

Information

April 17, 1958

~~Volodymyr Yurets~~, 27 years old, student of philology (Ukrainian) at the Warsaw University, former UPA member, enrolled at the university in 1958.

V. Yurets was visiting his father in England in February-March. End of March he returned to Poland.

Meeting our friend in Gr. Britain Yurets gave the following information about himself: In 1948 he was a link leader in one village in Volynia, where he attended high-school. In the school at that time there were 15 members of the underground. They read and distributed clandestine literature which they received through their contact and some of it they printed by themselves. In 1949 on the anniversary of Kruty the local group issued an underground appeal to the youth. One copy was sent to a member who was previously arrested and was in Siberia. MVD caught the letter and as a result of investigations arrested 14 members Yurets among them. They were badly beaten and sentenced to 20 years concentration camp each. They all were scattered in various concentration camps. Yurets was sent to a camp near Irkutsk. He worked in the forests and later in the coal mine. In 1956 he was released and after half a year was repatriated to Poland, to his mother. In 1958 he received a fellowship from the state and enrolled at the university. The fellowship is room and 300 zloty a month.

Yurets underwent an operation for appendicitis in England. Upon his return to Poland he again met our friend. He was very disappointed with the disunity of our Ukrainian emigration. (He was visited by members of various Ukrainian groups). Particularly he was complaining at the segment of the Ukrainian emigration (Z Ch) who don't understand the present situation in Ukraine, and in Poland. After one hour of conversation he departed with tears in his eyes and asked for contact through his father.

Yurets took with him one volume of the Encyclopedia of Ukraine, Zbirnyk ULH, Zymoyu v Bunkri, Spomyny Chotovocho Ostroverkha, Kriz Smikh Zaliza, Ukraina v OON, Ukraina i Ukrainaska Polityka Moskvy, Natsia Ponevolena ale Derzhavna, and some copies of "Suchasna Ukraina", "Literaturna Hazeta", "Ukrainskyi Samostiynyk", "Ukrainske Slovo" (Paris) et cet.

Yurets informed also that two members of his underground link escaped arrest and one of them works as teacher in Kiev and the other is engineer in Leningrad.

He also informed that in 1949/50 to his concentration camp arrived many young students mainly from Leningrad, who were called "Leninists". The students' ~~relations~~ relations with Ukrainian political prisoners were pretty good and they recognized that Ukraine should be an independent state. After Stalin's death they all were released. In 1957 while waiting for repatriation to Poland, Yurets heard that many students from Moscow were brought to that concentration camp.

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DATE 2007

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~~Travel from Poland to Ukraine~~

Travel from Poland to Ukraine in 1957. (according to a woman-traveler)

At 20.45 the train departed toward Peremyshl. The cars were crowded with people who wanted to visit their relatives in the Ukrainian SSR, and also with visitors from the USSR who returned to Ukraine. Permission to visit receive only the closest relatives and the permission is given only ~~in two years~~ once in two years. The conversations in the train are being conducted about the relatives living in the USSR and about aid they are asking for. The train arrived in Peremyshl one hour late. The Lviv train was already assembled. The porter brought ~~the~~ the luggage to the Lviv train and put it on the seat informing that upon the departure there will be luggage control. As soon as the train started to move the ~~train~~ train man distributed declaration forms called "zayavlenie", which must be filled out carefully: first and last name, father's name, from which city and to what country traveling, exact address of person to be visited, content of luggage. Polish currency is allowed but the exchange is forbidden. The traveller must also declare possession of any foreign currency and its amount, also gold, and artistic items (diela Isskustva) and arms. At the end of the form is a warning that in case of finding of items which have not been properly declared there is penalty. There is also a question whether the items declared are specifically for somebody or for transferring (peredacha). The form is in Russian.

Polish

After the declaration has been filled out the customs officer appears. He did not particularly check the luggage. He looked into one of my suit cases where I had mostly used clothing and two coupons of material, and did not check the other suit-case where I had more coupons. The customs officer then departed and we approached the station Mostyska. In Mostyska Soviet customs officials stepped in. A poorly dressed woman in a gray jacket and shawl who was a cashier exchanged the bonds of the Polish National Bank into rubles. (In Cracow one pays to the bank 70.13 zloty and for this money 50 rubles are paid at the border). The Soviet customs officer was very polite. He did not check the luggage and asked only if anyone was bringing goods for transfer(peredacha), because this is forbidden. Passangers said that sometimes luggage is being checked very carefully. The train stays in Mostyska station about one hour.

At 8:00 A.M. Eastern time the train arrived in Lviv main station. The station is clean. Porters in dark uniforms and small white aprons move around. By tunnel we approached the main exit. In front of the station is a stand of "Pbeda" taxi cabs painted in one color and with a green light on the right side which means that the taxi is free. I took a cab and went downtown. At the former Leona Sapiehy street I noticed the St. Elisabeth church, in deteriorating shape with broken windows. The taxi driver informed me that construction material is being kept there. (There are three Polish churches in Lviv, open but Sundays and Holidays). Taxi fare is very low comparing with Poland, where it is at least 5 times higher.

Travel from Poland to Ukraine 1957 - cont.

After a short rest I started to move about the town which I knew so well before. Straggers passed by. Their faces were sad and thoughtful. 2-3 people in mutual conversation cannot be found. ~~The~~ Their dresses are poor but clean. Ukrainian language is not much heard in the streets. I heard it in the park where two students talked in literary Ukrainian. Later on I learned that at the Ukrainian university named after Ivan Franko only one department had the Ukrainian language as language of instruction, the rest ~~was~~ was in Russian. The Lviv inhabitants come mostly from deep Russia and also of the Mongol race. In a park ^{for children} at the former Pelchynska street I met an older woman. She noticed the astonishment because the park was very well kept and said: "this park was built by prisoners-slaves. They worked hungry and in rags, to make it possible for children to play. They (the Soviets) care for the body but they don't see the soul in the children and in the grown ups, they need a robot, an automaton without a soul."

I also visited the cemetery at the former Yanivska street. ~~Men and~~ ^{and children} Women were sun bathing between the graves.

Next day I had to register at the ZAKS located at 23 Sykstuska street to get a permission to stay. There I met an ~~old~~ 82 year old woman who arrived from Cracow to see her daughter and wanted to stay permanently. She was denied the application because "we have many old ones".

General Information

All churches are open and are orthodox. Ukrainian catholic priests who refused conversion to orthodoxy were deported. ~~Rev.~~ Rev. Cherniak, D.D. the rector of the catholic theological seminary had to go back to Siberia again for his refusal to become orthodox. The Lutheran church at Lyenakivska street was converted into a childrens home.

Information

Conversation with a student from Moscow at the university in London.

Our friend who studies at the university for some time exchanges newspapers with the student Safranchuk who studies at the same university. Safranchuk came with another student from Moscow to study in London. He considers himself a Ukrainian, though he was brought up in Moscow. He delivers to our friend "Pravda" and other Soviet papers and in exchange gets "Suchasna Ukraina" and other papers and publications.

After having read some issues of "Suchasna Ukraina" Safranchuk commented that this paper contains "also some positive ideas". Generally all publications in the emigration he described as a "product of Stalinism" because at the present time under Khrushchev all this is deprived of real grounds. In his opinion the emigration makes the following fundamental mistakes: 1/. overestimates the role of nationality problem and Ukrainian liberation struggle in the USSR, 2/. underestimates the concessions Ukraine received already and is going to receive from Khrushchev. In one conversation Safranchuk assured our friend that within next five years "there will not remain a trace of great Russian chauvinism and of any national oppression of Stalinist kind." According to him the "idea of revolution in Ukraine is unrealistic because Khrushchev will not let it happen". "Khrushchev is not Stalin". Safranchuk does not exclude the possibility that few more years of Stalinist regime " would have brought about internal outbreaks in the USSR". "Khrushchev has a sound mind and will pursue the line of broadening the rights of Ukraine and other republics in various branches of state life and will raise the standard of living".

Safranchuk expected on the eve of Bulganin's dismissal, that ~~U.~~ O. Kirichenko was going to take his place as premier of the USSR.

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