

EASTERN EUROPEAN UNITY UNDER RUSSIAN COMMUNISM AND
THE ANTI-BOLSHEVIK BLOC OF NATIONS:
CONCEPTION, IDEOLOGY, AND CONFERENCES

BY

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THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement
for the degree of Master of Arts in Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies
in the Graduate College of the
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2010

Urbana, Illinois

Adviser:

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Abstract

This work studies the close working relationship of Eastern European and Eurasians in the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (1943-1996) and how subjugation under Russian communism strengthened the ties among various ethnic and national groups. Examination of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc's establishment, ideology, and dialogue of its conferences revealed the true sentiments of non-Russians within the Soviet Union. Research of the organization's literature, conference transcripts, and continually evolving discourse was crucial in revealing the cooperative and expectant nature of the relationship among Anti-Bolshevik Bloc represented ethnicities, their interpretation of Russian communism, and their importance to the West and Western idealism.

Acknowledgements

With great appreciation, I would like to thank my advisor, Professor Dmytro Shtohryn for revealing and explaining elements of the little-known ABN and providing direction in finding materials concerning the organization. I also extend my gratitude to my grandfather, Gregory Szczerbaniuk for aiding me with supplemental research, reference books, and interesting insight on the topic. I also thank the very helpful Slavic Library staff for their help in finding and acquiring resources not only during thesis research, but also during my two years in the REEES MA program.

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EASTERN EUROPEAN UNITY UNDER RUSSIAN COMMUNISM AND
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The many Eastern European and Eurasian states, with distinct cultures, languages, and national aspirations, experienced a historical narrative often defined by subjugation and exploitation by Russia. Since Peter the Great, the Russian state has followed policies and military action in suppression of non-Russian nationalities in path of widespread expansion. The phenomenon of Russian expansionism routinely silenced aspirations of sovereignty in its subjugated states¹, continually intensified exploitation, and promoted the use of Russian language and culture over ethnic ones. As the West pursued a realization of Enlightenment individualism, human rights, democratic election and state sovereignty, its ideological adversary, whether Tsarist Russia or the Bolshevik-Marxist Soviet Union, continually deprived its own people of rights and adhered to policies of expansion and exploitation in the Eastern Europe, Eurasia, and the Caucasus. For the Russian-Bolshevik vanguard, the 1917 Russian Revolution may have signified the creation of the world's first laborers' utopia, but to the minority ethnicities of Russian Empire, the U.S.S.R. remained the same expansionist Russia with merely a more euphemistic title.

Russian Bolshevik Communism proved more brutal and repressive than imaginable, and each subjugated state held on to its existence through insurgency, preserving culture and language despite Russification, and keeping contact with individuals and organizations from other subjugated Soviet satellites and eventually the West. In 1943 representatives of these

¹ The Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations and its theorists often refer to U.S.S.R. satellites, republics, or incorporated ethnic regions as the 'subjugated states' and the term will retain the same meaning in the essay.

repressed states clandestinely met to create the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (ABN). The ABN exemplified Eastern European and Eurasian unity at its finest, and it provided a platform in the fight against Russian communism through political strategy, a media outlet revealing Soviet digressions, and most importantly, a means of intercommunication, moral and religious support, and peaceful coexistence among the subjugated states.

On November 21st and 22nd, 1943, a multinational delegation, representing ethnic groups across East European and Eurasian, gathered in Zhytomir, Ukraine under the initiative of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and its political affiliate, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). In the First Conference of the Subjugated People of Europe and Asia, thirteen nationally aspirant ethnic groups were represented. Six Azerbaijanis, 2 Byelorussians, 5 Georgians, 5 Ukrainians, 4 Armenians, 5 Uzbeks, 2 Ossetians, a Hungarian, a Tartars, a Bashkir, a Kazakh, and delegates from Cherkesy and Karbardinia attended.² Deserters from Red Army, dissatisfied with conditions and treatment of Soviet soldiers, also came. While the representatives' and speakers' religions, historical narratives and interpretations, and political thoughts varied, all experienced occupation by the U.S.S.R. They viewed the Bolshevik regime as simply a continuation of Russian Tsarist imperialism, if not more exploitative and repressive. Quite significantly, the conference occurred dangerously close to the Nazi-Soviet front in the forests of Zhytomir in Volhynian Ukraine. The conference attendees collectively considered both Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia as imperialistic powers engaging in war for land,

² Ihor Bilyi, *ABN v Borot'bi za Svobodu Narodiv* (Munich: Komitet ABN, 1946), 7.

Biblioteka Ukrains'koho Pidpil'nyka, V. 2, *ABN v Svitli postanov Konferentsii ta Inshykh Materiialiv z diial'nosti 1941-1956* (Zakordonnykh Chastyn Orhanizatsii Ukrains'kykh Natsionalistiv, 1956), 15-16.

resources, and exploitation of undermined nationalities. Surrounded by war, the First Conference of Subjugated People established clear goals and strategies for their achievement.³

Due to the proximity of the Nazi-Soviet front and reports of nearing German forces, attendees carried out the two day conference with extreme caution and clandestine. As the conference was carried out, the UPA conducted surveillance and engaged in skirmishes with German detachments. UPA routinely operated in Volhynian forests where the conference occurred, and its experience in stealth of organization and guerilla warfare proved vital in maintaining the secrecy of the conference.⁴ Delegates even took up arms and joined UPA in protecting the conference. On November 1st, as the conference was beginning, Nazi forces quickly approached. A Ukrainian Insurgent Army detachment, under command of a Georgian major and strengthened by volunteering conference delegates, routed the Germans and preserved the first meeting of what would become the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations.⁵

Conference delegates and their affiliated resistance organizations represented their respective subjugated state, and these anti-Soviet personalities and insurgencies agreed to adhere to the cultural, political and religious aspirations of each state while protecting the basic human and national sovereignty of all. The Ukrainian Insurgent Army was among the largest resistance movements represented at the First Conference of Subjugated People, and as a model ABN resistance organization, it experienced relative success against the German and Russians. Along with its political counterpart, the OUN, UPA organized and ensured the protection of attending delegates. UPA doctrine supported the achievement of free Ukrainian state and general national

³ Yaroslav Stetsko, "The Light of Freedom from the Forests of Ukraine," *ABN Correspondence Vol. XLIV No. 1-6*, (Aug-Dec, 1993): 3-6.

⁴ Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine: A History*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 442-446.

⁵ Ihor Bilyi, 5-6.

sovereignty through the world through the end of foreign occupancies, and freedom of religion, culture and language. A fundamental element of discussed anti-Bolshevik strategy involved the cooperation and assistance among the Ukrainian insurgents and other ethnic/national insurrectionary organizations. Many of the conferences' multinational representatives resisted Russian-Bolshevik imperialism in their own nations' underground movements, which like UPA, carried out armed resistance against an extremely powerful enemy.

Achievement of state sovereignty permeated the ideology of OUN/UPA, and became an instrumental goal in destroying Russian Communist imperialism for the ABN membership. In interwar Western Ukraine, OUN led the struggle against the culturally repressive Polish regime. Drawing its membership from Ukrainian youth, scouting, cultural and political organizations, OUN was a strong proponent of Ukrainian language, political involvement, and the Ukrainian Catholic and Orthodox churches; all which faced strict prohibitions under the Poles. In 1942, the Ukrainian Nationalists created the Ukrainian Insurgent Army in response to the imperialistic threats of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. As OUN served as the political wing of the Ukrainian nationalists, UPA functioned as their army. The army's leadership played a definite role at the conference, performed administrative organizational tasks during the event and served as Ukrainian delegates. Although The Ukrainian Insurgent Army's operations began in Volhynia just a year before, the organization was well-armed, well-trained, and capable of conducting guerrilla warfare against the larger armies of foreign occupants.

Ethnic and religious diversity within UPA, as well as a sense of mutual aid and brotherhood among Europeans and Eurasians threatened by communism, was most vital to the success of the First Conference of Subjugated People. Substantial numbers of Ukrainian ethnic and religious minorities and immigrants (mainly from the Caucasus) were enlisted in the

Ukrainian Insurgent Army. Many defected from the multinational Red and Nazi armies and police forces. The large numbers of Tartars, Uzbeks, Azerbaijanis, and Georgians enlisted in UPA were very familiar with Russian occupation, and they fought with regular UPA units or in their own divisions under their own commanders. Two-thousand Georgians, most refugees of the 1921 Soviet invasion of Georgia, served as the leading ethnic/national minority in UPA. The army also provided Ukrainian Jews with an outlet to combat Nazism, and they predominately served as medical and intelligence officers. Approximately 40,000 insurgents served in UPA at its largest, though some Soviet and Nazi estimates documented an unsustainable 200,000.⁶

The Ukrainian Insurgent Army, like its contemporaries in other Soviet-subjugated states, failed in the prevention a Bolshevik takeover but significantly slowed the Russian communists' policies concerning industrialization, collectivization, and cultural assimilation. UPA operated most heavily west of the Dnieper, although underground units conducted raids and sabotage in the east. Seven-hundred individuals graduated from its clandestine officer academies, and many others received similar training in the Soviet, Nazi, or national armies. Generally, Ukrainians and ethnic minorities in UPA were assigned to divisions operating in their locales. This gave the insurgency a remarkable tactical advantage and maintained high moral among the soldiers fighting for not only their nation, but also for their villages and families and sovereignty to all states under Soviet rule. Propaganda, and countering Soviet propaganda, was a priority for the Ukrainian nationalist organizations later became a necessity the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations. OUN/UPA's printed periodicals and almost every region's insurgent divisions published their

⁶ B. Sobol, "The Ukrainian Insurgent Army," in *Encyclopedia of Ukraine, Vol. S-Z*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 393-395.

own pamphlets and journals but this, due to Soviet persecution, remained sporadic. The army's newspaper, *Povstanets*, served the entire Ukrainian Insurgent Army until 1946.⁷

Due to the impossibility of lengthy supplies lines through the Soviet Union, UPA did not exchange weapons and supplies with other Eastern European and Eurasian revolutionary movements. Instead, the insurrection relied almost entirely on weapons, artillery, ammunition and supplies, even cloth for uniforms, captured from the eastern front. Despite its ability to arm and train its soldiers without Western aid, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army established and maintained ties with other Eastern European and Eurasian resistance organizations. Strong ties formed between Georgia and Ukraine since the before the Bolshevik takeovers. During the Russian revolution, both created short lived sovereign states in close contact and recognition of each other. Following the Soviet takeover of the democratic Georgian and Ukrainian states, the relationships among these states' officials, many of whom served as leaders of resistance organizations, remained strong and maintained through migrations and forced resettlements. The Ukrainian nationalists realized that the pursuit of national self-determination, which continually permeated their ideology since 1919, was the struggle of all Eastern European and Eurasian people, and they believed that achievement of true freedom of their states meant the destruction of a Russian imperialism manifested in Bolshevik ideology of the U.S.S.R. The diversity within the UPA ranks not only furthered the creation of lasting ties among Eastern Europeans and Eurasians living under communism, but it also provided communication lines needed to coordinate the First Conference of the Subjugated People.

Delegates of the First Conference of Subjugated People of Eastern Europe and Asia sought to create a concrete set of goals with strategies that were malleable and adept in

⁷ B. Sobol, "The Ukrainian Insurgent Army," in *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, 394.

combating reactionary forms of imperialism in any form. Unity and dialogue among East Europeans and Eurasians, which the event itself exemplified, was paramount to ending foreign occupation and establishing a myriad of independent states respectful of each others' interests. To the members of the conference, little contrast existed between the motives of expansionism in Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia, but delegates' states held long histories of Russian occupation and exploitation. What was undoubtedly needed was a uniform platform of "ideological, political, and military principles and methods of the liberation of these enslaved peoples from the tyrants."⁸

As the large Nazi and Soviet armies operated only several miles away, the ethnically diverse delegates expressed that World War II was a dangerous manifestation of expansionist ambitions. Rostyslav Voloshym, an OUN/UPA official and propagandist known under the pseudonyms of Pavlenko and Horbenko, mediated the conference.⁹ Delegates depicted their nations' experience with communism, further coordinated national resistance movements, and debated on the most effective strategies in overthrowing the regime. To the subjugated groups, Bolshevik communism was simply an evolved, and more repressive, form of Russian imperialism, and its defeat required new perspectives, tactics, and ongoing dialogue fostered only by Eastern European and Asian unity.

In the European and Eurasian historical narrative, the idea of Russian domination and exploitation was certainly not a new one. Although all representatives sought the ultimate destruction of Russian communism and occupation, the First Conference of Subjugated People

⁸ Stetsko, Yaroslav, "The Light of Freedom from the Forests of Ukraine," *ABN Correspondence Vol. XLIV, No. 1-6* (Aug-Dec, 1993), 3-4.

did not discourage the achievement of sovereign socialist states. The represented national-revolutionary groups were all encouraged to create a government that best suited the needs of its society and fulfilled the wills of their people. Delegates generally were not cynical or ignorant of Marx's socialist ideology, and by understanding his principles undermined Russian Bolshevik communism. In illustration of this, First Conference members (and later ABN members), cited Karl Marx, upon whose theories the Bolshevism supposedly had had been built upon:

Russia's policy is unchangeable. Her methods, tactics and maneuvers may change, but the lodestar of her policy, world domination, is a fixed star...Russia has declared herself in favor of peace and we have heard words from her mouth which express her peaceable feelings...She is prepared for all the other powers to occupy themselves with conferences, provided that these allow her to occupy the countries she desires in the meantime.¹⁰

In the creation of a strategy to combat Russian domination, conference members established several declarations on the nature of Russian, and world, exploitation of individuals and nations. These statements outlined the political platform and opinions of the First Conference of Subjugated peoples, and would later permeate into ABN ideology. Firstly, they declared the contemporaneous war, from early Nazi takeovers to the bloody Nazi-Soviet front, a typical imperialistic and colonial war for world domination. The Russians and Germans strived for territorial expansion for the exploitation of the people and resources of occupied states. In exploiting others, the Germans and Russians bettered their own states while denying others

¹⁰ Karl Marx writings, 1855, & Karl Marx, New York Tribune 1853 in Niko Nakashidze, *The Truth about ABN*, (Munich: ABN Press and Information Bureau, 1960), 19, 25.

advantages. In doing so, both powers ignored the rights of states and the associated cultural, political, and in the case of the Soviet Union, religious freedom at all levels.¹¹

Understanding the importance of propaganda in the Soviet regime and the usefulness of counter-propaganda in revolutionary movements, the delegation examined Bolshevik communist rhetoric. Many of exploited and repressed under the communist system wouldn't be surprised by conference's declarations on the nature communist propaganda. Conference members claimed that lies of social equality and the liberation of workers masked the imperialistic ambitions of the criminal communists. Some argued that bolshevism was simply manifestation of Slavophilia fused with traditional Russian chauvinism by opportunistic reactionaries. Although the Soviet regime also exploited the Russian people, the Russians enjoyed more authority and privilege, and less exploitation in the communist system, and it was their responsibility to overthrow a government operating on exploitation and occupation of neighboring states.¹²

To overcome the declared grievances against the Soviet state, including alleged imperialism and subjugation of their states, delegates of the two day conference presented several crucial strategies. Due to the short duration and danger of the First Conference of Subjugate People, delegates created broad tactics for consideration, development, and execution in following meetings. Above all, they agreed that only a wide-scale occurrence of revolutions could end Russian domination and bring national sovereignty to the Eastern European and Eurasian states. Documentation of the First Conference of Subjugated people urged all subjugated nations to wage "a political-revolutionary war on their terrain for the equality on the

¹¹ *Biblioteka Ukrains'koho Pidpil'nyka*, 17.

¹² *Ibid*, 15-16.

revolutionary front against imperialism.”¹³ The multi-national revolutions needed to occur simultaneously and attack Soviet occupation in a single, united front with national revolutionary groups adopting similar tactics and maintaining close contact. Following the success of this wave of revolutions, which itself relied heavily on unity among Eastern European and Eurasians, separate nations would be built according to demographically ethnic and cultural regions while respecting the rights and ensuring equality of its minority groups.

Discussion on that formulation of a post-communist multinational Eastern European and Eurasian order captivated the ambitions of the subjugated nations’ representatives as early as the 1943 Zhytomir gathering. Delegates in later ABN conferences further debated the topic, but the first conference bound its members to fulfill the general aspirations of their nations’ people through a democratic process respectful of ethnic, cultural, and religious minorities. The newly independent states were to be mindful of the sovereignty and rights of the world’s nations. The First Conference of Subjugated People’s delegation also stressed the advantages of conferences, committees and cooperation in maintaining this brotherhood of nations.¹⁴

Genuine unity among the Eastern European and Eurasian groups against Russian domination had been a subject of inspiration centuries before the First Conference of Subjugated People. The Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko, who spent a majority of his life outside Ukraine, including exile in the Urals, depicted the unity of nations controlled by Russia. Though occupied and exploited, potential in overthrowing the Russian state existed only in unity:

If you befriended us,

Many would have learned from this.

¹³ *Ibid*, 18.

¹⁴ *Biblioteka Ukrains’koho Pidpil’nyka*, 15-18.

We all share the same world,
But how can wounded Siberia,
A prison and a nation, heal?
From Moldavian to Finnish,
All tongues remain silent,
For their own benefit.¹⁵

The Siberian exile system, which itself signified the harshest form of repression in Tsarist and Soviet Russia, ironically served as a forum for the empire's ethnic minorities. Prison camp populations generally consisted of higher ratios of ethnic minorities than the state demographic. Many prisoners, as documented in numerous memoirs and poems, including Shevchenko's *Caucuses*, realized that their subjugation was a shared one, and that unity and cooperation among ethnicities could be as useful outside of the prisons as within. The Tsarist regime toppled, but countless Eastern Europeans and Eurasians, including many of the First Conference's attendees, continued to face imprisonment due to political views, culture and language and religion. Nearly a hundred years passed since Shevchenko published his plea for insurrectionary unity, but the experiences of the subjugated people changed little and grew even harsher.

Representatives in First Conference of Subjugated People concerned themselves not only with the Bolshevik regime, but also discussed the threat of Nazi aggression, attempted to rally support among Red Army soldiers and Soviet partisans, and urged their own nationals to join the revolutionary struggle. To the delegates, Nazi and Soviet aspirations were largely indifferent and to be treated equally as enemies of the sovereignty of states. However, anti-Nazi ideology

¹⁵ Taras Shevchenko, *Caucuses*, 1845.

was not as prevalent in First Conference literature because the representatives' states experienced histories of Russian occupation. German occupation temporarily destabilized Soviet policies and exploitation in many of their states, and the growing success of the Soviet armies alluded to a once again Russian-dominated Eastern Europe. A 'Revolutionary Committee' was formed to express the First Conference's agenda and to create petitions to supporters and soldiers of the German and Russian armies. With gratitude for their service against the Soviet Union, the First Conference beckoned non-German SS units and Wehrmacht battalions to recognize and defy German motives of territorial expansion and exploitation. Through mass desertions and an influx into national resistance organizations, the First Conference delegates assured that Nazi forces would experience considerable setbacks.¹⁶

The Committee's requests towards the multiethnic Red Army paralleled those to the Germans. Delegates applauded the heroic battle by Soviet soldiers against the Germans but urged them to examine their own nations' histories under Russian imperialism and Bolshevik communism.¹⁷ First Conference documents also urged the Soviet soldiers to desert and establish contacts with anti-Soviet insurgencies. Representatives composed the conference's lengthiest petition for the Soviet partisans across the growing Soviet Union. The petition reminded of the Russian invasions following the declaration of independent states in 1917 and of the purging of many Bolshevik leaders and party members in Stalin's terror. The letter depicted, to the partisans, a new Soviet aristocracy with continued policies of Russification and imperialism paralleling those of the previous Tsarist regime. Partisans were asked why they believed falsified Soviet propaganda and were advised to speak with their countrymen about exploitation and

¹⁶ Biblioteka Ukrains'koho Pidpil'nyka, 22.

¹⁷ Revoliutsiinii Komitet Ponevolenykh Narodiv Skhidnoi Evropy I Azii, "Chervoni Partyzany!," in *Biblioteka Ukrains'koho Pidpil'nyka*, 21-22.

occupation by the Germans and Russians. The Committee warned Soviet partisans that “if you fight on the side of the Bolsheviks, you are fighting against the workers and possibility of a united revolutionary people’s front against Bolshevism and Hitlerism.”¹⁸

First Conference of Subjugated People of Eastern Europe and Asia produced further propaganda to attract individuals of the represented states. Apart from their petitions to Soviet and Nazi soldiers and partisans, the Revolutionary Committee members drafted written statements for workers of subjugated states of the Soviet Union. Touching upon Soviet policies that classified and punished society, it urged the millions of workers, to “not help the imperialists with your labor in the interest of your brothers at the front.”¹⁹ The Revolutionary Committee’s calling to workers asked the intelligentsia and professionals to not let the interests of the Soviet Union overcome the interests of their own people. Workers and professionals of subjugate states were welcomed to resistance organizations and reminded that the success of a united front demanded their support and aid in skilled labor.²⁰

During the two day conference, delegates exhibited great inter-ethnic cooperation and unity against a common enemy. The multinational delegation escaped detection by Russian and German forces and established the fundamentals of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations ideology, an ideology derived from East European and Eurasian unity and the pursuit of national and individual freedoms. To coordinate correspondence among the subjugated nations, a single chief representative was chosen for each subjugated nation. Each, most using pseudonyms, signed the declarations and documents of the conference, ; from Armenia – Antrant, Azerbaijan - Fizul’,

¹⁸ Ibid, 22-26, 26.

¹⁹ Revoliutsiinii Komitet Ponevolenyk Narodiv, “Robitnyky Voyennykh Zavodiv,” in *Biblioteka Ukrains’koho Pidpil’nyka*, 22.

²⁰ Revoliutsiinii Komitet Ponevolenyk Narodiv, “Robitnyky Voyennykh Zavodiv!” & “Pratsiuiucha Inteligentsiye!,” in *Biblioteka Ukrains’koho Pidpil’nyka*, 22-23.

Belorussia – Dryzhnii, Bashkira – Kagaraman, Georgia – Gogiia, Kabardinia – Baksan, Ossetia – Aram, Turkmenistan - Shimrat and Dezhkman (an Uzbek and Kazakh, respectively), Tartaria – Tukai, Ukraine – Ctetsenko, Cherkesy – Dzhigit.²¹

Due to the Red Army's increase in size and the availability of troops following the war, and rebuilding in the West, no conferences occurred in 1944 and 1945. During these years, Eastern European resistance organizations within the Soviet Union faced severe crackdowns. In 1944 and 1945, the NVKD intensified operations in Western Ukraine, including the Zhytomir region. The Ukrainian Insurgent Army experienced its first real losses since its establishment. The Soviets blockaded insurgent supply lines, promised amnesty to UPA soldiers abandoning the insurrection, and conducted assassinations, surveillance, and arrests of UPA leadership and their families. Similar tactics were used in destabilizing anti-Bolshevik organized opposing in other regions represented under the First Conference. In 1946, burdened with losses over 40%, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army was driven underground, and it would not be able to organize and defend another Conference of Subjugated People of Eastern Europe and Asia within the borders of the Soviet Union.²² Many surviving OUN/UPA veterans and commanders fled the West and continued the pursuit of a multi-national Eastern European and Eurasian front against the victorious and revived Russia, and some became affiliated with the organization founded under the First Conference. These political and cultural refugees, now largely settled in the West with close contact with liberation groups in Eastern Europe, organized another conference for the subjugated people of the U.S.S.R.

²¹ *Biblioteka Ukrains'koho Pidpil'nyka*, 19.

²² B. Sobol, "Ukrainian Insurgent Army," *Vol. St-Z*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), in *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, 1993 ed., 394-395.

On April 16, 1946, at its second international conference in its three year history, the Subjugated People of Eastern Europe and Asia convened as the reorganized Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (ABN) in Munich, Germany. Western peace and freedoms provided an atmosphere very different from the one of First Conference of Subjugated People. In the absence of threats of discovery by the Germans or Soviets, delegates better organized, administrated, and formulated strategy for the ABN. Turnout of representatives and resistance organizations greatly surpassed that of the previous conference. Organizations present included the Free Armenia Committee, the Bulgarian National Front, the Belorussian Central Council, the Cossack National Liberation Movement, the Croatian National Liberation movement, the Czech Movement for Freedom and National Committee, the Estonian Liberation Movement and Union of Estonian Fighters for Freedom, the Georgian National Organization, the Hungarian Liberation Movement and *Mindszenty* Movement, the Latvian Association for the Struggle Against Communism, the Lithuanian Rebirth Movement, the Slovak Liberation Committee, the National Turkestan Unity Committee, and the Ukrainian Hetman Union and Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists.²³

Anti-Bolshevik Bloc membership chose “Freedom for Nations! Freedom for the Individual!” as the slogan of the reorganized resistance union, and upon this theme they began creating goals and strategies to achieve the desires expressed in their slogan. In opening the event, a newly formed Secretariat Committee, staffed with the figureheads of the Zhytomir conference, outlined the objectives of the First Conference of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations. Above all, all represented parties were to fully express their individual goals so that a uniform political platform, considerate of all parties’ interests, could be formed. Secondly, tasks and roles concerning armed and underground resistance would be assigned to ABN-represented

²³ Danylo Husar Struk, Encyclopedia of Ukraine, 1994 ed., s.v. “ABN.”

organizations. The Secretariat Committee also advocated the creation of separately functioning entities, or committees, specialized in carrying out specific functions of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc. Finally, the conference would elect members to each of the formed committees and chose representatives for each subjugated nation.²⁴

The First Conference of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc then drafted a forthright declaration to express its struggle against subjugation:

In the name of the great goal of human progress – the freedom of nations and the individual – the struggle with Bolshevism is crucial. Bolshevism, as the worst type of totalitarianism, is, similarly to Hitlerism, the biggest enemy of the ideas of freedom of the modern era... We, the carriers of national-political aspirations, the national-liberation anti-Bolshevik center, and organizations of nations, subjugated or robbed by Bolshevism, fight for independence from Bolshevism. In this fight is union – may we join our liberation forces for the achievement of a shared goal, and with this create the Anti-Bolshevik Block of Nations.²⁵

The ABN declaration, which was published and distributed in several languages including English, German, Russian, and Ukrainian, made clear the organizations' grievances with Russian imperialism under the Bolshevik regime. To the delegates, the Soviet regime ruled as a dictatorship masking itself behind a façade of proletariat control. While claiming the progresses of internationalism, equality and democracy, the dictatorship and its tightly controlled

²⁴ Sekretariiat Komitety ABN, "Komunikat," in *Biblioteka Ukrains'koho Pidpil'nyka*, 20.

²⁵ Komitet Antybol'shevyts'koho Bl'oky Narodiv, "Dekliaratsiia Antybol'shevytskoho Bl'oky Narodiv," in *Biblioteka Ukrains'koho Pidpil'nyka*, 30-31.

party operated on terror. The Bolsheviks conducted the communist experiment at the cost of its people and a system dependent on national-political, economic, and social subjugation for its own existence. Quite ironically, as alluded to by participating delegates, the U.S.S.R. promised freedom from capitalism and imperialism while exhibiting imperialistic tendencies and exploitation of all classes in its relationship to subjugated states or satellites.²⁶

The Declaration of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc explicitly stated that the organization stood against all forms of totalitarianism in the world. As the First Conference of Subjugated People also cautioned about the imperialism of the Nazi regime, the ABN advocated national and individual freedoms from all repressive regimes of any political or economic alignment. The ABN delegates would not tolerate acts of “imperialism and militarism in the name of ‘world revolutions,’ ‘liberation’ of nations, or in the name of domination of a racial or national superiority.”²⁷ The Anti-Bolshevik Bloc’s declaration further protested any form of subjugation of one nation by another, especially through means of assimilation or inclusion into a larger union dominated by a single state, such as the Soviet Union. It condemned staged elections and any other misrepresentations of people’s wills, provocation of class conflict, and widespread use of falsified media. ABN also reprimanded any limitations on free thought and doctrines that infringed upon cultural and religious freedoms.²⁸

The Declaration then listed advocated elements of national and individual freedom. In ABN ideology, these served as the fundamentals rights for all humanity and the epitome of progression of the human race. Above all, democratic processes in each nation, without falsified elections and divisions of classes, would best serve the rights of all. Each sovereign and

²⁶ Ibid, 30-32.

²⁷ Ibid, 32.

²⁸ Ibid, 32.

democratic state should receive equal treatment, no matter its size and influence, and it should not be omitted in dealings on the world stage. For the achievement of true democratic states, the ABN declaration supported the end of imperialistic exploitation and advocated the recreation of ethnographically or culturally defined states as seen following World War I. Each state held responsibility in creating its own governmental system that represented the rights of both minorities and majorities. The formerly subjugated nations would be free to choose their own economic system, whether capitalist or socialist, as long as rights and wills of all remained the major determinants. Any forms of state sponsored terror and limitations on the rights of the individual would not be tolerated, and ABN pledged its support for freedom of organization among all political, cultural and religious groups.²⁹

The Declaration of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations documented a similar ‘for and against’ list specifically concerning the Soviet Union. Most significantly, the ABN stood against the “‘Bolshevik ‘Prison of Nations,’... [known as] the U.S.S.R., and including Bolshevik regimes in separate states and satellites of the U.S.S.R.”³⁰ ABN protested the Soviet totalitarian system’s intrusion into religion, culture, politics, and economics in subjugated nations’ societies, and denounced the use of terror through arrests, exile, and forced shortages in managing its populace. The ABN believed that only the total disintegration of the Soviet Union and destruction of the Bolshevik system in Russia, followed by mutual respect among the formally subjugated masses, could facilitate freedom for nations and individuals:

²⁹ Ibid, 33.

³⁰ Komitet Antybol’shevyts’koho Bl’oky Narodiv, “Deklaratsiia Antybol’shevytskoho Bl’oky Narodiv,” in *Biblioteka Ukrains’koho Pidpil’nyka*, 34.

ABN adheres to [the fact] that, after the final destruction of Bolshevik tyranny in the world, long lasting peace would rule among nations in which every nation would have full safety and security of its borders from foreign aggression, and people of all nations could live in peace, free from any fear of war or depravity.”³¹

Following a complete dismantling of U.S.S.R. and the Bolshevik communist system, each of the nationally aspirant subjugated groups or Soviet controlled ‘democracies’ would create sovereign nations generally based on ethnographic, including cultural and linguistic, boundaries. The Anti-Bolshevik Bloc’s stance on the annihilation of Soviet subjugation and the creation of free nations aligned itself with the declarations’ previous elements of worldwide national sovereignty. As in ABN’s worldwide scheme, only a true democratic process among nation-aspirants of the U.S.S.R. could end the repression and exploitation of any groups. On the world stage, this democratic unity should permeate the relationships among nations. The unity displayed by Eastern Europeans and Eurasians through the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc was central in a post-communist ‘Pan-Europe,’ a peaceful coexistence of states and a primary theme of ABN conferences and literature.³²

The Declaration of Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations coined the U.S.S.R. the *Tiurma Narodiv* – the ‘Prison of Nations’. In decades following the first ABN Conference, the notion of the Soviet Union as the *Tiurma Narodiv* appeared in ABN publications, conferences, and speeches. ABN insisted that all policies of this ‘Prison of Nations’ greatly contradicted the

³¹ Ibid, 34.

³² Komitet Antybol’shevyts’koho Bl’oky Narodiv, “Deklaratsiia Antybol’shevytskoho Bl’oky Narodiv,” in *Biblioteka Ukrains’koho Pidpil’nyka*, 34-35.

objective of ABN and Western ideology; freedom for individuals and their nations. The imprisonment of nations manifested itself most apparently in the nature Russian imperialism under the communist banner. To the subjugated nations, Soviet rule quickly marred all by terror, purges, starvation, attempts of assimilation through Russification and forceful implementation of economic and social policy. As early as the 1917 revolutions, Russian Bolshevism exhibited strong imperialist qualities in its attempt to retain control non-Russian regions of the old empire. Between 1940 and 1960, the Soviet Union implemented force and falsified elections to absorb 18 nations, 3 million square kilometers and over 100 million people.³³

ABN expressed that policies of the U.S.S.R. paralleled those of colonialism. Workers, miners, and farmers across the Soviet Union labored with poor compensation, horrible conditions, and usually for the benefit of greater Russia. The agricultural sector paid the heavy prices of collectivization, nationwide single crop production for export to Russia, and purges of modestly successful farmers. In an edition of *ABN Correspondence*, the organization's official publication, ABN representative Eric Nasar of Turkestan spoke of his father's plight as a farmer. The postwar Soviet Union economically subjugated the satellite by the creation of a 'cotton monoculture.' Seventy percent of farmable land was converted to cotton production, 90% of which was directly exported to Russia. The policy destroyed crop diversity and left farmers dependent on the state.³⁴ The phenomenon occurred in all sectors of production within the Soviet Union in all subjugated states.

³³ Niko Nakashidze, *The Truth about ABN: An Answer to the Provocations of Moscow's Fifth Column in the West* (Munich: ABN Press and Information Bureau, 1960), 25.

³⁴ Eric Nasar, "Turkistan in the Period of Glasnost and Perestroika," in *ABN Correspondence Vol. XXXX No. 4* (May-June, 1989): 42-45.

The repression of the alleged ‘Prison of Nations’ extended into personal life. Physical imprisonment of subjugated nations’ people existed in millions of deportations, exiles, and prison camp sentences. From the creation of its declaration until after disintegration of the Soviet Union, the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc exposed and denounced the communists’ innumerable human rights violations. These violations reached extremes within the Russian gulag. All subjugated nations shared unequal representation in prison and labor camps when compared the overwhelmingly Russian majority of the U.S.S.R. The Soviet prison and exile system, a remnant of the Russian Empire and extremely outdated in the West’s view, grew dramatically once the Bolsheviks secured power. Under Stalin, the prison system held 18 millions criminals, war prisoners, purged communists, national revolutionaries, and any other ‘undesirable’ elements. Almost half as many found themselves in unsupervised but legally bound exile, a tactic the Soviet regime used to populate its wilderness and frontiers.³⁵

The prison and exile system imprisoned many nationals and non-Eastern European or Eurasian ethnicities. Americans (native born or European born), West Europeans, and Asians, including as many 600,000 Japanese captured or arrested during the war, passed through the Bolshevik detention system. The Soviet regime conscripted countless prisoners as ‘shock’ workers in massive and often unnecessary infrastructure projects including the construction of the White Sea Canal in which an estimated 25,000 inmate laborers died in a single winter. Although the Soviet prison system saw a large downsizing in post-Stalinist Russia, the ‘Prison of Nations’ continued housing large numbers of anti-Soviet proponents and national revolutionaries until its eventual disintegration.³⁶ Many of these post-Stalin prisoners held

³⁵ Anne Applebaum, *Gulag, A History*, (New York: Anchor Books, 2004), xvii.

³⁶ Anne Applebaum, xvii, 62-65, 299.

allegiances and ties to the organizations represented in the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc, *and ABN Correspondence* regularly published stories of and recollections of these political prisoners.

Following the declaration's solidification of ABN's stance against worldwide repression by the Soviet Union or other expansive powers, ABN delegates concluded the document with an explanation of the nationally liberating revolutions that would displace Russian communism. This anti-Soviet wake of revolutions was to be of a "national-political, social and cultural [nature]."³⁷ The revolutions would occur in all the satellites and national/ethnic groups of the U.S.S.R and among all social classes from peasants to the working intelligentsia. The national liberation organizations of ABN promised to form a united front, work in collaboration, and aid all social classes involved in the insurrection. ABN announced these organizations, whether military or political, as the true armies and parties of subjugated nations. The Anti-Bolshevik Bloc realized that a large scale mobilization of the subjugated masses, not unlike the Bolsheviks strategy in securing power, would ironically displace Soviet domination. To ABN, the fight was unconditional, and it was clear that "Bolshevism must disappear from the face of the earth so that humanity could live in peace, harmony, truth, and good."³⁸

Upon the First Conference's composure of the declaration, delegates wrote a memorandum to be read at the Paris Peace Conference later that year. Read to a primarily Western audience, the memorandum illustrated the plights of Bolshevism and asked for all to support to the subjugated nations' wills of independence and a peaceful international coexistence. The memorandum described the histories of ABN's political and military insurgent organizations, and it expressed their validity as self-sustained national armies with qualified command

³⁷ Komitet Antybol'shevyts'koho Bl'oky Narodiv, "Dekliaratsiia Antybol'shevytskoho Bl'oky Narodiv," 35.

³⁸ Ibid, 35-36.

structures, military tradition, and uniforms.³⁹ The First Conference of ABN also composed a memorandum to the leaders of democratic, sovereign states. The Anti-Bolshevik Bloc urged the support of the primarily western democracies, reminding them that ABN fought for the ideals these nations embodied. The letter to the leaders of the free world aligned ABN's objectives with those of NATO and the United Nations, and it expressed the need of a lasting and peaceful existence of free nations. Similarly to their documents to be read at the Paris Peace Conference, ABN delegates asked for official recognition and legitimization of its national liberation movements and recognition of the U.S.S.R's denial of national independence.⁴⁰

Petitioning as the First Conference had, the Munich ABN conference delegates outreached to the multiethnic Red Army and urged desertion to anti-Soviet national organizations. The friendly, yet reasoning document asked Soviet Soldiers to consider the failures of the Soviet New Economic Policy, industrialization and collectivization. The ABN expressed that the Soviet system impoverished workers, packed peasants into communes, and silenced the intelligentsia with propaganda and terror. The petition reminded the Red Army soldiers of their brothers-in-arms and veterans unjustly purged or imprisoned following the war. Instead of dying for a totalitarian system that subjugated the masses and robbed the individual physically and mentally, the soldier should consider the risks and heroism in the struggle for freedom of nations and people.⁴¹

³⁹ Komitet Antybol'shevyts'koho Bl'oky Narodiv, "Memorandum ABN: vnesenii na Myrovu Konferentsiiu v Parizhi, 1946," in *Biblioteka Ukrains'koho Pidpil'nyka*, 38-45.

⁴⁰ Prezydiiia Komitety ABN, "Nota ABN do Derzhavnyky Myzhiv Zakhody," in *Biblioteka Ukrains'koho Pidpil'nyka*, 60-64.

⁴¹ Komitet Antybol'shevyts'koho Bl'oky Narodiv, "Zvernennia Komitetu ABN do Biitsiv Chervonoi Armii," *Biblioteka Ukrains'koho Pidpil'nyka*, 49-54.

The First Conference of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations elected Yaroslav Stetsko as president. Stetsko, an experienced politician and ideologue, served as ABN president for the majority of the organizations' existence and his work on national liberation theory was ingrained into the ideology of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc. Born in the Ternopil region of Western Ukraine on January 19, 1912, the young Stetsko became involved in the Ukrainian cultural and youth organizations antagonized and downsized by the ruling Poles. Due to continually intensifying restrictions on Ukrainian language, political involvement, and organization, Stetsko joined the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists. By 1932, he was the chief ideologue and political strategist for the organization and worked closely with the most prominent figures of OUN/UPA, including Roman Shukhevych and Stephan Bandera, who respectively, would serve as general of UPA and president of OUN. Polish authorities imprisoned Yaroslav Stetsko from 1936 - 1937 for his involvement with the Ukrainian nationalists.⁴²

In June of 1941, the Ukrainian national liberation organizations resisted German and Russian subjugation by the declaration of a free Ukrainian state. As one of the insurgency's most accomplished politicians, Yaroslav Stetsko was elected prime minister of the short-lived state. His entitlement attracted the attention of both the Nazis and Soviets, and Stetsko was arrested and spent 1941 - 1944 in Nazi prison camps. After the war, Soviet authorities targeted him in several failed assassination attempts due to his involvement with ABN and other anti-communist unions. Although Yaroslav Stetsko was unable to attend the First Conference of Subjugated People of Eastern Europe and Asia because of his imprisonment, he'd serve as the most important personality and president of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc until his death in 1986.

⁴² H. V. Boriak, *Narodzheni Ukrainoiu*, (Kyiv: Mizhnarodna Blahodiina Organizatsiia, 2002), 568-569.

Stetsko was also involved with the formation of the World Anti-Communist League (WACL) and made lasting contacts with the Taiwan-based WACL established by Chaing Kai-shek.⁴³

Stetsko's works on national and world liberation theory advocated a single front of East European and Eurasian national revolutions against Bolshevism. During the Cold War, Stetsko offered this alternative to Western policies, arms races, and mutually assured destruction, which described as horribly paradoxical to Western ideals:

The decay and downfall of empires, the victory of national principles in every aspect of international politics in the entire world are characteristic of our era...The national wars of liberation – that is to say, a series of insurrections – can bring about the destruction of the U.S.S.R. from within...The idea of nationalism is a solution to current world problems because nationalism solves problems on the basis of national communities. All other ideas – the balance of power and containment, will fail. Nationalism alone can oppose a false system backed by Russian imperialism and chauvinism...If the US gives aid to the subjugated nations then it will become a revolutionary liberation force, whereas the Soviet Union is a reactionary force.⁴⁴

Yaroslav Stetsko's literary works on anti-Soviet liberation, the essential foundations of Anti-Bolshevik Blok ideology, have been published in collections of his essays, *ABN*

⁴³ B. Folusiewicz, "Yaroslav Stetsko," in *Encyclopedia of Ukraine, 1993 ed.*, 54.

⁴⁴ Yaroslav Stetsko, *The Light of Freedom from the Forests of Ukraine [1964]*, Volodymyr Masur, "Yaroslav Stetsko – Prominent Statesman of the 20th Century," *ABN Correspondence* Vol. XXXVII No. 3-4, (May-Aug, 1986): 29-30.

Correspondence, and literature of ABN's national organizations. According to Stetsko, the communists' claims of equality, the destruction of class structure, and other Soviet utopian ideals could not be fulfilled. If they had been realized, as Bolshevik authorities often claimed, the state would have had no need to conduct purges, terror, and widespread propaganda campaigns. The ABN figurehead also stressed the danger of liberalism without any restraints, which he claimed was embodied by the Bolsheviks in the 1917 Russian revolution. Yaroslav Stetsko, familiar with Marxist theory, noted that the communist experiment in Russia was premature because the Soviet Union failed to fully develop economically and industrially for a successful attempt at maintaining a communist system. Elaborating on problem of the Bolshevik adaptation of Marx, Stetsko wrote that Marx's schematic failed to develop in even those 'ripe' for Marxism, primarily the United States, Britain, and Germany. Other than merely failing in producing communist revolutions, these nations stood out as the strongest enemies of communism.⁴⁵

Yaroslav Stetsko wrote extensively on the Bolsheviks' portrait of the West as villainous and greed-driven, and he depicted, often from personal experience, the communists' use of class struggle, fear, propaganda, and paranoia. The Russian communist regime repeatedly warned Russians and people of subjugated satellites about the West only to distract attention from the ills within the Soviet Union; hunger, food and supply shortages, mass terror and arrests, etc. Ideological anti-Western Soviet propaganda, like the Bolshevik's advantageous exploitation of class struggles, acted as a distraction among Bolshevism's real victims; the men and women of the U.S.S.R. Stetsko compared the Bolshevik-communist system to the tragically misguided paladin of Spanish literature, Don Quixote. Like Don Quixote's battle with the windmills, which Quixote misconceived as enemy giants, the Bolsheviks engaged their populace in a war against

⁴⁵ Yaroslav Stetsko, *Ukrains'ka Vyzvol'na Kontsepsiia*, (Munich: Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, 1987), 145-150.

that which posed no threat; the bourgeoisie and kulaks. In doing so, the Bolsheviks succeeded only in further damaging the Soviet economy and punishing motivated individuals who truly exceeded work standards. In addition, Stetsko explained that in Ukraine and many of the subjugated states, no true capitalist bourgeoisie class existed, and therefore, could not be a legitimate target of the Bolshevism.⁴⁶

Soviet Human rights violations, and their exposure and reparation, served a primary motivation of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations. The ABN insistence on the realization of human rights was partly inspired by Stetsko's writings on anti-communist liberation theory. Religious persecution within the multi-religious subjugated states remained among the most protested aspects of the U.S.S.R., and ABN liberation organizations all insisted on religious freedoms following national liberations. Stetsko, whose father was a priest, strongly denounced Soviet repression of religion, supported freedoms of both the Ukrainian Catholic and Orthodox churches, and advocated freedom of religion and denomination in all nations.⁴⁷

Other than elaborating upon Ukrainian liberation theory, or general liberation of nations from the imperialism and colonialism, Yaroslav Stetsko's essays frequently discussed Anti-Bolshevik Bloc ideology. In an essay describing unitary front of anti-Soviet revolutions, he simply stated that "the Bolshevik imperialist center, Moscow, forcefully threw upon our nations, a foreign and adversarial order...[and] without national liberation, there cannot be freedom and social equality."⁴⁸ The Anti-Bolshevik Bloc revolutions needed to be both national and social in nature so that Bolshevism could be destroyed externally and internally. The fate of these revolutions rested in the hands of the national subjugated groups, including political, cultural and

⁴⁶ Yaroslav Stetsko, *Ukrains'ka Vyzvol'na Kontsepsiia*, 154.

⁴⁷ H.V. Boriak, *Narodzheni Ukrainoiu*, 586-569.

⁴⁸ Yaroslav Stetsko, *Ukrains'ka Vyzvol'na Kontsepsiia*, 144.

social groups and all economic classes. These united groups then could achieve revolution by taking control of the government of their nations, and contemporaneous revolutions occurring throughout the U.S.S.R. would undermine Soviet authority. Contact and correspondence through ABN would aid these nations' in achieving simultaneous and well-connected revolutions, and such a wide scale endeavor was crucial in limiting the Bolshevik authorities' ability to allocate troops and suppress insurrection.⁴⁹

ABN's ideal post-Soviet Eastern Europe and Eurasia always remained clear. Stetsko's essay "*ABN i Panevropa*" stressed the importance of a peaceful and brotherly coexistence of Eastern European and Eurasian states in the defeat and prevention of a rebirth of subjugation, imperialism, and colonization. Ultimately, the success of the Anti-Bolshevik Block rested on member nations' ability to maintain this coexistence. Unity among the sovereign European nations and their defeat of Soviet repression would bring Europe to a new era and fulfill the objectives of ABN, its members, and its represented states. Stetsko was also concerned with and expressed the need to the end of colonialism and liberation of non-European states. The essay highlighted the struggles of Indonesia, China, India and Burma, their conflict against colonialism and its lasting effects, and the Asian states' insistence on and right to freedom. Unity in a 'Pan-European' and worldwide coexistence of nations, as defined by Stetsko, demanded the creation and sustainment of individual national freedoms for each national group and the ethnicities it consisted of. Stetsko and ABN dismissed the divisions of single states such as Germany and the creation of federations built by several merged national states. Entities such as Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia failed fulfill sovereignty among their ethnic and nationally aspiring groups, and

⁴⁹ Ibid, 144-149.

federations or similar groupings tended foster dominance in a single national ethnicity and suggested a false notion of freedom and sovereignty.⁵⁰

By 1948, the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations expanded and further involved its represented populaces. The organization appreciated that a multi-generational and multi-ethnic membership best represented the sentiments of all individuals in non-Russian Soviet states. The ABN engaged youth in the subjugated states and Western diasporas through the creation of the FM-ABN, or the *Front Molod-ABN*. Most members of the ABN administration participated in cultural and social youth organizations in their respective countries and realized the importance in establishing a strong center of support and involvement among the younger generations. The Anti-Bolshevik Bloc encouraged the youth to wage a politically and socially resistance against the U.S.S.R. Youth from ABN-represented nations, and FM-ABN members gathered and published independently. FM-ABN proved essential in recruitment and participation in the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc and bringing unity to younger individuals involved in the struggle. Most importantly, the youth of the subjugated nations and diaspora communities aided the ABN in outlasting the Soviet Union and propagating ideals of freedom. Along with providing a continuing influx of members and delegates, the opinionated, confrontational youth vowed to carry out, and finish, an “uncompromising fight.”⁵¹

The FM-ABN’s anti-communist literature, romanticizing a revolutionary liberation, confronted Russian communism:

⁵⁰ Yaroslav Stetsko, *Ukrains’ka Vyzvol’na Kontsepsiia*, 165-169.

⁵¹ Kongres Frontu Molodi Antybol’shevytskoho Bl’koku Narodiv, “Manifest,” in *Biblioteka Ukrains’koho Pidpil’nyka*, 129-133.

With deepest respect to the memories to the heroes who fell in the anti-Bolshevik fight for liberation of the subjugated nations, we promise to finish the battle they began and gave their life for. On the ruins of the U.S.S.R. we will build our national states. We will not rest until we will fulfill the statement written on our revolutionary flag...Freedom to nations! Freedom to the individual!⁵²

FM-ABM placed its struggle alongside the French Revolution and national revolutions across Europe of 1917-1920. The ABN youth envisioned themselves as revolutionaries, and, in their manifest, expressed their desire to live in the spirit of Joan d' Arc, Byron, Garibaldi, and Mazzini.⁵³ As passionate as the Anti-Bolshevik youth may have seemed, FM-ABM literature encouraged a politicized youth and a romanticized struggle as an integral and lasting strategy. The organization believed that nations' increasingly educated youth, as the largest segment of a population, unaffected by lifelong experience of unjustness and persecution, acted as a revolutionary "barometer."⁵⁴ FM-ABN called for a massive propaganda campaign to be carried out by its Western members and welcomed the involvement of academic, sporting, scouting, and other youth organizations, and it urged Western members to take advantage of their nations' democratic systems.⁵⁵

The Anti-Bolshevik Bloc worked in cooperation with the European Freedom Council and World Anti-Communist League. These organizations, largely drawing members from the Americas, Asia, and Western Europe, strengthened relations between the Eastern Europeans and

⁵² *Ibid*, 133.

⁵³ *Ibid*, 134-135.

⁵⁴ Kongres Frontu Molodi Antybol'shevytskoho Bl'koku Narodiv, "Manifest," 135.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 135-146.

Eurasians united in ABN and the rest of the world. Chaing Kai-shek's ousted nationalists created the WACL in Taiwan in 1966, but ABN leadership made and maintained contact with the Chinese nationalists a decade earlier.⁵⁶ Due to the United States' interest in containing the eastern spread of communism into Asia, the WACL grew into the largest of anti-communist organizations and was largely comprised of Asian and Latin American delegates. The WACL and ABN rarely held joint meetings but shared an intertwined membership, and the ABN president and some delegates served on WACL committees.

The European Freedom Council (EFC), which Yaroslav Stetsko co-founded and participated in, operated in close conjunction with ABN. Annual conferences for the ABN and EFC were often held together, and the leadership of both organizations was well acquainted and corresponded regularly. The EFC functioned as ABN's Western counterpart and sought to "mobilize support of the Free World for the subjugated nations' liberation struggle."⁵⁷ A mass Western mobilization in support of ABN's disenfranchised delegates could only strengthen the united multi-national ABN front. The administrative structure of EFC resembled that of ABN, and the EFC represented anti-communist groups from Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, England, France, West Germany, Holland, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and the United States. The EFC extended into Asia with a branch, the Asian-Pacific Anti-Communist League, that included Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, China (Taiwan), Thailand, and Vietnam.⁵⁸

The joint ABN-EFC Conference of 1982 proved most successful not only in attendance, but also in the formation of new strategies in attacking Russian communism and freeing the

⁵⁶ Danylo Husar Struk, *Encyclopedia of Ukraine, Vol. St-Z*, 54.

⁵⁷ Slava Stetsko, ed., *The West's Strongest Allies, ABN/EFC Conference: London, September 24-26, 1982*, (Munich: Press Bureau of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations, 1985), 3.

⁵⁸ Slava Stetsko, ed., *The West's Strongest Allies*, 4-7.

subjugated nations. On September 24-26, over 500 members of both organizations, 222 serving as delegates, assembled in London's Imperial Hotel. General John Singlaub, commander of American forces in the Korean War, and John Wilkinson, prominent English political and MP, attended as distinguished guests and speakers. During the three day event, delegates and guests read essays, held several panels, and conducted an open session. ABN-EFC invited the participation of the youth, and a 'Youth Panel' was held with representatives from Belgium, Canada, Great Britain, Poland, the United States, and Vietnam. A large rally, attended by an approximate 3,000, concluded the conference. Celebrating the 40 year anniversary of the creation of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, the demonstrators prayed, marched with signs, created cultural displays and listened to letters and blessings from ABN members and clergy working within the subjugated nations.⁵⁹

The strategies laid out in the 1982 Conference embraced an intensifying of political, economic, and military resistance to the Soviet Union while criticizing Western nuclear arms buildups and traditional policies. More than ever before, the conference's speakers stressed the importance of a close, working relationship between the West and the subjugated nations in order to defeat Russian communism. ABN-EFC delegates formulated approaches to answer the question, and theme of the conference – 'What Alternative is there to Thermo-nuclear War?' The world expansion of ABN-EFC and related organizations was foremost in order to empower Western individuals. Nations' individuals, knowledgeable of the plight of the subjugated nations and dangers of communism's spread, would then rally their own governments. The ABN-EFC strategy asserted that national governments, bound to the majority will of their people, should pursue an complete embargo of the Soviet Union, the Soviet republics of the subjugated nations,

⁵⁹ Ibid, 4-10.

and its Africa, Asian, and Latin American communist allies. In a reminder to the West, delegates spoke of the massive political prison population, the ignorance of political, religious, and social rights, and elements of imperialism of the Soviet Union. The anti-communist coalition's strategy suggested a direct, Western confrontation of the Soviet state by the proclamation of a "Great Charter of Independence for the nations subjugated in the U.S.S.R...(in which the West) should raise the issue of Russian imperialism on all international forums, demanding that the UN resolution on Decolonization from 1960/72 be applied to the Russian prison of nations."⁶⁰

The 1982 ABN-EFC Conference discredited the rationality of nuclear or world war against Russian communism, but it supported use widespread conflicts disrupting the Soviet Union from within. Since the creation of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc, armed national liberation movements played a vital role in the administration and operation of the organization, and ABN-EFC promoted the continuance of such struggles. Referencing the Soviet-Afghan conflict, delegates encouraged the West to supply anti-Soviet liberation movements to the best of its abilities. Western support of the subjugated nations should include the formulation and execution of anti-communist doctrines, food and medical supplies, and non-nuclear armaments. Soviet expansion, which could only succeed through conventional, and not nuclear, weaponry, remained a fear of the ABN-EFC administration. They urged the Western nations to sacrifice some economic consumer production for national defense and that "NATO needs to continue its armament programme...with regard to conventional weapons, because otherwise the West will be vulnerable to Russian expansionism."⁶¹

⁶⁰ Slava Stetsko, ed., *The West's Strongest Allies*, 4-7.

⁶¹ Slava Stetsko, ed., *The West's Strongest Allies*, 16-18.

The Anti-Bolshevik Bloc's greatest link to its members, supporters, the EFC and anti-communist organizations was its journal. ABN published ideology, interviews, essays and other relevant literary works in *Anti-Bolshevik Bloc Correspondence*, and in return, the Eastern European and Eurasian coalition faced intensive Soviet counterpropaganda campaigns. For over forty years, *ABN Correspondence* served as the primary publication of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc. From 1952 to 1996, *ABN Correspondence* portrayed the struggles of anti-soviet organizations and individuals not only to Eastern Europe and Eurasia, but the Western Europe and the wider world. *ABN Correspondence*, based in Munich Germany, printed and distributed the periodical as often as six times a year in English, German and French. The Anti-Bolshevik Bloc's strategies, and their proliferation, rested most heavily propaganda and counterpropaganda against the Soviet Union, which was realized in *ABN Correspondence*. Along with essays, book reviews, and breaking stories within the Soviet Union and abroad, the periodical concluded every issue with a segment entitled 'From Behind the Iron Curtain,' which briefly reviewed current events and dealings with communism in each of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc's represented nations.

The Press Bureau of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of nations, headed by ABN president Yaroslav Stetsko's wife, Slava Stetsko, collected information and published *ABN Correspondence*. In an era of increasing tension between East and West, capitalism and communism, and freedom and subjugation, the publication allowed Western readers to understand the true sentiments, unadulterated by Soviet propaganda and its notions of true freedom and equality, of Eastern Europeans and Eurasians. Unlike other anti-soviet entities (which were often government agencies or single-nationality endeavors), such a well organized and represented multi-ethnic union of Eastern Europeans and Eurasians, all denied sovereignty and disadvantaged under the Soviet Union, was unheard of. *ABN Correspondence* proved

crucial to the bloc's recognition and popularity and through *Correspondence*, ABN gained the support and acknowledgement of Westerners and their governments.

The Anti-Bolshevik Bloc and subjugated nations of the U.S.S.R. won recognition in the United States in 1959, and the achievement served as a reoccurring theme of ABN literature. On July 6, 1959, Senator P.H. Douglas of Illinois introduced a bill declaring the week of July 20th as 'Captive Nations Week.' In commemorating the deprivation within ABN's represented nations and other regions of the U.S.S.R., the United States formally allied itself with the genuine interest of the subjugated states. Accepted by the House of Representatives and signed by President Eisenhower, the bill passed as United States Senate Resolution 111. In the 'Captive Nation's Week' Resolution, the government of the United States acknowledged the imperialistic nature of the Soviet Union and its policies in disrupting or manipulating national revolutions, pursuing intensive persecution of all religions, and denying basic human rights. Furthermore, Resolution 111 stated that the ultimate goal of the subjugated nations, freedom, stood in alignment with national security, interests, and ideologies of the United States.⁶²

Through unity and blatant persistence against Bolshevik Communism, the Anti Bolshevik Bloc and its affiliates won the support of Russia's most outspoken adversary, the United States. Niko Nakashidze, a Georgian delegate and Secretary-General of ABN, stressed the parallel of the United States and ABN in their relationships towards the Soviet Union:

⁶² Central Committee of ABN, "The American People Defend the Subjugated Nations," *ABN Correspondence Vol. X No. 9-10*, (September, 1959): 1 – 5.

In this Resolution (Resolution 111) the competent government authorities of the USA for the first time official contested the Russian Bolshevik rule over all non-Russian countries and peoples both outside and within the frontiers of the so-called Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and recognized the right of these peoples to freedom and independence as legitimate. And, what is more, the liberation of all these forcibly subjugated and enslaved peoples was declared to be an aim which must be pursued and which is of vital importance for the security of the United States.⁶³

The United States legislature heartily agreed that the recognition of the plight of the subjugated nations, and supporting their legitimacy to freedom, could serve as an instrumental strategy against the U.S.S.R. American ideology, which was aligned with Anti-Bolshevik idioms, manifested itself in Resolution 111 and the resulting ‘Captive Nations Week.’ The American discourse of individual and national rights and freedoms stood out as the boldest, fiercest supporter of ABN in the free West. Other than national security and containment of Bolshevik Communism, the resolution expressed the United States’ recognition of the importance of the achievement of subjugated nations’ freedom in the fulfillment of lasting peace. In revealing congruence in the U.S. and ABN pursuit of freedom, the ‘Captive Nations Week’ resolution reminded Americans that “it is fitting that we (Americans) clearly manifest to such peoples through an appropriate and official means the historic fact that the people of the United States share with them their aspirations for the recovery of their freedom and independence.”⁶⁴

⁶³ Niko Nakashidze, *The Truth about ABN*, 41.

⁶⁴ Niko Nakashidze, *The Truth about ABN*, 41, 39-44.

The Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations, as evident in *ABN Correspondence*, at times spoke critically of the Western powers and their legacies on the rest of the world. The African and Asian nations, some finally liberated after or contemporaneously with the First Conference of Subjugated Nations, still faced overwhelming disadvantages resulting due to decades of colonialism. The resulting social fragmentation and economic poverty facilitated an attraction to communism within these states, or as in the case of Afghanistan, direct invasion and exploitation of a weakened political, social, and economic system. Although ABN writers contributed the United States in taking the strongest stance against Russian Communism and recognizing states subjugated by it, “the subjugated nations, headed by Ukraine, which are breaking down the empire from the inside...still (are largely) ignored by official U.S. policy.”⁶⁵ The Western vision of victory over communism remained overly ‘Western,’ in that the growing tension between the West and communist East couple produce only a Western (or Communist) victory instead of an emancipating victory for those living outside and under communism.

President Stetsko also viewed several inadequacies with the Western, and American, approach to the Soviet Union, and he illustrated during the 1982 ABN-EFC Conference. He believed Western policies failed to carry enough severity to make a lasting impact on the U.S.S.R. Any economic and technological aid to the Soviet Union could not exist. The embargo required extension to satellites states (which the regions of most ABN members had become) because the economies of the Soviet republics produced for Russia. Citing the creation of a 1980’s Siberian pipeline, Stetsko emphasized that the West could not participate, support, or take benefit of Soviet infrastructure or economic projects built by political prisoners of the subjugated states. Western government and military support and cooperation with the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc

⁶⁵ Zinoviy Karbowych, “The Neglected Power: Present Western Policy Regarding the Russian Empire and Possibility of Change,” *ABN Correspondence Vol. XXXII No. 1* (Jan-Feb, 1981) 2, 1-6.

and similar organizations required consistency and had remained sporadic and largely unprogressive. Above all, ABN President Yaroslav Stetsko starkly criticized the nuclear arms races and Mutual Assured Destruction as rational strategies against the Soviet Union.⁶⁶

The Soviet state carried out an intensive propaganda campaign against ABN, mimicking to its handling of any other ‘problem’ or ‘subversion’ against the proposed Bolshevik-Communist utopia,. All national groups and notable individuals in the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations experienced unity in enduring attacks of Soviet propagandists and police, which were highly defamatory, published in the East and West, and often times, physically dangerous. Russian Roman Yagotinsky and his staff appeared to have headed the anti-ABN propaganda campaign. His writings were published under the Ukrainian pseudonym Ivan Emelyanovych Chemerys as the president of the Ukrainian Liberation Movement (ULM), a fabricated entity unknown to Ukrainian liberationists.⁶⁷ Soviet propagandists rarely attacked the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc or *ABN Correspondence* directly and in its entirety. Due to the difficulty in arguing against the nature and explicitly stated goals of the widespread Eastern European and Eurasian ABN, Soviet propaganda instead targeted individual national liberation groups or individuals enlisted in Anti-Bolshevik Bloc membership. More often than not, Soviet references recalled anti-Soviet allegiances during the ‘Great Patriotic War’ or used outright lies or irrational associations in attempt to discredit ABN leadership or member organizations.

The Soviet propagandists often labeled Anti-Bolshevik Bloc members fascists. This tactic surely was not limited to ABN members and was a common charge against persons or groups harboring anti-Soviet sentiment since World War II. Soviet propaganda linked Nazism,

⁶⁶ Slava Stetsko, ed., *The West's Strongest Allies*, 15-20.

⁶⁷ Niko Nakashidze, *The Truth about ABN*, 10-12.

though largely a relic of the war, to ABN through accusations of anti-Semitism, ethnic superiority with nationalist tendencies, and of course, exploitation of working and peasant classes. Unrecognized by Soviet writers, the Anti-Bolshevik came into existence as the First Conference of Subjugated people in which delegates themselves took arms against encroaching German forces, and therefore it was unlikely that aid or information was given to the Nazis. The Soviet propagandist was pressed to find any anti-Semitic discourse in the literature and principles of ABN, and Jews served not only in the ABN, but in the ranks of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, the Bulgarian National Front, and similar ABN-associated resistance organizations.

Prince Niko Nakashidze (1899-1966), a Western-educated Georgian noble, served in Georgian National Democratic Party in his youth. Following his 1922 exile and resettlement in Germany, Nakashidze assembled Georgians and published in support of a sovereign Georgia. A founding member of ABN, he served as Secretary-General and a chief propagandist from the organization's creation until his death.⁶⁸ In the ABN's defense, Niko Nakashidze defended each involved state, examined strategies of Soviet propaganda, and harshly singled out propagandists in his work, *The Truth about ABN*. Communist literary attacks of Anti-Bolshevik Bloc labeling the ABN members as proponents of national or ethnic supremacy (i.e. Nazis) held no truth, and to Nakashidze, were outrageous. As Bolshevik communism enveloped new nations for exploitation to benefit greater Russia, the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc yearned to create a harmonious union of *equal* national states free from a more powerful and exploitative state.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ "25 Years since the Death of Prince Nakashidze," *ABN Correspondence Vol. XLII No. 6* (Nov-Dec 1991), 49.

⁶⁹ Niko Nakashidze, *The Truth about ABN*, 39-43.

Soviet propagandists labeled Yaroslav Stetsko with many of the same dishonorable designations shared by his friends and fellow ABN members, but as the Anti-Bolshevik President, he faced the brunt of Soviet propagandists' personal attacks and KGB assassination attempts. In his defense of ABN and its members, Nakashidze's *Truth about ABN* noted that Soviet-Ukrainian organizations and literary circles, perhaps in attempt to legitimize the propaganda in the readers' eyes, were employed in their pursuit against Stetsko and Ukrainian ABN elements.⁷⁰ Despite Stetsko's imprisonment in a German camp for his involvement with Ukrainian resistance organizations, Yagotinsky's ULM charged him with Nazi-collaboration during the war. Soviet sources also accused Stetsko, along with his associates in OUN/UPA, of post-war assassinations of Russians, including a professor V. Petrov, who, as discovered by Nakashidze, defected and taught in an American university under the name Muller.⁷¹

Soviet propaganda against other (non-Ukrainian) ABN-represented nationalities further prompted Secretary Nakashidze's blatant defense. In his writings, he stated that the cooperation of General Farkas and the Hungarian Veterans' Union with German forces against pro-communist Hungarians was necessary in the hope of reclaiming independence. Nakashidze's work also expressed that ABN-affiliated Hungarian Liberation Movement had been severely misinterpreted and underestimated by under Roman Yagotsinky and Western Soviet sympathizers. Similarly to other aspiring nations represented in the Anti-Bolshevik Block, Soviet propaganda downplayed national anti-Soviet organizations' numbers and their public support.

⁷⁰ Soviet-Ukrainian publications included, but were not limited to the newspapers *Literaturna Hazeta and Radianska Ukrayina*. Organizations such as the Congress of Soviet Ukrainian Writers and communist publishers, routinely attacked ABN, its president and member organization.

⁷¹ Niko Nakashidze, *The Truth about ABN*, 44-46.

The Truth about ABN, exemplifying Anti-Bolshevik Bloc ideals, defended the Slovaks in discrediting the artificial creation, instead of national self-determination, of federations involving two or more states. Soviet propagandists downplayed the significance Slovak Anti-Bolshevik representative Dr. F Durchansky⁷² and the Slovak Liberation Committee and charged them with working to maintain the Soviet-created federation with the more economically advantaged Czechs. In reality, Nakashidze expressed that the Slovak Liberation Committee gained vast underground support in Slovakia and had rallied the Slovak diaspora in the West.⁷³

Georgi Dimitroff and the Bulgarian Exile Committee conducted communist propaganda against Bulgarian ABN representatives, most significantly, the Bulgarian National Front. Nakashidze's writings revealed a strong appreciation of King Boris' populist regime among ABN's Bulgarian delegation. According to the Bulgarian representatives, Russian meddling uprooted the true inclinations of Bulgarians and disrupted the adherence to their constitution. Anti-Bolshevik Bloc counterpropaganda attacked prewar opposition parties and recalled "the notorious attempt at mass murder in the Sofia Cathedral, 'Sveta Nedelja' in 1925, (and) the attempt to murder the popular Bulgarian King Boris...which were always financed and organized by Moscow, and the small leftist agrarian party group, 'Pladne Party.'⁷⁴

Niko Nakashidze, as the most notable Georgian representative to ABN, countered Soviet propaganda in Georgia fiercely. As in the case of Bulgaria, he highlighted the cooperation of national communists and Russian communists in the Georgian takeover. Nakashidze outwardly admitted to serving in the German army while expressing that such service, which was not unpopular among people of the subjugated nations, failed to exhibit ethnic or fascist tendencies.

⁷² Durchansky also served in the executive of the United Nations.

⁷³ Niko Nakashidze, *The Truth about ABN*, 44-50.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 50, 50-52.

Instead, it was the only available outlet in the struggle against Russian communism. He also contributed most of the anti-Georgian ABN propaganda to Georgian personalities who'd spent the majority of their lives outside of Georgia, and he contributed similar phenomenon in the Eurasian nations of ABN.⁷⁵

The Truth about ABN, written a decade and a half after the end of the war, portrayed the nature of the early years of the ABN and Soviet propaganda war. In the last three decades of communism, the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc's propaganda gradually adopted a more offensive strategy. The passage of time brought further irrelevance to accusations of prewar and war allegiances, and *ABN Correspondence* focused more on exposing Soviet human rights violations to the West. Each of the represented ABN nations shared a similar, horrific historical narrative under Russian communism and it became ABN propagandists' duty to uncover this. Soviet abuse of the subjugated nations' people endured as long as the U.S.S.R. lasted, and the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc dedicated itself to informing the West of exploitation, imprisonment, and violence. ABN's journal, a source read mostly by displaced Eastern Europeans and Eurasians, published eyewitness accounts, tales of defectors and political prisoners, and essays or speeches of prominent anti-communist personalities. *ABN Correspondence* continued to unearth and examine news and personal stories following the fragmentation of the Soviet Union and well into the 1990's.

'Russification' or the instilment of Russian language and culture among the U.S.S.R.'s non-Russians, was a pseudo-imperialistic and revitalized relic of the old empire. To the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc delegates, the histories of their nations experienced 'Russification' in pre-U.S.S.R. Eastern Europe and Eurasia. *ABN Correspondence* fervently criticized Soviet

⁷⁵ Niko Nakashidze, *The Truth about ABN*, 52-55.

‘Russification,’ which aimed to reduce subversion by incorporating communist ideology with old methods of limiting the use of non-Russian language and education. Despite early Bolshevik promises of national and linguistic freedoms, Russian communist leaders of the late 1970’s and 1980’s maintained assimilatory tactics. Yaroslav Stetsko’s writings in *Correspondence* protested the 25th Congress of the Russian Communist Party declaration of Russian as the “language of friendship and brotherly relations of the peoples of the U.S.S.R.”⁷⁶ Recalling Russian Imperial policies forcing Russian upon the empire’s minorities, the ABN journal fiercely critiqued contemporaneous Soviet policies of demanding use of Russian language and expanding its teaching into all levels of education.⁷⁷

In the last decade of Russian communism and repression of subjugated states, the enduring Soviet prison system remained a primary target of *ABN Correspondence*. Individuals of the subjugated state faced political imprisonment or exile in far greater numbers than Russians. In its journal, the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc protested the widespread detainment of Soviet citizens (2% of all Soviet citizens) and the ongoing use of the Soviet prison system as a receptacle for political prisoners and subjugated states’ insurrectionist. Through interviews with escapees and letters from the imprisoned, the ABN found that 40% of prisoners in Ural camps were Ukrainians, a third from the Baltic states, and most of the rest from other subjugated, non-Russian, states.⁷⁸ As the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc nations, with similar but unique narratives of exploitation and subjugation, unified, so did non-Russian political prisoners. With the praise of *ABN Correspondence*, former political prisoners and national liberationists from Armenia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Ukraine formed the Coordinating Committee of the Patriotic Movements

⁷⁶ Yaroslav Stetsko, “We Accuse Moscow and Remind the Free World; Genocide through Russification,” *ABN Correspondence Vol. XXXX No. 6 (Nov-Dec): 2*.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 1-4.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 3.

of Peoples of the U.S.S.R in 1988. Recognition of similar entities exhibiting Eastern European and Eurasian Unity with aims of decentralizing and destroying the Soviet Union proved as a vital in showing that ABN did not stand alone.⁷⁹ *ABN correspondence* published remarkable stories of the communist experience, including that of Vladas Sakalis, a Lithuanian Liberation Movement member who walked and swam 200 kilometers in an escape to political asylum. Sakalis, a vehement national liberationist, claimed that most of his fellow Russian political prisoners tended to avoid the national question while describing them as “very good and honest.”⁸⁰

With a post-World War II world increasingly aware and uncompromising of human right violations, *ABN Correspondence* could prove the necessities of ABN goals by detailing the horrors of Russian communism in the subjugated nations. Remembrance of large-scale tragedies, the most morbid legacies of Soviet subjugation and a shared experience among Eastern Europeans and Eurasians of ABN, was a key goal of *Correspondence* writers and editors of the 1980’s and 90’s. Knowledge of the horrors of Soviet rule lived in the memories of displaced and disenfranchised members of the communist states, and the ABN journal aimed to continue this remembrance and educate the West. Stories describing the history of Russian included the Ukrainian famine of 1932-33, the Katyn massacre, decades of harsh political imprisonment, disappearances of anti-communist personalities, as well as continuing grievances such as the Chernobyl disaster and Soviet police brutality in dispersing pro-sovereignty demonstrations and labor strikes.

⁷⁹ Dr. W. Bolush, “The USSR and the Nationalities Question,” *ABN Correspondence Vol. XXXX No. 3* (May-June, 1989): 17-26.

⁸⁰ V. Sakalis, “Common Front in the Concentration Camps,” *ABN Correspondence Vol. XXXII No 3-4* (May-Aug, 1981): 18-19.

The ABN publications and conferences of the 1980's took great interest in the Soviet-Afghani struggle and viewed the situation as an exemplary example of Russian Soviet expansionism. While the multi-ethnic ABN conferences appealed for Western aid to Afghanistan, *ABN Correspondence* propaganda strategy attempted to center the West's attention to atrocities committed against the Afghans. *Correspondence* often published the works of other organizations, and in June of 1989, it printed the memoir of former Soviet soldier Valeri Krasnopolsky originating from the Israeli Research Centre's Information Bulletin. Krasnopolsky, an officer and sharpshooter who served in Afghanistan from 1981 to 1982, recalled the Soviets' brutal treatment of the local populace. The former Soviet soldier described the Red Army and KGB's assassinations of village elders, attacks by Soviets dressed as locals to exploit of the relationships of tribes, horrifying use of medical experimentation, luring locals into minefields, and the indiscriminate use of chemical weapons and artillery strikes aimed to 'miss' and hit civilians or refugees.⁸¹ Detailing his orders, Krasnopolsky recalled being stationed along roads with orders "to shoot all passersby in the head only: to kill women, children, and the old,...(because) they are all bushmen bandits."⁸²

Krasnopolsky's refusal of orders led to a six year imprisonment and eventual escape to Israel, but stories like his acted as important evidence for *ABN Correspondence's* campaign in informing the West of the true nature of the U.S.S.R. To the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc delegates and those living under Russian communism, such stories may have not been too surprising; each represented nation of the ABN experienced ongoing violence under the Russian dominated Soviet Union. Even as the U.S.S.R. collapsed, authorities' mistreatment of non-Russian Soviet

⁸¹ Research Center of Israel, "Soviet Atrocities in Afghanistan," *ABN Correspondence Vol. XXXX No. 4 (July-Aug, 1989): 31-33.*

⁸² *Ibid*, 31.

citizens endured and the ABN journal reported. In 1989, *ABN Correspondence* published ABN an article of ABN affiliate's Executive Committee of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union exposing a KGB raid on a small youth scouting camp near L'viv. Scouts, all children from 10 to 17 years, were beaten and arrested and police destroyed buildings and all Ukrainian materials.⁸³ Instances such as these, ABN expressed, were partly due to unclear liberalization and glasnost in the Soviet Union. Misinterpretation of glasnost led to actions still deemed criminal by the communists, and the "political and economic reforms, although effectuation unprecedented changes in the Russian system, can never lead to national independence, sovereignty and statehood."⁸⁴

In the early 1990's, after struggling against Russian communism for over fifty years, the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations achieved its goal and continued fighting enemies of democratic sovereignty until its disbandment in 1996. Although Eastern European economies were left in disrepair, the horrors of the Soviets still lingered, and some Eurasian regions remained under Russian domination, many of the represented subjugated nations finally achieved sovereignty. ABN achieved unmatched success in uniting Eastern Europeans and Eurasians, in the struggle for national independence and a peaceful, coexistent future. Delegates from each of the ABN nationalities played administrative roles, tied ABN to national liberation organizations, and wrote or spoke in against the communist experience. Russian communism, in part, could be credited for the success of ABN; each of ABN represented nations shared commonality in their disenfranchised, exploited, and oppressed status under the Soviet Union. Unlike ethnic Russians, who also experienced Soviet persecution, the subjugated states' people were subject to foreign

⁸³ Executive Committee of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union, "KGB Raid Scout Camp near L'viv," *ABN Correspondence Vol. XXXX No. 5 (Sep-Oct, 1989): 30-31.*

⁸⁴ Ihor Dlaboha, "Glasnost and Perestroika will not bring Democracy," *ABN Correspondence Vol. XXXX No. 3 (May-June, 1989): 11-14.*

occupation and rule, often denied the use of their native language, and performed colonial labor for the benefit of their occupiers.

The Eastern Europeans and Eurasians in the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations exhibited remarkable unity in facing an overwhelmingly powerful foreign occupant. Such a multi-ethnic and multinational cooperation of the Soviet Union's subjugated people was unparalleled, and signified a remarkable feat considering severe Soviet domination and intrusion on all walks of life. In its sixty-two years of existence, ABN experienced continual expansion and growing influence. Discontented and war weary, the 1943 First Conference's delegates kindled the spark of Eastern European and Eurasian brotherhood and a mutually active participation against a Russian communism which gravely threatened each society, culture and religion. Surviving the Nazi-Soviet crossfire, the ABN outlasted the war to become the subjugated peoples' representative to the West. The organization established ties with similar worldwide groups, gained the recognition of Western governments, and published regularly, and the multi-faceted ABN members played a variety of roles in the areas, or émigré populations, they represented. ABN strategies and discourse constantly evolved, developing with the communist situation, but through the decades it retained its basic ideological principles supporting national and personal freedom. Most importantly, ABN idealism outlasted the U.S.S.R. and expressed the necessity of a prolonged international and intercontinental coexistence in the prevention of the rebirth of subjugation and exploitation among states.

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