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THE TREATY
OF
PEREYASLAV

The Ukrainians Three Hundred
Years' Fight against the
Perfidious Moscow Ally

by

JOHN F. STEWART

554

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Address: Ashfield,
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THE TREATY OF PEREYASLAV

UKRAINE is a country in South East Europe with the Black Sea as its southern frontier and with Russia in the North East—Russia has no Black Sea coast. It is a country of 45 million virile people, with a long history, and, in earlier days, was the eastern bulwark of Western Christianity and civilization against attacks of semi-savages from the east. It has the misfortune, from some points of view, of being naturally extremely rich and valuable, in soil, minerals and strategic position; and so, through the centuries, it has been an object of greed on the part of neighbouring countries, both west and east, and an object of attack.

In the end of 1653, it had been at war for six years with Poland, whose rulers tried to seize Ukrainian territory. Ukraine, which had driven the Poles out of the country after inflicting crushing defeats on them in many battles, became exhausted by this long struggle, while Poland, fortunate in the possession of ample financial resources, was able to hire German mercenaries to go on fighting, as we did at Waterloo and in the American War of Independence, and in other places.

Becoming despondent, the Ukrainian Hetman, Bohdan Khmelnytsky, sought round for Allies, but, not finding those he wanted, in the end he approached the Tsar of Moscow—the present-day Russians have no right to that name, which they stole in quite recent times, and before this they were known as Muscovites and their land as Muscovy.

It cannot be too much emphasised that the Hetman's attitude was that of an *Ally*, not one seeking domination by or incorporation into the Muscovite kingdom.

Ultimately, representatives of Ukraine and Muscovy met at a town in Ukraine, Pereyaslav, from which the ill-fated Treaty takes its name. Terms were agreed, but were not put in writing till this was done in Moscow some two months later, when it was found that they had been falsified by Moscow in its own favour.

Even as it was, however, the Treaty promised Ukraine full independence and non-interference in her internal affairs, and her ruler had the right of separate diplomatic relations with other countries; only the dynasty should be common to both countries. When the other insinuated terms became known to the Hetman's colleagues, they refused to accept the Treaty, but the Muscovites

were more wily than the Ukrainians, and managed to persuade them that any apparently oppressive conditions were only a formality, and Ukraine would remain as free as ever.

Shortly, the Treaty, as the Ukrainians understood it, compelled the Tsar to send military aid to Ukraine to assist in the war against the Poles. As is typically Muscovite, if only the British people would recognise this characteristic, Moscow broke every article of the Treaty, and, instead of acting as an Ally for a specific purpose, sent in its own people to occupy all key positions, supported them with troops, built fortresses for them, and more and more began to act as masters of a Muscovite province. Gradually, the Russians, to give them the name by which they are now better known, occupied the country, enslaved the Ukrainians, subordinated the Ukrainian Church to Moscow and confiscated all her properties, defamed the Ukrainian language and prohibited its use in public, and finally abolished the very name of Ukraine and converted it into a colony under the name of "Little Russia."

At various times the Russians have taken various views of Khmelnytsky, and for all the three hundred years of the existence of the infamous Treaty, various Russian jurists have excelled themselves in making the issues raised by the Treaty unintelligible to the ordinary man or woman, but there is no advantage in trying to explain these mental gymnastics.

Khmelnytsky spent the few remaining years of his life in trying to recover the old complete independence, as he had realised at last that he had been completely tricked by the Russians, and, instead of gaining an *Ally*, he had opened the gates of his country to a thief and destroyer.

But, however the Hetman and his immediate colleagues looked on the Treaty, the arrangement with Russia was never accepted by the Ukrainian people, who have, for the 300 years, fought to throw off the Russian yoke as they are fighting to-day.

In fact, the first battle took place only five years after the signing of the Treaty, when the Ukrainians severely defeated the Muscovites at Konotop. The next battle took place in 1709 at Poltava, when the Ukrainian Hetman I. Mazepa joined with Charles XII of Sweden against Peter I of Russia. Fighting, more or less severe, continued until, in 1918, the Ukrainians re-established their own independent Government, but again Russian methods, this time aided by disastrously mistaken Western policy, led to Bolshevik occupation of Ukraine in 1920. But the fight goes on and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) "rejoices" in the anniversary of Pereyaslav with arms and fixed resolve to win. Equally the underground political fight of the Ukrainian people—the whole people—is carried on without cessation in complete unity.

It may be mentioned that, on the accession of each succeeding Tsar of Moscow, the terms of the Treaty were further falsified by the Russians so as to induce the world to believe that it was actually a Treaty of Union between Russia and Ukraine. In the

mind of no single Ukrainian, high or low, has there ever been a shadow of a belief that there was ever a question of "union." For centuries the Ukrainian people had been free and democratic, and they could even dismiss their ruler if he displeased them. They are a Western people, and any "union" or even collaboration with the people known as Russians is, to those who know them and their experiences, unthinkable. From the time they had the power the Russians treated the Ukrainians as slaves. For example, when Peter I, called "the Great," built his new capital of Petersburg (now Leningrad), he sent hundreds of thousands of the Ukrainians from the south to build it, and hundreds of thousands of them died of hunger, brutal treatment and exposure in the ice and marshes on which the capital was built. During Tsarist days a steady stream of Ukrainians were sent to exile in Siberia, but, when the Bolsheviks occupied Ukraine, the stream became a flood.

In 1925 began the mass deportations of Ukrainians to Siberia, under conditions of inhuman cruelty. In the first year or so it is estimated that six million were deported or shot outright. That this is not exaggerated is confirmed by the statements of German prisoners-of-war now being returned from Siberia to Germany. Collated reports give the number in the slave camps as over 20 millions, *half of whom are Ukrainians.*

To compel obedience to Moscow, in 1933 Moscow seized the food grown by the Ukrainians and deliberately starved to death at least six millions—men, women and children. This is a fact so conclusively proved as to admit of no doubt.

The Ukrainian farmers objected to the collectivisation schemes of the Bolsheviks.

When the Germans attacked Russia in 1941, and, for a time occupied Ukraine, there had been in various parts of the country rumours of earlier mass shootings and burials, and, in one town, Vynnytsia, the local Ukrainian authorities obtained permission to investigate them. In and around the year 1937, many people, both men and women, had mysteriously disappeared in the neighbourhood, most of them without trace. In the few cases where the relatives had courage to ask the local Bolshevik authorities questions about the missing, they were told they had been sent to one place or another for purposes of labour and would ultimately return. In Vynnytsia, rumour pointed to there having been mysterious sounds during the nights of 1937 in the Public Park, which had been enclosed by a high wooden fence, and no one was admitted within this. Excavation was begun, and in a mass grave over 12,000 bodies of the missing men and women were found, all shot by pistol through the back of the head. A Committee of the first European medical experts was brought to the scene, who examined the bodies, and came unanimously to the conclusion that the victims had been killed in and about the

year 1937. As this was during the Russian occupation and before the outbreak of World War II, the Russians could not say, as they did on the discovery of the grave of several thousand murdered Polish officers at Katyn, that the perpetrators must have been the Germans. There are many Vynnytsias in Ukraine, but this example is enough. And, almost incredible as it may seem, after the burial, the Russians had constructed a very up-to-date Park of Rest and Culture over the grave, and had erected all sorts of amusement facilities for children, swings, roundabouts, and even a summer open-air theatre. Can bestiality go further? The little children playing games on the graves of their fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters!

I am telling these one or two stories of what relations were between the Russians and the Ukrainians to throw some light on the intense propaganda now going on in relation to the Treaty of Pereyaslav, which the Russians claim as uniting freely Ukraine and Russia, and to celebrate which rejoicings on the most fantastic and elaborate scale have been going on in the U.S.S.R., and particularly in Ukraine, since 18th January of this year. The celebrations are to commemorate the Treaty and the "boundless joy of the Ukrainian people at their union and devoted friendship with their brothers the Muscovites." It is in reality a question of "rejoice or be shot or sent to a slave camp." But, to those who know the Ukrainians, it is a certainty that they will disappoint Moscow, which will, however, succeed in getting the West to believe its propaganda. Indeed, there is little doubt that the Russians agreed in the end to the Berlin Conference and to ask for its postponement to 24th January so that the "rejoicings" could be in full swing and impress the West that the non-Russian peoples were happy and contented in their partnership in the great Soviet Union. Is it likely?

These accounts of the Treaty of Pereyaslav are taken from recorded history, and the events took place 300 years ago. But the Treaty and the whole sequence of events can be duplicated by events which took place in our own day, and which show conclusively that Russian methods have never altered, whether they are applied by Tsarists or Bolsheviki. These events I am now about to refer to also took place in the personal knowledge of the writer himself. During the inter-war years, after experience of Soviet Russia, my professional work occasioned my being for a good part of each year in the three Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. I knew most of Europe, and these three little countries were, to me, the most peaceful, prosperous and happy countries in the world. Their independence had been recognised by Russia among other countries, and they had Treaties of Friendship and Non-Aggression with Moscow, to which their behaviour had been most correct. The Russo-German Pact of August 1939, which enabled Germany to start the war, had a secret clause by which Russia was to annihilate the independence of the Baltic States. As a first step, Russia negotiated with them

"Treaties of Mutual Assistance," the Baltic versions of the "Treaty of Pereyaslav." To give effect to this, the Russians then demanded facilities for stationing Red troops in the States to "defend them against aggression." The Baltic peoples were unable to resist this demand, and Molotov eulogised their mutual good feeling and relations. A little later he showed his hand in an interview he had with the Lithuanian Foreign Minister, who had offered some slight protest against some Russian actions. Here are his actual words. "We are assisting Germany, but only that that State may not collapse before the popular masses of the belligerents, exhausted by the war, rebel against their Governments. . . . At that moment we will come to the rescue, by sending well-prepared fresh forces, and I think that, on the plains of Western Germany, possibly not far from the Rhine, the last battle will take place between the rotten bourgeoisie and the proletariat. That will decide the fate of Europe, and we hope that this battle will bring us victory." There you have age-long Russian policy and duplicity in a nutshell.

The people of Britain have been fed for centuries on what purported to be Russian history, but which was actually Russian propaganda. And even our so-called statesmen seem ignorant, and they plan Berlin Conferences and meetings at the "highest level," oblivious that no Russian Government has ever kept any agreement in its history. If they will just ponder Molotov's words they may begin to realise that Russia never intends to keep any agreement, and that it is useless to negotiate anything with her.

The Treaties of Pereyaslav and the Treaties of Mutual Assistance with the Baltic States are on all fours. They gave Moscow the excuse to enter these countries so as to "help." They were designed for and ended in the annihilation of the independence of all, and of the murder and deportation to slavery of millions upon millions of their peoples and murder and torture incalculable.

And, at the time of writing this, Mr Eden, no doubt on the instructions of Sir Winston Churchill, is promising Russia a guarantee against aggression and the extension of the existing British-Russian Treaty indefinitely. Do our leaders really wish to see Britain suffering the same fate as the other countries which had Treaties of Friendship with Moscow? For that would seem to be the outcome of every Treaty Moscow has made with other countries in the past 800 years.

And, to the Ukrainians, while 18th January is a day of deep mourning, it is also a day of renewed and strengthened resolve to free their homeland from the alien oppressor.