

UNCLAS 3T

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 PASS: ATTN BBC PRESS
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 SUBJ: TAKE 1 OF 2--POLITICAL SITUATION IN LUGANSK
 SOURCE: MOSCOW LITERATURNAYA GAZETA IN RUSSIAN 31 OCT 90 P 10
 TEXT:

//((ARTICLE BY S. KISELEV, LITERATURNAYA GAZETA SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT FOR THE UKRAINIAN SSR: "LUGANSK...IS SEPARATING--SOCIOPOLITICAL PORTRAIT OF THE CITY IN THE EPOCH OF PERESTROYKA"))
 ((TEXT)) TODAY, THE SITUATION THAT HAS DEVELOPED IN THIS 500,000-POPULATION CITY REMINDS ONE OF A FIGHT BETWEEN A HEAVY-WEIGHT BOXER WHO IS MANAGED BY AN EXPERIENCED TRAINER AND A NOVICE WHO RELIES FOR HIS SUPPORT ON THE AUDIENCE. THERE IS THE CONSERVATIVE OBLAST SOVIET UNDER THE WARDSHIP OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OBLAST PARTY COMMITTEE, AND OPPOSING IT IS THE CITY SOVIET, WHERE A STRONG DEMOCRATIC BLOC HAS BEEN ORGANIZED--WHO WILL WIN? AND WILL THE CITY BE DELIVERED A KNOCKOUT BLOW, IF THE OBLAST SUDDENLY TAKES LUGANSK IN AN ECONOMIC BLOCKADE ENCIRCLEMENT?

A VERY COMPETENT PUBLIC OPINION POLL, CONDUCTED BY THE LUGANSK VOTERS' ASSOCIATION, ELOQUENTLY SHOWED THE FOLLOWING: ONE AND FOUR-TENTHS OF A PERCENT OF THE LUGANSK RESIDENTS ARE PLACING THEIR HOPES ON THE CPSU; FIVE PERCENT, ON NEW PARTIES, AND A SLIGHTLY LARGER NUMBER OF PEOPLE, ON STRIKE COMMITTEES. THE REMAINDER OF THOSE POLLED DO NOT BELIEVE IN ANYTHING.

THIS IS ON THE ONE HAND. ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE IS THE WARFARE POSITION BETWEEN THE RUKH ((UKRAINIAN PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT FOR PERESTROYKA)), UKRAINIAN REPUBLICAN PARTY, AND UNION OF INDEPENDENT UKRAINIAN YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS, AND THE CPSU. BOTH SIDES ARE SHOOTING AT EACH OTHER FROM A CORNER. SALVOS FROM THE LEFT: WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE COMMUNISTS SALVOS FROM THE RIGHT: BANDERA AND PETLYURA SUPPORTERS FROM THE LEFT: THE FIGHT WITH THE PARTY APPARATUS THAT AT TIMES SLIPS INTO A FIGHT WITH RANK AND FILE COMMUNISTS--AN EFFORT NOT TO LET GO OF POWER THAT BORDERS ON HYSTERIA OF THE DOOMED. BOTH SIDES, ALAS, ARE FIGHTING NOT FOR SOMETHING, BUT AGAINST SOMEONE, WHICH, VERY LIKELY, CAN LEAD TO THE APPEARANCE OF A THIRD FORCE--THE STREETS. BUT FURTHER--EVERYTHING ACCORDING TO A WELL-KNOWN SCENARIO: INSUBORDINATION, RIOTS, TROOPS, A SPECIAL SITUATION, ETC.

PASSIONS, IT IS KNOWN, GET AROUSED. SOMEONE WANTS TO STIR UP THE RUSSIANS AGAINST THE UKRAINIANS. SOMEBODY, WANTS TO STIR UP THE WORKERS AGAINST THE COOPERATORS. LUGANSK RESIDENTS AGAINST THE MINERS (AN ANNOUNCEMENT WAS HANGING IN THE DEPARTMENT STORE: "CARPETS ONLY FOR MINERS.")). MINERS AGAINST DEMOCRATS: IT IS SAID THAT UNEMPLOYMENT IS EXPECTED WITH THE TRANSFER TO THE MARKET. THIS ALMOST LED IN SEPTEMBER TO A MINERS' STRIKE IN SUPPORT OF THE PROGRAM...OF RYZHKOV. AND WHEN THE FAMOUS WRITER AND ECONOMIST VASILIIY SELIYUNIN VISITED LUGANSK IN OCTOBER, WHEN HE GAVE FOUR LECTURES HERE ABOUT THE MARKET, ON THE EVENING BEFORE HIS ARRIVAL,

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THE OBLAST PARTY COMMITTEE SENT INSTRUCTIONS TO THE VUZ ((HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION)) PROPAGANDISTS: GIVE BATTLE TO SELYUNIN DURING HIS SPEECH AS SOMEONE WHO IS ATTEMPTING TO DESTABILIZE THE SITUATION IN LUGANSK. AND SOMEONE TRIED TO GIVE BATTLE.

IN GENERAL, IT COULD HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE TO THINK THAT EVERYTHING THAT IS HAPPENING IN LUGANSK IS OCCURRING IN ALMOST THE ENTIRE COUNTRY, IF IT WERE NOT FOR ONE FEATURE. SOMEWHERE, ABOUT HALF A YEAR AGO SUDDENLY, LITERALLY LIKE A UFO, THERE BEGAN TO APPEAR, WELL, HOW CAN THIS BE PUT, NOT QUITE RUMORS, NOT EVEN CONVERSATIONS, BUT SOMETHING SOMEWHAT TELEPATHIC, A KIND OF TRANSMISSION OF IDEAS OVER A DISTANCE. WE DO NOT KNOW WHERE THE IDEAS WERE BEING TRANSMITTED FROM, BUT THEIR GIST SOON BEGAN TO BE KNOWN RATHER WIDELY: AUTONOMY. AND THEN IT WAS IN WHISPERS: AUTONOMY. AND THEN IN A LOUD VOICE AMONG OUR OWN: AUTONOMY. TERRITORIAL AUTONOMY. THIS SPLASHED OUT ONTO THE STREETS.

IT WAS SUDDENLY RECALLED IN LUGANSK THAT THE DONETSK-KRIVOROG SOVIET REPUBLIC, HEADED BY ARTEM (F.A. SERGEYEV), EXISTED IN 1918, AND THAT ON THE LAWS OF FEDERATION, IT LEFT THE UKRAINE FOR RUSSIA. IT WAS ARTIFICIALLY CREATED BY THE BOLSHEVIKS (THE CONGRESS THAT APPROVED THIS DECISION CONSISTED OF 74 DELEGATES), WHO NAIVELY SUPPOSED THAT THIS WOULD SAVE THE REGION FROM THE INFLUENCE OF THE CENTRAL RADA AND WOULD PREVENT GERMAN OCCUPATION OF THE DONBAS. THE REPUBLIC LASTED FROM 30 JANUARY TO 19 MARCH 1918, AFTER WHICH IT ONCE AGAIN BECAME PART OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE UKRAINE AS A TERRITORIAL-PRODUCTION AUTONOMY.

AND SO TODAY IN LUGANSK TALK HAS ONCE AGAIN STARTED ABOUT THE RESTORATION OF THE DONETSK-KRIVOROG REPUBLIC, AND, ABOVE ALL, ABOUT TERRITORIAL AUTONOMY WITHIN THE RSFSR ((RUSSIAN SOVIET FEDERATED SOCIALIST REPUBLIC)) SYSTEM. NOW, WHY THIS? PERHAPS THE FACT THAT LUGANSK OBLAST, IN FACT, BOYCOTTED THE DECISION OF THE UKRAINIAN PARLIAMENT ON THE SWITCH TO KIEV TIME (THE TIME HERE AS, BY THE WAY, IN THE CRIMEA, HAS REMAINED MOSCOW TIME), AND THAT IT WAS A PRECURSOR OF THE FACT THAT LUGANSK IS SEPARATING?...

"HISTORICALLY, THE DONBAS WAS NEVER A PART OF THE UKRAINE," EXPLAINED V. CHEKER, HEAD OF THE PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT OF THE LUGANSK AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE AND THE COCHAIRMAN OF THE SOCIOPOLITICAL ORGANIZATION "PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT OF THE LUGANSK AREA FOR PERESTROYKA (THIS MOVEMENT WAS ESTABLISHED APPROXIMATELY ABOUT A YEAR AGO TO COUNTERBALANCE RUKH). "THEREFORE, WE ARE AGAINST THE UKRAINIZATION OF OUR REGION, AND WE THINK THAT GRANTING THE DONBAS A NEW ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND SOCIAL STATUS WOULD BE WARRANTED. OUR MOVEMENT IS FOR AUTONOMY WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE UKRAINE, OF COURSE, IF THE REPUBLIC SIGNS A UNION TREATY. AND IF THIS DOES NOT OCCUR, THEN WE CAN TALK ONLY ABOUT A CHANGE TO RSFSR JURISDICTION."

"BUT HOW IN YOUR OPINION WILL THE RESIDENTS OF LUGANSK OBLAST FEEL ABOUT THIS?" WE INQUIRED.

"I THINK THAT MORE THAN HALF OF THE LUGANSK RESIDENTS WILL SUPPORT THE IDEA OF AUTONOMY WITHIN THE RSFSR SYSTEM.

BUT HERE IS THE OPINION OF YU. KOZOVSKIY, A LEADER IN THE KRAY ORGANIZATION OF RUKH AND AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF THE PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT OF THE LUGANSK TEACHERS' TRAINING INSTITUTE:

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