

6 Ukraine, 1987-1991

The breakup of the Soviet Union was both a cause and an effect of the democratic revolutions of the late 1980s. As we have seen, Mikhail Gorbachev hoped to save the Soviet Union by reforming it; instead, he presided over its demise. A union of fifteen republics that had seemed unshakable at the beginning of 1989 had disappeared from the map by the end of 1991. In its place were fifteen new countries, none of which had been independent for at least fifty years.

Things could have turned out quite differently. After all, nonviolent transformation requires commitment on both sides; it is not enough for an opposition to decide against armed conflict if leaders do not also take that step. To some extent, leaders can be swayed by the behavior of opposition or by external pressures; these factors can be seen in a number of the cases in this book. A peaceful conclusion was perhaps least likely in the Soviet case given the threat that the opposition posed not just to the regime but to the country itself and to relations among ethnic groups.

This central event in global political transformation is not easy to represent as a revolution. Most of the fifteen newly independent states, including Russia and the states of Central Asia and the Caucasus, cannot really be said to have undergone a transition to democracy, though in each the level of freedom is now greater than it was thirty years ago. The most successful revolutions—the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—lack the global significance of other case studies. Ukraine, which was the second most populous of the Soviet republics, offers the most insight into how politics changed in the Soviet Union. Though it may not have seemed so at the time, twenty years later it is becoming clear that Ukraine has undergone the most dramatic transformation of the group.

Ukraine had become Soviet in stages. At the time of the Russian Revolution (1917), a West Ukrainian National Republic flashed briefly on the horizon before the Red Army on one side, and Poland on the other, divided up Ukraine. Collectivization of agriculture under Joseph Stalin in the 1930s, and the resultant famine, ravaged Ukrainian soci-

ety, as did purges of national and local leaders. After World War II, the Soviet Union took from Poland the territory of Eastern Galicia (including the city of L'viv, long the heart of Ukrainian nationalism). The purges continued, accompanied by Russification that reduced Ukrainian to the status of a local language whose literature survived largely in exile and in the labor camps of Siberia.

Ukrainians were among the first to respond to the Helsinki Accords of 1975 (see Introduction), seeing the international recognition of human rights as a tool to reassert national rights. But members of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group (Document 26), among them Vyacheslav Chornovil, quickly found themselves imprisoned. Two factors reawakened opposition in Ukraine in the early years of Gorbachev's administration. The first of these was a revived tradition of dissent, as Chornovil and others returned home to L'viv or to the capital, Kyiv, and decided to test the limits of Gorbachev's *glasnost* (see Document 7). The second was the explosion at the nuclear power plant at Chernobyl (Ukrainian: Chornobyl') in northern Ukraine in April 1986. While open protests were rare, the disaster lent urgency to political activism.

Gorbachev took steps to rein in nationalist dissent, especially in the Baltic republics where national opposition was better organized; like any good Communist, he regarded nationalism as a reactionary, elitist force. Yet his increasingly evident willingness to rethink the Soviet economic and political system opened the door for ever-stronger moves for autonomy, especially in republics where opposition was already well organized. In March 1989, elections to the Congress of People's Deputies allowed for multiple candidates for the first time in Soviet history. Though there could be no opposition parties, many Ukrainian advocates of national autonomy (no one was yet talking about independence) ran for seats as representatives of a new umbrella group, the National Movement for Support of Perestroika (usually called simply *Rukh*, "Movement"), and some were elected. As members of parliament, they now had access to television and sharpened their demands for autonomy. A new dynamic emerged in the politics of the Soviet republics: Communist party leaders now actually attempted to gain popularity, painting themselves as advocates of national autonomy. Lithuania and Latvia even declared independence in March 1990, though the world largely ignored them. Ukraine followed in July with a declaration of sovereignty that, while not going as far as the Baltics had, asserted that Ukrainian law superseded Soviet law and that Ukraine had the right to self-determination.

Gorbachev now began an attempt to recast the Soviet Union through a new treaty that would give the republics far-reaching autonomy. The day before it was to be signed, August 19, 1991, a group of Communist party leaders opposed to this liberalization staged a coup to overthrow Gorbachev. The coup failed, but it spelled the end of the Soviet Union. The republics now rushed for the exits, led by Ukraine, which declared independence just a few days later. Gorbachev formally dissolved the Soviet Union in December.

Between 1987 and 1990, Ukrainian society relearned self-organization after decades of Sovietization. Yet the abruptness of the Soviet Union's collapse, as well as the strategic importance that Ukraine continued to have for Moscow, stunted Ukraine's democratic transformation. Its leaders, especially President Leonid Kuchma (1994–2005), proved increasingly corrupt, authoritarian, and beholden to Moscow. Another revolution, the Orange Revolution of November and December 2004, would be needed to push Ukraine toward democracy. Yet that revolution, whose outcome remains uncertain, would not have been possible without the prior experience of democratic change.

Reading these documents, consider what might explain Ukraine's more modest success in comparison with other cases. What role might the demands and visions of the opposition play? For example, how do Vyacheslav Chornovil's concerns and ideas compare with those of Aung San Suu Kyi or Václav Havel? The documents in this chapter express fears about national, cultural, and even biological survival. How does the conception of what a nation is and who its members are differ from ideas articulated in other cases?

VYACHESLAV CHORNOVIL
Open Letter to Mikhail Gorbachev
1987

Vyacheslav Chornovil (1937–1999), a journalist by profession, was Ukraine's best-known dissident. He was a founding member and editor of the opposition journal Ukrainian Herald and a founding member of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group, formed in 1976 to call attention to human rights abuses. Though he was never a member of the Communist party, his open letter shows a genuine belief that the party's leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, deserved support; he is careful to couch his letter in the language of Soviet politics. With this letter, Chornovil also expresses his belief that open activity was the best form of opposition.

The whole world is following with great interest your attempts to put into practice some democratic ideas that are new for Soviet society. And though you call the current changes in the country revolutionary, unfortunately one has to concur that at the moment it is only "a revolution in words." It is obvious that you do not have enough active and honest partners and helpers to break the resilient back of the Soviet party bureaucracy. Their numbers would increase if you were to stop stifling and putting on the back burner such important problems in *perestroika* as the right to free criticism, legal opposition and the national question.

Allow me to share some thoughts with you as a competent person who, over the past twenty years, has been among "dissidents" and "nationalists" and who has experienced nearly the whole arsenal of restraints on independent thinking (except perhaps for "psychiatric" incarceration): prohibition to practice a profession; administrative surveillance; harassment of family and friends; four trials (among them one on a flimsily constructed criminal charge), fifteen years of prison, camps and exile, etc. . . .

Views on the problems of the national economy in the Soviet Union, criticism of language policies in the republics, for which we were carted off to prison camps until not long ago, are now being repeated from public platforms and in the press by leading Soviet writers. . . .

It is a logical conclusion that the social, political, spiritual and economic stagnation of the last twenty years was precisely the result of the harsh suppression of all independent thinking, the spirit of criticism and doubt. And it is equally logical to assume that the official *glasnost*, regimented and under control of the party organs, will be inadequate for the spiritual relief of the society and insufficient to move forward. Inevitably, what could be called dissent, legal opposition or simply independent criticism in one form or another will have to be allowed. If you need some confirmation from Lenin in these cases then you could refer to his tolerance towards opposition and oppositionists in the party, how he advised searching for the grain of truth even in the criticisms of the emigre press, how he taught his colleagues and followers: "it is not necessary to assume 'intrigue' or 'opposition' in those who think and act differently, but to value independent people."¹

. . . Even now, some political prisoners, victims of the period of stagnation where there was no *glasnost*, continue to study your speeches on democratic renewal of Soviet society through fortified prison bars; others were given their freedom as a favor (although the confessions and pleas for mercy should have come from their tormentors). A third category, having served the full term of imprisonment, continue to face discrimination of a different nature. An example is close at hand: tomorrow morning, I, a former journalist in republic and regional newspapers and television, publicist and literary critic, will change shifts at my work as a stoker with a former instructor of the regional party committee. After him will come a doctoral candidate in philology, university lecturer, author of verses for which he was arrested and sentenced to a term not much less than mine—twelve years. . . . The situation is the same for many others who have been freed.² . . .

¹Vladimir Lenin (1870–1924): leader of the Communist party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). Chornovil purposely places Lenin, usually considered no friend of dissent and democracy, in an unfamiliar light. The quote is from Lenin's letter to N. Osinsky, December 1921, in Lenin, *Collected Works*, v. 45 (Moscow, 1970), p. 406.

²As in Czechoslovakia, where Václav Havel . . .

In this situation, let me remind you that any creative individual, be he a stoker or carpenter, will always need to find an outlet for his creative energy and intellectual potential. And if you do not wish to channel this creativity within this democratic restructuring of society, then we will find our own readers, observers and listeners.

I am informing you that several Ukrainian journalists and writers, who are presently experiencing a ban on their works and within their profession, including myself in this work, are legally reviving the publication of the socio-political and literary journal, *The Ukrainian Herald*, which appeared from 1970–1972 under difficult circumstances. This journal wholly conforms to the present stipulations of “glasnost.”

There is also the idea of forming our own creative circles independent from the official ones, which enforce a ban upon us, and forming our own associations of persecuted Ukrainian writers, journalists, artists even though the circulation of our publications may well be limited; we would also organize exhibitions in private apartments, and if the opportunity arose, we would consider publishing our works or organizing exhibitions abroad, without any intention of going against the state. That is the legal right of any author.

We hope that you and the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU will appreciate our efforts to allow our society to witness this true “glasnost.”

If one sees a positive result on the question of independent thought (i.e. the release of some political prisoners, the immediate halting of repressions, the taciturn admittance—so far only from the center—of various democratic forms of opposition, such as demonstrations, legal *samvydav*,³ etc.), then the national question has ended up in the deafest corner of this *perestroika* even though this is a most vital question for this multi-national country which has proclaimed itself as the Union of Sovereign Socialist Republics. . . .

In practice, *perestroika* in the national question is limited at the moment to the opportunity for activists in national cultures, primarily writers, to talk (on a superficial level without going into substance or circumstances, without mentioning the total or even partial dissolution of the state functions of supposedly sovereign nations) about the depressed situation of national languages and the cultural heritage of their people. . . .

In order to return to Lenin's norm with respect to nationality policies the initiatives ought to come from the ranks of the Soviet party leadership. . . . It is necessary to hold a special plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine where, with the same courage and openness you showed at the June plenum in your speech about the economy,⁴ one could openly discuss the true situation of the non-Russian nationalities in the USSR, the fictitious character of their sovereignty and the total non-conformity to Lenin's mandates, particularly as stated in his well-known work, "The question of nationality or autonomy."⁵ . . .

I would dearly want to believe that now under the auspices of this new democracy publicly initiated by you, Moscow will finally extend, to its "younger" brothers in this Union of "equal rights," its hand without the traditional iron fist.

. . . First and foremost, it is essential to extend the rights of the republics of the Soviet Union with respect to political, economical and cultural life. . . . Secondly, it is vital to return to its fullest extent the usage of national languages within the state and community framework. To this end, within the republics' constitutions, national languages must again be proclaimed as state languages and this must be put into practice. . . .

They will try to alarm you with claims of "bourgeois nationalism" and even the break-up of the Soviet Union although the policy is aimed at strengthening it as an actual, and not fictitious, union. Only in this way will it be possible to overcome the fierce opposition of the Russian and Russified bureaucracies. But, believe me, you will find understanding among the greater part of the Russian nation not yet tainted by chauvinism, however in the other republics, you will receive the most fervent support and see an outburst of creative energy within all aspects of *perestroika*. As representatives of the non-Russian sector of the Soviet Union population, we will ultimately only accept this *perestroika* as our own once it is carried out not only in the interest of all the classes and strata of society (except the bureaucrats) but in the interest of all the nations and nationalities of the Soviet Union.

⁴At a plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in June 1987.

UKRAINIAN HELSINKI UNION

Atomic Evil Out of Ukraine!

November 1988

The Chernobyl disaster of April 1986 had three effects on political change in Ukraine. First, it made apathy or conformity impossible for many Ukrainians (and others in the region, too): One might resign oneself to the lack of the Ukrainian language in one's children's school but draw the line at accepting a threat to people's very lives. This petition, issued by the Ukrainian Helsinki Union (known before 1988 as the Ukrainian Helsinki Group), spoke to the fears of ordinary citizens of Ukraine. Second, opposition activists interpreted the event as a crime not only against the environment and the people but against the nation, placing its very existence in peril; it thus helped to fuse democratic and nationalist opposition. Finally, Chernobyl jolted Gorbachev out of complacent expectation that the Soviet Union would smoothly reform itself. The approach he took in his speech to the Communist party plenum, excerpted in Document 7, was partially a result of this realization. Anti-Communist activists in many republics, like those in Poland, as we saw earlier, sought to capitalize on all of these trends.

An Appeal from the Executive Committee of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union

Citizens of Ukraine!

The threat of destruction hangs over our country, the specter of degeneration over our people. As a result of the criminal centralist policies of the Stalinist-Brezhnevite leadership, which ignores the interests of the sovereign (on paper only) republics; as a result of the irresponsibility of the local authorities, who leased out Ukraine to the mafias in the ministries and departments, Ukraine is oversaturated with energy,

mining, metallurgical, and chemical industries, those that produce the greatest amounts of harmful wastes. Nearly 50% of the atomic energy output of the Soviet Union is concentrated in Ukraine.

The Chernobyl tragedy, which shook the entire world, taught the ruling bureaucratic leadership nothing. New atomic reactors are being built or planned for the Rivne, the Novo-Ukrayinka, the Khmelnytsk and the Zaporizhzhia atomic power stations. Despite protests by the community, the construction of the Crimean atomic power station is near completion, while in Chyhyryn, the very historical center of Ukraine, quietly like thieves they continue building an atomic power plant. And this is at a time when Ukraine even now exports electricity to other countries, when, with efficient management, a reduction in the energy requirements to world standards, the entire electrical energy output of Ukrainian atomic power plants would become superfluous. And this when atomic energy is banned in many countries or is being cut back, when such a superindustrial country as the U.S.A. has decided to renounce the further building of atomic power plants and shut down existing ones.

The time has come to put an end to predatory management practices in our land. At first we were forced to take pride in being the bread basket of Russia, then the all-Union forge and the all-Union boiler room. Today Ukraine is becoming the all-Union reactor, and, in perspective, the all-Union, and even the all-human cemetery. Today we are called upon to remind the rulers that this land has a master—the **people**, for whom it is not only the means of carrying out production plans, but also the historical cradle of the past, the native home in which present and future generations could live a life of happiness.

Glasnost brought the long overdue truth about the cruel thirties to the pages of our newspapers. But if we rejoice about the truth of the past alone then the years ahead will be even more horrific. Yes, the artificial famine of the thirties took eight million lives; the blood runs cold in the veins at the thought. But what about today's truth? Where is it? Why do they want to lull it to sleep, the truth about the seven and one half million who walk among us today and who, in the opinion of competent scientists, will be prematurely laid to rest in the earth? And this is only from one reactor in Chernobyl! But fifty have been planned for us!

Ukrainian scientists, writers and public figures appealed to the authorities and later to the 19th Conference of the ruling party, demanding that the further development of atomic energy in Ukraine be halted. The issue of a referendum was raised. However, as evi-

denced
absenc
seriou
Minist
and ne
Pec
Ma
which
territ
invas
respo
let's
and
of ou
K
S
Hels
the

genced by the reaction to this appeal, or, more accurately, by the absence of any reaction whatsoever, no one has taken these demands seriously; no one even thinks about asking the people. Meanwhile the Ministry of Atomic Energy pushes forward by putting new reactors and new nuclear power plants into operation.

People! Let's stop the madmen! Let's stop them before it's too late! May this collection of signatures become a national referendum by which the Ukrainian people and all other nationalities that live on the territory of Ukraine declare for life. Our land witnessed many enemy invasions. Our ancestors preserved it for us. Today the historical responsibility for Ukraine's fate falls with all its weight upon us. So let's defend our native land against the merciless talons of centralism and from our own irresponsibility and indifference to our fate, the fate of our children and grandchildren, the fate of our suffering land.

Kiev-Lviv, November 1988. . . .
Supporting the appeal by the Executive Committee of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union, we the undersigned, demand that the governments of the USSR and the Ukrainian SSR:

- Immediately halt the construction of the Crimean atomic power stations;
 - Halt the operations of the Chernobyl atomic power stations;
 - Develop and publicize a promising plan for the gradual elimination of all existing atomic power stations in Ukraine and their replacement by alternative means of generating electricity, as well as for the closing down of those production facilities that have great electrical energy requirements, are damaging to the environment and are located in zones of industrial overload and in densely populated areas.
- Atomic evil—out of Ukraine!

Founding Meeting of the Native Language Association

June 13, 1988

Beginning in 1987, in the western city of L'viv, people who had never been engaged in opposition and who tended to be younger than the generation of Vyacheslav Chornovil began to organize. Among them was Ihor Mel'nyk, an engineer at the Kineskop factory. In early 1988, he began to collect signatures for a petition asking for permission to found a society to promote the Ukrainian language. City authorities reluctantly gave Mel'nyk permission to hold an inaugural meeting on June 13, but then they locked the doors of the building where the gathering was to take place. The crowd of supporters, a thousand or so, simply moved to the nearby square to hold a rally by the statue of writer Ivan Franko. Many leading dissidents addressed the crowd, including Mykhaylo Horyn' of the Helsinki Union and Iryna Kalynets', a leader in the opposition centered around the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, a religious faith based largely in western Ukraine. In this meeting, we can see a process of radicalization taking place as a crowd that has gathered for relatively innocuous purposes becomes a vessel for political opposition, in part because of the authorities' reaction.

Engineer Ihor Mel'nyk, a member of the initiative group forming the association, read the collectively written draft statute of the Native Language Association. . . .

Then Mykhaylo Horyn' spoke: "Esteemed comrades! The creation of the L'viv Native Language Association is one of the rungs of the ladder by which we will raise our consciousness, which has fallen so low it is difficult to imagine. How many of our children have turned away from their language, how many of our brothers and sisters have forgotten their birthplace? But we are beginning to awaken. I support what has been read out here, but I believe that such a society should

set serious goals. I propose adding a paragraph about expanding the sphere of native language use, since this has already been expressed even in the newspapers: The association will fight for the Ukrainian language's status as the official language of the Ukrainian Republic. . . . As we discuss the question of the status of the Ukrainian language, we must talk about ensuring that it is used. The Ukrainian language ought to be introduced into every institution, without exception: scientific institutes, management, administrative offices, etc. The job of the association is to bring the Ukrainian language into all spheres of society, into the workplace, into science and culture. And into politics, in fact. It would be very good, for example, if our Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs really dealt with foreign affairs and did not just sit around playing cards. We should insist that the administrative bureaucracy, which is in fact incredibly Russified, should prepare its entire staff to be examined in knowledge of Ukrainian."

A voice from the crowd: "If you want to eat, learn!"

Horyn': "I'm not saying anything new. . . . This is not a discriminatory proposal, but is of elementary importance for this nation, whom you administer and whose bread you eat. Last Saturday and Sunday, here in L'viv, there was a conference of representatives of independent organizations, at which was discussed the problem of national construction in the republics. The conference was convened at the initiative of the *Ukrainian Herald* and the Ukrainian Helsinki Group. . . . As I listened for two days to what they are doing in the Baltic republics and the Caucasus, I was ashamed for us. Even here, colleagues whom we have just elected [to the association] did not want to come out and show themselves in public—this certainly is not a good start to the association's work. I hope that though the shirt of fear now is stuck to our spine, it will start to loosen in the course of our work, and we will become normal people. . . .

A woman's voice: "Such people should be excluded—don't select them!"

Horyn': "We all understand clearly that language is only a part of the larger, complex Ukrainian problem. If the administrative and management bureaucracy has no need for professionals who know Ukrainian, we will become just a bunch of dilettantes. We must change the question from a purely cultural one into a political one and declare that industry, and all other branches [of the economy] should *Ukrainianize!* This is one of the proposals to emphasize what is written in our constitution: that we have a Union of states, not of provinces. We should demand that this state, which we call Ukraine, be an authentic

state within the conditions that exist. We need to work hard in this direction—other republics are ahead of us.”

Next, Iryna Kalynets' spoke: “Something doesn't get done just by talking about it. There are a lot of us here—and let everyone think about what concretely he can do in the association. Who can assemble examination commissions, who can sign up to give cultural performances, who can travel about and give lectures? There should be a statute, and now we must put together a program. Everyone must do something. Go to the villages and inspire the people, go to the factories, talk with people. Do you understand? So everyone here needs to say something of himself. Therefore we ask you: Write down in your name, what you can do, what you propose.” . . .

The resolution of the constituent assembly confirming the statute of the Taras Shevchenko Native Language Association was accepted. . . . Although the official part of the gathering was finished, the rally continued. People did not want to leave. . . .

Now Natalia Didchuk, a student at L'viv University, spoke: “I call all of you my brothers, because you have stood up for our language, for our culture, and for this, that in every home, in every family mothers will be able to sing our beautiful lullabies to their children in their native tongue. I would like for you to raise your voices so that our Ukrainian Virgin Mary would no longer be called the Black Madonna because of Chernobyl, or because of the pierced hearts of our boys in Afghanistan.¹ Brothers! Let us consecrate these good beginnings to the immortal memory of our fathers, who perished under Stalin, our grandfathers, taken by war, and our great-grandfathers, also taken by war. Let us not lose our roots, and remember that we are Ukrainians, we are proud of this name.” . . .

One after another, people got up on the improvised stage, around the Franko monument, and read the verses on language by Sydir Vorobkevych, Ivan Hnatiuk, Bogdan Stel'makh, and Volodymyr Sosiura, and fragments of Taras Shevchenko's poem “To the Dead and the Living.”²

IVAN DRACH

*The Political Situation in Ukraine
and Rukh's Task*

October 1990

As late as the summer of 1989, organized opposition in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic was confined to intellectual elites and to the city of L'viv. Rukh, the Ukrainian Popular Movement for Perestroika, began to change this. As its name suggests, the movement positioned itself within the political sphere but in support of Gorbachev. A republic-wide strike by miners in the summer of 1989 moved protest onto a new plane, as strikers, along with Adam Michnik of Poland, addressed Rukh's first congress in September of that year. At the congress, perestroika disappeared from the movement's name, symbolizing its reorientation toward purely Ukrainian matters. In 1990, elections at the republic and local levels effectively broke the Communist party's monopoly on politics; the Ukrainian parliament's near-unanimous passage of the Declaration of Sovereignty in July 1990 showed that nationalism had become an accepted language. At Rukh's second congress, its leader, Ivan Drach (1936-), a poet from Kyiv, traced a vision of a united Ukrainian political opposition.

Any objective historical, political, economic, social or cultural analysis would inevitably lead us to the same conclusion: only the total sovereignty of the Ukrainian people, a completely independent Ukrainian state, is appropriate given the present development of world civilization. Any other form of historical existence of the people, the nation, would leave it with no choices, no mercy, throw Ukrainian society out into the back yard of civilization, turn it into food, raw material, resources to be used for the further development of other nations which have their own states. This is the challenge that fate is sending

us, this is the choice before which we stand. Either—or. We must understand this now, as we stand at the edge of the bottomless abyss of the union treaty.¹ If our souls and minds are not yet completely mutilated and plundered, we are obliged to be horrified by the current situation of the Ukraine, to finally learn something from her thousand-year history. Let us look into one hundred eyes, into 50 million eyes. . . .

Today, political and just plain human awakening is knocking at the door of every inhabitant of the Ukraine. The Donetsk miner, Lugansk chemist, Dnieper bank metallurgist, Kiev, Kharkov, Sumy machinist, Mykolayiv and Kherson ship builder, the conscientious and docile Poltava or Podillya grain and cattle farmer, the dweller of the coastline of the dying Black Sea or of the Dnieper, which has been turned into poisonous mud, not to mention those whose settlements have been transformed into an atomic leper colony by the cesium and strontium plague²—none of us here, in the Ukraine, can hide any longer, close our eyes, cover our ears and fail to hear the knocking on all of our doors by disablement, national death, degeneration, nonexistence. The present regime, which speaks in the words of the proletarian hymn, cares not about us. And it will never care about us. It is not ours. However much a meat processing plant may be reconstructed, it still remains a meat processing plant. Technological improvement can lighten the work of the staff or of the “collective management,” allow the plant to enter the international market, increase profits, even “humanize” the barbaric slaughterhouse, but a people which cannot defend its own rights will always remain that plant’s raw material. . . . We, Ukrainians, have paid God and humanity an unbelievable price for our existence. And we have the right to not bring any more bloody sacrifices onto the altar of our independence, we have paid for it one-hundred-fold. . . .

It is now completely obvious that after several years of official fireworks about *perestroika*, . . . in the summer of 1989 began the real *perestroika*, which was not expected by the authorities and was awaited by democratic forces: the appearance on the arena of political struggle of no less powerful a force than the working class. The miners’ strikes, well-organized and determined, really shook the party-state authorities. . . . The democratic forces, particularly those in the

¹At this time . . .

Ukraine, do not have the billions of the CPSU or the CPU (Communist Party of Ukraine); they do not distribute sausages and footwear, building materials and other resources. We could offer the miners only our moral and political support, our solidarity, and this we did. The authorities succeeded in misleading the miners, frightening them, like Little Red Riding Hood, with the wicked wolf—Rukh. Who won out of this? Let the miners themselves answer. . . .

What should the strategy and tactics of the democratic forces of the Ukraine be from now on? First of all, let us state directly and openly that they are totally, consciously, in principle opposed to the strategy of the repressive party rulers who still hold power in the republic today. . . . But our strategy does not foresee seizing power and it follows only the peaceful path of consolidating the sovereignty of the Ukrainian people. In contrast to the Ukrainian Communist Party, we do not impose our rule on the people; we do not call on the workers to follow our lead to a bright, but never attainable, future. . . . We see our strategy and tactics in going to the people, taking in their misery and pains, their longings, their current and historical interests and turning these things into political action. We will not imitate the bolsheviks, who seized power through conspiracy and bloody coup d'etat and then turned it against the people. Democratic forces can take power only at the will of the workers and their future rule must be under the people's control. . . .

These principles logically and inevitably set the line of the tactics of our political battle. They include making use of all treaties recognized by international law, the United Nations, the Helsinki Agreements and methods of non-violent but determined defense by the people of their inalienable rights. The arsenal of our peaceful means of struggle will include methods taken from the golden treasury of national liberation movements, in particular, various forms of civil disobedience which have been blessed by Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King and other great sons of humanity. We will study and apply the victorious experience of the Polish "Solidarity" and the Czechoslovak citizens' forum,³ the experience of patriots in Namibia⁴ and supporters of Nelson Mandela. All of this should be added to the achievements of our own Ukrainian national

liberation struggle and should help us to avoid past mistakes. We will also work with all elected bodies, from the parliament of the Ukraine to village councils, to make certain that they do not go back to being mere divisions of various party committees of the CPSU or of so-called "party forums." . . .

Against the repression and terror of the penal and military organizations of the CPSU—the KGB, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the army—we will also apply extra-parliamentary methods of struggle, in union with the people, because the police state created by the party is directed not only against democratic activists. Its main target is the worker who wishes to live in dignity, like a human being. Strikes, meetings, demonstrations, pickets, petitions, refusal to pay taxes, to participate in the illegal expropriation by the party-state of agricultural and industrial production under the guise of state orders and so-called socialist obligation, suspension of payment for community services—all of these and other actions are an effective weapon for the liberation of workers, especially now, when the serf-creating guidelines of the so-called economic reform are aiming for an even greater impoverishment of the people. . . .

When spontaneous protest, the natural and invincible human drive to freedom and happiness, is united with organized political forces, the progress of history becomes less brutal, less merciless, although it still remains irreversible. . . .

The authorities want to deceive us with their lies—we will oppose them with knowledge of the truth; let us learn and let us teach others.

The authorities want to divide us—let us oppose them with the unity of our democratic forces.

The authorities are trying to turn our attention to secondary issues—let us oppose them by understanding the essential.

The authorities are implementing economic and ideological chaos—let us oppose them with the organization of our ranks.

The authorities threaten us with the Beijing scenario—let us oppose them with fearlessness and endurance on the pattern of Prague. . . .

Long live Rukh as a structure which constantly renews itself!

LONG LIVE THE UKRAINE!