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THE ACTIVITIES OF THE “LEFT” WING (CP(B)U) IN THE CONTEXT OF POLITICAL AND ARMED CONFRONTATION ON THE NORTHEASTERN BORDER OF THE UKRAINIAN STATE IN SEPTEMBER — OCTOBER 1918 ¹

In this article, the author attempts to examine a case that has not yet been sufficiently considered in Ukrainian and foreign historiographies: the activities of certain CP(b)U political groups (the so-called “left” wing) in September-October 1918. This issue will be considered through the intra-party discussions in the CP(b)U during the “September” plenum in Orel, the 2nd Congress of the CP(b)U in Moscow in October 1918. This topic has not yet received adequate attention in historiography. Most studies have focused on the ideological basis of political groups “inside” the CP(b)U, without much attention to their common and distinctive features. Discussions within local parties have been viewed in isolation from the “external” processes outside them. In the end, this issue was often given a certain political coloration, through which the CP(b)U was seen as either a “controlled pawn of Moscow” or a “local national independent movement” in a “communist wrapper”. The activities of the “leftists” demonstrate a certain “self-sufficiency” of local Bolshevik political formations. Even though Georgy Pyatakov’s faction faded into the background, a number of its ideological postulates were put into practice. Among them, the main one was the idea of an armed way of the “liberation” of Ukrainian territories, with a focus on the means available locally (formation of armed regular units). The author also notes that the manifestations of the “leftist” independent activities were, not least, facilitated by a change in the political line in Moscow’s highest political circles (especially after Lenin’s injury in September 1918), and a common vision of the “left” wing with their opponents in the CP(b)U (the “right-wing” led by Emmanuel Quiring).

Keywords: G. Pyatakov, E. Quiring, “left” wing, CP(b)U, Congress, plenum, Central War Revolutionary Committee (CWRK), partisans, insurgent division, Lenin, Stalin, Sverdlov.

Introduction ²

The Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine (CP(b)U) despite its ties to the local area, was formally created outside of it, during the Bolshevik retreat, in Taganrog in April 1918. During the Taganrog meeting, the idea of creating a political structure that would have the right to govern its own territory was first proclaimed. This fact was legally confirmed at the first party congress in Moscow in July 1918. However, despite its seemingly organized structure, there were frequent clashes within the party over the role, functions, and purpose of the newly created political entity. One of the main issues that sparked these disagreements was the fate of the occupied territories of Ukraine, which were supposed to be liberated by the CP(b)U. These dis-

putes led to the formation of two opposing political factions within the party: the “left” and the “right”.

In August 1918, the “left” wing gained power in the party and incited an armed uprising. Though the uprising saw some tactical successes, it ultimately failed strategically. As a result, the “leftists” lost political authority and had to make concessions to their opponents during the September plenum of the CP(b)U and the 2nd Congress of the CP(b)U.

Despite facing difficulties, it was not necessary to consider the situation of the Ukrainian “leftists” as a failure. Although they suffered political setbacks, Georgy Pyatakov’s group managed to maintain influence on the party’s armed institutions and propaganda work. As a result, the “leftists” were able to implement some of their ideas in the political and military spheres and even engage in more radical actions, including open armed confrontation.

The organization to which the CP(b)U was accountable, the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) (RCP(b)), was also

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² Статтю подано в авторській редакції.

affected by the situation. In September-October 1918, complex political processes took place, which were connected with the temporary absence of power and the arrival of Yakiv Sverdlov-led opposition to Vladimir Lenin’s leadership. The opposition of this group to the previous agreements in Brest-Litovsk contributed to the activities of the “leftists” in the CP(b)U, allowing them to preserve some of their political positions.

With V. Lenin’s return to the leadership of the party, the situation changed radically. However, even with the support of the “right” wing from representatives of the RCP(b), supporters of G. Pyatakov were able to maintain influence not only in military authorities but also to prove the feasibility of their ideas (especially in the matter of armed detachments).

Soviet, modern Ukrainian and foreign historiography do not consider the practical activities of the “left” in the CP(b)U (especially in terms of the creation of armed forces), focusing exclusively on the ideological component. The participation of representatives from other party structures (first of all, Moscow) in the internal party discussions of the CP(b)U was overlooked. Since Soviet times, the formula of “conflict” between “left” and “right” has remained established. In addition, the common vision of these groups on certain problematic issues related to Ukrainian terrains and ways of mastering them was not taken into account. In addition to that problem, we have a lack of complete familiarization with local sources. This situation prevents not only creating a coherent picture of the ideas of the “left”, but also its connection with the practical actions of this wing.

Appealing to the opinion of Ronald Kowalski, we consider the “left wing of the CP(b)U” to be a political group distinct from other similar movements in other parts of the former Russian Empire³. Geographically, it operated exclusively on the Ukrainian territory. Politically, this faction had both common (non-recognition of the Brest Peace) and distinctive (e.g., attention to the peasantry) features with other similar political movements of the time, making it a unique political entity. Like other socialist parties in the Russian Empire, this political “wing” was a multi-ethnic organization that included both natives of the local area (Ukrainians) and other nationalities (Russians, Jews, Poles, etc.). So, for us, it is, first and foremost, a political grouping with a clear geographical and political distinction.

³ Ronald Kowalski, *The Bolshevik Party in conflict: the left Communist opposition of 1918* (London: University of Pittsburgh press, 1991), 168–181.

Plenum in Orel: September 8-9, 1918

The August demonstration in Chernihiv province, organized by the Central War Revolutionary Committee and approved by the CP(b)U Central Committee headed by G. Pyatakov, was ultimately defeated⁴. Despite the capture of several villages, the main district and provincial centers (such as Novgorod-Siversk, Gomel, Nizhyn, and Starodub) were not taken under control, and partisan units and individual regular formations (such as the *Red Cossacks*) were forced to retreat to the “neutral zone” or hide in the local forest.

The main summary of these events was to be discussed at the September plenum of the CP(b)U in Orel. The opposition at this meeting was presented, on the one hand, by the “leftists” led by G. Pyatakov, Andriy Bubnov, Stanislav Kosior, and on the other by the “rights”, the main “voices” of which were Semen Schwartz and Emmanuel Quiring. Mykola Krestynskyi was present as an RCP(b) representative with the right of an advisory vote.

The position of the “leftists” was outlined at the beginning of the meeting by G. Pyatakov (who at that time was the secretary of the Central Committee of the CP(b)U) in his report on the results of the August uprising. Acknowledging the failure of this performance, G. Pyatakov, at the same time, tried to highlight the advantages of the current position of the CP(b)U. According to him, as a result of the battles, the military units developed “a desire for organization, for preparatory work, which was not noticed before the call for combat operations”⁵. Moreover, “in certain places (the “neutral zone”⁶) military bases have been created to disturb the Germans, and, most importantly, during hostilities, they will grow, constantly checking their combat forces and the suitability of certain military units, strengthen and grow as human material”⁷.

In the vision of the secretary, the August events contributed to the formation of experienced and, most importantly, organized (or regular) units. The secretary demonstrates the effectiveness of such detachments in the example of the two mentioned settlements – Yampil and Vorobjivka, in the area in which separate units of the German army were tem-

⁴ See more in Владислав Пилипенко, “Збройні сутички на північно-східному кордоні Української держави в серпні 1918 р.” (Кваліфікаційна робота. Освітній ступінь — бакалавр, НаУКМА, 2022), 1–117.

⁵ “Из деятельности ЦК КП(б)У и Ц. Военно-Революционного Комитета в период между I и II с ездом КП(б)У (по материалам Истпарта),” *Летопись революции* 1 (1927): 132.

⁶ A no-man’s land between the borders of the Ukrainian state and the RSFSR, where the CP(B)U formed its armed units. Adopted by an agreement between the German and Bolshevik sides in Korenevo in May 1918.

⁷ “Из деятельности ЦК КП(б)У,” 133.

porarily forced to retreat. Ultimately, the author of the speech sees the expediency of such attacks in the “accumulation” of sufficient personnel and weapons, which, along with experience, contributes to the military effectiveness of such military units. As an example of this, G. Pyatakov mentioned Vitaliy Primakov’s *Red Cossack* squad, which grew from 120 men to a regiment by the end of the uprising⁸.

Despite such radical thought, G. Pyatakov, nevertheless, saw armed actions at the level of fronts, etc., as premature, using them only at a “more distant moment”⁹. The main goal, in his opinion, should be to inflict a series of “*tangible blows*” on the part of Soviet units, thereby exhausting the enemy, reorganizing their units, and, finally, ending with the final “offensive”, as a result of which a revolution should take place in Ukraine, reinforced by similar events in Europe¹⁰.

At the same time, seeing the local peasantry as the main source of resource replenishment and revolution, the author rather insists on cooperation and appropriate work with this stratum of the population than on its leadership in actions. G. Pyatakov transfers the leadership of the offensive and uprising to the workers. The “revolutionary” blow of the peasantry should distract the enemy, while the main actions should take place during the uprising of the “proletariat” in the city¹¹. After all, the peasantry itself, according to the author of the speech, “is a social stratum that is not in a position to take over political power”¹². According to Ronald Kowalski, such piety of the “*leftists*” towards the working class (despite attention to the peasantry) is due to the reliance on the teachings of one of the theorists of Russian socialism and V. Lenin’s opponent, Oleksandr Bogdanov, especially, his work, “*Questions of Socialism*”¹³. According to the author of the work, the construction of socialism rests on the “dictatorship of the proletariat” despite possible (and, in some cases, necessary) deviations on the ground, which must end with the victory of the working class.

A. Bubnov’s position, in most cases, is consistent with the opinion of his colleague. The author sees the main power of the “local” revolution as “*shock groups*”, which are supposed to attack Ukraine in the form of “organized shock fists from the neutral zone”¹⁴. It is worth noting that A. Bubnov sees the leadership of such groups only in the form of the military headquarters, pushing the po-

litical component to the background¹⁵. The author mentions campaigning work among the peasantry as an aid in the organization of regular units, which, in the end, should turn into material that will “build up” future military formations.

However, even the head of the *Central War Revolutionary Committee* noticed the unsuccessful actions of the rebel “*revcoms*” (local revolutionary committees) subordinated to him. Even though the present state of affairs indicates that “the matter has come to decisive and energetic actions”¹⁶, still “a correctly constructed front is being created” and “it is necessary to practically raise the question of a general offensive based on military conditions”¹⁷. So A. Bubnov was by no means going to refuse the involvement of individual units in repeated attacks on enemy positions (without specifying their scope and coverage). However, he admitted that the activity of larger-scale operations of strategic/front-line importance is not a matter of the coming days.

S. Kosior, in general, agreed with the criticism of the “*right*” regarding the prematureness of the August speech. However, on the other hand, he recognized the inseparability of military activity, in parallel with political, campaigning activities in the form of local revolutionary committees. According to the speaker, such political organizations already exist on the ground, and require, if only, more in-depth work with the “masses”¹⁸.

After all, the last of the “*leftists*”, Volodymyr Zatonskyi criticized the “*rights*” for the lack of, at least, some practical plan of action, at the time when their opponents from the “*left*” wing were trying to implement it on the ground¹⁹.

The opinion of the “*right*”, led by E. Quiring and S. Schwartz, was different. The first of them opposed the issue of the chronological framework of the uprising. Seeing in the current state of affairs only the “disorganization of the enemy”, the author denies the possibility of the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks soon²⁰. Moreover, E. Quiring sees a huge mistake in the liberation of Ukrainian territories at the expense of existing partisan/regular units. The armed activity of the *CP(b)U*, according to the speaker, should be connected “only with the growth of the revolutionary movement in Austria and Germany and the strengthening of Soviet power in Russia”²¹. Moreover, the author does not believe in the possibility of “operating large

⁸ Ibid., 130.

⁹ Ibid., 132.

¹⁰ Ibid., 134.

¹¹ Ibid., 134.

¹² Ibid., 134.

¹³ Kowalski, *The Bolshevik Party in conflict*, 4–5, 185.

¹⁴ “Из деятельности ЦК КП(б)У,” 136.

¹⁵ Ibid., 135–136.

¹⁶ Ibid., 136.

¹⁷ Ibid., 136.

¹⁸ Ibid., 143–144.

¹⁹ Ibid., 145.

²⁰ Ibid., 138.

²¹ Ibid., 139.

masses” as well as in the fact that “we can make an independent front”²².

In the end, the author sees the success of Bolshevik activities in Ukraine due to the strengthening of political work on the ground. In this sense, E. Quiring means the creation of a more extensive network of political branches, united by a single center in the borderland and based, first of all, on urban revolutionary centers²³.

Despite this state of affairs, E. Quiring did not object to certain theses of his colleagues from the “left” wing. Seeing the expediency in the partisan actions of the “leftists”, the author gives them the form not of “percussive fists”, but of “mass terror”, emphasizing the gradual recruitment and activity of such units as material for the “disorder” of the enemy ranks²⁴.

In the end, the speaker does not deny the success of individual armed actions (in a short-term period): “The coming days will show what will come of it. Undoubtedly, successes are possible (the capture of Novgorod-Seversky, Starodub), but these units will not be able to create a front (*long-term actions of a larger scale*, – P.V.) against the Germans”²⁵. It is appropriate to note that the speaker similarly does not see the peasantry as a political actor: “Men (muzhik) stand up in places, but, as you can see, only when they are directly hurt, it is difficult to do anything here”.²⁶

The relevant opinion is supported by his colleague, S. Shvarts, a representative from the party branch of Donbas and Kryvyi Rih. The main work for internal uprising (since “external” influences should be carried out only from the side of the *RSFSR*) was given by the author to the proletariat in the cities²⁷. Finally, he proposes to stop the activities of front-line revolutionary committees in the field, considering them more valuable at a later time. Instead of them, active work should be carried out by local political branches of the party²⁸.

It is no less interesting to look at the opinion of the representative of the “patron” of the *CP(b)U*, *RCP(b)* representative M. Krestynskyi. On the one hand, he saw expediency in certain theses, which were mentioned by the “left” earlier. First of all, this is the thesis about the formation of “strike groups”. M. Krestynskyi saw one of the main goals for the

CP(b)U in the formation of “victorious detachments” under clear military leadership²⁹. In addition, the author saw their use precisely in the form of a unit, which is not assigned a subversive role, but the role of a formation that will “advance” through Ukrainian terrain³⁰.

M. Krestynskyi had a lot to disagree with in the context of his appeal to the “left” wing of the *CP(b)U*. The main remark (and, at the same time, a proposal) was a departure from the idea of a “general uprising” to a more “narrowly territorial” concept of “guerrilla war”³¹. The attention was proposed to draw to those areas of space where the control of the Bolsheviks was more stable (cities, border provinces), which somewhat limited the initial initiative of G. Pyatakov’s group.

Despite the heated debate in the plenum, both groups still managed to reach a certain “compromise”, which resulted in the “Resolution on the issue of hostilities”. One of its main thesis was that “the struggle of the working masses in Ukraine took the form of a long partisan war”³². At the same time, the following thesis asserted that this kind of military action “can be conducted with the greatest success... in the villages”³³. In this way, one of the main theses postulated by the “left” wing was approved: the gradual formation of regular units in combat conditions, which are largely based on the peasant element.

On the other hand, the resolution was also a “victory” for the “right” wing of the *CP(b)U*. The fourth thesis of the resolution noted that “a political victory can only be achieved by workers in the cities” (albeit with the direct support of the peasant masses)³⁴. In addition, although partisan actions may be conducted in such settlements as cities, they are not aimed at seizing power³⁵.

The fourth point, however, had a twofold nature. After all, it also combined the ideas of the “left” and “right” wings. Although partisan actions were not supposed to be in the form of seizing power, nevertheless, during the “general uprising” the proletarians were supposed to take power on the ground. In the end, the third and sixth points of the resolution were a compromise, which provided for campaign work both in the village and among the forces of the Triple Alliance, as well as cooperation of military and political units in the place³⁶.

²² Ibid., 141.

²³ Ibid., 137–139.

²⁴ “Из деятельности ЦК КП(б)У,” 138.

²⁵ “Переписка Секретариата ЦК РКП(б) с местными партийными организациями. Август — октябрь 1918. Сборник документов” (Москва, 1969), 180.

²⁶ Ibid., 138.

²⁷ “Из деятельности ЦК КП(б)У,” 139.

²⁸ Ibid., 139.

²⁹ Ibid., 140, 146.

³⁰ Ibid., 140.

³¹ Ibid., 140.

³² ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1, оп. 1, спр. 9, арк. 17.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

The rest of the decisions of the September plenum were also ambiguous. On the one hand, we have obvious evidence, which appeared in the form of the appointment of a representative of the “right”, Sofia Gopner, as the secretary of the Central Committee of the *CP(b)U* instead of G. Pyatakov, as well as the joining of another representative of this wing, Artem³⁷, to the *CP(b)U*. However, 1) the heterogeneity of the above-mentioned resolutions, 2) as well as the fact that the composition of the main publishing body of the *CP(b)U* “Communist” remained unchanged (consisting of G. Pyatakov, V. Zatonsky, and A. Bubnov) and the *Central War Revolutionary Committee (CWRC)* of the Communist Party of Ukraine still led by the “leftists” led by A. Bubnov³⁸, testified that the latter not only had power over the distribution of the publication but could also implement (on a legal basis) individual points of their theses (for example, the formation of regular armed divisions).

In addition, such “ambiguity” of the plenum could be influenced by external factors. The first of them took place at the end of summer in Moscow. An attempt was made on the current leader and authority of the Bolshevik Party, V. Lenin. Thus, Y. Sverdlov, head of the Central Executive Committee of the party, comes to power (at least until October 14). Y. Sverdlov, an opponent of peace with Germany (opposed to “theorists” like V. Lenin)³⁹, one of the supporters of the regular army⁴⁰, at the head of the Central Committee, gradually began to replace the system of plenum of the *RCP(b)*, establishing his moratorium on their resolutions, signing and approving/suspending them personally⁴¹.

M. Krestynskyi was also elected as a representative for a reason. Firstly, he was a member of Sverdlov’s “Ural” group⁴², secondly, although he had a greater tendency towards party centralism, at the same time he was a representative of the “Russian leftists”, who advocated the breakup of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty⁴³. So, a certain level of favor of the center towards the local Ukrainian “left” wing was felt.

In addition, the composition of the “rightists” at the plenum was far from complete. For example, the Donbas group of Bolsheviks (including Artem) was,

at the time, based in the area of the Tsaritsyn Front⁴⁴. Which, a priori, made the number of votes of the “right” wing disproportionate. After all, we should not forget about the benefits of local party branches from this situation. S. Gopner noted in her memoirs, “Due to the wounding of Lenin on August 30, about which we heard with horror in Orel, direct relations of the Central Committee of the *CP(b)U* with Lenin were interrupted throughout his illness”.⁴⁵ Thus, the temporary interregnum and Y. Sverdlov’s attempts to legitimize his power could provide a certain period for the independent actions of the “leftists” in the *CP(b)U*.

The Starodub incident and the 2nd Congress of the *CP(b)U*

The beginning of October marked the end of the short-term silence on the border, which lasted from the middle of September 1918. At the beginning of October, the first skirmishes took place in the Gremyach area between the detachments of the first and second regiments of the Red Cossacks (at that time, V. Primakov’s regiment was finishing its deployment into a two-regimental brigade), and the 2nd regiment of the Zaporizhia division under the command of Peter Bolbochan. To eliminate existing partisan “revcoms” on their side of the “neutral zone”, the last one attacked Kamianska Sloboda, as a result of which the local partisan was forced to retreat behind Desna. However, on October 4, the Zaporozhian regiment had to face directly the units of the Red Cossacks, who made several attempts to attack Gremyach. In the end, they were successfully repulsed by the Zaporozhians⁴⁶.

A few days later, on October 8-9, the boundaries of the skirmishes were already unfolding far west of Gremyach to the Starodub, in the area of Kister-Pogor-Andrejkovychy-Kartushyn. On the 9th-12th of October, the 1st and 2nd regiments of the Red Cossacks, with the support of the Tarascha regiment, launched an offensive along the entire line of contact, from Starodub to Kamianska Sloboda. As a result, they were successful in the area of the last village and Kartushyn, where Bolbochan’s regiment, in total, lost more than 70 people killed and several officers wounded and killed⁴⁷. However, near Starodub, with the support of German units, the

³⁷ “Из деятельности ЦК КП(б)У,” 154–155.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 154.

³⁹ Юрий Фельштинский и Владимир Попов, *От красного террора к мафиозному государству* (Киев, 2021), 39.

⁴⁰ Сергей Войтиков, *Ленин и Сталин против Троцкого и Свердлова* (Москва: Вече, 2023), 130.

⁴¹ Войтиков, *Ленин и Сталин*, 156; Фельштинский и Попов, *От красного террора*, 80.

⁴² Войтиков, *Ленин и Сталин*, 154.

⁴³ Riga Liliana, *The Bolsheviks and the Russian Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 151.

⁴⁴ Д. Фрід, “Таганрозька нарада”, *Літопис революції* 4 (1928): 28.

⁴⁵ “Воспоминания о Владимире Ильиче Ленине. Т. 3,” (Москва, 1979), 218.

⁴⁶ ЦДАВОУ. Ф. 1077, оп. 1, спр. 40, арк. 175 зв.; Григорий Сопранский, “М. Гремяч, Н.-Северск,” *Черниговская земская газета*, 11–19 октября, 1918, 7.

⁴⁷ ЦДАВОУ. Ф. 1077, оп. 5, спр. 11, арк. 297–299.

enemy managed to be stopped and forced to retreat, practically, to the previous lines of defense (due to the stretching of the defense lines, Kamianska Sloboda and Demyanka had to be left to the enemy). Taking advantage of the exhaustion of the enemy units, the Zaporizhia regiment and separate units of the 47th Landwehr division launched an attack on the main enemy forces in the “neutral zone” in the area of Andrekovichy and Mishkovka. As a result of this offensive, the Bolsheviks were forced to leave the mentioned villages and leave the southern borders of the “neutral zone” with preliminary losses of up to 200 people killed and wounded⁴⁸. The last attempt of the Bolsheviks to change the course of the battle was the attack on Lyshchichi and Kustychi near the railway junction, Klynitsi. However, Shchors’ Bogunsky regiment failed there as well, not capturing any of the mentioned settlements.

This case became one of the most important topics of discussion during the Second Congress of the CP(b)U which took place at that time (October 16–24). First, let’s start with the main “actors” of the offensive – the “left” wing of the party led by G. Pyatakov.

G. Pyatakov, recognizing the fact of this offensive, tried to explain the given situation by the presence in Starodub exclusively “*haidamak*” units and the withdrawal of German units from the city. In addition, the issue in the area of Kamianska Sloboda was shown as insignificant, because the attack on this village was carried out to improve the current demarcation line in their favor, or, according to G. Pyatakov, “to clarify our front”⁴⁹. In the end, it was “provoked” by the actions of the agents of the Ukrainian State, which, during the negotiations with the RSFSR, arrested several “revcoms” in Chernihiv, Starodub, and Kyiv. So, according to G. Pyatakov, the division’s offensive was highly appreciated by the top leadership of the republic (especially Y. Sverdlov), who saw in it a worthy response to the arrests of their representatives⁵⁰.

However, in the following days of the Congress, Georgy revealed the theoretical component on which he based his decisions. First of all, he connects the reason for the armed action with the current situation on Ukrainian territory. According to him, at the moment, Ukraine is witnessing the “col-

lapse of Austro-German imperialism”, which in the future may lead to a “complicated international situation”⁵¹. The latter is closely related to the troops of the Triple Alliance, which, on the one hand, must oppose the revolutions in the West, and on the other, the future naval landing of the Entente in the south of Ukraine. In the end, this will contribute to the fact that “we can continue the partisan war in Ukraine without the risk of collapse and with a full prospect of victory”⁵². Thus, the “*leftists*”, using the problem of the uncertainty of the time of the start of the revolution in the resolution of the September plenum, imposed their concept of “expediency of the revolution” in the context of the current political situation in Ukraine. In addition, this thesis made it possible to bypass the decision of the Orel plenum (which related to partisan actions that prohibited the capture of the city) and to proceed directly to a “comprehensive” uprising with the participation of regular units⁵³.

On the issue of subordination to the “center” (RCP(b)), G. Pyatakov appealed to the RSFSR as the only “proletarian power that only exists now”⁵⁴. Moreover, at the September plenum, he supported the resolution on “the slogan of the unification of revolutionary Russia with revolutionary Ukraine on the principles of proletarian centralism”⁵⁵. However, in the struggle with “world capital”, the best variant, in G. Pyatakov’s opinion, will be not to wait for direct help from Moscow, but “to stand inside and be there, on the ground, and there to wage this struggle”⁵⁶.

Finally, opposing Lev Kamenev’s (representative of the RCP(b)) thesis, Georgy objects to the involvement of military units of the “neutral zone” in the fight against Krasnov’s Don Cossacks. Such a policy, according to G. Pyatakov, will lead to the elimination of the only military potential currently available in Ukraine⁵⁷. Thus, we can reject the thesis about the “national separatism” of the “*leftists*”, because the issue of disagreement was not so much in subordination, or “autonomy” of the party, but in the tactics of activity. This thesis is also supported by Andrea Graziosi, pointing to G. Pyatakov as a supporter of the ideas of the theorist of Austrian communism, Karl Renner, about economic “centralism”, as an opponent of national separatism⁵⁸.

⁴⁸ “На українно-більшовицьким фронті,” *Нова Рада*, 26 жовтня, 1918, 3.

⁴⁹ ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1, оп. 1, спр. 4, арк. 34.

⁵⁰ Ibid. (It is significant that we can find support for such actions by Sverdlov not only in Pyatakov’s report, but also in Yakov Sverdlov’s direct letter to Lenin, in which the dispatcher informs that “under the current conditions, fuller assistance to our Ukrainians in the formation of their units is necessary.” (“Директивы Главного командования Красной Армии (1917–1920),” (Москва, 1969), 194.)

⁵¹ ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1, оп. 1, спр. 4, арк. 170.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid., арк. 34.

⁵⁴ Ibid., арк. 165.

⁵⁵ “Из деятельности ЦК КП(б)У,” 156.

⁵⁶ ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1, оп. 1, спр. 4, арк. 168.

⁵⁷ Ibid., арк. 167.

⁵⁸ Andrea Graziosi, “G. L. Piatakov (1890–1937): A Mirror of Soviet History,” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 16, No. 1/2 (1992): 135–136.

The opinion of the “right” was presented at the meeting by Yakiv Epshtein and E. Quiring. The last of them, condemning the division’s performance at Starodub, saw in the activities of the “left”-controlled *Central War Revolutionary Committee (CWRK)* the failure of the entire policy of the *CP(b)U* on Ukrainian territory. First of all, the leadership of the “leftist” was accused of delaying the approval of its plans directly with the political leadership – the Central Committee of the *RCP(b)*⁵⁹ (thus violating one of the resolutions of the September plenum).

Secondly, the “leftists” were blamed for the failure of the agitation campaign in the border areas. In addition to the fact that the local organizations of the Chernihiv province provided unreliable information about the situation, E. Quiring noted that “they did not consist of communists but of leftist S.R. and anarchists in the majority”⁶⁰. To improve this situation, the speaker proposed to give higher military and political power to the Presidium of the Central Committee, elected by the current Congress⁶¹. It is significant that despite the opposition to the “national” factor, Pyatakov and his colleagues closely cooperated with other local Ukrainian parties (such as the USDRP (Neronovych’s group)) and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries (“Borotbists”). This cooperation, which lasted from the beginning of the Taganrog meeting and the creation of the first underground armed center, the “Rebel Nine” (“*Povstancha deviatka*”)⁶², allowed the “left” wing to somewhat expand its sphere of influence.

On the other hand, the author did not deny the possibility of an uprising in Ukraine carried out with the direct participation of border and local military formations. The only condition was the performance of these actions with the direct consent of the political and military departments of the Presidium of the *CP(b)U*⁶³.

Epstein, in agreement with his colleague, proposed a similar thesis about the liquidation of the *Central War Revolutionary Committee* and its replacement by the Presidium of the *CP(b)U*. In the current Ukrainian conditions, he saw, first of all, the expediency of political activity and the formation of relevant political organizations. The speaker saw the reason for this in different conditions for the formation of the “working masses” in Ukraine and the *RSFSR*. While “Russia could create the power of the proletariat and hold this power, the proletariat of Ukraine could not hold it”⁶⁴. The

author saw the solution to this problem, caused by the occupation of the Triple Alliance, in the formation of local party workers’ centers in the cities, around which the already mentioned military leadership departments – the revolutionary committees – were to be formed. In the peasantry itself, by analogy with G. Pyatakov, he saw only a powerful uncontrolled mass, at the head of which should be the urban proletariat⁶⁵.

However, unlike E. Quiring, Y. Epstein’s position was somewhat different. The author agreed with the expediency of forming regular shock units, which, at the right political moment, could be used during the uprising in Ukraine. But the activities of such units were to be guided by “when they are called up, not then and there the heart prompts”⁶⁶. It was meant to avoid the mistakes of the August offensive when the actions were caused not by strategic expediency, but by an emotional factor. A part of detachments in which “blood boils” was supposed to be involved “where political thought demands”⁶⁷. By this concept, Epstein meant the Don Front, where “the common interests of the Russian and Ukrainian working class” coincided⁶⁸.

In the end, it is worth looking at the opinion of the representatives of the Central Committee of the *RCP(b)*, L. Kamenev and Christian Rakovsky, who were invited to the congress (due to the similarity of their theses, let’s try to consider L. Kamenev’s case). The first of them undoubtedly considered the territory of Ukraine to be the center of the political and armed struggle for the world revolution⁶⁹. However, he set, first of all, other priorities. L. Kamenev saw the protection of the main center of the “export” of the revolution – the *RSFSR* – as a priority. It was provoked by the fact that the “expansion of the Russian Revolution to Ukraine” was supposed to take place⁷⁰. So, in this context, the priority was the liquidation of the Don Front, as a potential bridgehead for the Entente and the Don Cossacks, which created the so-called “iron ring” of fronts around the center of the revolution (Russia)⁷¹.

In the end, the road “to the restoration of Soviet power in Ukraine lies through Rostov”⁷² not only for the reason that it allows access to the natural and human resources of Donbas but also because it opens up an area for maneuver where “there is no connection between the German force and the forces

⁵⁹ ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1, оп. 1, спр. 4, арк. 57.

⁶⁰ Ibid., арк. 117.

⁶¹ Ibid., арк. 58.

⁶² Фрід, “Таганрозька нарада,” 29, 31.

⁶³ ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1, оп. 1, спр. 4, арк. 58, 119.

⁶⁴ Ibid., арк. 174.

⁶⁵ Ibid., арк. 177.

⁶⁶ Ibid., арк. 179.

⁶⁷ Ibid., арк. 179.

⁶⁸ Ibid., арк. 179.

⁶⁹ Ibid., арк. 6.

⁷⁰ Ibid., арк. 142.

⁷¹ Ibid., арк. 6.

⁷² Ibid., арк. 43.

of the counter-revolution”⁷³. During the Bolshevik offensive on the Don, in Ukraine, according to L. Kamenev’s plan, gradual agitation should take place among the occupying troops (especially the Austro-Hungarian army), which, as a result, should lead to a revolution in the enemy’s rear. Thus, the enemy will be forced to flee from Ukraine, sandwiched between the Bolshevik divisions from the Don and the revolutionary troops of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy⁷⁴.

In this regard, the author of the project attached great importance to local Ukrainian units. In addition to the fact that they were supposed to contribute to the advance of the Russian Red Army on Rostov, these detachments also helped the uprising in local Ukrainian areas (however, only in time that such a Central Committee of the *RCP(b)* was proclaimed through the local Presidium)⁷⁵.

In the end, the speaker paid considerable attention to the formation of such units and the forms of their struggle against the enemy. As L. Kamenev noted, partisan war is a war of the “weak. This is a war designed not for victory, but for interfering with a stronger enemy”⁷⁶. To win, rather than inflict point strikes on the enemy, a full-fledged regular war must take place. One of its conditions is the reformation of semi-partisan units into regular units. L. Kamenev demonstrated the success of this tactic with examples of battles with the Czechoslovak Corps and the Don Cossacks⁷⁷.

After all, the final point in this process is the removal from such departments a “*semi-peasant*” character. As the speaker noted, the most expedient way to improve discipline in such units is to “mix” the peasant element with an urban, proletarian unit, or to involve experienced personnel from the local combatants⁷⁸.

It will be appropriate to recall L. Kamenev’s vision regarding the participation of the peasant “masses” and the relationship between the center and local organizations announced at the 2nd Congress. Characterizing the peasant movement, the author notes: “Such a mockery could easily have happened in history that the Communists, the most revolutionary party in the world,...which is counting on the development of the world proletarian revolution,... used the spontaneous peasant movement”⁷⁹. In the end, the peasant movement, which L. Kamenev considered “nationalistic”, was proposed to

be “undermined” and to create an international movement from it, devoid of the “national” side⁸⁰. Thus, the author’s opinion was not so far from the “*left*” or “*right*” wing of the *CP(b)U*.

The issue of relations between the *RCP(b)* and the *CP(b)U* was seen by the representatives of Moscow as a hierarchical structure. According to the author, “We are here in Moscow, trying to form and implement the tasks of the world proletarian revolution, we must say... what tasks have we entrusted to you from the world proletariat to fulfill”⁸¹. For “better coordination”, all actions of the Central Committee of the *CP(b)U* were to be carried out according to the instructions of the Central Committee of the *RCP(b)* in Moscow⁸². In the end, the result of the local uprising, the Soviet Ukrainian Republic, was to unite with the *RSFSR* into a single political structure, an entity under the leadership of neither a Russian nor a Ukrainian, but an international party⁸³. Steven Velychenko noted the reasons for such a vision, considering it a remnant of pre-revolutionary imperial thinking about a single “space”, which was modified for the needs of Marxist ideology with its “*class*” vision⁸⁴.

Thus, in most of their theses, the representatives of the *RCP(b)* and the “*right*” wing had a lot in common (unlike the September plenum). Political bodies in the form of the Presidium of the Congress were to take over not only the political but also the military component of the duties of the *CWRK* and the Central Committee of the *CP(b)U*. The expediency of military actions was specified by a certain event, the German Revolution. In the end, the local units were to become part of the joint army and, as a Soviet (not Ukrainian) department, be involved in the most threatening areas of the front for the center (but not Ukraine). As a kind of guarantee, a promise of activities on Ukrainian territory was given.

However, under the conditions of the already mentioned internal processes in the Alliance occupying forces and the liquidation of the Don Front, these promises, in the long run, were to drag on. Probably, such a change in policy in the *RCP(b)* can be explained by the return to power of Lenin, who began work already on October 14, 1918⁸⁵. Moreover, the selection of candidates from the *RCP(b)* to the Congress, according to K. Rakovsky, was the idea of Volodymyr Ilyich himself, who was a strong

⁷³ Ibid., арк. 44.

⁷⁴ Ibid., арк. 44.

⁷⁵ Ibid., арк. 42, 45.

⁷⁶ Ibid., арк. 41.

⁷⁷ Ibid., арк. 206.

⁷⁸ Ibid., арк. 206.

⁷⁹ Ibid., арк. 149.

⁸⁰ Ibid., арк. 150.

⁸¹ Ibid., арк. 145.

⁸² Ibid., арк. 159.

⁸³ Ibid., арк. 145.

⁸⁴ Steven Velychenko, *Propaganda in Revolutionary Ukraine Leaflets, Pamphlets, and Cartoons, 1917–1922* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019), 70.

⁸⁵ Войтиков, *Ленин и Сталин*, 180.

supporter of the policy established in Brest-Litovsk (and tried to preserve it at any cost)⁸⁶. In the end, L. Kamenev, as a supporter of V. Lenin, increasingly began to replace the duties of the head of the All-Russian Central Committee, Y. Sverdlov, independently signing all important documents of this organization⁸⁷.

Let's move on to the results of the Congress. One of his points was sending the *CP(b)U* delegation to the division's area of operation, to verify information about the offensive. The delegation was headed by representatives of the *CP(b)U*, Andriy Blyznichenko and Andriy Ivanov. The fact of the attack on Starodub "could not be established"⁸⁸, and the head of the division, M. Kropyvnyansky himself, claimed that the offensive on the city was not an attack in its current sense, but was only a contribution "for 500 pairs of boots"⁸⁹ due to the lack of uniform sets in the units. However, the delegation managed to assess the state of the division. As A. Blyznichenko noted, "Krapivnyansky's detachment represents a significant force," and his "selflessness and devotion are beyond doubt"⁹⁰.

In the end, it was decided to wait for the final decision from the delegate from the operational department of the People's Commissariat for Military Affairs, Ivan Modenov. The inspection later recorded that "the regiments of the division, continuing their formation, carry out constant patrol and reconnaissance service on the line of St. Huta – M. Gremyach", and "major performances are undertaken only by the Germans or Haydamaks themselves"⁹¹. The author noted the state of division as follows: "The selection of people is good and fighting... the spirit of the units is strong... intelligence and agents are well placed; agents are successfully working on the preparation of an uprising in the area planned for the offensive"⁹². Thus, the "rights" lost their argument regarding the "uncontrolled" performance of the division, as the "adventures" of G. Pyatak's group.

In the resolution of the Congress, considerable attention was paid to political activity and control in the party. First of all, in the political body of the Communist Party of Ukraine, the Presidium of the Central Committee of the *CP(b)U*, appeared two departments related to political work in Ukraine: *the*

*Foreign Bureau and the Executive Bureau*⁹³. The first body was to deal directly with the transportation and production of printed literature (location – Orel), while the second was to unite local political cells "on the ground" (location – Kharkiv). Later an agitation department, aimed at interaction with the armies of the Triple Alliance, was to be formed. Besides, separate political units – "party committees" – were created the local *Revolutionary Committees*, as the bodies of the military leadership of the uprising. The former were to be accountable to the latter, including in military matters⁹⁴. To control the activities of the armed departments of the *CP(b)U*, party departments headed by the Political Commissar were to be formed under each of the insurgent divisions, and propaganda literature was to be distributed⁹⁵.

In the end, at Quiring's insistence, a decision was made to print the main printed organ of the *CP(b)U* "The Communist" not only abroad, but also directly in the occupied territories of Ukraine⁹⁶. The main emphasis of the political activity of the *CP(b)U* was to be aimed "at the territory of Ukraine itself", and the agitation was to be concentrated in "workers' centers"⁹⁷.

However, the main success of the "right" was the occupation of all positions in the above-mentioned bodies. In the Foreign Bureau of the Central Committee, a place was given to Joseph Stalin (as a new member of the *CP(b)U*), E. Quiring, and Artem, while Y. Epshtein took a prominent place in the Executive Bureau⁹⁸. Also, Y. Epshtein was in charge of the literature printing department at the Foreign Bureau. The "leftists" were finally deprived of the monopoly on campaigning activity.

In its activities, the *CP(b)U* had to closely cooperate with the "center" in Moscow. As noted in the resolution, "the overall goal... is the unification of Soviet Ukraine with Soviet Russia; only the latter of them can provide the Ukrainian working masses with full freedom of national and cultural development"⁹⁹. In the preparatory work, the local party had to rely "on the forces of proletarian Russia, to coordinate and subordinate their actions to the Central Committee of the *RCP(b)* and only in agreement with it choose the moment of the general offensive"¹⁰⁰. In the end, *CP(b)U* forces "assistance" was

⁸⁶ Христиан Раковский, "Ильич и Украина," *Летопись революций* 2 (1925): 8.

⁸⁷ Войтиков, *Ленин и Сталин*, 226.

⁸⁸ ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1, оп. 1, спр. 13, арк. 9.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, арк. 4.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ Валентин Петров, *Отражение страной советов нашей германского империализма в 1918 году* (Москва: Наука, 1980), 301, 302.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 301.

⁹³ "Переписка Секретариата ЦК РКП(б)," 41.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁹⁵ ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1, оп. 1, спр. 13, арк. 11.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, арк. 17.

⁹⁷ "Переписка Секретариата ЦК РКП(б)," 36.

⁹⁸ ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1, оп. 1, спр. 13, арк. 15; "Переписка Секретариата ЦК РКП(б)," 41.

⁹⁹ "Переписка Секретариата ЦК РКП(б)," 36.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 37.

guaranteed in the plan of the struggle of the Red Army on the Don Front.

Despite this state of affairs, the “left” also had its dividends. The resolution of Congress recognized the need for “the creation of organized, disciplined combat military units whose strike, coordinated with the combat actions of the proletariat and peasantry of Ukraine, will crush the Hetman”¹⁰¹. Despite the warning about the impropriety of conducting “guerrilla” actions on the border of the Ukrainian State, which could strengthen the enemy’s forces, active combat operations were allowed on the condition that such areas were liberated by German troops and the in time of the arrival of White Guard units, which they should “resolutely oppose for destruction”¹⁰².

To improve the condition of the existing military units, one of the resolutions required to start recruiting human resources on Ukrainian territory and to help them in the transition to the other side of the “neutral zone”. At the same time, the *CWRK*, which, at the insistence of the “rights” and representatives of the *RCP(b)* demanded to be abolished and replaced by the Presidium of the Central Committee, still decided to remain as a military body, which was supposed to manage the process of the uprising on the ground¹⁰³.

As we can see, despite the significant “concessions” of G. Pyatakov’s group, their activities were not too limited by the new distribution of forces. Several factors probably contributed to this. The first of them consisted of the already mentioned consequences of the two inspections of the rebel division, whose delegates were convinced of their fighting capacity and the future potential of the unit.

The second factor is the impermanence of the “right-wing” line. Returning to the theses of this wing at the Congress, we could observe the divergence of the lines of E. Quiring and Y. Epstein. If the former saw the possibility of first-priority involvement of armed insurgent units on the “*Ukrainian front*”, the latter, nevertheless, adhered to the line of the *RCP(b)* regarding the expediency of involving the division in the Rostov-on-Don region.

After all, the last factor could be the diversification of the “center” itself. Despite the insistence of L. Kamenev and K. Rakovsky, regarding the liquidation of the *CWRK*, nevertheless, the decisive word in this matter remained with the previously unmentioned third member of this “Moscow” representative office, J. Stalin. Taking advantage of his status as the head of the People’s Commissariat for

Nationalities Affairs (a position that directly existed as a communication link between Moscow and local organizations)¹⁰⁴, the latter managed to convince the “rights” not to liquidate the Central War Revolutionary Committee, in exchange for the re-election of the personnel of this body of his choice¹⁰⁵.

In the end, there was definite opposition between L. Kamenev and J. Stalin, the latter of whom was a supporter of a “partisan”/autonomous local army, mostly peasant, in contrast to the policy of the former regarding regular proletarian units (which L. Kamenev reminded J. Stalin in the debates of 1927)¹⁰⁶. Taking into account the recent conflict between J. Stalin and Lev Trotsky in Tsaritsyn (which was also related to the mentioned issue), supporters of Lev Davydovich’s line, a priori, became potential opponents of the former.

Conclusion

In the presented study, we tried to trace the general ideas and practical activities of *leftists* during the party discussions on the question of ways and means of liberating the territory of Ukraine, which took place in September-October 1918. A close analysis of existing and newly introduced sources made it possible to reveal the theoretical component of the *Ukrainian “left” Bolsheviks*. Despite the deviation in several decisions with their opponents from the “right” wing and the *RCP(b)* (especially in the matter of the importance of Ukrainian territories and attention to the local peasant resource), the “leftists” had many common points of contact with their colleagues. Among them: are the political supremacy of the proletariat, the reliance of the political vision on armed force, and the unchanging ultimate goal of the local revolution – unification with the *RSFSR*.

External factors also influenced the activity of the G. Pyatakov group. A lot depended on the situation in the “center of the revolution” – Moscow. The temporary change of power in September and early October contributed to the intensification of the actions of the “leftists” on the border, while the return of V. Lenin, a supporter of the Brest-Litovsk peace, forced the “leftists” to adjust their plans (stopping the attack on enemy units).

Despite this state of affairs, representatives of the *RCP(b)* still recognized the expediency of creating local armed units, which was facilitated, not

¹⁰¹ “Переписка Секретариата ЦК РКП(б),” 37.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 37.

¹⁰³ ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1, оп. 1, спр. 13, арк. 13.

¹⁰⁴ Франсин Хирш, *Империя наций. Этнографическое знание и формирование Советского Союза*, пер. Роберта Ибатулли-на (Москва: НЛЮ, 2023), 77.

¹⁰⁵ ЦДАГОУ. Ф. 1, оп. 1, спр. 13, арк. 13.

¹⁰⁶ Войтиков, *Ленин и Сталин*, 18–19.

least, by the practical activities of the “leftists”. The constant replenishment of units with human resources, effective propaganda, and the fighting capacity of armed units of the partisans influence the “center” idea of their possible involvement in the territory of Ukraine in the future.

During the last meetings (the September plenum and the 2nd Congress of the *CP(b)U*), the “leftists” finally formed their positions, which guided them in their current and future practical activities. First of all, this is attention to the local peasant element, as the main “instrument” for the further liberation of the Ukrainian territory, the vision of the current situation as a “revolutionary” moment, and with this, the need for active military actions, as the only means of liberating the local territories. Ultimately, this is a question of the “autonomy” of one’s tactics (which should not have depended on the course of events in the *RSFSR*) and the importance of Ukrainian territory as the “center” of the world’s revolutionary struggle.

On the other hand, some of the ideas proposed by the “leftists” coincided with those of their opponents from the “right” movement and the Central Committee of the *RCP(b)*. Firstly, there was a shared vision for the reformatting of rebel units into regular military units, which would act as a “shock nucleus” for the further liberation of Ukraine (or the Don). Additionally, there was a consensus that the leadership of the local struggle should be entrusted to the urban proletariat, while the armed struggle required political support in the form of agitation. Ultimately, the objective was to achieve the “liberation” of local territories and the formation of an international political state body, in partnership with the *RSFSR*.

The decisions taken during the September plenum, despite certain concessions in favor of the “right” (such as the transfer of the highest political power), remained largely unchanged. The agitation activity and leadership of the supreme military body

of the uprising (*CWRK*) remained in the hands of G. Pyatakov and his comrades, while certain theses of the resolution, regarding the time of the offensive and the tactics of armed actions, were still being debated. Ultimately, the overall situation was influenced by the political situation in Moscow. Thanks to the support of the opponents of the Brest-Litovsk system and the temporary anarchy, the “left” wing had the opportunity to implement their proposals.

On the eve of the 2nd Congress, the “leftists” tried to change the “political situation” in the party and regain lost positions. Throughout October, units of the 1st Rebel Division carried out an offensive in the Starodub-Klyntsi district but were defeated, capturing only a few settlements on the border.

The mentioned events provoked condemnation from the “right” wing and representatives of the Central Committee of the *RCP(b)*, sent by V. Lenin, a supporter of the Brest-Litovsk system. All military and political activities were to be transferred to the newly elected Presidium of the Central Committee of the *CP(b)U*, while all political and campaigning activities of the bureau of this body were transferred from the hands of the “left” to the representatives of the “right” movement. To strengthen the positions of the latter, individual members of the Central Committee of the *RCP(b)*, such as the head of the People’s Commissariat, J. Stalin, joined the *CP(b)U*. In the end, local military units were to be involved in helping the *RCP(b)* on the Don Front.

On the other hand, the situation with the supporters of G. Pyatakov was not so bright. Taking advantage of the disunity between the views of the “right” and representatives of Moscow, they were able to save some of their initiatives. Despite the demand to liquidate the *CWRK*, this body was left as an institution that was supposed to manage the local uprising in Ukraine. In the end, it was recognized the need for regular “shock” units, which had the right to be involved in local areas under conditions of revolution in the forces of the Triple Alliance.

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ДІЯЛЬНІСТЬ «ЛІВОГО» КРИЛА (КП(б)У) В КОНТЕКСТІ ПОЛІТИЧНОГО ТА ЗБРОЙНОГО ПРОТИСТОЯННЯ НА ПІВНІЧНО-СХІДНОМУ КОРДОНІ УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ ДЕРЖАВИ У ВЕРЕСНІ — ЖОВТНІ 1918 р.

У статті автор здійснює спробу розглянути раніше не охоплені сучасною закордонною та українською історіографіями кейс діяльності окремих політичних груп КП(б)У (так званого лівого крила) у вересні — жовтні 1918 р. Для наочності окреслену проблематику розглянуто в контексті тогочасних політичних і воєнних подій. Одним із таких кейсів стали внутрішньопартійні дискусії в КП(б)У під час «вересневого» пленуму в Орлі, 2-го з’їзду КП(б)У в Москві в жовтні 1918 р. В історіографії ця тематика досі не отримала належної уваги. Переважно дослідження зосереджені на ідейних поглядах політичних груп «усередині» КП(б)У, особливо не зауважуючи їхніх спільних і відмінних сторін. Дискусії всередині місцевих партій розглядалися окремо від «зовнішніх» процесів поза їхніми межами. Врешті, зазначеному питанню часто надавали певного політичного забарвлення, крізь призму якого КП(б)У вважали або «контрольованою пішкою Москви», або «місцевим національним самостійництвом» у «комуністичній обгортці». На прикладі діяльності «лівих» можна простежити певну «самодостатність» місцевих політичних формувань більшовиків. Попри відхід фракції Георгія П’ятаківа на другий план, низку її ідеологічних постулатів було втілено на практиці. Серед них головною стала ідея збройного шляху «визволення» українських теренів, із прицілом на наявні на місцях засоби (формування збройних регулярних відділів). Також автор зауважив, що проявам «самостійної» діяльності окремих політичних груп в КП(б)У сприяла зміна політичної лінії у вищих колах влади Москви (особливо простежувана після поранення Леніна у вересні 1918 р.) та спільна візія «лефтистів» в окремих питаннях з їхніми опонентами в КП(б)У («правим крилом» на чолі з Еммануїлом Квірінгом).

Ключові слова: Г. П’ятаков, Е. Квірінг, «ліве» крило, КП(б)У, з’їзд, пленум, Центральний військово-революційний комітет (ЦВРК), партизани, повстанська дивізія, В. Ленін, Й. Сталін, Я. Свердлов.

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