

Anti-Regime Movement in the Second Half of the 20th Century in Soviet Ukraine: Essence, Scale, Forms and Methods of Resistance

OLEH BAZHAN

Doctor, Candidate of Historical Sciences

National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine,

Institute of History of Ukraine,

Department of History of State Terror of the Soviet Era

Senior Research Fellow

(Kyiv, Ukraine)

✉ bazhanclio@ukr.net

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2328-4512>

ABSTRACT. The article highlights the general trends and features of the formation of the opposition movement in Ukraine from the late 1950s through the 1980s, and examines the forms and methods of the protest movement as well as the specifics of the information and communication activities of Ukrainian dissidents. The study focuses on the mechanism of political repression, the use of criminal legislation in the Ukrainian SSR to punish dissent, and the approximate number of citizens of the republic who were repressed for “anti-Soviet propaganda and activities” from the 1950s through the 1980s.

KEYWORDS: dissidence, samizdat, political repression, KGB of the Ukrainian SSR.

Until recently, the activities of opposition currents and movements from the late 1950s through the 1980s had little chance of receiving proper coverage. "Dissidence" should be understood as a set of philosophical, economic, political, religious and cultural currents that are completely or partially opposed to official doctrines in all spheres of the material and spiritual life of society. A "dissident" can be considered a person whose views, beliefs and actions completely or partially disagree with the dogmas of the ruling ideology, the actual practice of the totalitarian regime. The dissident movement of the second half of the 1950s-1980s in Ukraine must be considered as the newest form of manifestation of the Ukrainian national liberation movement directed against the ruling Soviet totalitarian regime. The dispersion of archival materials, departmental approaches to their processing, and contradictions in the testimonies of the participants of those events did not allow for objective and balanced scientific generalisations about the typology, features and scale of the dissident movement in the Ukrainian SSR.

After its entry into force, the Law of Ukraine "On Access to Archives of Repressive Bodies of the Communist Totalitarian Regime of 1917–1991" (2015) provided the opportunity to fully explore the documents of the former Soviet special services. These documents make it possible to get a complete picture of the little-known pages of the socio-political life of Ukraine from the late 1950s through the 1980s, to comprehensively characterise the confrontation between official government structures and the opposition forces in the political, economic and spiritual spheres, and to more clearly trace the repressive policy of the party-state leadership of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and Ukrainian SSR aimed at suppressing dissent.

The socio-political context of the formation of protest sentiments in the Ukrainian SSR

The period of Khrushchev's Thaw affected all spheres of socio-political and cultural life in the Ukrainian SSR. The growth of national consciousness and the fostering of political culture were significantly facilitated by positive changes in the spiritual sphere, brought about by the policy of the new leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) to liberalise domestic politics. The shift from Stalinism led to a decrease in total control over all spheres of life, a weakening of censorship, an end to campaigns against nationalism, an expansion of the framework for creative and scientific activity, and an increase in the number of new research centres, public organisations and artistic unions. Under the conditions of the Khrushchev Thaw, almost for the first time ever in Ukraine during the Soviet period, the issue of the need to ensure human rights as a necessary condition for further social development was outlined, albeit in a declarative manner. In accordance with the 4 March 1963 resolution of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine (CC CPU), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was published in Ukrainian.

The process of de-Stalinisation of Soviet society enshrined in the decisions of the 20th and 22nd Congresses of the CPSU, as well as the related partial dismantling of the powerful punitive system, mass rehabilitation of victims of political repression, and revitalisation of spiritual life, qualitatively changed the social situation in the USSR and Ukraine in particular, contributing to the formation and spread of the ideology of dissidence. Broad segments of the population of the Ukrainian SSR joined the process of deep rethinking of the past. From archival documents, it is evident that the criticism of Joseph Stalin's personality cult at government-organised meetings in factories, plants and unions of professional artistic workers went beyond the limits defined by the CPSU leadership in the large-scale ideological campaign. During discussions of Nikita Khrushchev's anti-Stalinist report, there were cases when speakers resorted to outright criticism of the Soviet totalitarian system. As journalist Viacheslav Chornovil recalled: "The real turning point for me was the 20th Congress and the debunking of the personality cult. This was clearly the last blow, after which I began to radically reconsider my views and everything I had been taught. That's when I probably became a dissident..."¹

The noticeable changes towards the liberalisation of the Soviet model of totalitarianism led to the emergence of a new literary-artistic and socio-political current among the Ukrainian intelligentsia – the Sixtiers. The initial period of the Sixties (late 1950s – early 1960s) was characterised by the search for "truth and honesty", "personal individuality" and new forms of creativity, as well as a review of moral and ethical values in life and literature. A symbol of artistic open-mindedness, spiritual democratism, ethical maximalism, non-conformism, urge to experiment at the beginning. In the 1960s, the work of poets and writers Mykola Vinhranovskiy, Yevhen Hutsalo, Ivan Drach, Lina Kostenko, Vasyl Symonenko, and Valerii Shevchuk was marked; literary critics Ivan Dziuba, Ivan Svitlychnyi, Yevhen Sverstiuk; artists and graphic designers Alla Horska, Panas Zalivakha, Viktor Zaretskyi; composers Lesia Dychko, Valentyna Sylvestrova, Mykhailo Skoryk; film directors, actors, and theater actors Yurii Illenko, Ivan Mykolaichuk, Leonid Osyka, Lesia Taniuk, Serhii Paradzhanov, and others.

The desire of a generation of young artists to get rid of the totalitarian dictate in the creative process eventually grew into unregulated cultural and educational events (informal literary readings, art exhibitions, evenings in memory of repressed artists, preservation of historical heritage, petitions to protect Ukrainian language, etc.) as well as the emergence of unofficial associations such as artistic youth clubs in Kyiv, Lviv, and Pridniprovsk in the Dnipropetrovsk region.

The artistic work of the Sixtiers sparked numerous discussions on the pages of the Ukrainian Soviet press and internal literary-artistic debates within creative associations.

¹ *Vek XX i mir*, 1991, issue 12, p. 27.

Expressing support for the creative youth in the “substance and courage of judgments”, experimental searches, representatives of the literary and artistic establishment of the Writers’ Union, the Artists’ Union, and the Composers’ Union subjected the new generation to soft and cautious criticism for their apolitical nature, fascination with modernist theories, and orientation towards the artistic heritage of Western culture. Nikita Khrushchev’s tongue-lashing of an art exhibition in Manezh on 2 December 1962, the tone of the meetings of the leadership of the CPSU with the artistic intelligentsia on 17 December 1962, and 2–8 March 1963 in Moscow became a signal for the deployment of a large-scale struggle against formalism and “pseudo-innovation” in the literary and artistic circles in Ukraine. In place of purely professional literary and artistic discussions about the non-conformist pursuits of the young generation of artists, which caused an extraordinary resonance in the Ukrainian intellectual environment, there came personalised “principled party criticism and ideological and educational work of grassroots party organisations.” The Republic-level meeting with the artistic intelligentsia on 8–9 April 1963 with the participation of the secretary of the CC CPU Andrii Skaba, resolutions of the CC CPU “On the work of artistic unions to educate young writers and artists” (December 1971), “On literary and artistic criticism” (21 January 1972), “On Work with Artistic Youth” (21 October 1976) were imbued with a negative characterisation of dissent in art and literature and aimed to “improve the atmosphere” in artistic unions.

Mass ideological pressure from governing structures, the facts of persecution of various youth organisations, their closure, and the use of punitive measures against the Sixtiers activists became a certain stimulus for the formation of opposition sentiments among the Ukrainian intelligentsia and other strata of the population, as they vividly demonstrated the attitude of the ruling regime towards the process of national revival and revealed its inhumane nature.

The economic and social reforms of Nikita Khrushchev, which had a cosmetic nature and did not touch the foundation of the totalitarian system, generated protest sentiments even among individuals loyal to the Marxist-Leninist ideology. The task of fighting for deepening and further development of the process of de-Stalinisation of Soviet society, affirmation of the “purity” of Marxist-Leninist ideology were set by illegal organisations that operated on the territory of Ukraine in the early 1960s: “Democratic Union of Socialists” (Odesa Region), “Leninist Communist Party of the Soviet Union” (Kharkiv), “Party of Struggle for the Implementation of Lenin’s Ideas” (Luhansk) and others.

The inconsistency and limitations of the de-Stalinisation process in the USSR in general and in Ukraine in particular, determined a new stage of the struggle against any what manifestations of dissent. Adjusting the state’s political doctrine, the new leader of the country did not intend to deviate from the tried-and-true method of ruling through terror and coercion. In his pursuit to retain complete authority and uphold the ideological foun-

dation of the Soviet political system, Khrushchev sometimes resorted to terrorist methods. However, terror as a policy of intimidation and suppression of political opponents by violent means in Khrushchev's Thaw took on more liberalised forms and was applied more selectively and individually. Relapses of terror were manifested throughout the entire "Khrushchev decade", and could be traced in both the domestic and foreign policies of the Soviet state. Revision of established values, critical analysis of the past, rehabilitation of victims of political terror in the process of de-Stalinisation did not at all mean that a group of high-ranking officials and leaders of the Communist Party changed their attitude to dissent as a social political phenomenon in the life of Soviet society. The ruling elite, led by Khrushchev, just like Stalin, considered various manifestations of opposition as a mortal threat to the ruling regime.

Within a few months after the 20th Congress of the CPSU, the leadership of the USSR made decisions that not only blocked the path to the pluralism of thoughts and views but also directed party organisations and power structures to suppress all kinds of opposition sentiments among different segments of the population. Discussion of the letter of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CC CPSU) from 19 December 1956 "About strengthening the political work of party organisations among the masses and stopping the raids of anti-Soviet hostile elements" in the lower party cells resulted in a loud ideological campaign, during which positive achievements, attained in the process of de-Stalinisation of the country, were reduced to nothing, and real attempts to revive the theory and practice of Stalinism were made. The instability and incompleteness of democratic transformations have led to a sharp turn towards neo-Stalinism in the country.

The fluctuating political course was first experienced by the intelligentsia, who, after a short-lived "buzz", were once again squeezed into ideological clamps. It is no coincidence that numerous representatives of the scientific and artistic intelligentsia in the mid-1960s took a firm nonconformist stance on the regime and formed the core of various underground organisations and groups. Disappointment in the politics of the authorities was observed among workers and peasants, whose dissatisfaction was intensified by the difficult economic situation in the country, and the obvious miscalculations of the leadership of the CPSU in the social and economic spheres. Even cosmetic attempts to reform the political system were perceived by the party nomenclature and the administrative apparatus as a threat to their own existence, and they began to prepare a conspiracy against Khrushchev. Moreover, the failure of social and economic reforms had a negative impact on the authority of Khrushchev and sparked dissatisfaction among the broader segments of society. The denouement came in October 1964. Khrushchev was removed from the position of the head of state by the decision of the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CC CPSU). The replacement of Khrushchev, amidst public discontent, brought about a period of relative stability, albeit of short duration. The

head of the KGB under the Council of Ministers of the USSR Vladimir Semychastnyi informed the Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU that in 1965, compared to 1964, the number of people who were engaged in the production of critical materials about the socio-economic life in the USSR decreased by more than 2 times².

Certain hopes for the improvement of citizens' well-being were inspired by the economic reform of 1965 in the USSR, which was aimed at overcoming the inherent features of the Soviet economic model (inefficient use of production funds, disproportions in the development of economic sectors, low efficiency of agriculture, etc.). In the second half of the 1960s, the measures aimed at strengthening the economic stimulation and increasing the material interest of labour groups, in the development of the material and social base of the village led to tangible positive results. However, the economic transformations carried out within the framework of the administration-by-fiat system in the early 1970s began to decline. In the late 1960s, there was a new surge of dissatisfaction among the population, associated with the housing issue, shortages of food products, industrial goods, and the violation of principles of material work incentives. As a result of serious shortcomings in the organisation of the production process, the inattentive attitude of the managers of enterprises to the requests and needs of factory workers, only in the period of January–October 1967 in the republic there were 8 cases of refusal to work, in which 435 people participated³. While in the 1960s through the first half of the 1970s it was mainly about separate cases of collective refusals to work, then at the end of the 1970s the higher party leadership of the Ukrainian SSR was very concerned about the intensification of the strike movement in the USSR, which was emphasised at a meeting of the Politbureau of the Central Committee of the CPSU on 31 July 1979, when considering the issue "On strikes in the labour collectives of a number of regions of the country".⁴

Amid the strike movement of the 1960–70s in Ukraine, a number of illegal organisations and groups emerged, with their main goal being the struggle for the improvement of the welfare of urban and rural workers. Among them Herald of Ukraine's Freedom (*Вісник свободи України*) (1963, city of Kherson), Underground Centre "Freedom" (*Підпільний центр „Свобода“*) (1962, city Kostiantynivka, Donetsk region), Party of National Communists (*Партія народних комуністів*) (1968, city of Donetsk-Leningrad). The miscalculations in the field of socio-economic policy of the ruling regime, the dissatisfaction with

² *Russian State Archive of Contemporary History* (hereinafter – RSACH), fond 89, op. 6, case 30, sheet 2.

³ Transcript of the meeting of CC CPU of the first secretaries of the party obkoms, heads of oblast executive committee, heads of republican ministries and departments, responsible workers of CC CPU and the Council of the Ministers of Ukrainian SSR, editors of republican newspapers regarding the question of industry and agriculture, science and culture work, 10-20-1967, in: *Central State Archives of Public Associations and Ukrainica* (hereinafter – CSA PAU), fond 1, op. 31, case 3106, sheet 55.

⁴ RSACH, fond 89, op. 9, case 1, sheet 1.

the material situation of various social groups, primarily workers and peasants, became the basis for strengthening protest sentiments among the republic's inhabitants, an essential factor for the formation of the ideology of dissidence in the Ukrainian SSR.

The growing social tension and protest potential in the Ukrainian society drew the attention by the First Secretary of the CC CPU, Petro Shelest, who in his diary entry from January 9, 1972, wrote:

In the republic in 1971, over 100 cases of distribution of leaflets with hostile content were recorded. 1 000 anonymous letters of an anti-Soviet, slanderous, and threatening nature were sent to Soviet and party bodies... We searched for anonymous letters and explanatory leaflets, but what will it do? After all, this is not the main thing. 80 people who made and distributed leaflets, 221 authors of anonymous letters were found, and 24 people were arrested and brought to criminal responsibility. And in general, a very difficult situation.⁵

No less important factor that influenced the activation of the resistance movement in the Ukrainian SSR in the 1960–80s was the implementation of the national policy of the CPSU, which became more chauvinistic year by year. After the adoption of the Program by the 22nd Congress of the CPSU (1961), which proclaimed the course of gradual and unyielding eradication of national differences in the USSR, hiding under the guise of slogans of “socialist internationalism”, the higher political leadership of the country began to implement a policy of russification in practice. Implementation by the governing structures of legislative norms and specific measures aimed at artificially narrowing the sphere of application of the Ukrainian language and linguistic-cultural assimilation of the Ukrainian ethnos has caused the rejection and resistance of the nationally conscious part of the republic's population.

Russification trends in the educational and publishing spheres have strengthened the public movement in defence of historical and spiritual values of the Ukrainian people. On the increase of radical sentiments in society in connection with the entry into force of the “Law on Strengthening the Connection of School with Life and Further Development of the System of Public Education in the Ukrainian SSR” (1959), analytical reports of the KGB under the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR of that period testify. In one of the information letters addressed to the top political leadership of Ukraine, the head of the KGB, Vitalij Nikitchenko, reported:

If earlier certain representatives of the intelligentsia saw in various cases a contemptuous attitude towards the development of the Ukrainian language, they attributed this to the wrong actions of local institutions, which, in their opinion, by inertia continued to lead the “line of unification of nations and languages” characteristic of the period of the cult of personality, then after the adoption of the “School Law” they began to evaluate it as an official approval of “Stalin's course of russification”... Such attitudes began to be reflected in works

⁵ Petro Shelest, *Spravzhnii sud poperedu*, Kyiv: ADEF-Ukraine 2011, pp. 555–556.

distributed in manuscripts, where in the form of an allegory or openly speaking about the upplanting of the Ukrainian language and calling for its protection.⁶

In addition, during 1961–1964, the KGB authorities in the Ukrainian SSR exposed and prevented groups of young people and intellectuals from Kyiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Lviv, and Ivano-Frankivsk, the basis for their emergence was doubts about the correctness of the national policy of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in Ukraine, and in practice, asserting the idea of the need to counter the ongoing russification of Ukraine among their environment.

The domestic intelligentsia associated the hope for changes for the better in the language policy in the Ukrainian SSR with the removal of Khrushchev from the political stardom. After the October Plenum (1964) of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, a significant part of it sought to raise the issue of the development of the Ukrainian language for discussion by party organisations and sought to abolish the 9th paragraph of the Law “On strengthening the connection of schools with life and the further development of the system of public education in the Ukrainian SSR”. According to the Soviet security agencies, at the end of October 1964, members of the Writers’ Union of Ukraine planned to send a series of open letters to the Central Committee of the CPSU with the aim of drawing the Kremlin’s attention to “the existing deviations of Lenin’s national policy in Ukraine”.⁷

In artistic circles and student lecture halls, discussions on the national question in Ukraine regained relevance, and interest in studying the policy of nativisation (*коренізація*) in the Ukrainian SSR in the 1920s–1930s grew. The growth of resistance to denationalisation from the intelligentsia and students prompted the party leadership in 1965 to make a few timid steps towards the promotion of the Ukrainian language in higher education institutions. In particular, speaking at a conference of rectors and secretaries of party organisations of higher educational institutions in July 1965, the Secretary for Ideology of the CC CPU, Andriy Skaba, gave instructions on the transition to teaching in the universities of the republic in the national language within a three-month period. Similar decisions were adopted by some state administration bodies.

However, the outlined plans were not implemented in practice. Moreover, following the instructions of the central leadership, a wave of political arrests swept through various parts of Ukraine at the end of August and the beginning of September 1965. The use of power instruments by the party leadership only intensified the process of politicizing the movement for the revival of the national language in the second half of 1960s through to 1980s.

⁶ Information reports and special reports of the state security organs to the party and soviet organs, 04-02-1965 – 06-12-1965, in: *Departmental State Archive of Security Service of Ukraine (Haluzevyi derzhavnyi arkhiv Sluzhby bezpeky Ukraini, hereinafter: DSA SSU)*, fond 16, op. 1, file 928, sheets 264–276.

⁷ *Ibid.*, sheets 140–146, 264–276.

Disappointment in the internal and external policy of the CPSU, significant failures by the Soviet leadership of the country in the socio-economic sphere, serious violations of constitutional norms regarding freedom of conscience and religion, processes of re-Stalinisation, serious violations of constitutional norms regarding freedom of conscience and religion, the ban on freedom of creativity provided a powerful impetus to development dissidents and laid the foundation for the further development of the dissident movement in the Ukrainian SSR.

Manifestations and typology of the Resistance Movement

The growth of opposition sentiment among various strata of the population has largely contributed to the formation and strengthening of real forces capable of resisting the totalitarian regime. The latter mostly grouped around the nationally-conscious Ukrainian intelligentsia, which, due to its inherent social functions, acted as the guardian of the national gene pool and cultural traditions. Defending national forms of life of the Ukrainian people combined various forms of public protest: from intellectual resistance expressed in writing and disseminating original journalistic, prose, and poetic works through *samizdat*, which decisively exposed serious deformations of Soviet society were strongly condemned, to the creation of organisational structures for fighting against the existing state and social order.

In the first half of the 1960s, there were noticeable trends related to the preparation of summarizing works on the ancient and modern history of Ukraine, and the ways of implementing national policy in the USSR. Characteristic in this regard was the work of the well-known critic and literary scholar among the Ukrainian intelligentsia, member of the Union of Writers of Ukraine Ivan Dziuba *Internationalism or russification? (Інтернаціоналізм чи русифікація?)*. The author, relying on the works of Karl Marks, Friedrich Engels, Vladimir Lenin, documents of the Communist Party from the 1920s through the 1930s, open statistical materials, testimonies of the periodic press, tried to prove that the reasons for all the troubles experienced by Ukraine in the chauvinistic revision of Lenin's great-power national policy are due to this revision and the only recipe for salvation is a return to it. Ivan Dziuba considered it appropriate to acquaint the senior officials of the with the results of his research. In December 1965, the work *Internationalism or russification?* with an accompanying letter was sent to the first secretary of the CC CPU Shelest. The reaction from the party's council of the republic was the implementation of specially designed measures aimed at discrediting both the work itself and its author.

Despite the party's condemnation, the treatise by Dzyuba was illegally distributed in Ukraine and beyond its borders. By attempting to at least partially comprehend the historical paths of Ukraine's development, Dzyuba urged a significant number of people to search for possible ways out of the difficult situation in which the Ukrainian nation found

itself as a result of Russian imperialist policy. To the cohort of intellectuals who engaged in reflections on the nature of Soviet society belonged publicist and literary critic Yuriy Badzio. His work on the historical-philosophical writings in 1972–1979 with the symbolic title *The Right to Live* (*Право жити*), is dedicated to justifying the right of every nation to live a full-fledged political, economic, and spiritual life, and to occupy its unique place in the territories of world civilisation. One of the central issues in the work is the critique of the flawed theory of “fusion of nations”, which, according to the author, is nothing more than a means of assimilation of all nations and nationalities that were part of the USSR.

Dedication to comprehension of the past of Ukraine is the work of a dentist from the city of Chervonograd of Lviv region Stepan Khmara’s *Ethnocide of Ukrainians in the USSR* (*Етноцид українців у СРСР*), written in 1974 under the pseudonym Maksym Sahaidak. Along with other materials from the *Ukrainian Herald* No 7-8, it was taken abroad and published by the “Smoloskyp” publishing house. In his work, Khmara depicted a terrible picture in which the Ukrainian people were under the rule of a totalitarian regime. Bloody civil war, ominous famines, violent collectivisation, mass deportations, and unjustified repressions, the author asserted, inflicted irreparable damage to the gene pool of the Ukrainian nation, and the policy of russification pushed the Ukrainian people to the brink of spiritual impoverishment.

In 1966, an employee of the Republican newspaper *Reader’s Friend* (*Друг читача*) Viacheslav Chornovil prepared a journalistic work *Justice or Relapses of Terror? (Правосуддя чи рецидиви терору?)*, in which he tried to reveal the sinister mechanism of political repressions of the second half of the 1960s, to show the immorality of law enforcement agencies focused only on execution social order, to tell the general public about the fate of representatives of the creative intelligentsia, who ended up in prisons and camps for their views⁸. Soon, in 1968, his second book *Trouble out of Intelligence* (*Лихо з розуму*) was published in France⁹, in which he clearly proved that the Soviet power structures are by no means persecuting a handful of “renegades”, but those who can rightfully be classified as the Ukrainian elite.

The uncensored journalism of literary critic Yevhen Sverstiuk was characterised by a wide range and versatility, and was well-known among the creative intellectual elite in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The leading theme of the essays and pamphlets *Cathedral under Construction* (*Собор у руйнуванні*), *On the Occasion of the Pogruzhal’sky Trial* (*З приводу процесу над Погружалськи*), *Ivan Kotliarevsky Laughs* (*Іван Котляревський сміється*), and *On Mother’s Day* (*На мамине свято*) by Sverstiuk became the issue of historical amnesia among the Ukrainian people, resulting in the eradication of entire layers of national

⁸ Criminal case charging Chornovil Viacheslav Maksymovych with the art. 62, vol. 1, CC [Criminal Code] of Ukrainian SSR, in: DSA SSU, file P-23335, vol. 2, sheets 214–216; vol. 3, sheet 23.

⁹ Viacheslav Chornovil, *Lykha z rozumu*, Paris: Persha ukrainska drukarnia u Frantsii, 1968, p. 338.

culture, the distorted portrayal of the brightest moments in Ukraine's history, the activities of its political and state figures, and the cultivation of spiritual emptiness and lack of culture.

This topic was close to the talented Ukrainian journalist Valerii Marchenko, whose personal fate was determined by the three articles he wrote in 1972: "Behind the Screen of Ideology" (*За параваном ідейності*), "Some Terrible Burden" (*Страшний якийсь тягар*), and "Kyiv Dialogue" (*Київський діалог*), which were qualified by the KGB as anti-Soviet and slanderous documents¹⁰. In his works, the dissident Marchenko posed rhetorical questions: Why is the Ukrainian language declining? Why are the Ukrainian people being misrepresented in such a disgraceful manner? Why is bland, overtly opportunistic literature promoted by high-ranking party officials, deceiving present and future generations?

The uncensored journalism of Yevheniya Kuznetsova, Mykhailo Masiutka, Leonid Plushch, Ivan Sokulskyi, Oleksii Tykhyi, Sviatoslav Karavanskyi, and Vasyl Stus sparked interest in the literary and artistic community and triggered discussions "behind the scenes".

The next wave of Soviet party criticism of Ukrainian spiritual and mental identity caused intellectual resistance in the form of poetry, which due to its ideological orientation could not only not be published in Ukraine because it was classified as "anti-Soviet documents", but also became the basis for the fabrication of criminal cases by the ruling regime. The poetic works of Vasyl Stus, Vasyl Barladian, Ihor and Iryna Kalynets, Iryna Senyk, Yaroslav Lesiv, Taras Melnychuk, Borys Kovhar, Mykola Kholodny, Stepan Sapeliak, and Mykola Horbal reached readers through various channels, contributing to the affirmation of Ukrainian national consciousness.

Intellectual resistance to the Soviet regime was manifested in the covert production and dissemination of statements, petitions, critical letters, and appeals addressed to the highest political leadership of the USSR and the Ukrainian SSR, as well as numerous international organisations. Addressed to a specific recipient, responses became the heritage of the Ukrainian and global community, conveying information about the state of affairs in the republic, serious deviations in the sphere of national-cultural policy, and publicizing facts of persecution of dissenters. Despite ideological and legal pressure, and the monopoly on truth from the party-state structures, the Ukrainian intelligentsia made real attempts to give an objective assessment of political, economic, and cultural processes in Ukraine.

In conditions of strict state surveillance over the press and mass media, there could be no question of publishing any uncensored literature, protest letters or dissident ideas. The *samizdat* (self-publishing, from Russian *сам издательство*, Ukr. *samyvydav*), an uncontrolled means of disseminating objective information about Ukraine, remained

¹⁰ Valerii Marchenko, *Lysty do materi z nevoli*, Kyiv, 1994, pp. 30–40.

the only means of their distribution in the 1960s through 1980s. According to Ukrainian philosopher and political prisoner Vasyl Lisovyi, “the creation and distribution of *samizdat* literature became the main method of activity of the dissident movement”.¹¹ *Samizdat* flourished in the mid-1960s and early 1970s. Here is how Ukrainian human rights activist Ivan Svitlychnyi explained this phenomenon:

The interest in anti-Soviet literature arose... when Khrushchev’s adventurism began to manifest itself noticeably in politics, when words began to diverge from deeds, when endless reforms did not bring the promised benefits, in short, when in many cases, vestiges of the party-condemned politics began to emerge. This undermined people’s faith in the transformations taking place in the country, generated scepticism, and forced people to search everywhere for answers to pressing questions of social life”.¹²

During the same period, the *samizdat* spread Dziuba’s work *Internationalism or russification?*, a treatise by Mikhail Braichevskiy, *Annexation or Reunification? (Приєднання чи возз’єднання?)*, and anonymous essays by Sverstiuk such as *Cathedral under Construction*, *Ivan Kotliarevskiy is Laughing*, *The Last Tear (Остання сльоза)*, and *On Mother’s Day*, as well as the pamphlet *Concerning Pohrzhalskyi’s Trial* and the original research by Helii Snehirov’s *Cartridges for Shooting (Набої для розстрілу) My Mother, My Mother... (Ненько моя, ненько...)*, the journalistic works of Chornovil such as *Justice or Recidivism of Terror?*, *Trouble out of Intelligence*, *How and What Bohdan Stenchuk Stands For (Як і що обстоює Богдан Стенчук)*, and articles by Valentyn Moroz’s “Among the Snows” (*Серед снігів*), “Chronicle of Resistance” (*Хроніка опору*), “Moses and Datan” (*Мойсей і Датан*), “Report from the Beria Nature Reserve” (*Репортаж із заповідника імені Берії*), uncensored poems by Vasil Symonenko, Mykola Kholodny, Ivan Sokulskiy, research by Ivan Koshelivts *Modern Ukrainian Literature (Сучасна українська література)*, Bohdan Kravtsiv’s book *On the Crimson Horse of the Revolution: Towards the Rehabilitation Process in the Ukrainian SSR*, the work of Yevhen Proniuk *The State and Tasks of the Ukrainian Liberation Movement (Incomplete Theses for Discussion) (Стан і завдання Українського визвольного руху (неповні тези для обговорення))*, and information about the conditions of detention of political prisoners in Soviet correctional labour camps.

If in the 1960s, *samizdat* served as a means of disseminating individual literary works, journalistic works, and documents of the human rights movement, then at the beginning of the 1970s, it became entirely reasonable to address the question of publishing periodic uncensored publications dedicated to a wide range of existing problems in Ukraine. Thus, the idea of creating the *Ukrainian Herald* emerged and started to be realised, bringing together a specific group of Ukrainian dissidents. According to Chornovil, one of the in-

¹¹ *Dysydenty. Antolohiia lystiv*, Kyiv: Dukh i litera, 2018, p. 501.

¹² Criminal case charging Svitlychnyi Ivan Oleksiiovych with the art. 62, vol. 1, CC [Criminal Code] of Ukrainian SSR, in: DSA SSU, fond 6, file 68805-FP, vol. 7, sheet 253.

iators of the *Ukrainian Herald*, the work of Ukrainian human rights activists was not a mere imitation of *Chronicle of Current Events* (Rus. *Хроника текущих событий*) or other similar publications. Instead, it was rooted in the Ukrainian experience, local possibilities, and objectives.¹³ *Ukrainian Herald* had an extensive network of correspondents in Kyiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Rivne, Odesa, Ternopil, Chernivtsi, Cherkasy. The magazine published literary works and polemical essays on its pages, as well as a chronicle of the Ukrainian human rights movement.

The emergence of a periodic opposition publication confirmed the Ukrainian national movement's transition to a new level of organisation. The *samizdat* spread extent led to a series of KGB operations aimed at identifying centres involved in the production, storage, and distribution of "samizdat". In particular, in 1965, such centres were exposed in Kyiv, Lviv, Ternopil, Lutsk, Ivano-Frankivsk, Zhytomyr. During the searches, over 900 copies of *samizdat* were confiscated, along with 13 printing machines that were used for their reproduction.¹⁴

The widespread dissemination of *samizdat* and the establishment of centres for its promotion prompted the higher political leadership of the USSR and the Ukrainian SSR to develop special measures "On countering the illegal distribution of anti-Soviet and other harmful materials", which were approved by the resolutions of the Central Committee of the CPSU (28 June 1971) and the CC CPU (27 July 1971)¹⁵. However, despite their cruelty and strictness, these measures did not yield the desired results. In the reports of the State Security Committee of the USSR, both in the 1970s and in the first half of the 1980s, Ukraine was referred to as one of the most unreliable republics in terms of suppressing dissent¹⁶.

Despite the strong resistance from the authorities, *samizdat* remained a notable factor throughout the 1960s to 1980s, influencing the socio-political situation in the republic. It contributed to the consolidation and mutual understanding among national-patriotic forces within the confines of the totalitarian system. *Samizdat* demonstrated specific pathways for the realisation of the national idea, which involved preserving and elevating long-standing folk traditions, propagating exemplary cultural heritage, and creating favourable conditions for the formation and affirmation of Ukrainian statehood.

¹³ Criminal case charging Chornovol Viacheslav Maksymovych with the art. 62, vol. 1, CC [Criminal Code] of Ukrainian SSR, in: *DSA SSU* (Lviv), file P-23335, vol. 2, sheet 11.

¹⁴ A letter of CC CCSU, references of the departments of CC CPU, informations of the obkoms of Ukraine, KGB at C[ouncil]M[inisters] Ukrainian SSR and other organizations – about fulfillment of a decree of CC CP of Ukraine "About information of the Supreme Court Ukrainian SSR, Prosecutor General's Office Ukrainian SSR and KDB at CM Ukrainian SSR", about Ukrainian nationalists, about unorganized meeting in the Babyn Yar", 03-25-1966, in: *CSA PAU*, fond 1, op. 24, file 6160, sheets 25–26.

¹⁵ Minutes of the meeting No 5 of the Secretariat, original, No 125-h-172-h, in: *RSACH*, fond 89, op. 46, file 35, sheets 1–5; *RSACH*, fond 1, op. 10, file 1024, sheets 68–70.

¹⁶ *RSACH*, fond 89, op. 55, file 1, sheets 1–6; *Ibid.*, op. 51, file 10, sheets 1–2; *Ibid.*, file 13, sheet 1.

In the first half of the 1960s, protests largely had an anonymous character and were carried out through the dissemination of leaflets, national symbols, and the circulation of petitions and statements. However, from the mid-1960s onwards, individuals who spoke out against the totalitarian system were personally involved and saw no need to conceal their views, faces and names. An event of exceptional significance that gained international attention was the demonstration of protest by dissidents Dziuba, Stus, Chornovil, Yurii Badzio against political repressions that took place at the end of the summer in 1965 at the "Ukraine" cinema during the premiere of Serhii Paradzhanov's film *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* (*Тіні забутих предків*).

Similar demonstrations were increasingly "disturbing the peace" in the capital of Ukraine and other cities of the republic. In the second half of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, the party and law enforcement agencies of Kyiv were alarmed by Shevchenko days of mourning, on 22 May, when events to honour the national genius were held with the participation of doctor Mykola Plakhotniuk, artist Alla Horska, writers Ivan Svitlychnyi, Vasyl Ruban, scientist Vasyl Lobko, artist Tetiana Tsymbal, pensioner Oksana Meshko, part-time student Anatolii Liupinos were outgrown by stormy political demonstrations¹⁷.

Mykola Bondar, a teacher at Uzhgorod State University, openly expressed his disagreement with the existing regime during the October demonstration in 1970. He successfully approached the government tribune with the slogan "Shame on the criminal leadership of the CPSU!" We find out about the reasons that prompted him to take such a step from a letter written by Bondar, sent to the address of the Central Committee of the CPSU, the Presidium of the Supreme Council and the Council of Ministers of the USSR on 6 November 1970. Bondar accused the senior political and state leadership of the country of suppressing any seeds of democracy, lacking transparency, showing contempt for the individual, persecuting dissent, establishing ineffective foundations of the Soviet economy, and pursuing a gendarme foreign policy¹⁸.

Self-immolation as a form of individual protest against the colonial status of Ukraine was carried out on 5 November 1968, in Kyiv by Vasyl Makukh, a native of the village of Kariv in Sokal district, Lviv region. On 10 February 1969, in protest against russification, an attempted self-immolation took place in the premises of Kyiv State University by Mykola Bereslavsky, a native and resident of the village of Osypenko in Berdyansk district, Zaporizhia region. Only the intervention of the security guards at the educational institution prevented him from carrying out his intention¹⁹. On 21 January 1978 late at night on Cher-

¹⁷ Ya. Dzyra, "Shevchenkivsky traven u roky zastoiu", in: *Molod Ukrainy*, 1993, May 13, p. 3.

¹⁸ Criminal case charging Bondar Mykola Vasyliovych with the art. 62, vol. 1, CC [Criminal Code] of Ukrainian SSR, in: *DSA SSU*, file 72253-FP, vol. 1, sheets 7, 41–60.

¹⁹ Criminal case charging Beryslavsky Mykola Oleksandrovych with the art. 62, vol. 1, CC [Criminal Code] of Ukrainian SSR, in: *DSA SSU*, file 70131-FP, vol. 1, sheets 7, 45, 117v.

necha Hora in the city of Kaniv, near the grave of the Great Kobzar, Oleksa Hirnyk from Kalush, Ivano-Frankivsk region, set himself on fire. He explained the motives of his actions in numerous postcards scattered on the territory of the museum-reserve with the words: "For the oppressed people, an independent sovereign state is necessary for its development. Despite the KGB's attempts to conceal not only the true reasons behind the self-immolation of Ukrainian patriots but even the acts themselves, the truth about these protests transcended the Iron Curtain and became known to the global community. It vividly demonstrated the determination of those fighting for Ukraine's independence to take decisive action.

In the second half of the 1960s through the 1980s a network of secret organisations and opposition cells emerged in Ukraine. Some of these organisations operated on the basis of integral socialism, e. g., the Ukrainian National Front (1964 through 1967; Lvivska, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kirovohrad, Donetsk regions), others – Ukrainian National Communist Party (1971 through 1972; city of Kyiv), Party of National Progress (late 1970s through early 1980s; city of Horlivka, Donetsk region) – relied on the ideas of national communism. If the national-communist and nationalist groups put the main emphasis on solving national problems and sought to build an independent Ukrainian state, then a whole series of organisations and groups (underground centre "Freedom", city of Kostiantynivka of Donetsk region; Democratic Union of Socialists, village of Serpneve of Odesa region, Struggle for Social Justice, Mykolaiv region; Party of Struggle for the Implementation of Leninist Ideas, city of Luhansk and others) highlighted the tasks of implementing democratic rights and freedoms of citizens regardless of their nationality as an indispensable guarantee of the further development of Soviet society.

The illegal status in which the mentioned national-communist, nationalist, and general democratic organisations and groups operated significantly restricted their capabilities and limited their contacts with foreign media and international human rights organisations. It also hindered their ability to actively and purposefully influence public opinion. Therefore, in the early 1970s, there was a need to establish organisations and groups that could operate legally within the framework of Soviet legislation and international law. One such organisation was the Public Committee for the Defence of Nina Strokata – the first human rights organisation in Ukraine, established in 1971 in Lviv by Vyacheslav Chornovil and Iryna Stasiv in response to the arrest of Nina Strokata, the wife of human rights activist Sviatoslav Karavanskyi, in Odesa. The Committee did not have the opportunity to fully carry out its activities due to the arrest of some of its members. (Stasiv, Chornovil, Stus). At the same time, the experience of creating a legal human rights organisation had a positive significance. Firstly, he convinced of the expediency of uniting the efforts of the most active group of human rights defenders; secondly, he paved the way for the creation of such a human rights organisation that would take care

of the fate of not only individual political prisoners, but also assume the coordination of the entire human rights movement.

New attempts to create a legal Ukrainian human rights organisation were observed in the mid-1970s and were based on the realities that had developed at that time in the domestic and foreign policy of the USSR. The initiator of the creation of the Ukrainian public group to support the Helsinki agreements was the writer Mykola Rudenko, who was joined by Oles Berdnyk, Oksana Meshko, Levko Lukianenko, Ivan Kandyba, Oleksii Tykhyi, Nina Strokato-va-Karavanska, Mykola Matushevych, Miroslav Martynovych, Petro Hryhorenko. The first document prepared by the Ukrainian Human Right Organization – Ukrainian Helsinki Group (*Українська Гельсінська Група*, hereinafter – UHG) was the “Declaration of the Ukrainian Public Group for the Promotion of the Implementation of the Helsinki Agreements”, which outlined the tasks and directions of activities of the human rights association. The group aimed to facilitate the familiarisation of the Ukrainian public with the Declaration of Human Rights, to put into practice the provisions of the humanitarian articles of the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference (1975), to ensure that at all international meetings where the results of the implementation of the Helsinki Agreements were to be discussed, Ukraine as a sovereign state and member of the UN was represented by a separate delegation, and the creation of independent press agencies to establish a free exchange of information.

The arrests and trials of the participants of the Helsinki movement in Ukraine, such as Rudenko, Tykhyi, Marinovych, Matushevych, and Lukianenko, during 1977 did not result in the self-dissolution of the organisation. During the entire existence of the UHG (1976–1988), there were 41 members in it. Thirty-nine of them were sentenced to extended terms of imprisonment for their human rights activities, and four – Stus, Tykhyi, Marchenko, Litvin – died in custody. Assistance and support in the publication of UHG materials was provided by the Committee for Ensuring the Helsinki Guarantees in Ukraine created in November 1976 in Washington (president Andrii Zvarun) and the Foreign Office of the UHG, established in October 1978 by the political emigrants Hryhorenko, Leonid Pliushch, Nadiya Sviit-lychnaia and Strokato-va-Karavanska. In September 1982 U.S. President Ronald Reagan signed a proclamation declaring 9 November 1982 “Ukrainian Helsinki Group Day”.

The activities of UHG marked a new stage in the Ukrainian resistance movement in the 1970–80s, which combined the struggle against national oppression with the struggle for democratic rights in the Ukrainian SSR. In July 1988 UHG was reorganised into the Ukrainian Helsinki Union.

In the chronicles of the opposition movement in Ukraine during the second half of the 1960s to the 1980s, the Crimean Tatar national movement holds a significant position. It represents the selfless and consistent struggle of the Crimean Tatars to return to their historical homeland and realise the rights and freedoms guaranteed by international acts, as well as the Union and Ukrainian Constitutions. The first steps in the formation of the

Crimean Tatar national movement were observed in the second half of the 1940s. They were found in the unstoppable desire of the Crimean Tatars to preserve their own identity, language, culture, through mass escapes from places of “special settlement”, violation of the established regime of their functioning, in a mass and ongoing petition campaign, and the activities of the secret club Union of Crimean Tatar Youth for Returning to their Homeland led by Mustafa Dzhemilev, Marat Omerov, Refat Hodzhenov, and others.

Artificial restrictions on the resettlement of Crimean Tatars to Crimea resulted in mass demonstrations in the Zaporizhzhya, Crimean and Kherson regions, as well as acts of self-sacrifice by Musa Mamut and Izzet Memedullaev.

A significant segment of the opposition in Ukraine was the Jewish national movement, represented by two main currents – the “emigrants” (advocating for the realisation of the right to emigrate) and the “culturalists” (focused on reviving the historical and cultural traditions of Ukrainian Jewry). Activists of the Jewish national movement, such as Yosif Zisels, Yakiv Levin, Yakiv Mesch and Oleksandr Parytskyi, made significant efforts to establish illegal cultural and educational centres called *ulpan*s (Hebrew אוּלְפָן) in Kyiv, Kharkiv and Odesa. These centres aimed to meet the religious needs of the Jewish minority and mitigate the negative effects of domestic and state anti-Semitism.

The anti-Church campaign of the second half of the 1950s through the beginning of the 1960s, which was accompanied by the forced overcoming of “religiosity”, and administrative intervention in the activities of religious organisations, caused the emergence of religious dissidence. Within the Russian Orthodox Church, there were several currents that were directed against both the Moscow Patriarchy and the state authorities. It refers to the Christian Committee for the Protection of the Rights of Believers in the USSR (1976), the public speeches of Bishop Theodosius of Poltava and Kremenchuk against the state’s interference in Church affairs, the human rights activities of priests Peter Zdrylyuk²⁰ and Vasyl Romanyuk²¹, protests by believers against the mass closure of churches and monasteries, destruction of holy places, and so on.

The movement for the restoration of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was a significant force. It emerged shortly after the non-canonical Lviv Council of 1946 and found expression in the activities of unregistered religious communities, the establishment of organisations for the protection of the rights of believers (such as the “Initiative Group for the Protection of the Rights of Believers and the Church” led by Yosyp Tereleya), various protest actions, and the dissemination of theological works by Yosif Slipyi, Vasyl Velychkovskyi and Roman Bakhtalovskyi.

²⁰ Scientific archive of the international historical, educational and charitable society “Memorial” (city of Moscow), fond 103, folder “Represii”, file 6, sheet 41.

²¹ DSA SSU (Ivano-Frankivsk), file 10123-P, vol. 1, sheets 31–33v.

As a result of the state policy regarding religion and the Church, representatives of the Roman Catholic and Jewish communities were among those in opposition to the regime. Opposition currents among Evangelical Christians, including Baptists, Seventh-day Adventists and Pentecostals, displayed high activism. They established independent spiritual centres such as the Council of Evangelical Christian-Baptist Churches and True and Free Seventh-day Adventists. They disseminated religious *samizdat* materials and appealed to international public opinion.

Persecution of dissent in the Ukrainian SSR in statistics

The process of de-Stalinisation in the second half of the 1950s and early 1960s, although it brought about some positive changes in the functioning of the punitive-repressive organs (structural and political reorganisation of law enforcement structures, oversight of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the KGB, rehabilitation of victims of illegal repressions during the Stalinist era), was still accompanied by persecutions of dissenters, albeit on a smaller scale and with somewhat different directions, but equally dubious and shameful. Terror, as a policy of intimidation and suppression of political opponents during the specified period, acquires controlled and liberalised forms and is applied more selectively and individually. During the peak of Khrushchev's Thaw in Ukraine, repression against former members of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists (*Організація українських націоналістів*, OUN) and Ukrainian Insurgent Army (*Українська повстанська армія*, UPA), participants of unauthorised strikes, meetings, demonstrations, and crackdowns on "disobedient", "inconvenient", and "unworthy" confessions such as the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, Evangelical Christian Baptists, and Seventh-day Adventists are carried out with renewed vigour.

Following the new realities, the legislative and regulatory framework was formed, which significantly expanded the capabilities of the authorities in carrying out political repressions (Law of the USSR of 25 December 1958 "On criminal responsibility for state crimes", the introduction of new article "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda" (Art. 62 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR) into the criminal codes of the union republics, numerous instructions and recommendations of the KGB under the Council of Ministers of the USSR, the General Prosecutor's Office of the USSR, the Supreme Court of the USSR, and their subordinated republican bodies). During the period from 1954 (the time of the creation of the State Security Committee under the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR) to the first half of 1964, the KGB authorities in Ukraine brought 793 individuals to criminal responsibility for what was referred to as "nationalist activities". During the specified decade, KGB employees exposed and liquidated 77 nationalist organisations and groups with a total number of participants of 601 people²². The most massive political re-

²² Information reports and special reports of state security organs to the party and soviet organs, January – November 1964, in: *DSA SSU*, fond 16, op. 3 (1967), file 2, sheet 277.

pressions during the Khrushchev Thaw occurred in the following years: 1959 – 122 people arrested; 1960 – 48 arrests; 1961 – 48 arrests; 1962 – 115 arrests; 1963 – 56 arrests.

A significant turn towards neo-Stalinism in the mid-1960s defined a new general line of struggle against “Ukrainian nationalism” and dissent in Ukraine. The statistics of archival investigative cases not only allow us to reconstruct the scale of political repressions but also to trace specific stages and patterns of the punitive-repressive policy during that time.

The wave of arrests that swept through Kyiv, Lviv, Odesa, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ternopil, Lutsk and Feodosia in August-September 1965 was a preventive attack by the ruling regime against the development of dissent in Ukraine. As a result of these arrests, 24 of the most active participants in the Ukrainian national movement were placed in KGB's pre-trial detention centres, with 18 of them later being sentenced to various terms of punishment. The statistics of arrests of the “anti-Soviet element” in the following years were as follows: 1966 – 4 people (in 1966, the KGB of the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR exposed 73 organisations and groups, which included 450 people); 1967 – 21 people; 1968 – 10 people²³.

The campaign to eradicate dissent as a social phenomenon in the republic continued and persisted. In 1969, the state security authorities uncovered and put an end to the organised activities of 76 groups involving 335 participants. In 1969, 55 individuals were held criminally responsible for anti-Soviet activities (from 1965 to 1969, a total of 77 citizens were held criminally responsible by the KGB for conducting anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda in the Ukrainian SSR, including 43 individuals who acted unlawfully on their own and 34 who were part of 10 anti-Soviet groups). In addition, based on the materials of the KGB agencies, 208 individuals were convicted through the prosecution service and police. In 1969, the KGB authorities of the republic identified 245 authors who, in 86 instances, had distributed 465 postcards and 383 anonymous letters. The ruling regime sought to engage the public in the fight against dissidents. In 1969, based on the materials of the state security agencies of the Ukrainian SSR, preventive measures were taken against 2697 individuals, including 808 individuals with the involvement of labour collectives. Despite the impressive statistics in the fight against the dissident movement (it is known that from 1967 to June 1971 the KGB of the Ukrainian SSR “preventively” dealt with over 6 000 citizens). Vitalii Nikitchenko, the head of the KGB under the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR, drew the attention of the higher political leadership of the republic to the tendency of the increasing number of people involved in the production and distribution of hostile leaflets and anonymous letters, which rose from 406 people in 1968 to 515 people in 1969. The leadership of the special services was concerned about the age of the group of “dissidents” who disagreed with the existing socialist order. Since 1966, the number of persons under the age of 25 screened by state security bodies

²³ *Ibid.*, fond 16, op. 3 (1974), file 5, sheet 284.

has been increasing year by year: 1966 – 442 people; 1967 – 461 people; 1968 – 581 people; 1969 – 684 people²⁴.

It is known that during the preparation and conduct of the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of Ukraine and the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in January–March 1971, the KGB of the Ukrainian SSR took several actions. They halted the activities of two nationalist groups in the Ivano-Frankivsk and Ternopil regions, implemented preventive measures against over 100 individuals who made anti-Soviet statements, conducted searches for 86 individuals who distributed 209 leaflets and 91 anonymous documents, uncovered 15 incidents of destruction of Soviet monuments, and held 19 individuals criminally responsible for making threats against Soviet party activists.

Despite the determined resistance of government structures against various forms of intellectual opposition, the dissemination of self-published uncensored works within and outside the republic remained an uncontrollable area on the “frontline” for Soviet special services.

The concern of the Communist Party leadership about the surge of public interest in self-publishing was reflected in the content of the resolutions of the CC CPSU (from 28 June 1971) and the CC CPU (from 27 July 1971), which had the common title “On Measures to Counter the Illegal Distribution of Anti-Soviet and Other Politically Harmful materials”²⁵. In the summer of 1971, following the instructions of the party’s high-ranking body, the KGB under the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR initiated a special operation codenamed “Block” (Блок). The objective of this operation was to neutralise the most active and interconnected “nationalist elements” in the Ukrainian SSR who were involved in the illegal distribution of “anti-Soviet and other politically harmful materials” (known as *samizdat*). It is notable that shortly after the approval of the resolution by the CC CPU, on 9 August 1971, the state security agencies of the Ukrainian SSR launched criminal case No. 42 regarding the production and distribution of the illegal magazine *Ukrainian Herald*.

As a result of operational and investigative measures in the “Block” and *Ukrainian Herald* cases, residents of Kyiv, Lviv, Odesa, and other cities in Ukraine came to the attention of state security agencies. Among them were Ivan Svitlychnyi, Ivan Dziuba, Oles Serhienko, Ivan Rusin, Viacheslav Chornovil, Nina Strokatoва, Viktor Nekrasov, Vasyl Romaniuk, Serhii Paradzhanov, Vasyl Stus, Leonid Seleznenko, the Horin brothers, Stefaniia Shabat-ura, Ivan Hel, Zinoviia Franco, Yevhen Sverstiuk, Mykola Plakhotniuk, Iryna Kalinets, Le-

²⁴ Information reports and special reports of state security organs to the party and soviet organs, January – December 1970, in: *Ibid.*, sheet 24.

²⁵ Information reports and special reports of state security organs to the party and soviet organs, January–December 1971, in: *Ibid.*, op. 7 (1985), file 5, sheets 68–75.

onid Pliushch and Borys Antonenko-Davydovych. Based on the information obtained, the state security authorities became aware that the individuals involved in the “Block” case had extensive connections with the so-called “democrats” from Moscow. These individuals were implicated in the production of the uncensored almanac *Chronicle of Current Events* and were associated with the activities of the Initiative Group for the Protection of Civil Rights in the USSR. Furthermore, they were establishing contacts with certain “Jewish nationalists” and “Crimean Tatar autonomists” with the intention of creating a large-scale opposition movement in the USSR. During the implementation of the “Block” case in 1972, approximately 70 dissidents were imprisoned: Ivan Svitlychnyi, Viacheslav Chornovil, Yevhen Sverstiuk, Vasyl Stus, Ivan Hel, Iryna Kalynets, Stefaniia Shabaturova, Vasyl Romanyuk, Danylo Shumuk, Leonid Pliushch, Mykola Plakhotniuk, Zinovii Antoniuk, Leonid Seleznenko, Volodymyr Roketskyi, Mykhailo Osadchyi, and others.

In July 1976, the case “Block” underwent a new operational deployment when the KGB board at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR discussed the status of the case's development and measures to improve it. The board recommended its regional administrations to intensify efforts in neutralizing nationalist elements and to take preventive action against the organisers and participants of the Helsinki movement. In 1977, founding members of the UHG were arrested: Rudenko, Oleksii Tykhyi, Lukianenko, Marynovych, Matushevych. 1979 tore from the ranks of the UHG Oleksandr Berdnyk, Petro and Vasil Sichkiv, Yurii Lytvyn, Vasil Ovsienko, Yosif Zisels. A year later, severe sentences were received by Olha Heiko-Matushevych, Mykola Horbal, Vitalii Kalynychenko, Petro Rozumnyi. The court proceedings in the cases of Oksana Meshko, Vasil Stus, Ivan Kandyba, Yaroslav Lesiv and Ivan Sokulskyi took place in 1981.

The KGB special operation “Block” in the Ukrainian SSR lasted for fifteen years, with its last documented activities dating back to 1986. However, despite the prolonged persecution, the dissident movement persisted and remained the main force that brought together all the healthy and progressive elements of Ukrainian society, even during the period of Gorbachev's Perestroika.

In general, based on the Law of the USSR of 25 December 1958 “On Criminal Responsibility for State Crimes” and Article 62 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR (“Anti-Soviet Agitation and Propaganda”), which became effective on 1 April 1961, a total of 719 individuals were criminally prosecuted in Ukraine between 1959 and 1986. These prosecutions were based on charges related to anti-Soviet activities, such as agitation and propaganda against the state. If we consider the first decade (1959 through 1969) of the implementation of the USSR law on state crimes, a total of 547 individuals were repressed. However, during the subsequent period (1970–1986), the number decreased to 172 people. In the conditions of deepening socio-political and economic crisis and the unfolding of democratic processes in Soviet society during Gorbachev's Perestroika, the ruling re-

gime in the USSR, under pressure from the international community, was compelled to renounce terrorist methods of combating dissent. They had to release political prisoners from prisons and exile and allow the existence of “informal” groups, clubs, and organisations of various political and religious orientations.

Conclusions

During the 1960s through 1980s, there was a real opposition in Ukraine that stood against the Soviet totalitarian regime. This opposition engaged in a systematic and diverse range of activities aimed at democratizing all aspects of public life, fostering state-building processes, and promoting political and legal culture among the people. The Ukrainian national movement emerged as the most organised and cohesive force during that time period. It brought together representatives of the intellectual elite and passionate supporters of the Ukrainian idea from various regions of the republic. To achieve their ultimate goals, the Ukrainian national movement closely interacted with other nonconformist forces in Ukraine – activists from the Crimean Tatar, Jewish national, and religious movements. Nonconformist forces, despite their unique characteristics, acted as a unified force to achieve democratic rights and freedoms, which paved the way for the free development of all peoples inhabiting Ukraine.

The union and republican party-state leadership officially denied the existence of any opposition to the regime, labelling its representatives as “renegades” and “criminals”. However, they consistently fought against nonconformist forces. In response to the escalation of the dissident movement, political repressions were implemented through the establishment of an extensive punitive apparatus and relied on the existing legislative and regulatory framework. The cessation of terror as a form of state governance and acts of violence in the second half of the 1980s ultimately led to the collapse of the Soviet totalitarian system.

Oleh Bažan

XX a. antros pusės pasipriešinimo judėjimas Sovietų Ukrainoje: esmė, mastai, formos ir metodai

SANTRAUKA

Straipsnyje apžvelgiamos bendros opozicinio judėjimo formavimosi Ukrainoje XX a. šeštojo dešimtmečio antroje pusėje–devintajame dešimtmetyje tendencijos ir ypatumai, nagrinėjamos protesto judėjimo formos ir metodai, Ukrainos disidentų informacinės ir komunikacijos veiklos specifika. Tyrime daugiausia dėmesio skiriama politinių represijų mechanizmui, Ukrainos SSR baudžiamosios teisės aktų taikymui baudžiant už su oficialia ideologija nesutampančią nuomonę, nustatomas apytikslis respublikos piliečių, represuotų XX a. šeštojo–devintojo dešimtmečių laikotarpiu „už antisovietinę propagandą ir veiklą“, skaičius.

REIKŠMINIAI ŽODŽIAI: disidencija, savilaida, politinės represijos, Ukrainos SSR KGB.

Олег Бажан

Антирежимний рух другої половини ХХ ст. в радянській Україні: сутність, масштаби, форми і методи спротиву

РЕЗЮМЕ

У статті висвітлюються загальні тенденції і особливості формування опозиційного руху в Україні в другій половині 1950-х-1980-ті роки, розглядаються форми і методи протестного руху, специфіка інформаційно-комунікаційної діяльності українських дисидентів. У дослідженні акцентується увага на механізмі політичних репресій, застосуванні кримінального законодавства УРСР для покарання за інакодумство, встановлено приблизна кількість репресованих громадян республіки за «антирадянську пропаганду та діяльність в 1950–1980 ті роки.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: дисидентство, самвидав, політичні репресії, Комітет державної безпеки УРСР.