALT WITH SEVERELY AND IT WAS DECIDED THAT THE BOLSHEVIKS "MUST WITHIN A SHORT SPACE OF TIME PREPARE THE CONDITIONS FOR EJECTING THE BOROT'BISTS FROM THE GOVERNMENT RANKS AND FOR ACHIEVING THE COMPLETE LIQUIDATION OF THE BOROT'BIST PARTY AS A SOVIET-RECOGNIZED PARTY."101

OUTWARDLY, HOWEVER, RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES SEEMED QUITE SATISFACTORY. LENIN, IN HIS LETTER TO THE UKRAINIAN WORKERS AND PEASANTS OF DECEMBER 28, 1919 POINTED OUT "BEFORE THE UKRAINIAN BOLSHEVIK COMMUNISTS, THERE ARE UKRAINIAN BOROTBA COMMUNISTS WORKING ON THE... [ALL-UKRAINE] REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE AS MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT."102 HE CONTINUED, NOTING THAT "ONE OF THE THINGS DISTINGUISHING THE BOROT'BISTS FROM THE BOLSHEVIKS IS THAT THEY INSIST UPON THE UNCONDITIONAL INDEPENDENCE OF THE UKRAINE. THE BOLSHEVIKS WILL NOT MAKE THIS A SUBJECT OF DIFFERENCE AND DISUNITY, THEY DO NOT REGARD THIS AS AN OBSTACLE TO CONCERTED PROLETARIAN EFFORT."103 THERE COULD BE NO QUARREL OVER STATE FRONTIERS, INSISTED LENIN, BECAUSE THEY WERE RELATIVELY UNIMPORTANT. ONLY ON ECONOMIC AND MILITARY QUESTIONS WAS THERE NEED FOR
RIGIDITY; ECONOMIC AND MILITARY UNION WAS INispensable. 104

In this letter Lenin explained the conditions of the alliance between the two parties. He stressed that

Great-Russian Communists must make concessions when there are differences with the Ukrainian Bolshevik Communists and Borot'bizty and these differences concern the state independence of the Ukraine, the forms of her alliance with Russia, and the national question in general. But all of us, Great-Russian Communists, Ukrainian Communists, and Communists of any other nation, must be unyielding and irreconcilable in the underlying and fundamental questions of the proletarian struggle, of the proletarian dictatorship; we must not tolerate compromise with the bourgeoisie or any division of the forces which are protecting us against Denikin. 105

This letter was directed to the Ukrainian people and was written for mass consumption. Lenin therefore chose to ignore the real differences that existed with the Borot'bizty. He chose instead to emphasize something more popular such as the reactionary nature of Great-Russian chauvinism. 106 His real attitude to the Borot'bizty was that discussed above in the two party documents and, as he remarked at the Ninth Congress, "...Anybody who says that the Central Committee is guilty of strengthening the Borot'bizts does not understand the political line on the national question." 107

If the Borot'bizty had any doubts about their role and status in the Soviet Ukraine as perceived by the Bolsheviks they should have been dispelled in January 1920. They had applied to join the Communist International as an independent communist party. While the first Comintern resolution did not reject their application outright, it raised the question of the unification of all communist forces in the Ukraine in one party, starting from the principle that in every communist country there should be a single communist party.... 108 The second resolution of the Comintern, however, accused the Borot'bizty of succumbing to a "purely petty bourgeois deviation" and then stated that "the executive
Committee of the Communist International considers that no one will prevent the true communist elements among the Boret'ibisty form joining the ranks of the CPU (Bolshevik) the party which fully recognizes the independence of the Soviet Ukraine.... This rejection followed Lenin's orders. He insisted that the Boret'ibisty not be accused of nationalism but rather of petty bourgeois deviation.

One month after this rejection, at the Ninth Party Congress of March 29- April 5, 1920 Lenin remarked that the Bolsheviks had "promised the maximum concessions to the Boret'ibists, but on condition that they pursued a communist policy" and added that in this way we showed that we are in no way intolerant. By this time, however, the Boret'ibisty realized the full significance of their predicament; they were caught in a Russian pincer formed by the RCP on one side and the Comintern on the other. Their position seemed hopeless and by March 1920 the party had dissolved and many former members joined the Bolsheviks. Nevertheless, at the congress Lenin insisted that it was the tolerance of the Bolsheviks that prompted the party's dissolution. He insisted that the correctness of Bolshevik concessions was shown by the fact that all the best elements among the Boret'ibists have now joined our party. We have carried out a re-registration of this party, and instead of a revolt of the Boret'ibists, which seemed inevitable, we find that, thanks to the correct policy of the Central Committee...all the best elements among the Boret'ibists have joined our Party under our control and with our recognition, while all the rest have disappeared from the political scene.

It should be noted, however, that of these "best elements" only 119 out of the 4,000 that joined the party in the spring of 1920 remained after the Kronstadt rebellion.

Zinoviev, in November 1920, suggested that a sufficient number of Boret'ibists had joined the CP(B)U and that any further enrollment
WOULD TEND TO STRENGTHEN A GRAVITATION TOWARD UKRAINIAN CHAUVINISM. THE FIFTH CONFERENCE OF THE CP(B)U SUPPORTED ZINOVIEV'S SUGGESTIONS NOT ONLY BY REFUSING TO RE-ELECT A LEADING BOROT'BYSTY TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE BUT ALSO BY INSISTING THAT THE UKRAINIZATION WORK OF 1920 HAD ALMOST EXTINGUISHED THE NATIONAL QUESTION. LENIN DISAGREED, HOWEVER, AND ORDERED THAT UKRAINIZATION BE CONTINUED. THERE CAN BE LITTLE DOUBT THAT BOROT'BYSTY ACTIVITY MADE LENIN AWARE OF UKRAINIAN NATIONAL DEMANDS AND THUS PROMPTED THE RELATIVELY WIDE-RANGING CULTURAL CONCESSIONS THAT WERE KNOWN AS UKRAINIZATION. FURTHERMORE, THE BOROT'BYSTY FORCED LENIN TO RECOGNIZE THE EXISTENCE OF A GENUINE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT IN THE UKRAINE OTHER THAN BOLSHEVISM.


ALL CLASS-CONSCIOUS WORKERS MUST CLEARLY REALIZE THAT FRACTIONALISM OF ANY KIND IS HARMFUL AND IMPERMISSIBLE....

This statement was directed not only to the BOROT'BYSTY but to the CP(B)U AS A WHOLE WITHIN WHICH VARIOUS GROUPS HAD BEEN COMPETING FOR POWER.

IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, LENIN COULD NOT RECOGNIZE THE BOROT'BYSTY PRIMARILY BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT COMPLETELY SUBORDINATED TO MOSCOW AND WITH HIS PECULIAR LOGIC HE ARGUED THAT WHEN THEY FINALLY HAD BEEN EFFECTIVELY SUBORDINATED THERE WAS NO ACCEPTABLE REASON FOR THEIR CONTINUED EXISTENCE. MANY BOROT'BYSTY IDEAS, COMPATIBLE WITH BOLSHEVISM, WERE AP-
PROPRIATED BY THE CP(B)U AND THEIR INFLUENCE WAS THEREFORE NOT INCONSIDERABLE. THEIR IDEAS ON UKRAINIAN INDEPENDENCE AND A SEPARATE UKRAINIAN ARMY, HOWEVER, WERE CONVENIENTLY FORGOTTEN.


THE THEORETICAL GROUNDWORK FOR UKRAINIZATION HAD BEEN PREPARED BY LENIN LONG BEFORE THE REVOLUTION BY HIS INSISTENCE ON NATIONAL EQUALITY AND THE ABOLITION OF ALL PRIVILEGES BASED ON NATIONAL CRITERIA. THIS WAS GIVEN PROGRAMMATIC REINFORCEMENT AT THE EIGHTH CONGRESS WHEN THE PARTY DECIDED THAT IT WAS "ESSENTIAL TO ANNUL ANY AND EVERY PRIVILEGE ON THE PART OF ANY NATIONAL GROUP, TO SECURE COMPLETE NATIONAL EQUALITY..." AND EMPHASIZED THAT "IN EACH CASE ON THE PART OF THE PROLETARIAT OF THOSE NATIONS WHICH ARE OR HAVE BEEN OPPRESSOR NATIONS, IT IS NECESSARY THAT THERE SHOULD BE EXTREME DISCRETION, AND THAT THE UTMOU
CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE PAID TO THE SURVIVAL OF NATIONAL SENTIMENTS AMONG THE WORKING MASSES OF NATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN OPPRESSED OR HAVE BEEN DEPRIVED OF EQUAL RIGHTS." This resolution became part of the Bolshevik program and was the direct result of Lenin's appraisal of the situation in the Ukraine. In his draft program, prepared for the Eighth Congress Lenin explained that the previously successful Bolshevik policies would in all likelihood have to be changed to meet the peculiar conditions of the Ukraine. "In those outlying parts of Russia which are now becoming Soviet—the Ukraine and the Don region—our policy may have to be modified," explained Lenin. "It would be a mistake to draw up stereotyped decrees for all parts of Russia; it would be a mistake for the Bolshevik Communists, the Soviet officials in the Ukraine and the Don, to apply these decrees to other regions wholesale, without discrimination."

Lenin had recognized the problem in January 1919 and one of the instructions he issued Rakovsky, who was replacing Piatakov as head of the Soviet government in the Ukraine, was to be more tolerant of the nationalist sentiments of Ukrainians. Rakovsky however did not follow these instructions, which would have included the declaration of Ukrainian as the official language. The CP(B)U also refused to accept the general peasant orientation of Ukrainian socialists as anything but a petty bourgeois deviation.

As a result of this doctrinaire stubbornness of members of both the CP(B)U and the RCP a new official approach to the Ukrainian question was mooted and the Leninist line was finally adopted at the Eighth Party Conference in December 1919. Lenin, who not so long ago wondered if Ukrainian was really the language of the Ukrainian masses and if Ukrainian nationalism was not a German invention, now decided that not only
DID SUCH A LANGUAGE AND DISTINCT NATIONAL GROUP EXIST AND WAS TO BE OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED BUT ALSO THAT MEMBERS OF THE RCP WORKING IN THE REPUBLIC WOULD HAVE TO LEARN THE LANGUAGE AND REMOVE ALL BARRIERS TO UKRAINIAN CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT. Paragraph 3 of the resolution "On Soviet Power in Ukraine" dealt with the cultural aspects of the question:

In view of the fact that Ukrainian culture (language, school, etc.) has been suppressed for centuries by Russian tsarism and the exploiting classes, the C.C., R.C.P. makes it incumbent upon all party members to use every means to help remove all barriers in the way of the free development of the Ukrainian language and culture. Since the many centuries of oppression have given rise to nationalist tendencies among the backward sections of the population, R.C.P. members must exercise the greatest caution in respect of those tendencies and must oppose them with words of comradely explanation concerning the identity of interests of the working people of the Ukraine and Russia.

Lenin made it clear that only the "backward sections" of the population were nationally conscious and condescendingly spoke of the need for "comradely explanation" of Bolshevik ideas. In the Ukraine, however, it was the "backward sections" that were not nationally motivated. More land, not a national state, was the prime objective of many relatively articulate peasants, although the nationalists could often channel these desires and merge them with nationalism.

Further tasks were outlined in this resolution with regard to the Russians working in the Ukraine. Lenin demanded that R.C.P. members on Ukrainian territory must put into practice the right of the working people to study in the Ukrainian language and to speak their native language in all Soviet institutions; they must in every way counteract attempts at Russification that push the Ukrainian language into the background and must convert that language into an instrument for the communist education of the working people.

Lenin had quite obviously concluded that Bolshevik ideas could be more easily disseminated and would be more palatable if they were propagated in the native tongue of the peasant. In order to refute the charge of
RUSSIANIZATION THE RESOLUTION ALSO INSISTED THAT IMMEDIATE STEPS BE TAKEN "TO ENSURE THAT IN ALL SOVIET INSTITUTIONS THERE ARE SUFFICIENT UKRAINIAN-SPEAKING EMPLOYEES AND THAT IN FUTURE ALL EMPLOYEES ARE ABLE TO SPEAK UKRAINIAN." No date was set for the time when all the administrators were to be fluent in Ukrainian and it was obviously left to the party to decide when Soviet institutions contained a "sufficient number of Ukrainian-speaking employees." Significantly, there was no talk of similar reforms within the CP(B)U.

By this concession Lenin fervently hoped to gain the sympathy of the Ukrainian peasant because, as he noted in his analysis of the Constituent Assembly elections, it was precisely in the rich grain growing areas like the Ukraine that the population was antipathetic towards Bolshevism. "In the long run," he resolved, "it was the vacillation of the peasantry, the main body of the petty-bourgeoisie working people, that decided the fate of Soviet rule and of the rule of Kolchak and Denikin. But this 'long run' was preceded by a fairly lengthy period of severe struggle and painful trial, which have not ended precisely in Siberia and in the Ukraine." Lenin was prepared to go a long way with cultural concessions—he even insisted they be applied in the army. In a telegram to Stalin in Kharkov, Lenin ordered the military command "to accept applications and other papers written in Ukrainian. This is absolutely essential—as far as language is concerned there must be every concession and the maximum of equality." If it is remembered, however, that the army was overwhelmingly composed of peasants these concessions do not seem overly generous on Lenin's part.

Ukrainization was officially announced by Stalin. He stated, in October 1920 that Soviet power must become "near and dear to the masses of the border regions of Russia. But this requires that it
should first of all become comprehensible to them. Stalin also
underlined the basic reason for the institution of Ukrainization, when,
speaking of the Ukraine and other republics, he announced that "the real
sovietization of these regions, their conversion into Soviet countries
closely bound with Central Russia in one integral state, is inconceiv-
able without the wide-spread organization of local schools, without the
creation of courts, administrative bodies, organs of authority, etc.,
staffed with people acquainted with the life and language of the popu-
lation."

Lenin attacked great-Russian chauvinism at the Tenth Party Con-
gress in March 1921 chiefly because it was alienating the masses of the
various nationalities. He insisted that Bolsheviks oppose every mani-
festation of great Russian nationalism, denounce suppression of national
movements unless this suppression was inspired by proletarian motives
and that they accept and support the progressive elements in national
movements. At the Tenth Congress Stalin presented the resolution on
the national problem and it was decided that educational, economic,
governmental and cultural institutions and organs should conform to the
national characteristics of the various regions and local languages were
to be employed. In reply to the party's centrists that Lenin and
Stalin were artificially cultivating a Belorussian nationality, Stalin
snapped that similar talk had been heard a few years ago about the Uk-
rainian nation but it was obvious now "that there is a Ukrainian nation,
and it is the duty of Communists to develop its culture. You cannot go
against history. It is obvious that although Russian elements still pre-
dominate in the Ukrainian towns, in the course of time these towns will
inevitably be Ukrainized." In his prerevolutionary writings Lenin
had always maintained that it was not the task of Communists to foster
A NATIONAL CULTURE BUT NOW, HOWEVER, SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT HAD BECOME A DUTY FOR COMMUNISTS.

LENIN'S INSTRUCTIONS TO THE COMMUNISTS IN THE TRANSCAUCASIAN REPUBLIC, EXPLAINING THE NEW NATIONAL POLICY IN GENERAL TERMS ARE APPLICABLE TO THE UKRAINE. He told them that they should not unquestionably copy Bolshevik tactics "but thoughtfully vary them in adaptation to the differing concrete conditions" and noted that one of the major differences was the "even more pronounced peasant character" of the area. "You will need to practise more moderation and caution", he insisted, "and show more readiness to make concessions to the petty bourgeois, the intelligentsia, and particularly the peasantry." The aim of this new policy, asserted Lenin, was "to effect a slower, more cautious and more systematic transition to socialism" and this could only be done successfully if the local communists "do not copy... Bolshevik tactics, but analyse the reasons for their peculiar features, the conditions that gave rise to them, and their results; go beyond the letter, and apply the spirit, the essence and the lessons of the 1917-21 experience."

STALIN, IN AN ARTICLE ON BOLSHEVIK NATIONALITY POLICY, WROTE THAT THE "ESSENCE OF THIS POLICY" OF WHICH UKRAINIZATION WAS THE MAJOR PART CAN BE EXPRESSED IN A FEW WORDS: RENUNCIATION OF ALL "CLAIMS" AND "RIGHTS" TO REGIONS INHABITED BY NON-RUSSIAN NATIONS; RECOGNITION (NOT IN WORDS BUT IN DEEDS) OF THE RIGHT OF THESE NATIONS TO EXIST AS INDEPENDENT STATES; A VOLUNTARY MILITARY AND ECONOMIC UNION OF THESE NATIONS WITH CENTRAL RUSSIA; ASSISTANCE TO THE BACKWARD NATIONS IN THEIR CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, WITHOUT WHICH WHAT IS KNOWN AS "NATIONAL EQUALITY OF RIGHTS" BECOMES AN EMPTY SOUND; ALL THIS BASED ON THE COMPLETE EMANCIPATION OF THE PEASANTS AND THE CONCENTRATION OF ALL POWER IN THE HANDS OF THE LABOURING ELEMENTS OF THE BORDER NATIONS—SUCH IS THE NATIONAL POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNISTS.

AN ARTICLE WRITTEN ONE YEAR EARLIER, IN OCTOBER 1920, OUTLINED THE OBE-
JECTIVES OF THIS POLICY. STALIN WROTE THAT TSARISM IMPLANTED A PRO-
FOUND DISTRUST OF GREAT RUSSIANS AMONG THE NATIONALITIES AND ARGUED THAT
THIS DISTRUST HAD TO BE ELIMINATED AND THAT "AN ATMOSPHERE OF MUTUAL UN-
DERSTANDING AND FRATERNAL CONFIDENCE BE CREATED."136

AT THE NINTH CONGRESS OF SOVIETS IN DECEMBER 1921, LENIN PROU-
DLY ANNOUNCED THAT IT WAS ONLY THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT THAT COULD HAVE
MADE ALL THESE NATIONAL CONCESSIONS POSSIBLE AND NO OTHER GOVERNMENT,
HE GENEROUSLY OBSERVED, WOULD HAVE RECOGNIZED THE GUILT OF TSARIST RE-
PRESSION OF THE NATIONALITIES. FURTHERMORE, HE NOTED, "THERE IS NOT,
AND CANNOT BE, ANOTHER GOVERNMENT WHICH WOULD SO OPENLY ADMIT THIS, ... WHICH WOULD CONDUCT PROPAGANDA AGAINST THE FORCIBLE INCORPORATION OF
OTHER NATIONALITIES INTO RUSSIA. THIS IS NOT MERE WORDS—THIS IS AN
OBVIOUS POLITICAL FACT, ABSOLUTELY INDISPUTABLE AND PLAIN FOR ALL TO
SEE."137 THIS WAS, OF COURSE, ABSOLUTELY CORRECT. IT WAS INDEED "AN
OBVIOUS POLITICAL FACT" THAT THE BOLSHEVIKS CONDUCTED PROPAGANDA AGAINST
BOTH TSARIST CENTRALISM AND AGAINST THE FORCIBLE RETENTION OF NATIONALI-
TIES BUT AT THE SAME TIME AS THEY WERE PROPAGANDIZING AGAINST THESE
THINGS THE BOLSHEVIKS WERE IMPOSING A CENTRALISM OF THEIR OWN AND FOR-
CIBLY RETAINING THE NATIONALITIES IN THE NEW SOVIET STATE.

THERE CAN BE LITTLE DOUBT THAT LENIN WAS GENERALLY APPALLED BY
RCP TREATMENT OF THE NATIONALITIES. HE WAS FULLY AWARE THAT SOMETHING
MUST HAVE GONE AWRY WHEN GOOD PARTY MEN SUCH AS SKRYPNIK AND RAKOVSKY
COMPLAINED OF RUSSIAN CHAUVINISM WITHIN THE RCP AND CP(B)U. BUT LENIN'S
ATTEMPTS TO CORRECT THIS DEVIATION WERE HAMPERED BY HIS CONCEPT OF PARTY
AND STATE UNITY AND BY HIS BELIEF THAT COMMunist PARTY MEMBERS AND AP-
PARATCHIKS WERE SOMEHOW FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT AND MORE TOLERANT THAN
THEIR TSARIST COUNTERPARTS.138 AT ANY RATE, UKRAINIZATION, BOTH PROGRAM-
MATICALLY AND PRACTICALLY, WAS REINFORCED AT THE THIRTEENTH PARTY CON-
gress, and Lenin's policy of national concessions to the Ukrainians was thus continued for the next several years.

The matter of the form of union and future relations between the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR was the cause of much perplexity for Lenin. His entire pre-October theory of self-determination had been designed to obviate the desire of nationalities to secede but since it had proved ineffective, new methods had to be used to reintegrate the various states that had separated from the old Russian Empire. Lenin realized a few months before the revolution that numerous nationalities had either seceded or would secede from the tsarist empire and he cast about looking for a new approach. He found one in the writing of Marx and Engels who had made a few pronouncements on federalism—Marx, as has been noted, with regard to Ireland and Engels in more general terms. Lenin now insisted that state relations must be based on the concrete historical peculiarities of each particular case, from what and to what the given transitional form is passing. Engels, remarked Lenin, regarded the federal republic either as an exception and a hindrance to development, or as a transition from a monarchy to a centralised republic, as a "step forward" under certain special conditions. And among these special conditions, he put the national question to the fore.

Thus by the time of the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets in January 1918 not only had federalism become acceptable but it had become an important weapon of the Bolsheviks in their striving toward unity. The concept of federalism was incorporated in the Russian Constitution of 1918 but it specifically stated that only the workers and peasants of the nationalities could finally decide if this was to be the form of alliance their republics would have with the RSFSR. Furthermore
this decision could only be made at "authorized" soviet congresses. 142

the program of the rcp, adopted at the eighth congress in march 1919
confirmed the third congress of soviets' stand on federalism but added
that "a federative union of all states which are organised on a soviet
basis" was to be "a transitional step towards complete union." 143

in his draft resolution on soviet rule in the ukraine written
for the eighth conference lenin insisted that it was "essential to again
affirm that the rcp holds consistently to the view that the independence
of the ukrainian soviet socialist republic be recognised" but added that
the rcp will strive to establish federal relations between the two re-
publics. 144 if this seemed like an exceptionally liberal statement,
lenin quickly brought it back within the bolshevik framework by declar-
ing "as beyond dispute for every communist and every political-conscious
worker that the closest alliance of all soviet republics in their strug-
gle against the menacing forces of world imperialism is essential...." 145

according to lenin only the ukrainian workers and labouring peasants
themselves could decide on the form of this alliance.

after the eighth conference lenin told the ukrainian people
that they were to decide at their all-ukrainian congress of soviets whe-
ther they would amalgamate with russia, or whether they would remain in-
dependent. his concept of independence for the ukraine was an extremely
strange one, however. if the ukrainians opted for a separate and inde-
dendent republic, he wrote, they would then have to decide "what federal
ties should be established between that republic and russia." 146 but
any real decision on the part of the "authorized" ukrainian congress of
soviets was made impossible by lenin's statement that the "common fight
will clearly show in practice that whatever the decision in regard to
state independence or frontiers may be, there must be a close military
AND ECONOMIC ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE GREAT-RUSSIAN AND UKRAINIAN WORKERS.

It would not be unreasonable to ask how a truly independent state could have "a close military and economic alliance" imposed upon it. Of course, this was merely a formality since a number of Ukrainian commissariats, including the Ministry of War, had been subordinated to Moscow in April 1919.

Lenin constantly emphasized the necessity for the "closest alliance" of Ukrainian and Great Russian workers or otherwise the revolution would fail. "Whatever the boundaries of the Ukraine and Russia may be," he remarked, "whatever may be the forms of their mutual state relationships, that is not so important...." What was important, however, was military and economic unity because "if we fail to maintain the closest alliance, an alliance against Denikin, an alliance against the capitalists and kulaks of our countries and of all countries, the cause of labour will most certainly perish for many years to come in the sense that the capitalists will be able to crush and strangle both the Soviet Ukraine and Soviet Russia." Lenin thus made the success of the revolution dependent on the Ukraine remaining within Soviet Russia and quite plainly stated that any decision to the contrary would be a counterrevolutionary manifestation, a submission to bourgeois nationalist prejudices.

Since it was becoming obvious that the Soviet Ukraine would prefer even the Soviet form of federalism to outright amalgamation, Lenin pointed out again that "federation is a transitional form to complete unity," emphasizing that "it is necessary to strive for ever closer federal unity...." This was already being done with the Ukrainian SSR as the result of the April 1919 agreement. Lenin happily noted that the building of "an ever closer alliance" with the Ukraine was facili-
tated by the Ukrainian people's experience with Denikin. He informed the All-Russian Central Executive Committee in February 1920 that

As a result of their bitter experience of Denikin's rule, the mass of Ukrainian peasants and workers are becoming convinced that only the closest alliance between the Ukraine and the Russian Republic will be really invincible in the face of international imperialism, and that at the time of struggle against imperialism there is nothing to be gained by the separation of the Ukrainian state, since imperialism will take advantage of every division to crush Soviet power. Such a division is criminal.153

Lenin then confidently predicted that the need for a closer alliance would be recognized by the forthcoming All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets because Bolshevik "policy is taking deep root in the Ukraine."154

A new "RSFSR-Ukrainian SSR Workers' Peasants' Treaty of Alliance" was dutifully adopted by the Ukrainian Congress of Soviets and it was duly ratified by Lenin and Rakovsky in December 20, 1920.155 By the terms of this treaty Ukraine formally entered into a military and economic alliance with the RSFSR. Seven important commissariats (Military and Maritime Affairs, Supreme Council of Peoples' Economy, Foreign Trade, Finance, Labor, Communications and Posts and Telegraphs) were declared unified and thus under the direct control of Moscow.156

If there had been any substance to the federal relations between the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR it no longer remained. Federalism was now an empty and meaningless form—from the Ukrainian viewpoint at any rate. As Carr points out, however, the Ukrainian treaty was much more elaborate than that concluded with the other republics157 and its importance is evidenced by the fact that this was the only one signed by Lenin. Moscow now fully controlled both the CP(B)U and the government of the Ukrainian SSR. At the Fourth Conference of the CP(B)U held in March 1920 a resolution was adopted on the state relations between Soviet Ukraine and Soviet Russia which declared that "close fraternal solidarity between the workers and peasants of all countries is the ba-
sic condition for the victory of the Universal Socialist Revolution.

All attempts to divide or weaken this solidarity are veritably counter-revolutionary, \( \text{and} \) directed against the very rule of the workers and peasants."\(^{158}\) Although individual members and groups in the CP(B)U often violently disagreed with Moscow, for several years, they were easily removed if Lenin or Stalin wished to be rid of them.

The next step was the creation of a union of all Soviet republics under Moscow's aegis. Although Lenin was becoming ill, he attempted to direct this union which to him had become even more important than the economic problems of the day.\(^{159}\) "The proper solution of this problem will determine the future organization of our machinery of state . . .," he observed in his telegram of welcome to the opening of the All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets on December 10, 1922.\(^{160}\) Lenin was concerned with past errors and did not wish them repeated, and he was becoming suspicious of his top lieutenants.

The closest unity of the republics was still Lenin's prime objective and for this reason he was becoming concerned with the high-handed treatment of the nationalities by Stalin and his cohorts. "...Nothing so hinders the development and consolidation of proletarian class solidarity as much as national injustice," he told a rapidly diminishing audience.\(^{161}\) Lenin was probably aware that Stalin had learned well the Leninist lessons on words meaning "little." He could, no doubt, see that Stalin's sudden support of federalism meant only that his disciple had decided to call his former centralist concept of regional autonomy by the new label of federalism.\(^{162}\) Lenin hoped to see the new Union of Soviet Socialist Republics retain central control only in military and foreign affairs\(^{163}\) but the process of centralization had proceeded too far for meaningful reversal to be effected by a man on his deathbed.
The Ukrainian government and the CP(B)U continued their struggle for a separate identity but the men from Moscow had destroyed them as a cohesive and, therefore, viable force. The Ukraine, as Lenin so resolutely wished, had again become, both legally as well as in fact, an integral part of the Russian political and economic structure.

Most of Lenin's life had been a struggle for a single highly centralized party and he also hoped to attain this degree of centralization in the new Soviet state. This is amply borne out by his prerevolutionary political writings. Although he was more adamant on the need for a unitary party, he was perhaps less so with regard to the state. It can be reasonably argued, however, that his concessions on state structure were largely ones of form rather than substance. His machinations with the CP(B)U, the Ukrainian SSR, the Borotbisty, Ukrainization, and the organizational and economic questions as they applied to the Ukraine can only be properly understood if this is remembered. His postrevolutionary work with the Ukrainian question was concerned with drawing the Ukraine and Ukrainians irrevocably within the Soviet Russian orbit. His route was circuitous and often too complicated for his less intellectually endowed disciples to understand. The few Bolsheviks like Piatakov and Bukharin who could comprehend his reasons usually disagreed with his tactics. But no matter what compromise he made or concession he gave, Lenin attempted to justify it by the argument that it would facilitate ultimate unity and assimilation. He even granted the cultural autonomy with which he had so violently disagreed before October 1917, as well as a sharply limited form of federalism.

All this was based on Lenin's belief that the Russian would be (or was) a 'new man', somehow fundamentally and intrinsically different from the tsarist bureaucrat. He discovered too late that this was not
SO AND THAT ALTHOUGH COMMUNIST CENTRALISM MAY HAVE DIFFERED IN SPIRIT
FROM TSARIST CENTRALISM, OBJECTIVELY FOR THE UKRAINIAN PEASANT OR WORKER
THE DIFFERENCES WERE QUITE INSIGNIFICANT. THE RUSSIAN BEAR WAS NOT TO
BE TAUGHT NEW MANNERS OVERNIGHT. IT SEEMS IRONIC, THEREFORE, THAT AFTER
A LIFETIME OF INSISTING THAT THE UKRAINE SHOULD BE BOUND TO RUSSIA IN
CLOSEST UNION AND ALLIANCE, HE CHANGED HIS MIND WHEN HIS DREAM WAS COM­
ING TRUE.


3. Lenin, VI, p. 462. In an attack on Bundist nationalism in 1903 Lenin wrote that "one who has adopted the standpoint of nationalism naturally arrives at the desire to erect a Chinese Wall around his nationality, his national working-class movement...and by this action he is reducing to nil the great call for the rallying and unity of the proletarians of all nations, all races and all languages." Ibid., p. 521. See Schapiro, p. 223.

4. Lenin, X, p. 159. 5. Ibid., p. 159.
6. Ibid., pp. 159-60.
7. Ibid., pp. 322, 371; Borys, pp. 74-75.

8. Burnistrova, p. 5. Chernov quotes Trotsky from "Biuletent' opozitii" to the effect that in labour centres such as Ekaterinograd, Perm, Tula, Nizhni-Novgorod, Sormova, Kolomna, Yuzovka, the Bolsheviks separated from the Mensheviks only at the end of May 1917. In Odesja, Nikolaiev, Elisavetgrad, Poltava, and other centres in the Ukraine the Bolsheviks had no organizations of their own even in the middle of June. Chernov, p. 411. Also see Chapter II of this thesis.


11. Adams, pp. 14-16; Dmytryshyn, pp. 29-40; M. Stachiw, "Soviet Statehood of Ukraine from the Sociological Aspect," Ukrainian Quarterly XVI (Mar., 1959), 38-40; Pipes, The Formation..., pp. 129-41. Pipes states that the Kievand advocates a peasant based revolution and stood for a degree of inter-party democracy while the Kharkov group insisted on a purely proletarian movement and were willing to subordinate themselves to the central party organs in Moscow. Ibid., p. 131. Also see Sullivant, pp. 38-41.

12. Borys, p. 135. This request in December 1917 was referred to a bureau of the Central Committee of the party composed of Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky and Sverdlov. The latter issued the following statement: "The creation of a separate, Ukrainian, Party, whatever it might be called, whatever programme it might adopt, we consider undesirable. Therefore we suggest that activities are not pursued in that direction. A different matter is the convocation of a regional congress or conference which would be regarded by us as an ordinary regional congress of our Party. There can be no objection in calling the region not South-Western, but Ukrainian." Ibid., p. 135. Borys' emphasis.
13. See Sullivant, pp. 41-45, 99-100; Pipes, The Formation..., pp. 132-36; Adams, pp. 17-22; Reshetar, The Ukrainian Revolution, pp. 219-25; Dmytryshyn, 39-42. Pipes notes that Lenin emphasized the fact that the change of party names to correspond to the names of their respective republics was chiefly a concession to mass psychology and that he never intended to divide party authority among the regional branches. Pipes, The Formation..., p. 245.

14. The First Congress of the CP(B)U was composed of 219 delegates but of these 147 had only a consultative voice. They represented 45 party organizations and 4,364 party members. P.Y. Denysenko, et al., compilers, "Materialy do istorii Komunistichnoi partiі Ukrainy (Khortka Khronika Zizdіv, konferentsiі i plenumiv TsK)," Ukrainskіy istorichnyy zhurnal, 11 (Traven'-cherven', 1958), 121. See Stachiw, "Soviet Statehood of Ukraine..., pp. 42-43.


16. At the Second Congress of the CP(B)U there were 125 delegates representing 9,000 members and candidate members. Denysenko, et al., p. 121.

17. Hryshko, p.54; Reshetar, The Ukrainian Revolution, p.224; Adams, pp. 115-17.

18. Lenin, XXIX, p. 194.


20. Ibid., p. 425.


23. Adams, p. 18, correctly states that the Piatakov group was in no way motivated by Ukrainian nationalism but was concerned with the most efficient means of consolidating the revolution in the Ukraine. In fact, as has been noted in previous chapters, Piatakov disagreed with Lenin about the right of nations to self-determination because he believed all nationalism to be bourgeois chauvinism and reactionary.


25. For some of Rakovsky's views on the close relations between the Ukraine and Great Russia see Rakovskii, "Rossiia i Ukraina," p. 2201.

27. LENIN, XXX, p. 194.
29. LENIN, XXX, p. 295.
31. LENIN, XXXIII, p. 299.
32. IBID., p. 299. See PAP, p. 214.
33. LENIN, XXXIII, p. 298.
34. IBID., p. 299. 35. IBID., p. 314.
36. KOMUNISTICHNA PARTIIA UKRAIYNY, p. 16.
37. PIPES, *The Formation...*, pp. 131-39. The Ukraine was proclaimed an independent republic at the Second All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets held in March 1918. See ADAMS, pp. 55-56; SULLIVANT, pp. 47-48.
38. LENIN, XXIX, p. 50. Lenin was fond of repeating this. See IBID., p. 83.
40. LENIN, XXIX, p. 50.
41. IBID., pp. 50-51. See ADAMS, pp. 358-59, 388-89.
42. LENIN, XXIX, p. 51.
43. IBID., p. 84. For other statements on the alleged grain surpluses in the Ukraine and the lack of administrative machinery, see IBID., pp. 85, 255, 316-17.
44. IBID., p. 317. 45. IBID., XXXI, p. 336.
46. In a speech in June 1921 Lenin gloomily observed: "If we look at the chart indicating the harvest prospects we shall find that the area of the R.S.F.S.R. and of neighbouring and fraternal republics where the harvest outlook is particularly good or is above the average, are the very regions where the food supply apparatus is certainly not above average, but even below it." IBID., XXXII, p. 446.
47. IBID., XXX, pp. 164-65. 48. IBID., p. 165.
49. IBID. 50. IBID., p. 326.
51. Lenin constantly accused Antonov-Ovseenko, his commander-in-chief in the Ukraine of separatist activity. Any scheme for dividing the Southern Front by the formation of a Ukrainian front was viewed as
A typical telegram to Antonov by Lenin stated: "I have received your code message, and also your scheme for dividing the Southern Front and the Ukrainian Front. For the first I thank you, for the second I rebuke you for playing at independence." \textit{Ibid.}, XXXV, p. 383. See \textit{Ibid.}, p. 611; Adams, p. 65. Almost everyone sent to the Ukraine seemed to be affected by some irresistible urge towards regionalism and, in Lenin's eyes, even Trotsky was susceptible to it. In January 1919 he telegraphed Trotsky: "I am very disturbed as to whether you have not got absorbed in the Ukraine to the detriment of the overall strategic task on which Vachetis insists, and which consists in launching a rapid, determined and general offensive against Krasnov... Vachetis favours a rapid offensive against Krasnov, but he himself evidently lacks the strength to muster the procrastination and separatism of the Ukrainians and other regionalists." Lenin XXXV p. 237.


53. Meijer, pp. 202-04; Adams, pp. 56-64, 131. See the letter Vatsetis sent to Lenin complaining about the formation of the Republican armies in Meijer, p. 353-55.


55. A resolution to this effect decided "to recognise as incompatible with the interests of defence the existence of separate bodies supplying the Red Army and separate commissariats of railways in the fraternal Soviet republics...." The resolution went on to state that all bodies supplying the Red Army "shall be under the jurisdiction of and fully subordinated to the Central R.S.F.S.R. bodies...." Lenin, XXIX, pp. 404-05. See Lenin's letter to Rakovsky asking his opinion on centralization of these commissariats, in Meijer, p. 559. The actual decision on this centralization of authority included not only the military and supply organizations but the Economic Councils, finance and labor. \textit{Ibid.}, p. 497. See Adams, pp. 226-27, and especially Meijer, p. 431.

56. To fully appreciate the reasons for Lenin's suspicions and distrust of the Ukrainian command see the following orders issued by Lenin which insisted that the Ukrainian group direct its main efforts towards the Donets area. In order they are to be found in Meijer, pp. 365-67, 371, 373-75, (Cf., Lenin, XXXV, p. 379), 381, (Cf. Lenin, XXXV, p. 391); Lenin, XXXV, pp. 386, 392. The Bolsheviki in the Ukraine tended to stress the importance of the Ukrainian front to the detriment of the Donets. Lenin vociferously disagreed with this. See Adams, pp. 256-
57. Lenin, XXVIII, p. 367. See Trotsky's letter to the Central Committees of both the RCP and the CP(8)U discussing Ukrainian troops, in Meijer, pp. 389-93. Also see Adams, pp. 142-43.

58. Lenin, XXIX, p. 317. Lenin added that "the possibility of bringing the war to a speedy close depends on this mobilisation; and on this mobilisation we base our hopes that Kolchak's advance will be checked and his forces routed. We do not want to weaken our forces in the South... because we want to make sure of our hold over this most fertile district." Ibid., p. 318.

59. Ibid., p. 448.

60. Lenin was particularly concerned with the successes of Makhno and Grigoriev and commented thus: "In every group the peasants were taking up arms, electing their own ataman, or 'father', to set up an authority, to create it on the spot. They paid no attention whatever to the central authorities and every 'father' thought he was the boss on the spot, that he alone could settle all Ukrainian problems, disregarding what was being done at the centre." Ibid., pp. 460-61.

Lenin had good reason to fear the guerrillas and anarchists. Pravda, for example, carried reports of guerrilla activities in the Ukrainian republic well into the summer of 1925, (although this may have been exaggerated for political purposes). See "De lo monarkhichebko bandy na ukraïne," Pravda, October 16, 1926, p. 4; "De lo atamana Ureniuka i dr.," Pravda, October 17, 1926, p. 4. Also see Pravda, October 21, 1926, p. 4 and November 2, 1926, p. 6. See E.R. Wolf, Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), pp. 94-99.

61. Ibid., p. 553.

62. Ibid., XXX, pp. 47-48; Ibid., XXIX, p. 462-63. Lenin had a rather cold-blooded view of the heuristic nature of the Denikin invasion of the Ukraine. Speaking on the invasion he noted that "the first blow fell on the Ukrainian peasantry of the zone contiguous to the Ukraine and the Don, but which will fortunately cure them of the defects of guerrilla tactics and chaos," and added that, "the peasants have seen what campaigns by the Cossacks and by Denikin mean, and the masses have begun to show a double degree of class-consciousness..." Ibid., pp. 461-62.

Almost two months later, in September 1919 Lenin repeated essentially the same theme: "The venture of Denikin, who, in the Ukraine is repeating the Kolchak lesson, will compel the Ukrainian workers and peasants to understand the mistake they are making in not fighting vigorously enough against him. We know that after Denikin has ruled a while in the Ukraine, the Ukrainian workers and peasants will be all the stronger for it and will defend the power of the workers and peasants, not in words but in deeds..." Ibid., XXX, p. 24.

It is quite obvious that Lenin belonged to the "historical objectivist" school, at least with regard to the Ukraine. Party members in the Ukraine did not share this view as may be evidenced by Trotsky's report to the Central Committee of the RCP on August 11, 1919: "...
There were the representatives of the School of Historical Objectivism, who said that it was wholesome for the Ukraine to pass through Denikin's school and that, for this reason, the surrender of Odessa, Nikolaev, Cherson and Kiev would be, as it were, of historically progressive significance. At the Kiev conference the representatives of this school of thought were called by scarcely printable names." Meijer, p. 653.


65. An excellent example of Lenin's steadfast insistence on unity and indeed uniformity was his decision that the Ukrainian Soviet government should neither print its own banknotes nor use those left by the retreating Rada forces. Currency was desperately needed in the Ukraine in order that the war effort be efficient and Lenin himself had observed that the Ukrainian peasant viewed Bolshevik issued banknotes as worthless. Trotsky even telegraphed Lenin from Kiev and declared that "the failure of the Ukrainian government to fulfill a number of its obligations relating to the Donbass and other fronts largely derived from the absence of paper currency. In this respect the Ukraine has been placed in an impossible situation; it is given no currency nor allowed to print its own." Meijer, p. 447.

Lenin did not answer Trotsky directly but instead telegraphed Rakovsky that "the C.C., R.C.P. recommends the C.C., C.P.U. not to submit substantive financial decisions, such as the issuing of new paper currency or the calling in of the Ukrainian one rouble notes, to the Ukrainian Council of People's Commissars for consideration without making prior inquiry of the C.C., R.C.P. as such measures can only be adopted on an All-Russian basis." Ibid., p. 455.

In March 1919 it had been decided to have one single currency for the Ukrainian SSR and the RSFSR and the Ukrainian Central Committee were asked to refrain from making major financial decisions on its own initiative and without central approval. Currency difficulties lasted from the spring of 1919 into 1920. See Ibid., pp. 446-47; Borys, p. 232; Boyko, p. 105; Carr, pp. 368-70.

Another example of Lenin's insistence on uniformity is the stand he took on discovering that Rakovsky was planning to raise the wages of workers in the Ukraine. Lenin wired Rakovsky: "It is politically impermissible to raise wage scales in the Ukraine without doing likewise in Russia, since, after all, the Ukrainian workers are in a considerably better position as regards supplies. Hence we recommend refraining from making the suggested increase and if it has started, that it be stopped." Meijer, p. 597-99. It would seem that Lenin was willing to tolerate setbacks in the war rather than let the Ukrainian Bolsheviks establish a financial base for a possible future independence movement.

66. Lenin, XXX, p. 332. 67. Ibid. 68. Ibid., p. 333.


70. B.M. Babii, Ukrains'ka Radians'ka Derzhava v Periode Vizbuvy Narodnoho Hospodarstva, 1921-1925 rr. (Kiev: Akademii nauk
UKRAINS’KOI RSR, 1961), pp. 54-57; BORYS, pp. 243-44. See Lenin’s telegram to Stalin outlining the tasks of the Ukrainian Council of the Labor Army in Lenin, XXX, p. 364, and Komunistychna Partiia Ukrainy, p. 16. Also see Lenin, XXXI, p. 140.

71. LENIN, XXXI, p. 298.
72. KPSS, Vos’maia konferentsiia RKP(b), p. 97.
74. LENIN, XXX, p. 190.
75. IBID., p. 194.
77. According to Babii, in January 1921 the Ukrainian SSR had only 193 collective farms which contained 14,460 desiatina of land and a mere 9,198 people (100 kryv). Three years later, in January 1924 there were 4,633 collective farms which contained 335,270 desiatina and 250,501 people. Babii, p. 161. See BORYS, pp. 271-73.
78. See ADAMS, pp. 126-27, 217-18, 335-37; BORYS, pp. 276-80. According to a contemporary Soviet source the kromedy were most active and, presumably, effective. It states that at the end of 1920 there were 10,799 committees of poor peasants with a membership of approximately one million. M.D. Berezovchuk, "V.I. Lenin i nezamozhni seliany Ukrainy," Ukrain’s’kyi istorichnyi zhurnal, V(traven), 1970), 128-29.
79. LENIN, XXXI, p. 339.
80. IBID.
81. Babii claims that "anarchist-Makhnovite and kulak-Petliu­rite banditism" was the main obstacle to the peaceful development of the domestic economy of the Ukraine in 1920 and 1921. At this time, he states, "kulak bourgeois-nationalist and anarchist-Makhnovite ban­ditism" created an extremely confused situation. Babii, pp. 59-61.
82. LENIN, XXXI, pp. 438-41. "In substance", stated Lenin, our New Economic Policy signifies that, having sustained severe defeat on this point, we have started a strategic retreat." IBID., XXXIII, p. 63. See Aspaturian, pp. 29-30.
83. LENIN, XXXII, p. 298.
84. IBID., XXXIII, p. 64. See IBID., pp. 64-71.
85. IBID., XXXI, p. 457. Lenin added that "within the limits indicated...this is not at all dangerous for socialism as long as trans­port and large-scale industry remain in the hands of the proletariat." IBID., p. 457.
86. See IBID., pp. 484-88.
90. For a short history of the Borot'byi see Meijer, pp. 790-93. For the stand of the Borot'byi parent body, the Ukrainian Socialist Revolutionaries, on the national question immediately after the February revolution see Browder and Kerensky, p. 371.

In an article discussing the Borot'byi attitude toward the problem of the nation and the state were the following statements: "Among the 'smaller', the 'non-historic' nations the bourgeoisie painstakingly spread and support separatist and independent tendencies and inculcate into the masses the desire to build national states, a desire which is not only foreign but hostile to the independent class policy of the proletariat.

The various illusions of the proletariat, which are linked with the growth and strengthening of a national state, lead to the worst kind of opportunism, to collaboration between classes and to an unnatural unification on the 'national-state' front which allows the dominant classes to appease the revolutionary spirit of the people by means of...insignificant 'reforms', thus restraining them from [carrying out] a wide and planned struggle for the complete transformation of the present social structure. However, social concessions...do not ameliorate the national problem. National oppression is detrimental to the masses...." Majstrenko, pp. 78-79.

Left this statement on the national problem be misinterpreted by socialists as advocacy of chauvinistic ideas, the article continued that "the UPSR is deeply convinced that the Ukrainian people basically has nothing in common with the Ukrainian state; there is no difference whether it is a monarchy...or a bourgeois republic, the dream of our national-patriots...the proletariat of the Ukraine, like every other proletariat under capitalism, has no country. It must simply win one for itself, and do this not in alliance with 'its' bourgeoisie, but in a fierce struggle against it...." ibid., p. 80.

This was all fine Leninism. However the Borot'byi feared the chauvinism of the Russian parties of the left as much as the nationalism of the Ukrainian right socialists: "...The Ukrainian socialist parties have made the problem of the national state the first item on their agenda....

...Supported by foreign circles and governments...they discredit and cynically profane the very idea of national liberation in the eyes of the toiling masses, thrusting them into the clutches of those Russian left socialist parties which showed quite clearly during the revolution their lack of understanding of the national problem and their imperialist-centralist chauvinism." ibid., p. 81.

It is quite plain from this statement that the Borot'byi did not trust the Bolsheviks because they viewed them in national, not class, terms. Also see ibid., pp. 82, 94-101, 136-42; Pipes, The Formation..., pp. 133-34; Sullivant, pp. 54-55; Adams, pp. 121-22; Borys, pp. 225-26; Reshetar, The Ukrainian Revolution, pp. 227-28.

91. Lenin, XXVII, p. 135.

92. See Pipes, The Formation..., pp. 141-47; Adams, pp. 106-07,

For the CP(B)U's policy toward Ukrainian leftist parties see Komunisticheskaiapartiia Ukrainy, pp. 18, 33-34. Also see Rakovsky's explanation of the CP(B)U's attitude in Rakovsky, "Il'ich i Ukraina," pp. 7-9.

93. See Lenin, XXIX, p. 327; Borys, pp. 263-64.


95. Ibid., p. 164. For a summation of why Lenin took a hostile stand toward the Borot'ibisty, see ibid., pp. 142-43.

96. Lenin, XXX, p. 194.

97. See Adams, pp. 164-65, 278-312, 394-95; Kommunisticheskaiapartiia-vodkhnovitel' organizator obedinitel'nogodyzheniia Ukrainy-kogo naroda... P. 145.


100. Ibid., pp. 789-91.

101. Ibid., p. 791. For the entire document and comments on it, see Meijer, pp. 787-93. Also see Wolfe, "Early Military Decisions...", pp. 176-79.

102. Lenin, XXX, p. 294. 103. Ibid., pp. 294-95.

104. Ibid., p. 295; Ciuciura, pp. 54-56; Majstrenko, pp. 164-65.

105. Lenin, XXX, p. 296.

106. In order to lull Ukrainian suspicions Lenin noted that "Great-Russian Communists must repress with the utmost severity the slightest manifestation in our midst of Great-Russian nationalism, for such manifestations, which are a betrayal of communism in general, cause the gravest harm by dividing us from our Ukrainian comrades..." Ibid., p. 296. See Majstrenko, pp. 165-66; Adams, pp. 396-99; Dmytryshyn, p. 53.


108. Majstrenko, p. 184. For the full text of this resolution see ibid., pp. 184-86.


110. Lenin, XXX, pp. 470-71.

111. See Sullivant, pp. 56-63, 98; Dmytryshyn, pp. 52-55; Borys, pp. 260-63.
112. Lenin, XXX, p. 471.

113. Dmytryshyn, pp. 54-55. According to Borys only 118 were left after Kronstadt. Borys, p. 265.


116. The Central Committee of the CP(B)U had just passed a resolution which stated that not only was the national question of utmost importance in the Ukraine but that, if it was not satisfactorily settled, the revolution could not succeed. Hryshko, p. 68; Aspects of Contemporary Ukraine, p. 207.

117. Bukharin, p. 394. See Meisel, p. 108. Since Lenin initiated the Ukrainization program in October 1920 it is interesting to note what Vinnichenko wrote in his diary in the summer of 1920 while in Moscow. He alleges that in a discussion with the official in the commission of foreign affairs in Moscow in charge of dealing with the Ukrainian government, the latter stated that there never was a Ukraine, that there was not one now, that in the Ukraine everyone spoke good Russian, and that the Ukrainian question was merely an invention. H. Kostiuk, "Misia V. Vinnichenka v Moskvi i Kharkovi 1920 roku," Novi Dni, XXI (kviten'-traven', 1970), p.11. This is one example of the attitudes and problems that Ukrainization was hopefully to overcome at least partially.

118. Lenin, XXIX, p. 158. Borys quotes Nikolay Popov to the effect that "the leading groups of our Party workers, especially in the area of Ukraine on the left bank of the Dnieper, when elaborating the political-line, used to forget, or not take fully into account, the very special characteristics of Ukraine and the importance of the Ukrainian national movement." Borys, p. 128.


120. For a discussion of the events leading to Ukrainization see Dmytryshyn, pp. 44-48; Sullivant, pp. 53-87; Borys, pp. 240-42; Carr, pp. 305-06; Reshetar, "Lenin on the Ukraine," pp.10-11.

121. Lenin, XXX, p. 163. For the resolution "On Soviet Power in Ukraine" as adopted by the Eighth Congress see KPSS, Vos'maia konferentsiiia RKP(B), pp. 189-91.

122. Lenin, XXX, pp. 163-64. 123. Ibid., p. 164.

124. Ibid., p. 268. 125. Ibid., p. 373.


127. Ibid., p. 372. Stalin explained that "cavalry raids with the object of 'immediately communizing' the backward masses must be
DISCARDED IN FAVOUR OF A CIRCUMSPECT AND CAREFULLY CONSIDERED POLICY OF
GRADUALLY DRAWING THESE MASSES INTO THE GENERAL STREAM OF SOVIET DEVELOP­
MENT." IBID., P. 375.

128. FOR A STUDY OF UKRAINIZATION DURING LENIN'S TIME SEE
SULLIVANT, PP. 94-120. ALSO SEE, CARR, PP. 370-71; LENIN, XXXIII, P.288;
TOMST, PP. 95-97; DMYTRYSHYN, PP. 58-60. DMYTRYSHYN QUOTES N. POPOV:
"WE SHALL CONQUER THE UKRAINIAN PEASANT ONLY IF WE ARE ABLE TO TRANSACT
THE PARTY AND THE CULTURAL WORK IN THE UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE." IBID., P.60.

129. FOR A DISCUSSION OF STALIN'S RESOLUTION ON THE NATIONAL
PROBLEM WHICH WAS ADOPTED AS OFFICIAL PARTY POLICY IN MARCH 1921, SEE
IBIO., PP. 49-52.

130. STALIN, WORKS, V, PP. 48-49. D. LESEB*, A SECRETARY OF
CP(B)U AND VERY INFLUENTIAL IN PARTY CIRCLES, BEGAN IN 1922 TO ADVANCE
A THEORY KNOWN AS THE "STRUGGLE OF TWO CULTURES". BABII WRITES THAT "A
DEVIATION TOWARDS GREAT STATE CHAUVINISM MANIFESTED ITSELF IN THE SE­
PARATE DIRECTION OF WORKERS IN THE UKRAINE AT THAT TIME [1922]. THUS,
THE SECRETARY OF THE CC OF THE CP(B)U, D. LESEB*, ADVANCED THE 'THEORY'
OF THE STRUGGLE OF TWO CULTURES IN THE UKRAINE—THE CITY (RUSSIAN) AND
THE VILLAGE (UKRAINIAN), IN WHICH THE CITY CULTURE, IN OTHER WORDS, RUSS­
SIAN, WAS BOUND TO OVERCOME THE VILLAGE." BAbII, P. 100. THIS VIEW WAS
DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSED TO THE ONE EXPRESSED BY STALIN AND, ACCORDING TO
BAbII, WAS CRITICIZED BY FRUNZE AND OTHER PARTY MEMBERS AT THE OCTOBER
1922 PLENUM OF THE CP(B)U AS A "PERNICIOUS DEVIATION TOWARD GREAT STATE
CHAUVINISM." IBID., P. 100. SEE SULLIVANT, PP. 104-05.

131. SUBSTITUTE "UKRAINE" FOR THE TERM "CAUCASUS" IN LENIN'S
LETTER "TO THE COMRADES COMMUNISTS OF AZERBAIJAN, GEORGIA, ARMENIA,
DAGHESTAN, AND THE MOUNTAIN REPUBLIC OF APRIL 1921 AND THE ESSENCE OF
UKRAINIZATION IS ADMIRABLY EXPLAINED. LENIN, XXXII, PP. 316-18.

132. IBID., PP. 316-17. 133. IBID., P. 317.
136. IBID., IV, P. 369.
137. LENIN, XXXIII, PP. 148-49.

138. SEE PIPES, THE FORMATION, PP. 263-66; SULLIVANT, PP.68-
69. ESPECIALLY SEE LENIN'S LAST ARTICLES ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION IN
WOLFE, KHRUSHCHEV, PP. 271-77. THEY PARTICULARLY SHOW THAT EVEN THEN
LENIN VIEWED THE NATIONAL QUESTION THROUGH THE UNNECESSARILY RESTRICTED
PARTY PRISM.

139. FOR THE TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION SEE BatsELL, PP.643-45.
140. LENIN, XXV, P. 446. 141. IBID.

142. SEE THE FIRST SOCIALIST REPUBLIC. BEING THE FULL TEXT OF
THE RUSSIAN CONSTITUTION AND OF THE DEGREE WHICH ESTABLISHES CONTROL OF
INDUSTRY BY THE WORKERS. (LONDON: THE HERALD, N.D.)

144. LENIN, XXX, P. 163. SEE TOWSTER, PP. 103-04; PIPES, THE FORMATION..., PP. 112-13, 250-51; ADAMS, PP. 397-98.

145. LENIN, XXX, PP. 165-66. 146. Ibid., P. 292.

147. Ibid. 148. PIPES, THE FORMATION..., P. 252.

149. LENIN, XXX, P. 296. SEE THE INTERESTING DISCUSSION IN CIUCIURA, PP. 54-55.

150. LENIN, XXX, P. 297.


152. LENIN, XXXI, P. 147. SEE CIUCIURA, PP. 55-56.

153. LENIN, XXX, P. 326. EMPHASIS SUPPLIED.

154. Ibid. 155. MEISEL, PP. 83-84.

156. FOR A DISCUSSION SEE THE FOLLOWING: PIPES, THE FORMATION ..., PP. 263-64; TOWSTER, PP. 104-05; CIUCIURA, PP. 56-57; BORYS, P. 343. ALSO SEE FRUNZE'S TELEGRAM IN KOMMUNISTICHESKAIA PARTIIA-VOOKHNOVIET'1 ORGANIZATOR OS"EDINITEL'NOGO DVIZHENIIA UKRAINSKOGO NARODA, P. 267.

157. CARR, PP. 384-89.

158. KOMMUNISTYCHNA PARTIIA UKRAYINI, P. 44. FOR THE ENTIRE RESOLUTION SEE Ibid., PP. 44-49.

159. LENIN, XXXIII, P. 454. SEE BORYS, PP. 299-317; SCHAPIRO, PP. 226-28; CIUCIURA, PP. 60-61; SULLIVANT, PP. 68-84; CARR, P. 393; ASPATURIAN, PP. 26-30, 50-51.

160. LENIN, XXXIII, P. 454.

161. WOLFE, KHRUSHCHEV..., P. 274.


163. WOLFE, KHRUSHCHEV..., PP. 271-76.
LEVIN'S CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL EFFORTS WERE DIRECTED PRIMARILY TOWARD EXPEDITING THE FUTURE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION AND THE CREATION OF A UNITARY SOCIALIST STATE. ALTHOUGH SOMewhat DOCTRINARIE IN HIS INTERPRETATION OF MARX, HE WAS, NEVERTHELESS, ONE OF THE MOST OPENMinded OF THE BOLSHEVIKS IN HIS TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS. HOWEVER, THERE WAS LITTLE OF MARX'S WORK TO GUIDE HIM IN THE NATIONAL QUESTION AND IT WAS HERE THAT LEVIN PROVIDED THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST MOVEMENT WITH SOME UNIQUE IDEOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS.

Even before the turn of the century, Levin had decided that the Russian proletariat needed allies if it was to be successful in its political and economic struggle. These allies were discovered among the anti-tsarist groups in Russia. Of these various groups, the nationalities became one of the most important since in most cases they were oppressed both economically and nationally. Although these ethnic groups were to become allies of the Bolsheviks, Levin insisted that there could be no theoretical or programmatic compromises with them. Social democrats support all revolutionary movements against the autocratic social system. But he warned that "the working class must single itself out, for it is the only thoroughly consistent and unreserved enemy of the autocracy; only between the working class and the autocracy is no compromise possible..." The hostility of all other groups and strata of the population toward the autocracy was always conditional although at certain times the proletariat and the nationalities were united by their hatred of tsarism and therefore by a parallelism of aims—the overthrow of this detested institution.

TACTICAL ALLIANCES WERE NECESSARY IN THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM AND LEVIN SARDONICALLY REMARKED THAT "WHOEVER EXPECTS A PURE REVOLUTION
WILL NEVER LIVE TO SEE IT. SUCH A PERSON PAYS LIP SERVICE TO REVOLUTION WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING WHAT REVOLUTION IS. More than ten years earlier, IN WHAT IS TO BE DONE? LENIN reproved those SOCIAL DEMOCRATS who would FORGET THAT, BECAUSE COMMUNISTS SUPPORT ALL REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS, THEY WERE "OBLIGED FOR THAT REASON TO EXPOUND AND EMPHASIZE GENERAL DEMOCRATIC TASKS BEFORE THE WHOLE PEOPLE, WITHOUT FOR A MOMENT CONCEALING... [THEIR] SOCIALIST CONVICTIONS. Marx regarded all democratic demands not as absolutes, instructed Lenin, but rather "AS AN HISTORICAL EXPRESSION OF THE STRUGGLE OF THE MASSES OF THE PEOPLE, LED BY THE BOURGEOISIE, AGAINST FEUDALISM." Because of these historically conditional views of Marx, Lenin noted that one must guard against the dogmatic application of Marx in a DIFFERENT HISTORICAL EPOCH--THIS WOULD BE "AN ATTEMPT TO USE THE LETTER OF MARXISM AGAINST THE SPIRIT OF MARXISM."

Among the democratic demands that Lenin thought were required by the historical conditions of prerevolutionary Russia was the advocacy of the RIGHT TO NATIONAL SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE CONSTITUENT NATIONALITIES OF TSARIST RUSSIA. Lenin chose Poland, Finland, and the Ukraine as the THREE MAJOR NATIONAL REGIONS FOR WHICH THE RIGHT TO NATIONAL SELF-DETERMINATION WAS TO BE CONSISTENTLY REITERATED. While Lenin supported the Ukraine's right to secession, he did so without any real appreciation or comprehension of Ukrainian national peculiarity, although there is no doubt that he was aware of this uniqueness. The discussion was carried on at a level of abstraction that admitted little real knowledge of, or sympathy for, Peculiarly Ukrainian characteristics. It seems that Lenin decided to advocate the right to self-determination for the Ukraine BECAUSE THE CULTURAL REFORMS INSTITUTED BY THE TSARIST REGIME AFTER THE REVOLUTION OF 1905 WERE BEGINNING TO DEVELOP A UKRAINIAN CONSCIOUSNESS AND BECAUSE THE UKRAINIAN MARXIST AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES WERE PARTICU-
Laristically oriented. A cultural reawakening was occurring in the Ukraine which was creating the preconditions for a viable national movement. Lenin hoped to ingratiate himself and the Russian Social Democrats with the Ukrainians by supporting Ukrainian national rights and, by doing this, he believed he could create sufficient Ukrainian faith in the Russian proletariat to stem the growth of nationalism. Ukrainian Marxists raised the national question long before the revolution and to silence them Lenin attempted to show that it was not the Russian people, but rather tsarism, that was oppressing them, hoping thereby to elicit their support for the forthcoming revolution.

The politically conscious Ukrainians, however, seemed to think that all Russians were painted by the same brush, if not the same colour, and remained suspicious of the Bolsheviks. This was at least partially due to the fact that Ukrainian Marxists received much of their ideology directly from Western Europe, rather than Russia, and therefore preferred to remain independent of Russian influence and control. The political naivety of the peasant was no more susceptible to the prerevolutionary propaganda of the Bolsheviks than were the Ukrainian Marxists because they retained a profound dislike of the urban Russian and Jew and of the landowners and government officials.

Lenin had a rather jaundiced view of the Ukrainian peasant, the so-called 'working' peasant, who, Lenin believed was "in fact a small proprietor, or a petty bourgeoisie" and therefore this 'working' peasant "vacillates in politics between the masters and the workers, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat." Although Lenin was not explicit, this categorization of "small proprietor" was more appropriate for the Ukrainian peasant than his Russian counterpart. This small proprietor was designated by the term middle peasant. The Ukrainian middle peasants
ALLEGED VACILLATING PHILOSOPHY, AS LENIN SUGGESTED, DID INDEED MANIFEST ITSELF IN THE UKRAINIAN COUNTRYSIDE DURING THE CIVIL WAR. AS A RESULT LENIN WAS FORCED TO CONSIDER THIS CLASS OF PEASANT MORE REALISTICALLY WHICH, IN EFFECT, ENTAILED THE STUDY OF THE UNIQUE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REALITIES OF THE UKRAINE. THIS STUDY LED HIM TO CONCLUDE THAT "THE PROLETARIAN STATE MUST EFFECT THE TRANSITION TO COLLECTIVE FARMING WITH EXTREME CAUTION AND ONLY VERY GRADUALLY, BY THE FORCE OF EXAMPLE, WITHOUT ANY COERCION OF THE MIDDLE PEASANT.\(^8\) IMPLICITLY, THIS CONCLUSION WAS ALSO A CONDEMNATION OF THE TACTICS OF THE CP(B)U WHICH, UNDER RAKOVSKY, ATTEMPTED TO INSTITUTE COLLECTIVIZATION IN THE UKRAINE.

IN HIS PREREVOLUTIONARY PROPAGANDA LENIN ATTEMPTED TO CONVINCE THE UKRAINIAN MASSES THAT TSARISM WAS THEIR OPPRESSOR, \(^9\) NOT THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE, IN AN ATTEMPT TO RETAIN AND ENHANCE THE CLASS AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE STRUGGLE TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE NATIONAL ASPECTS. IT WAS IN AN ATTEMPT TO PRE-EMPT THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF UKRAINIAN PARTICULARISM THAT HE DEVELOPED HIS THEORY OF THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND THE ANCILLARY CONCEPTS OF AUTONOMY, FEDERATION, NATIONAL EQUALITY, ASIMILATION, ANNEXATION, AND DEFENCE OF THE FATHERLAND. LENIN MADE IT CLEAR TO HIS FOLLOWERS THAT THESE QUESTIONS MUST "BE EXAMINED WITHIN DEFINITE HISTORICAL LIMITS" AND IF THEY REFER TO A PARTICULAR COUNTRY "THAT ACCOUNT MUST BE TAKEN OF THE SPECIFIC FEATURES DISTINGUISHING THAT COUNTRY FROM OTHERS IN THE SAME HISTORICAL EPOCH."\(^10\) HE THEREFORE ARGUED THAT THE RIGHT TO THE EXERCISE OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF ANY PARTICULAR COUNTRY MUST BE INDEPENDENTLY JUDGED BY THE PARTY BECAUSE THE PROLETARIAT "VALUES ABOVE ALL AND PLACES FOREMOST THE ALLIANCE OF THE PROLETARIANS OF ALL NATIONS, AND ASSESSES ANY NATIONAL-demands, ANY NATIONAL SEPARATION, FROM THE ANGLES OF THE WORKERS' CLASS STRUGGLE."\(^11\) THE WORKERS' STATE DEMANDED A LARGE ECONOMIC UNIT, HE THOUGHT, AND THEREFORE IT WAS PREDICTABLE THAT LENIN WOULD

...
CONCENTRATE HIS EFFORTS ON RETAINING THE TERRITORIES OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE IN THE NEW SOVIET RUSSIA.

LENIN, IN HIS PRE-OCTOBER WRITINGS, SEEMED CONVINCED THAT THE MORE HE SUPPORTED FREEDOM TO SECEDE FOR THE UKRAINE THE LESS IT WOULD DESIRE TO EXERCISE THAT RIGHT. IT WAS FOR THIS REASON THAT HE BECAME AN ARDENT ADVOCATE OF THE CENTRAL RADA AND IT WAS FOR THIS SAME REASON THAT HE SO VIOLENTLY OPPOSED FEDERALISM AT AN EARLIER DATE. FEDERALISM WAS A DISINTEGRATIVE CONCEPT WHEN APPLIED TO A UNITARY STATE, IN FACT SO DISRUPTIVE IN LENIN'S VIEW, THAT HE PREFERRED OUTRIGHT SECESSION. BUT SECESSION WAS SUPPORTED ONLY IF IT WAS SECESSION FROM A BOURGEOIS STATE. THEREFORE LENIN COULD VIEW WITH RELATIVE EQUANIMITY UKRAINIAN NATIONALIST STRIVINGS IN THE PREREVOLUTIONARY ERA AND EVEN DURING THE TIME OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT. LENIN MADE IT CLEAR THAT EVEN IN THE BOURGEOIS ERA SECESSION FOR THE UKRAINE WAS ONLY PROGRESSIVE INsofar AS IT LED TO THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE EMPIRE, THUS HASTENING THE REVOLUTION. THERE WAS NOTHING INTRINSICALLY POSITIVE IN THE EXERCISE OF SELF-DETERMINATION IF ONLY BECAUSE, BY LENINIST DEFINITION, THIS WOULD ALWAYS BE A BOURGEOIS MANIFESTATION. THE BOURGEOISIE COULD ONLY GIVE A "CHAUVINISTIC INTERPRETATION" TO THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION, LENIN ARGUED, THAT IS, THEY WOULD ATTEMPT TO EXERCISE THE RIGHT. THEREFORE THE BOURGEOISIE USED THIS PRINCIPLE, ACCORDING TO THE BOLSHEVIKS, "TO MISLEAD THE IGNORANT MASSES OF THE BORDER NATIONALITIES IN ORDER TO TURN THEM FROM CLASS WAR, AND CONSEQUENTLY TO THAT EXTENT WILL THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT DO ALL IN ITS POWER... TO PREVENT THIS APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE...."12

APPARENTLY THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION COULD ONLY BE EXERCISED IF ITS OBJECTIVE WAS THE HASTENING OF SOCIALISM AND THE SOVIET STATE. TO CIRCUMSCRIBE THE CONDITIONS FOR THE REALIZATION OF THE RIGHT TO SECEDE EVEN FURTHER, IT WAS DECIDED THAT ONLY THE WORKING MASSES COULD MAKE THIS
DECISION.  BUT LENIN HAD CLEARLY STATED THAT AN ENLIGHTENED PROLETARIAT COULD NEVER FAVOUR SEPARATION. IF THE PROLETARIAT FAVORED SECESSION, IT WAS ONLY BECAUSE THEY WERE STILL UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF BOURGEOIS IDEOLOGY IN WHICH CASE SOVIET RUSSIA WOULD STRETCH OUT A "FRATERNAL HAND" TO SET THEM ON THE CORRECT LENINIST PATH. CONSEQUENTLY, WHEN THE UKRAINE DECLARED ITSELF INDEPENDENT, LENIN DID NOT HAVE TO ANALYZE THE SITUATION IN ORDER TO REACH HIS DECISION TO INVADE BECAUSE, BY DEFINITION, THE UKRAINIAN DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE WAS NOT A TRULY PROLETARIAN ONE.

Nonetheless, Lenin could not part with the slogan of the right to self-determination after October because it still remained tactically necessary for propaganda purposes. This was one reason why Lenin never changed the party program to limit the decision to self-determination to the proletariat. At the Eighth Conference, when the Ukrainian question was debated at length, Lenin argued that it would be politically inexpedient to limit the right to self-determination in order to have it conform to Bolshevik policy. After all the party program was merely a statement of general principles and one must not be afraid to modify it in actual practice he emphasized. "You are afraid of words," he told the Bolshevik dissenters. "You must not let words frighten you. Everybody changes it (the Programme) anyway....We, however, define, make precise, develop and consolidate our position in keeping with the spirit of the Programme...." The spirit of the program demanded proletarian unity and therefore Lenin supported the right to self-determination not as an encouragement of nationalism but rather as a weapon to fight it.

There was, however, still another reason for Lenin's insistence on retaining the right to national self-determination in the party program without limiting its exercise to the proletariat. He was also against doctrinally limiting the right to self-determination only to the working
PEOPLE BECAUSE THIS KIND OF FORMULATION DID NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE FACT THAT DIFFERENT NATIONS MIGHT BE AT DIFFERENT STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT. IF THIS FACT WAS KEPT IN MIND, IT ALLOWED ONE THE LUXURY OF GREAT FLEXIBILITY IN PRACTICAL AFFAIRS WHILE STILL REMAINING PROGRAMMATICALLY CORRECT. THIS MEANT, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THE EXERCISE OF SELF-DETERMINATION COULD BE LIMITED IN THE UKRAINE IF LENIN CLAIMED THAT THE UKRAINIANS HAD ALREADY GONE THROUGH THE BOURGEOIS STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT.

LENIN NEVER TIRED OF REPEATING THAT "MARX DID NOT MAKE AN ABSOLUTE OF THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT..." THEREBY PRACTICALLY LIMITING THE APPLICATION OF SELF-DETERMINATION TO ITS COMPATIBILITY WITH THE GOALS OF THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION. FOR THIS REASON HE MADE IT ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT THE UKRAINE COULD NEVER EXERCISE ITS "RIGHT". HE BELIEVED THE UKRAINE WAS AN INTEGRAL PART OF RUSSIA AND THAT A SOVIET RUSSIA COULD NEVER EXIST WITHOUT THIS TERRITORY. THEREFORE THE WILL OF THE UKRAINE AND UKRAINIANS WAS TO BE SUBJECTED TO THE WILL OF THE PROLETARIAT AND SOCIALISM AND, MORE SPECIFICALLY, TO THE WILL OF THE RUSSIAN PROLETARIAT AND RUSSIAN SOCIALISM.

BY DECEMBER 1919, LENIN FULLY REALIZED THE STRENGTH OF NATIONAL FEELING AMONG THE MASSES WHEN HE ANALYZED THE ELECTIONS TO THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. HE CONCLUDED THAT STATE RELATIONS WERE RELATIVELY UNIMPORTANT, IMPLYING THEREBY THAT THE RCP WAS ACTUALLY IN CONTROL, BUT INSISTED THAT GREAT RUSSIAN CHAUVINISM WOULD HEIGHTEN THIS NATIONAL FEELING. IN ORDER TO ASSUAGE THE NATIONAL FEELING OF UKRAINIANS, AND THEREFORE STOP THE GROWTH OF NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS, LENIN INSTITUTED A PROGRAM OF UKRAINIZATION WHICH ATTEMPTED TO FULFIL UKRAINIAN CULTURAL ASPIRATIONS AND TO DRAW MORE UKRAINIAN WORKING ELEMENTS INTO PARTY AND GOVERNMENT WORK. WHILE THIS WAS IN ACCORD WITH HIS THEORY OF NATIONAL EQUALITY AND THE ABOLITION OF ALL NATIONAL PRIVILEGES, IT WAS NOT CONSONANT WITH HIS PREREVOLUTIONARY CONCEPT OF AUTONOMY.
LENIN HAD CONSISTENTLY ATTACKED ANY THEORY OF NATIONAL-CULTURAL AUTONOMY, PREFERING INSTEAD SOME FORM OF REGIONAL AUTONOMY. "...WE WILL CERTAINLY AND MOST DECIDEDLY GRANT AUTONOMY...," HE WROTE, BUT THIS WAS TO BE "AUTONOMY IN THE SENSE OF FREEDOM FROM PETTY INTERFERENCE BY THE CENTRAL BODY, ALTHOUGH THE DUTY OF OBEYING THAT BODY WILL, OF COURSE, REMAIN."15 AFTER THE REVOLUTION, HOWEVER, IT BECAME OBVIOUS THAT CULTURAL CONCESSIONS (AT LEAST) WERE MANDATORY IF THE BOLSHEVIKS WERE TO GAIN ANY SYMPATHY FROM THE UKRAINIAN MASSES AND LENIN QUICKLY REVERSED HIS STAND ON CULTURAL AUTONOMY—IN PRACTICE IF NOT IN THEORY.

THIS REVERSAL, WITH RESPECT TO THE UKRAINE, WAS AGAIN DUE TO LENIN'S BELIEF THAT COMPLETE UNITY, AMALGAMATION AND ASSIMILATION16 OF UKRAINIANS COULD BE MORE EASILY AND MORE QUICKLY ACHIEVED IF THEIR NATIONALIST DESIRES WERE HUMORED. LENIN HAD NEVER CHANGED HIS BASIC TENET THAT MARXISM CANNOT BE RECONCILED WITH NATIONALISM, BE IT EVEN OF THE "MOST JUST", "PUREST", MOST REFINED AND CIVILIZED BRAND. IN PLACE OF ALL FORMS OF NATIONALISM MARXISM ADVANCES INTERNATIONALISM, THE AMALGAMATION OF ALL NATIONS IN THE HIGHER UNITY....17

HE HAD OPPOSED CULTURAL AUTONOMY BECAUSE IT TENDED TO BUILD BARRIERS BETWEEN THE VARIOUS NATIONALITIES, BUT WITH RESPECT TO THE POST-1917 PERIOD, LENIN APPARENTLY PERCEIVED THESE BARRIERS AS ALREADY EXISTING AND SO DECIDED TO FIGHT FIRE WITH FIRE. THE EVENTS OF OCTOBER HAD CAUSED A CHANGE IN THE "CONCRETE HISTORICAL SITUATION" IN THE UKRAINE. AS A RESULT OF THE CHANGED HISTORICAL SITUATION CULTURAL AUTONOMY HAD BECOME A UNIFYING FORCE AND THEREFORE ITS TACTICAL SUPPORT WAS COMPATIBLE WITH LENIN'S PHILOSOPHY OF CENTRALISM.

FEDERALISM WAS VIEWED IN THIS SAME WAY. BEFORE THE REVOLUTION THERE WAS NO WAY THAT A CENTRALIST LIKE LENIN COULD LOGICALLY SUPPORT FEDERALISM BUT AFTER THE REVOLUTION, WHEN SOME NATIONAL GROUPS HAD SEPARATED, FEDERALISM BECAME A CENTRALIZING FORCE AND THEREFORE ACCEPTABLE.
to the Bolsheviks. Nevertheless Leninist federalism, when applied, existed only in form, not in substance, since the party was never federalized and all important commissariats always remained under central control.

Fundamentally, Lenin was opposed to federalism because it was based on the non-centralization of power rather than its de-centralization. Federalism was founded upon co-ordination rather than subordination in governmental relationships and its implementation. Lenin thought it would mean the creation of various power centers, the introduction of bargaining between governments and support of a greater degree of fiscal independence than the Bolsheviks could allow. Autonomy on the other hand was much more acceptable because it was based upon the de-centralization of power and therefore governmental relationships were of a subordinate—supersubordinate nature. This also allowed for the de-centralization of power—what one can de-centralize one can also re-centralize. Autonomy was therefore more compatible with Leninist thinking than federalism. However, Lenin finally realized that there was no need to conceptualize federalism in a traditional way and he, in effect, redefined its meaning. According to him the dynamics of federal relations could be viewed asymmetrically, that is, as a series of one-way interactions from the center to the periphery with the primary objective being progressive centralization until the achievement of final unity. Governmental institutions and relations were to be structured in such a way as to expedite this goal. As long as federalism functioned as an agent of centralization it was acceptable to Lenin.

Consequently, after the revolution, when the Ukraine was in fact separated, the concept of federalism could be employed as a centralizing agent. Nevertheless, Leninist federalism (as already noted in more general terms) when applied to the Ukraine, existed more in form than in substance since all important commissariats were generally directed and a
REGIONAL BRANCH OF THE RCP, THE CENTRALLY CONTROLLED CP(B)U, WAS THE REAL POWER HOLDER IN THE UKRAINE. THE QUESTION OF EXTENDING EVEN THIS SHARPLY RESTRICTED CONCEPT OF FEDERALISM TO THE PARTY WAS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE FOR LENIN AND ANY MANIFESTATIONS OF CP(B)U INDEPENDENCE WERE DEALT WITH SUMMARILY--THE PRIMARY TASK OF THE CP(B)U WAS ONLY TO GUARANTEE THE EFFICIENT EXECUTION OF CENTRAL ORDERS. CONTROL OF THE CP(B)U WAS FACILITATED BECAUSE IT WAS NOT COMPOSED OF MANY ETHNIC UKRAINIANS BUT PRIMARILY OF GREAT RUSSIANS.

LENIN’S CHANGE OF ATTITUDE TO THE CONCEPT OF THE DEFENCE OF THE FATHERLAND WAS ALSO BROUGHT ABOUT BY MODIFIED HISTORICAL CONDITIONS AFTER THE REVOLUTION. BEFORE THE REVOLUTION DEFENCE OF THE FATHERLAND WAS A REACTIONARY, BOURGEOIS SLOGAN BUT AFTER OCTOBER IT BECAME ACCEPTABLE BECAUSE IT WAS A SOCIALIST FATHERLAND THAT WAS BEING DEFENDED. THIS, OF COURSE, PROVIDED THE RATIONALE FOR RETENTION OF THE UKRAINE BY FORCE WITHIN RUSSIA BECAUSE LENIN MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE PROLETARIAN STATE OF THE NORTH COULD NOT EXIST WITHOUT UKRAINIAN GRAIN AND RAW MATERIALS. IT COULD THEREFORE BE ARGUED THAT THE INVASION OF UKRAINE WAS A DEFENSIVE MEASURE—AFTER ALL, LENIN HAD CONSISTENTLY ARGUED THAT THE RIGHTS OF SMALL STATES HAD TO BE SUBORDINATED TO THE OBJECTIVES OF SOCIALISM.

BEFORE THE REVOLUTION LENIN OFTEN MENTIONED THAT THE UKRAINE WAS ANNEXED TO RUSSIA AND AT THE SAME TIME MADE IT CLEAR THAT NO ANNEXED NATIONS WERE TO BE RETAINED IN A SOCIALIST RUSSIAN STATE. THE KEY TO LENIN’S STAND ON ANNEXATIONS, ESPECIALLY AS IT APPLIED TO UKRAINE, IS THAT HE DEFINED ANNEXATION AS THE “VIOLATION OF THE SELF-DETERMINATION OF A NATION, IT IS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF STATE FRONTIERS CONTRARY TO THE WILL OF THE POPULATION.” THUS THE CONCEPT OF ANNEXATIONS WAS FORCED TO FOLLOW THE POST-REVOLUTIONARY COURSE OF SELF-DETERMINATION AS APPLIED TO THE UKRAINE. AGAIN, IT MUST BE EMPHASIZED THAT WHILE LENIN INSISTED THAT TSARIST RUSSIA
MUST GET OUT OF THE UKRAINE, THIS OBVIOUSLY DID NOT HAVE TO APPLY TO
SOVIET RUSSIA. AFTER ALL, LENIN CONTINUALLY POINTED OUT, THE TRUE LI-
BERATION OF A NATION WAS POSSIBLE ONLY UNDER SOCIALISM. FURTHERMORE, ONE
OF HIS BASIC ASSUMPTIONS IN DEALING WITH THE CONCEPT OF ANNEXATION WAS THAT
A PROLETARIAN STATE COULD NOT BE ANNEXATIONIST.

TWO OTHER TACTICAL CONCESSIONS WERE PROMPTED BY LENIN'S VIEW OF
UKRAINIAN PROBLEMS AND PECULIARITIES. THE FIRST OF THESE WERE THE AGRICUL-
TURAL PROVISIONS OF THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY WHICH APPLIED PARTICULARLY TO
THE UKRAINIAN MIDDLE PEASANT. FIFTEEN YEARS BEFORE THE REVOLUTION LENIN
OBSERVED THAT "ECONOMIC CONCESSIONS (OR PSEUDO-CONCESSIONS) ARE...THE
CHEAPEST AND MOST ADVANTAGEOUS FROM THE GOVERNMENT'S POINT OF VIEW, BECAUSE
BY THESE MEANS, IT HOPES TO WIN 'THE CONFIDENCE OF THE WORKING-MASSSES."18
THESE CONCESSIONS, AS MANIFESTED BY NEP, WERE RELATIVELY SUCCESSFUL IN
THE UKRAINE.

AT THE SAME TIME THAT HE WROTE ABOUT ECONOMIC CONCESSIONS LENIN
LAID THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR THE AMALGAMATION OF THE BOROT'BISTY. A
POLITICAL PARTY COULD NOT EXIST WITHOUT ALLIANCES HE OBSERVED AND, IN THE
UKRAINE THE BOLSHEVIKS WERE LEARNING THIS TO THEIR DISMAY. A POPULAR BASE
AMONG THE PEASANTRY WAS REQUIRED IN THE UKRAINE AND THIS WAS ONE OF THE
MAJOR REASONS WHY A MERGER WAS FORCED BETWEEN THE CP(B)U AND THE BOROT'-
BISTY. THIS WAS A SUCCESSFUL MANOEUVRE ON LENIN'S PART BECAUSE NOT ONLY
WERE MOST OF THE FORMER BOROT'BISTY SOON EXCLUDED FROM THE CP(B)U, BUT
THOSE WHO REMAINED WERE, IN GENERAL, LESS OF A NUISANCE TO LENIN THAN
MANY RUSSIFIED MEMBERS OF THE CP(B)U.

ON ONE POINT, HOWEVER, LENIN NEVER CHANGED HIS MIND. IN HIS
WRITINGS IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT TO HIM NOT ONLY WAS THE UKRAINE NECESSARY
TO THE EXISTENCE OF A SOVIET RUSSIAN STATE BUT IT WAS ALSO PERCEIVED AS
AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE.19 BEFORE HE DEALT SERIOUSLY WITH
THE NATIONAL QUESTION HE NORMALLY REFERRED TO THE UKRAINE AS THE SOUTH, MEANING, OF COURSE, SOUTH RUSSIA. AS HE BEGAN TO GRAPPLE WITH THE NATIONAL QUESTION, LENIN BEGAN TO VIEW THE UKRAINE AS SOMETHING OTHER THAN AN INDISTINGUISHABLE PART OF TSARIST RUSSIA AND EVEN CATEGORIZED IT AS A FOREIGN NATION. AFTER THE REVOLUTION HOWEVER, HE AGAIN RETURNED TO CALLING THE UKRAINE "THE SOUTH" OR BY VARIOUS REGIONAL APPELLATIONS. AT THIS TIME HE CONTINUALLY STRESSED THAT IT WAS ONLY REQUISITIONED UKRAINIAN GRAIN THAT STAVED OFF FAMINE IN CENTRAL RUSSIA. DURING THE CIVIL WAR LENIN TENDED TO VIEW THE UKRAINE AS A VAST GRANARY WHICH WAS OBLIGATED TO GIVE ITS GRAIN TO RUSSIA. FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT LENIN CONSIDERED THE UKRAINE PART OF RUSSIA IS SEEN IN HIS DISTINCTION BETWEEN OPPRESSED AND OPPRESSOR NATIONS. OCCASIONALLY HE LUMPED THE UKRAINIANS WITH THE GREAT RUSSIANS UNDER THE LABEL OF "OPPRESSORS". 20

ACCORDING TO LENIN "THE CLASS CONSCIOUS PROLETARIAT WILL ALWAYS STAND FOR THE LARGER STATE"21 AND "IT FOLLOWS, THEREFORE, THAT WORKERS WHO PLACE POLITICAL UNITY WITH THEIR OWN BOURGEOISIE ABOVE COMPLETE UNITY WITH THE PROLETARIAT OF ALL NATIONS, ARE ACTING AGAINST THEIR OWN INTERESTS, AGAINST THE INTERESTS OF SOCIALISM AND AGAINST THE INTERESTS OF DEMOCRACY."22 THIS STATEMENT, IF TAKEN IN THE MARXIAN CONTEXT, IS VALID ONLY FOR A CERTAIN DEVELOPMENTAL PERIOD OF THE STATE. FOR EXAMPLE THE UKRAINE AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY STILL HAD TO GO THROUGH A CAPITALIST STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT ACCORDING TO MARXIST THEORY AND ACCORDING TO LENIN'S INTERPRETATION OF IT. IN THIS CASE IT WOULD BE QUITE LOGICAL AND NECESSARY FOR THE PROLETARIAT TO JOIN WITH THE BOURGEOISIE IN THE COMMON STRUGGLE. YURKEVICH, THEREFORE, DID NOT NECESSARILY DRAW A NON-MARXIST CONCLUSION WHEN HE SOUGHT TO BUILD UKRAINIAN NATIONALISM BECAUSE HE INSISTED THAT SINCE THE CAPITALIST STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT WAS NECESSARY, A CONSCIOUS REVOLUTIONARY COULD BRING SOCIALISM NEARER BY AIDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CAPITALISM. CAPITA-
LISM was merely a transitory but necessary stage on the road to socialism. Lenin subscribed to this view (at least until 1917) but did not think it was necessary for the national proletariat, or its leaders like Yurkevich, to encourage it.

The nation, as understood by Lenin, was a bourgeois institution but as it existed with capitalism and imperialism, the bourgeois state was closer to socialism than the feudal state. Socialism would obviate the necessity for nations as such and consequently the proletariat should be anational. If the proletariat was class-conscious, they would insist on the unification of national states in order to facilitate the achievement of socialism. In the Ukraine, however, it seems that the indigenous proletariat tended to be oriented toward Ukrainian nationalism while the exogenous proletariat had a centralist but unfortunately great Russian proclivity. Lenin objectively agreed with this centralist orientation but, because its motivation was blatant Russian nationalism, he could not tolerate it. This Russian nationalism was intolerable for Lenin less on moral or theoretical grounds than on tactical, primarily organizational, considerations. It seems Lenin regretted chauvinistic excesses in the Ukraine for no intrinsic reasons—he regretted them principally because they would retard the revolution in general and because they would impede what he thought was the inevitable assimilation of the Ukraine.

A number of conclusions may be reached on Lenin's attitude to the national question in general and the Ukrainian question in particular. The role of the national question in Leninist theory was to facilitate the socialist revolution by dismembering the tsarist empire. "For him," observes D.G. Smith, "principle and revolutionary theory were expedient tools, not fundamental articles of belief or strategy."23 Lenin, however,
EITHER UNDERESTIMATED THE LATENT FORCE OF UKRAINIAN NATIONALISM OR OVER-
ESTIMATED THE PERSUASIVENESS OF HIS ARGUMENTS ON THE NEED FOR UNITY. LENIN
SEEMED NOT TO UNDERSTAND OR ELSE PREFERRED TO IGNORE THE PSYCHOLOGICAL
BASES OF NATIONALISM. VIEWED FROM A PURELY ECONOMIC STANDPOINT IT IS NOT
DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND HOW HE ARRIVED AT THE THEORETICALLY CORRECT MARX-
IST CONCLUSIONS WHICH WERE TO PROVE SO INADEQUATE IN PRACTICE.

LENIN BELIEVED THAT A STRONG COMMUNIST PARTY WHICH, BECAUSE OF
ITS INTRACTABLE INSISTENCE ON CENTRALIZATION, MIGHT LACK THE SUPPORT OF
THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE WAS STILL FAR BETTER THAN A WEAK AND UNCONTROLLABLE
NATIONAL COMMUNIST PARTY. HE WAS PREPARED TO LOSE POPULAR SUPPORT FROM
AMONG THE UKRAINIAN MASSES ON THIS QUESTION. THIS DID NOT MEAN THAT TEM-
PORARY, PRACTICAL ALLIANCES WITH SUCH GROUPS AS THE BOROT'BYTSTY WERE EX-
CLUDED BUT RATHER THAT THERE COULD NEVER BY ANY REAL COMPROMISES OR CON-
CESSIONS REGARDING THEORY AND PROGRAM—CONCESSIONS WHICH COULD BE LEGITI-
MATELY DEMANDED BY A RECOGNIZED NATIONAL COMMUNIST PARTY. UKRAINIANS, HE
INSISTED, DID NOT HATE RUSSIANS AS A NATIONAL GROUP BUT RATHER HATED TSARISM
AS A CLASS INSTITUTION SO WHAT THEY NEEDED TO EFFICIENTLY FIGHT THIS ENEMY
WAS A CLASS, RATHER THAN NATIONAL, PARTY. IT WAS ALSO FOR THIS REASON THAT
LENIN PREFERRED INSTITUTIONAL TO REGIONAL REPRESENTATION IN ALL GOVERNMENT,
MILITARY, TRADE UNION AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS. INSTITUTIONAL REPRESENTA-
TION WOULD BE ETHNICALLY MIXED AND CONSEQUENTLY WOULD HAVE THE SAME UNIFY-
ING EFFECTS AS THE SUPRA-NATIONAL CAPITALIST ORGANIZATIONS.

AN INDEPENDENT UKRAINE SEEMED A LOGICAL ABSURDITY TO LENIN.
IF THE UKRAINE CHOSE AN ALLIANCE WITH RUSSIA, LENIN MAINTAINED THAT IT
WOULD HAVE NO REASON FOR REMAINING INDEPENDENT AND IT WOULD BE ABSORBED
INTO THE RSFSR. HE FIRMLY BELIEVED, IT SEEMS, THAT A SOCIALIST SYSTEM
WOULD HAVE BY ITS VERY NATURE A CENTRIPETAL, UNIFYING EFFECT.

LENIN'S VOLUMINOUS PRONOUNCEMENTS ON THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-
DETERMINATION AND, MORE PARTICULARLY, OF THE UKRAIN'S RIGHT TO SELF-
DETERMINATION, WERE RENDERED QUITE MEANINGLESS BY THE NUMEROUS QUALIFICATIONS PLACED ON THE EXERCISE OF THIS RIGHT. OF COURSE, THESE QUALIFICATIONS PROVED TO BE OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE AFTER THE REVOLUTION BECAUSE HE WAS THUS ASSURED OF A THEORETICALLY CONSISTENT FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH HE COULD INSIST THAT THE UKRAINE HAD TO BECOME AN INTEGRAL PART OF SOVIET RUSSIA.

AS EARLY AS 1903 LENIN MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE WAS CONCERNED FIRST WITH SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE WORKING CLASS, ALTHOUGH HE ADMITTED THAT AT CERTAIN STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT IT WAS PROGRESSIVE TO DEMAND THIS RIGHT FOR THE ENTIRE NATION IF BY DOING IT WOULD ACCELERATE THE ADVANCE TOWARD THE "INEVITABLE" REVOLUTION. BUT THE EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT TO NATIONAL SELF-DETERMINATION, OR SECESSION, WAS PRACTICALLY LIMITED TO THE PRE-REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD BY HIM WHEN HE SAW IT AS ACCEPTABLE ONLY WHEN IT SEEMED TO HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO ACCELERATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAPITALISM.

IN 1914 LENIN SKILFULLY LIMITED THE ROLE A NATIONAL MOVEMENT MIGHT PLAY IN THE ERA OF SOCIALISM. IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT HE ENCOURAGED THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN THE UKRAINE ONLY BECAUSE HE SAW IT AS THE QUICKER AND EASIEST WAY TO ACHIEVE THE INEVITABLE AND ULTIMATE UNITY HE SOUGHT. ACCORDINGLY, IN 1914 HE ANNOUNCED A THEORETICAL FORMULATION WITH RESPECT TO THE UKRAINE WHICH WAS INTERNALLY CONSISTENT AND WHICH ALLOWED THE GREATEST FLEXIBILITY OF ADAPTATION TO CHANGING CONDITIONS. HE WROTE THAT

THE CATEGORICAL REQUIREMENT OF MARXIST THEORY IN INVESTIGATING ANY SOCIAL QUESTION IS THAT IT BE EXAMINED WITHIN DEFINITE HISTORICAL LIMITS, AND IF IT REFERS TO A PARTICULAR COUNTRY (E.G., THE NATIONAL PROGRAMME OF A GIVEN COUNTRY) THAT ACCOUNT BE TAKEN OF THE SPECIFIC FEATURES DISTINGUISHING THAT COUNTRY FROM OTHERS IN THE SAME HISTORICAL EPOCH.24

ALL LENIN'S THEORETICAL PRONOUNCEMENTS AND MOST ACTIONS, WITH RESPECT TO THE UKRAINE WERE THEREFORE PRESUMABLY TAKEN AFTER HIS EXAMINATION OF THE
Concrete historical conditions and were guided by his overwhelming concern for unity. During the civil war, however, the "logic of events" also dictated certain decisions which could not be carefully considered from a theoretical point of view, although it is significant that in the great majority of cases these decisions resulted in actions toward greater political, economic, and military centralization.

Ukrainian nationalism, especially the elemental peasant variety, was an essentially negative force in that its appeal was based largely on the Ukrainian peasants' dislike of the Russians, Jews and Poles. The Ukraine differed from Great Russia in both national and class terms because there was for all intents and purposes only one indigenous class— the peasantry—and because nationalism was fostered by peasant xenophobia probably at least as much as by the politically and culturally more positive efforts of Ukrainian intellectuals. Because of these peculiar Ukrainian conditions Lenin found it almost impossible to obtain real support among Ukrainians for the Bolshevik program. Furthermore, the peculiarities of Ukrainian geography and development were reflected in the various groupings first of the RSDLP in Ukraine and later of the CP(B)U. These were the specific features Lenin took into account. To what degree a Ukrainian consciousness, national and developed, existed in fact is not questioned here because Lenin obviously thought it existed as a significant social, political and economic force.

With these specific features in mind Lenin analyzed the historical conditions in the Ukraine in order to arrive at his national policy. A federalist solution was not to be allowed the Ukraine when it was a member of the empire but it became permissible when the Ukraine seceded because in the existing historical situation federalism became a unifying factor and was viewed as a transitional step towards reintegration with
Soviet Russia. For this reason the Central Rada could be recognized and, indeed, accepted by Lenin as a legitimate governing body until the Bolshevik assumption of power. At this historical juncture the previously progressive Rada was dialectically transformed into a counterrevolutionary institution, in the Leninist analysis at any rate. It was for this reason also that support of national-regional autonomy, acceptable to Lenin because it did not contradict centralist principles, was to be neither permanent nor binding. The acceptance of both federalism and autonomy by Lenin was conditional upon his perception of their respective potential roles in a socialist state; if they were perceived as unifying instruments, they would be accepted as necessary but temporary solutions.

Superficially it seems ironic, contradictory and inconsistent that federalism, autonomy, annexations and defence of the fatherland, ideas to which Lenin was strongly opposed before the revolution, were almost immediately applied (or put into practice) after the revolution while self-determination, secession and other concepts advocated and supported before the revolution, were relegated strictly to the realm of theory in the post-revolutionary period. However, the Leninist analytical scheme demanded that account be taken of historical conditions and these had been radically altered in October 1917. Quite simply, changed conditions required different evaluations and quite often, different solutions.

All Lenin's efforts were directed towards the attainment of a total supra-national solidarity and his "concessions" which affected the Ukraine and Ukrainians such as self-determination, federalism, amalgamation of the Borotbisty, Ukrainianization, the New Economic Policy and others, all had centralization and unity as their ultimate objective. That centralization and unity was indeed his objective was made most evident in his consistent advocacy of the right to self-determination for the Ukraine.
While at the same time consistently maintaining that the right should not be exercised, this right was not to be exercised because Lenin insisted that the need for unity of all socialist states and parties was paramount.

Lenin's overall impact on Soviet nationality policy in general, and with respect to the Ukraine in particular, was significant. No other Bolshevik could seriously compete with him on this issue, although several tried. Stalin is often considered the leading Bolshevik theoretician on nationalism but his only completely original statement on the question before Lenin's death was his definition of the nation. Stalin always deferred to Lenin on the national question, although it can be argued that at times his concessions were merely semantic ones and therefore more apparent than real. During Lenin's active political life, Stalin was concerned mainly with the popularization and operationalization of his mentor's ideas. This, of course, provided him with an opportunity to interject his own interpretation of Lenin's ideas but it did not seem to encourage many significantly different theoretical positions. Evidence that Lenin was the real architect of Bolshevik nationality policy is provided by the fact that he was often the only significant party member who advocated the ideas and solutions discussed above. His theories and their combination with tactical considerations were often too sophisticated for many Bolsheviks to appreciate.

Lenin's tactical considerations often led him to doctrinal positions significantly different from those of Marx. His advocacy of assimilation was inconsistent with Marxism because Marx maintained that national strife was rooted in the capitalist-imperialist order and, once this order was overthrown by the proletariat, peaceful relations would be the natural consequence among the different nations. Disputes, Marx insisted, were not the product of natural differences such as national.
CHARACTER BUT RATHER WERE ROOTED SOLELY IN THE ECONOMIC ORDER OF CAPITALISM
AND IMPERIALISM. BUT IT WAS PERHAPS BECAUSE OF HIS ACCEPTANCE OF MARX'S
ECONOMIC DETERMINISM THAT LENIN SEEMED TO HAVE AN INADEQUATE CONCEPTION OF
THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BASIS OF NATIONALISM—IT SEEMED THAT HE GENERALLY DID NOT
WANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT PEOPLES WERE OPPRESSED BY ANYTHING BUT THE CAPITALIST
ORDER.

NATIONALISM WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A SUPERSTRUCTURAL PHENOMENON; IT
WAS SUPPOSED TO EXIST DURING THE CAPITALIST EPOCH AND THEN DISAPPEAR. THIS
MARXIST BELIEF IN THE TRANSITORY NATURE OF NATIONALISM IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE
MANY OF LENIN'S PROPOSED SOLUTIONS OF THE PRE-REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD STEMMED
FROM THIS PRECEPT. HIS MANNER OF CONCEPTUALIZING THE RIGHT TO NATIONAL
SELF-DETERMINATION, FOR EXAMPLE, CAN IN LARGE DEGREE BE EXPLAINED IF HE
THOUGHT THAT WITH THE ARRIVAL OF SOCIALISM, HIS PROPOSED SOLUTIONS WOULD
BE RENDERED UNNECESSARY AND WOULD THUS NEVER HAVE TO BE EFFECTED.

THE DUAL ROLE OF THE NATIONALITIES IN LENINIST THEORY WAS TO
FACILITATE THE DESTRUCTION OF TSARISM AND THE EMPIRE AND THEN TO AID
SOCIALISM BY VOLUNTARILY REJOINING A HIGHLY CENTRALIZED STATE AFTER THE
REVOLUTION. OF COURSE, HE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED THAT NATIONAL FEELINGS HAD
NOT BEEN AROUSED AND THAT THE VARIOUS NATIONS REMAINED PART OF RUSSIA. IT
IS SIGNIFICANT THAT LENIN'S WRITINGS DO NOT CONTAIN A DEFINITION OF
NATIONALITY NOR DO THEY CONTAIN A DISCUSSION OR DESCRIPTION OF ITS ESSENCE
OR CHARACTER. LENIN WAS INTERESTED PRIMARILY IN THE TACTICAL AND STRATEGIC
ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM RATHER THAN WITH THE ABSTRACT AND THEORETICAL. HE
WAS INTERESTED FIRST AND FOREMOST WITH THE IMMEDIATE PRACTICAL PROBLEM OF
ALLYING THE FORCES OF NATIONALISM WITH THOSE OF THE PROLETARIAT.

LENIN'S APPROACH TO THE NATIONAL QUESTION CAN ONLY BE UNDERSTOOD
IF IT IS VIEWED WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF HIS OVERRIDING CONCERN WITH UNITY.
IF FORCED, LENIN WAS PREPARED TO MAKE CERTAIN CONCESSIONS WITH RESPECT TO
Governmental structures and relationships but his stand with respect to the party was consistent: there was to be only one. When the CP(b)U was formed it was given the same degree of autonomy as that of provincial branches of the Russian party. Lenin was aware that several national parties, even if ideologically compatible, were less effective than a single, centralized one and that in a revolutionary situation the unified and disciplined organization was bound to prevail.

All support of nationalism and nationalities, according to Lenin, was conditional. The apparent ambivalence was a function of the conflict of Marxist premises with observed political phenomena. But this ambivalence was real only at a superficial level. It must be remembered that his concept of nationalism and its derivatives was based on certain Marxist economic assumptions and that Lenin's views would thus co-vary with the modification of these economically determined assumptions. This in fact occurred with the introduction of Ukrainization and the New Economic Policy and Lenin made it clear that both were to be temporary measures and were not major departures from Bolshevist philosophy.

The Ukraine's role in Lenin's nationality theory, like that of other national territories, was that of an integral part of Russia. Lenin had always intended to keep the Ukraine (and other national areas) within the borders of the new Russia, and, in fact, considered it an integral part of Russia. He created a pragmatic philosophy with respect to the national question of which national unity was the most salient aspect. This theory was never radically altered after the revolution. In the post-revolutionary era Lenin merely conformed to the spirit of his voluminous pronouncements on the national question and the Ukraine rather than to their letter. It can be argued that Lenin's approach to the national question can be fruitfully divided into letter and spirit because of the way
He purposefully chose to present the problem. At a more basic level of analysis, however, it would seem that this division is more apparent than real. Seen as a totality, rather than a series of disparate and only tenuously connected articles, spirit and letter become one. Lenin's work on the national question must be seen as an interdependent element in his theoretical system. Viewed systematically one can better understand that while Lenin could insist that socialism "cannot be reconciled with nationalism," he could still compromise on certain questions with a Ukrainian nationalism on a short-term basis. He could do it and be theoretically consistent because he believed this kind of "pseudo-concession" would accelerate the move toward assimilation and the complete unity he thought essential to a viable Soviet Russia.
1. LENIN, I I, p. 335. See the article "The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats," written at the end of 1897, in ibid., pp. 323-47.

2. ibid., XXII, p. 356. 3. ibid., V, p. 425.

4. ibid., XXII, p. 149.

5. ibid., XX, p. 433. In November 1918 Lenin lectured a Moscow party workers' meeting on Marxism and dogmatism: "Marx and Engels repeatedly said that our teaching is not a dogma but a guide to action, and I think that is what we should bear in mind most. The teaching of Marx and Engels is not a dogma to be learnt by heart. It must be taken as a guide to action. We have always stood by that, and I think that we have acted consistently, never succumbing to opportunism, modifying our tactics." ibid., XXVIII, p. 217.

In what is to be done? Lenin defined an opportunist as one who "will readily put his name to any formula and as readily abandon it, because opportunism means precisely a lack of definite and firm principles." ibid., V, p. 525. By this definition Lenin cleared himself of opportunism since his principles remained constant while only his tactics changed.

6. See Adams, pp. 10-12; Borys, pp. 75-76.


10. Lenin, XX, pp. 400-01.

11. ibid., p. 411.


15. ibid., VI, p. 487.


17. Lenin, XX, p. 34. 18. ibid., V, p. 406.

19. See, for example, ibid., XXVIII, pp. 23-24, where Lenin states that Ukraine was one of the "regions severed from Russia." He repeated this often: "Let us take it that there are about fifteen million peasant families in Russia, taking Russia as she was before the robbers deprived..."
her of the Ukraine..." Ibid., p. 56. And further: "In those outlying parts of Russia which are now becoming Soviet—the Ukraine and the Don region..." Ibid., XXIX, p. 158. Also see Dmytryshyn, p. 19; Borys, p. 244; Sullivant, p. 18.

20. Apparently Ukraine, under capitalism, was an oppressor nation. After the revolution Lenin wrote that "the workers of those nations which under capitalism were oppressor nations must take exceptional care not to hurt the national sentiments of the oppressed nations (for example, the attitude of the Great Russians, Ukrainians and Poles towards the Jews...." Lenin, XXIX, p. 127.

21. Ibid., XX, p. 45. 22. Ibid., XIX, p. 245.


24. Lenin, XX, pp. 400-01.
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ANTONOV-OVSEENKO, VLADIMIR ALEKSANDROVICH

Antonov was the commander of the Red Troops who occupied the Winter Palace during the October coup. Born in the Ukraine, he joined the Russian Social Democrats in 1897 but from 1903 he worked at various times with Trotsky and the Mensheviks. He joined the Bolsheviks in 1917 and during 1918-1919 was the Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army in the Ukraine.

DONTSOV, DMITRO

Dontsov was one of the founders of the League for the Liberation of the Ukraine which was formed in Lviv right after the beginning of the First World War. Later he became one of the leaders of the Ukrainian Democratic Agrarian Party which was founded in the summer of 1917. The party’s aim was to strengthen the middle farmer as a class in the Ukraine.

GRIGORIEV, ATAMAN

An ex- Tsarist junior army officer, Grigoriev was a member of the left-wing of the Ukrainian Socialist Revolutionaries. His was the most powerful partisan group in the right bank Ukraine. At one time he supported Petliura against Skoropadsky, later he joined the Bolsheviks but another double-cross, executed him.

MAKHNO, NESTOR IVANOVICH

A peasant with little education, Makhno was released from prison in the spring of 1917. As an anarchist his goal was to destroy all government. He disliked both the Provisional Government and the Rada because of their bourgeois and nationalist character. He turned against the Bolsheviks in the spring of 1919 but he was not a Ukrainian nationalist. His support was provided by the peasantry.
Muraviev, Mikhail A.

An ex-tsarist army officer, Muraviev was Antonov-Ovseenko's chief of staff. He commanded the Bolshevik troops who attacked and captured Kiev in February 1918. He had a tendency toward megalomania and by his politically unsophisticated methods created much resentment among Ukrainians who tended to favor the Bolsheviks.

Petliura, Simon

In his youth Petliura was expelled from an Orthodox educational institution because of his nationalist views and he went to live in Lviv. He was one of the leaders of the Ukrainian Social Democratic Workers Party which was based on Marxist principles but which believed in parliamentary government. This party and its leaders played an important role in the governments of both the Rada and the Directory. Petliura became the commander of the Directory's forces which fought the Bolsheviks. In a desperate effort to drive the Bolsheviks from the Ukraine Petliura formed an alliance with Pilсудski and Polish troops invaded the Ukraine. This proved to be an unsuccessful and unpopular move.

Petrovsky, Grigorii Ivanovich

Petrovsky was an Old Bolshevik who worked in the Ukraine. He was a deputy in the Duma where he spoke on the Ukrainian question. After the revolution he became the deputy chairman of the Ukrainian Council of People's Commissars.

Rakovsky, Christian G.

A Russified Bulgarian, Rakovsky was a member of the Rumanian Social Democratic movement before becoming a Bolshevik. He took a hard line on the national question. In January 1919 he became the second chairman of the Ukrainian Council of People's Commissars and Lenin ordered him to adopt a conciliatory policy toward the Ukrainian peasantry and to attempt to win over the left-wing Ukrainian parties. His antipathy toward nationalism changed and he eventually "turned nationalist in order to safeguard Communism" (Pipes). At the Twelfth Party Congress in April 1923 Rakovsky attacked Stalin's attitude toward Great-Russian chauvinism and thereafter became an advocate of greater rights and powers for the republics.
SAVENKO, A.I.

Savenko was a Russian nationalist who was the leader of the Ukrainophones in the Duma. He was a leader of the Nationalist Union in Kiev and argued that Ukrainian separatism was a much greater danger to the Russian empire than the separatism of the Finns, Poles or the peoples of the other borderlands.

SKOROPADSKY, Hetman Pavlo Petrovich

An ex-general of the tsarist army, Skoropadsky was the son of a wealthy Ukrainian landowner. In April 1918 when German troops disbanded the Rada, he was appointed to head the government. His tenure was generally unpopular and, without German support, he was forced to resign in December 1918.

SKRYPNIK, Mykola A.

An Old Bolshevik who favored an independent Ukrainian communist party with some ties with the Russian party, Skrypnik was at one time an editor of Pravda. In 1919 he was appointed to head the department of the Cheka and in 1920 he became the Commissar of the Interior of the Ukraine. His ideas on the certain aspects of federalism were similar to those current in the West. He too eventually "turned nationalist in order to safeguard Communism" (Pipes) and charged that the Red Army was being used as a weapon of Russification in the Ukraine.

SHAUMAN, Stepan G.

An Armenian whose views on the national question were similar to those of Lenin, Shauman was from 1907 the party leader in Baku. He attacked nationalism in a long article written in 1906. In 1918 he was appointed Extraordinary Soviet Commissar for the Caucasus. Stalin saw him as a rival. He was one of twenty-six People's Commissars of Baku shot by English troops in September 1918.

VINNICHENKO, Volodymir Kirillovich

A writer, Vinnichenko was a leader of the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party founded in Kharkov in 1900. At the time of the revolution he was a leader of the Ukrainian Social Democratic Workers' Party. In the early part of 1917 he still maintained pro-Russian views and wrote that "Ukrainian separatism died with its raison d'etre [tsarism]." He was the chairman of the General Secretariat of the Rada, i.e., the premier. He led the revolt against the German supported Skoropadsky regime after which he and Petliura were at the head of the Directory government.
Yurkevich, Lev

Yurkevich was a left-wing Ukrainian Social Democrat who "advocated the independence of the Ukrainian labour movement organized in an independent Social Democratic party federated with the RSDWP." He suggested that Ukrainian Marxists devote more of their time to the growing number of Ukrainian urban workers in an effort to bridge the gap between the urban and rural movements.