

## Life in Interwar Russia and Soviet Union:

*Key words: The Internationale, Spartakiad, The Pioneer movement, Propaganda, the Gulags, Socialist Realism, The Black Book of Communism, Poverty and Famine, International Workers' Day*

### Trestný zákon (zákoník) - Zákon č. 300/2005 Z. z.

#### § 422

(1) Kto verejne, najmä používaním zástav, odznakov, rovnošiat alebo hesiel, prejavuje sympatie k skupine alebo hnutiam, ktoré násilím, hrozbou násilia alebo hrozbou inej ťažkej ujmy smerujú k potlačaniu základných práv a slobôd osôb, potrestá sa odňatím slobody na šesť mesiacov až tri roky.

#### § 422b

(1) Kto rozmnožuje, prepravuje, zadovažuje, sprístupňuje, uvádza do obehu, dováža, vyváža, ponúka, predáva, zasiela alebo rozširuje extrémistické materiály, potrestá sa odňatím slobody na jeden rok až päť rokov.

## The Internationale:

- The original French words were written in 1871 by Eugène Pottier (1816–1887)
- Famous **socialist, communist, social-democratic and anarchist anthem**.
- Gained particular fame under the Soviet Union from 1922 to 1944, when it was that communist state's de facto national anthem.

### Slovensky

#### Internacionála

Ej, hor sa sveta proletári,  
ej, hor sa hladom zmučení!  
Už nášho hnevu sopka žiari,  
to bude výbuch posledný.  
Rozboríme sveta starý základ,  
otroci hor sa k víťazstvam!  
Zabránme minulosti návrat,  
ľud bude vládnuť navždy sám.

Ref:

Posledná borba vzplála,  
dajme sa na pochod!  
Internacionála  
je ľudstva nový zrod.

Už vstáva robotník i roľník,  
už vstáva strana veliká.  
Nový raz príde sveta život voľný,  
zem všetkým ľudom slúžiť má.  
Dlho nám krv pili supi čierne,  
havrnov krdle zbesilé.  
Rozptýli nové ráno tiene  
a slnce svitne žiarivé.

Ref:

Posledná borba vzplála,  
dajme sa na pochod!  
Internacionála  
je ľudstva nový zrod

### Česky

#### Internacionála

Již vzhůru, psanci této země,  
již vzhůru všichni, jež hlad znět.  
Teď právo v jícnu duní temně  
a výbuch zazní naposled.  
Od minulosti spějme zpátky,  
otroci, vzhůru k cílům svým.  
již chví se světa základ vratký,  
my ničím nejsme, buďme vším.

Ref:

Poslední bitva vzplála,  
dejme se na pochod:  
Internacionála  
je zítřka lidský rod.

Dělníci, též rolníci, bratří,  
jsme velkou stranou dělnickou,  
všem lidem jenom země patří  
a zahalečí ať již jdou.  
Dost napásli se naši muky  
vran, supů hejna kroužící.  
Rozptýlí den příští jich shluky,  
věčně vzplá slunce zářící.

Ref:

Poslední bitva vzplála,  
dejme se na pochod:  
Internacionála  
je zítřka lidský rod.

**English:**

**The Internationale**

Arise, ye starvelings,  
from your slumbers,  
Arise, ye criminals of  
want,  
For reason in revolt now  
thunders,  
And at last ends the age  
of cant,  
And away with all your  
superstitions!  
Servile masses, arise,  
arise,  
We'll change forthwith  
the old conditions,  
And spurn the dust to win the prize.

Chorus:  
Then comrades, come rally!  
And the last fight let us face,  
The Internationale unites the human race,  
Then comrades, come rally!  
And the last fight let us face,  
The Internationale unites the human race.

We peasant, artisans, and others,  
Enrolled among the sons of toil,  
Let's claim the earth henceforth for brothers!  
Drive the indolent from the soil,  
On our flesh too long has fed the raven,  
We've too long been the vulture's prey,  
But now farewell the spirit craven,  
The dawn brings in a brighter day.

Chorus:  
Then comrades, come rally!  
And the last fight let us face,  
The Internationale unites the human race,  
Then comrades, come rally!  
And the last fight let us face,  
The Internationale unites the human race.



*Monument in Prague-Letná (1955–1962)*

**Socialist Realism:**

- style of realistic art which was developed under Socialism in the Soviet Union and became a dominant style in other communist countries.
- the purpose of the style was to support **the ideas and goals of socialism and communism**.
- art that served PORAPAGDNA: *correct the word* .....
- Socialist realism became **state policy** in 1932
- Socialist realism held that successful art depicts and glorifies the proletariat's struggle toward socialist progress.
- Its purpose was to elevate the common worker, whether factory or agricultural, by presenting his life, work, and recreation as admirable. In other words, its goal was to educate the people in the goals and meaning of

Communism. The ultimate aim was to create what Lenin called "an entirely new type of human being": *New Soviet Man*. Stalin described the practitioners of socialist realism as "engineers of souls".

- All characters were poured into a heroic mold, sometimes termed heroic realism. Art was filled with health and happiness; paintings teemed with busy industrial and agricultural scenes, and sculptures depicted workers, sentries, schoolchildren,...

#### **Spartakiad:**

- Spartakiad initially was the name of an international sports event that the Soviet Union attempted to use to both oppose and supplement the Olympics. The name, derived from the name of the slave rebel leader, ... Spartacus, was supposed to symbolize proletarian internationalism because Spartacus' revolt united slaves from diverse ethnic backgrounds within the Roman Empire.
- The first Winter Spartakiad was held in February 1928 in Oslo, and the first Summer Spartakiad was held in August 1928 in Moscow.
- In 1952 the Soviet Union decided to join the Olympic movement, and international Spartakiads ceased. However the term persisted for internal sports events in the Soviet Union of different levels.
- The name "**Spartakiáda**" was also used for a mass gymnastics display, which was held every five years at the Strahov Stadium in Prague, Czechoslovakia, when the country was under Communist rule.

#### **Pioneer movement:**



**The Young Pioneer Organization of the Soviet Union:** was a mass youth organization of the USSR for children of age ... 10–15 in the Soviet Union between 1922 and 1991.

Young Pioneer Motto: "**Always Ready!**" In Slovak: "Vždy Pripravený!"

The Solemn Promise: *I, (last name, first name), joining the ranks of the Vladimir Ilyich Lenin All-Union Pioneer Organization, in the presence of my comrades solemnly promise: to love and cherish my Motherland passionately, to live as the great Lenin bade us, as the Communist Party teaches us, as require the laws of the Young Pioneers of the Soviet Union.*

Although membership was theoretically optional, almost all the children in the Soviet Union belonged to the organization; it was a natural part of growing up.

- **Komsomol = The Communist Union of Youth:** was the youth division of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union formed in 1922.

#### **International Workers' Day (a.k.a. May Day):**

- is a celebration of the international labour movement and left-wing movements.
- It consists in organized street demonstrations and marches by working people and their labour unions throughout most of the world.
- May 1 is a national holiday in more than 80 countries. It is also celebrated unofficially in many other countries.

- Eastern bloc countries such as the Soviet Union and most countries of central and eastern Europe that were under the rule of Communist governments held official May Day celebrations in every town and city, during which party leaders greeted the crowds. Workers carried banners with political slogans and many companies decorated their company cars.

**Gulags:**

See the worksheet: *Stalin: Trials and Purge*

**Propaganda:**

- See also “Cult of Personality”: in the worksheet *Stalin: Trials and Purges*

**Description of Propaganda:**

- Propaganda often presents facts selectively to encourage a particular synthesis, or uses loaded messages to produce an emotional rather than rational response to the information presented. Propaganda is opposed to impartially provided information. The propagandist aims to change people's understanding through deception and confusion rather than persuasion and understanding. The leaders of an organization know the information to be one sided or untrue.
- Richard Alan Nelson: "*Propaganda is neutrally defined as a systematic form of purposeful persuasion that attempts to influence the emotions, attitudes, opinions, and actions of specified target audiences for ideological, political or commercial purposes through the controlled transmission of one-sided messages (which may or may not be factual) via mass and direct media channels.*" Richard Alan Nelson, *A Chronology and Glossary of Propaganda in the United States* (1996) pp. 232-233.

Give short description of propaganda: .....

.....

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**Propaganda in the Soviet Union:**

- Was extensively based on the Marxism-Leninism ideology to promote the Communist Party line. It penetrated even social and natural sciences giving rise to various pseudo-scientific theories whereas fields of real knowledge, as genetics, cybernetics, and comparative linguistics were condemned and forbidden as "bourgeois pseudoscience".
- The main Soviet censorship body - Glavlit - employed seventy thousand full-time staff not only to eliminate any undesirable printed materials, but also "*to ensure that the correct ideological spin was put on every published item*". Telling anything against the "Party line" was punished by imprisonment or through punitive psychiatry.
- An important goal of Communist propaganda was to create a new man. Schools and the Communist youth organizations, like Soviet pioneers and Komsomol, served to remove children from the "petty-bourgeois" family and indoctrinate the next generation into the collective way of life.

*“We must make the young into a generation of Communists. Children, like soft wax, are very malleable and they should be moulded into good Communists... We must rescue children from the harmful influence of the family... We must nationalize them. From the earliest days of their little lives, they must find themselves under the beneficent influence of Communist schools... To oblige the mother to give her child to the Soviet state – that is our task.”* Orlando Figes *The Whisperers: Private Life in Stalin's Russia*, 2007, ISBN 0-08050-7461-9, p. 20-31.

- An important goal of communist propaganda was "to justify political repressions of entire social groups" How? The most effective means to achieve this objective "was the denial of the victim's humanity through the process of dehumanization", "the reduction of real or imaginary enemy to a zoological state". In particular, Vladimir Lenin called to exterminate enemies "as harmful insects", "lice" and "bloodsuckers".

State procurator *Andrey Vyshinsky* during Stalin's show trials said about the suspects:

*"Shoot these rabid dogs. ... Down with that vulture Trotsky ... Down with these abject animals! Let's put an end once and for all to these miserable hybrids of foxes and pigs, these stinking corpses! Let's exterminate the mad dogs of capitalism, who want to tear to pieces the flower of our new Soviet nation! Let's push the bestial hatred they bear our leaders back down their own throats!"*

- By 1918, Lenin had liquidated the independent press

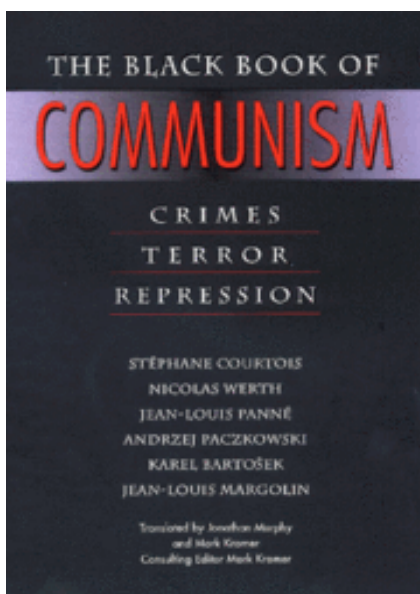
### Poverty

- **The Famine of 1921-1922:**

- The famine began in the early spring of that year, and lasted through 1922. The famine, which **killed an estimated 5 million**, affected mostly the Volga-Ural region.
- The famine resulted from the combined effect of the disruption of the agricultural production, which already started during World War I and continued through the disturbances of the Russian Revolution of 1917 and Russian War with its policy of War Communism.

- **The Famine of 1932-1933:**

- Main reasons of the famine: **forced collectivization** which caused chaos in the countryside. This included the destruction of peasant activists' possessions, the selling and killing of horses for fear they would be seized, and farmers' refraining from field work. Authorities blamed the agitation on the kulaks (rich peasants) and accused them of sabotage.
- The famine **affected more than 40 million people**, especially in the south on the Don and Kuban areas and in Ukraine, where by various estimates from 5 to 10 million may have starved to death. Estimates of deaths due to the 1932-1933 famine vary wildly, but are typically given in the range of **millions**.



### ***The Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, Repression:***

- is a French book which describes a history of repressions, both political and civilian, by Communist states, including genocides, extrajudicial executions, deportations, and artificial famines.
- originally published in 1997 in France.

#### **Estimated number of victims:**

In the introduction, editor Stéphane Courtois states that "**Communist regimes turned mass crime into a full-blown system of government**".

- The breakdown of the number of deaths given by Courtois is as follows: The statistics of victims includes executions, intentional destruction of population by starvation, and deaths resulting from deportations, physical confinement, or through forced labor.

- 65 million in the People's Republic of China
- **20 million in the Soviet Union**
- 2 million in Cambodia
- 2 million in North Korea
- 1.7 million in Africa
- 1.5 million in Afghanistan
- 1 million in the Communist states of Eastern Europe
- 1 million in Vietnam
- 150,000 in Latin America
- 10,000 deaths "resulting from actions of the international Communist movement and Communist parties not in power."

**Courtois claims that Communist regimes are responsible for a greater number of deaths than any other political movement, including Nazism. !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

**Total: almost 100 million dead**

**Soviet repressions:**

Repressions and famines occurring in the Soviet Union **under the regimes of Vladimir Lenin** and **Josef Stalin** described in the book include:

- the executions of tens of thousands of hostages and prisoners, and the murder of hundreds of thousands of rebellious workers and peasants from 1918 to 1922
- the Russian famine of 1921, which caused the death of 5 million people
- the extermination and deportation of the Don Cossacks in 1920
- the murder of tens of thousands in concentration camps in the period between 1918 and 1930
- the Great Purge which killed almost 690 000 people
- the deportation of 2 million so-called "kulaks" from 1930 to 1932
- the deaths of 4 million Ukrainians and 2 million others during the famine of 1932 and 1933
- the deportations of Poles, Ukrainians, Moldavians and people from the Baltic Republics from 1939 to 1941 and from 1944 to 1945
- the deportation of the Volga Germans in 1941
- the deportation of the Crimean Tatars in 1943
- the deportation of the Chechens in 1944
- the deportation of the Ingush in 1944.