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To the Editors of *Silski Visti* (Village News)

On December 9, 1988, your newspaper published an announcement by Doctor of Historical Sciences Professor S. Kulchytsky of the organization of an editorial board to prepare and publish a memorial book entitled “1933: Famine,” inviting witnesses to those events to take part in this major work. I do not wish to dispute the need for this book. But having decided to publish it, let it be done honestly, objectively, truthfully, and not opportunistically, in support of someone’s authority. But the book cannot be written objectively if already in the announcement Dr. Kulchytsky orients everyone toward laying the responsibility for all the evils on Stalin and Stalin alone.

This is a one-sided, biased, and incorrect interpretation.

Stalin was to blame, and that is indisputable. But even more guilty were the former leaders of Ukraine—[Stanislav] Kosior, [Pavel] Postyshev, [Vlas] Chubar, [Panas] Liubchenko,¹ and others.

¹ Stanislav Kosior—general secretary of the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine [CP(B)U], arrested in 1938 and shot in 1939. Pavel Postyshev—second secretary of the Central Committee of the CP(B)U, from January 1933

It is they who, in their struggle for power, to promote their careers, artificially created a famine in Ukraine and killed millions of people!

They should have been tried not in 1938, but in 1933.

Yet now they are extolled as innocent victims, that they had great merit, etc.

All their merits are insignificant compared to the crime they organized in 1932, sweeping clean all of the grain not only from the collective farms but also from the collective farmers. It is they who fulfilled five-fold the grain procurement plans.

After all, it is a fact that in the oblasts of other republics bordering with Ukraine—Gomel [Homiel], Briansk, Kursk, Belgorod, and Voronezh—there was never a famine of this kind, and no one there died of hunger.

Whereas Ukraine, under the leadership of these sycophants, careerists, and soulless individuals who did not care about their people, had to endure this terrible tragedy. They really were the enemies of our people!

Stalin's personal representative in Ukraine, arrested in 1938 and shot in 1939. Vlas Chubar—chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR, full member of the Central Executive Committee of the CP(B)U, arrested in 1937, subsequently either shot or died in prison. Panas Liubchenko—secretary of the Central Committee of the CP(B)U, deputy chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR, allegedly committed suicide while awaiting imminent arrest. All four were rehabilitated in the late 1950s and 1960s.

I am a living witness of those events, inasmuch as I worked from March 1933 as assistant to the head of the political department of the Komsomol of the Novomoskovsk MTS [Machine-Tractor Station] in that same raion [district] of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, encountering almost daily facts deaths from hunger, cannibalism, trade in products made of human flesh, and so forth.

Walking through the village in the spring [of that year] was eerie. No light anywhere, no dogs, no cats, no traditional rooster. Houses trashed, many empty.

The village was dead!

Some historians now write that the collective farmers had been starving for years, that they received nothing in return for their workday units, that they fled from the collective farms. This is not true, [this is] slander of the collective farm system.

The famine in 1933 lasted until May, inclusively. In June, the first vegetables and various greens appeared, which eased the situation for collective farmers.

In July, they began harvesting grain and making the compulsory deliveries of it [to the state], and [the state] began making advance payments in grain to collective farmers based on 15% of what was delivered to the state.

After the fulfillment of the plan for compulsory grain deliveries to the state (1.5 centners per hectare of arable land) and a small payment in kind to the MTS, no one set

any additional quotas, and all the rest of the grain remained at the disposal of the collective farmers.

The harvest in 1933 was exceptionally bountiful, unrivaled throughout the thirties. Before that, there had been a harvest like that only in 1922.

All this made it possible for the collective farmers to obtain more grain than they had ever had in their lives!

On thirty-eight collective farms serviced by the Novomoskovsk MTS, on average, 12 kg of wheat were issued per workday, and on the Spartak collective farm under the Znamenivka Village Council, 18 kg each.

They even filled many collective farmers' houses with wheat because there was nowhere to store it on the collective farms.

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The cooperatives organized the purchase of grain from collective farmers in exchange for goods. This enabled the collective farmers to buy many essential goods—clothing, footwear, everything including bicycles and gramophones.

In the fall of 1933, the village was unrecognizable. Renovated and whitewashed houses, stocked with domestic livestock, weddings, songs.

The village had come to life!

The political departments of the MTS established order in the collective farms and the MTS even helped to convince the collective farmers in practice of the advantages of the collective farm system over the old individual way of life.

The collective farmers felt themselves to be real collective owners of the land and the entire economy.

The subsequent years, up to the Great Patriotic War, were years of great uplifting, enthusiasm, competition among collective farmers for high productivity, for the further development and

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strengthening of the collective farms. And no one was dying of hunger during those years.

True, there were no more such payments for a workday as in 1933, but people lived comfortably, cheerfully, and joyfully.

There were hundreds and thousands of Stakhanovites² in agriculture, such as beet grower Maria Demchenko, machine operator Pasha Angelina, milkmaid Maria Savchenko, and many, many others.

The collective farms helped our army defeat German fascism and end the war with a glorious victory!

I am writing this letter with great reluctance, because I know that you will not accept a single phrase from it for the book you are planning and will throw it into the trash can, pretending that you did not receive it.

Why? Because it does not suit your purpose—to cater to

² Refers to the title, *stakhanovets*, awarded to workers who modeled themselves after Aleksei Stakhanov and produced more than was required, thereby strengthening the Communist state.

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the modern personality cult. This is a great misfortune for the Soviet people.

Having condemned the cult of personality, it appears we just cannot run away from it.

Therefore, to accommodate the modern cult, we very generously and in a variety of ways pour dirt on our entire Soviet history, on the struggle of our Party and people; we are teaching our youth to not believe in our sacred goals and dreams.

I am afraid that this memorial book will be another big clump of this dirt.

(Signature)

Veteran of the Party, War, and Labor

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