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DISTRICT AND MULTI-CIRCULATION PRESS OF THE WESTERN REGIONS OF THE UKRAINIAN SSR AS AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE “PERESTROIKA” ECONOMIC FAILURES TRANSFORMATION INTO POLITICAL REFORM DEMANDS IN 1988

Abstract. The Purpose of the Study. *It is common knowledge that one of the important components of the source basis of scientific research is the analysis of periodicals of the historical period to which they belonged to. Especially when there is an opportunity to study the local press, which was the closest to the socio-economic, political and other demands of the societies of that time. During the period of the Russian-Soviet occupation of Ukraine, and especially during its final stage known as “Perestroika”, such were district-level and multi-circulation newspapers published in all administrative districts, large enterprises and prominent institutions of the Ukrainian SSR. Since these publications were at the centre of labour collectives of the Western Ukrainian regions, which were the mass bearer of the*

national democratic movement at the end of the 80s of the 20th century, the author sets himself the objective of illustrating a rapid development of economic failures of "Perestroika" into demands for a political reform, presented against the background interpretation of local press publications. **The research methodology** is based on the principles of a historical objectivity and impartiality in the interpretation of historical facts. In the course of the study, methods of a critical structural analysis and classification, systematization and verification of the periodical material of the local press of seven regions of western Ukraine have been used. **The scientific novelty** of the historical research consists in the fact that, on the basis of a large number of periodical materials of the local press of Western Ukrainian regions, the events little known to the general public have been reconstructed, connected with the development of unsuccessful socio-economic reforms of "Perestroika" into calls for a political reform in the USSR and CPSU. As a result, in 1988, at the 19th All-Union Party Conference, the ruling Communist leadership from Moscow was forced to announce the transfer of power to the hands of Soviet institutions and a number of internal party changes, which, combined with the industrial unrest, caused the collapse of the state. **The Conclusions.** Therefore, the analysis of the articles published in the columns of the Western Ukrainian regional and multi-circulation press shows that the first sprouts of disbelief of the residents of the region in the socio-economic innovations of the "Perestroika" appeared at the stage of its apogee in 1988. Incompatible with the planned economy, implementation of segmental market innovations in the form of self-financing and state self-support gave positive results only in the first half of the specified year. The positive results manifested themselves in the form of a short-term increase in wages, which quickly became inconsistent with last year's planned financial estimates. Then the budgets were exhausted, which led to the reduction in salaries, the curtailment of social programmes, and an increase in the deficit of food and industrial consumer goods. On this basis, the attitude of the Western Ukrainian public towards the initiator of reforms of the CPSU-CPU, in the format of its district committee and party committee units, deteriorated significantly. Gradually there came the understanding that the communist power was not capable of effective implementation of economic innovations, and therefore the political ones should be introduced to limit its influence on the production process. However, after the introduction of a political reform at the 19th All-Union Party Conference towards the transfer of power into the hands of the Soviet institutions, the negative attitude towards the party nomenclature continued to grow. The nature of the publications in the second half of the year indicated that the mistrust in the economic innovations of the party apparatus, caused by the unfolding of the crisis, was also reflected in its political attempts to maintain dominance in the state created for itself.

Key words: Western Ukraine, district press, multi-circulation, "Perestroika", socio-economic innovations, political reforms, national democratic movement.

РАЙОННА ТА БАГАТОТИРАЖНА ПРЕСА ЗАХІДНИХ ОБЛАСТЕЙ УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ РСР ЯК ІЛЮСТРАТОР ПЕРЕРОСТАННЯ ЕКОНОМІЧНИХ НЕВДАЧ "ПЕРЕБУДОВИ" У ВИМОГИ ПОЛІТИЧНИХ РЕФОРМ У 1988 р.

Анотація. Мета дослідження. Як відомо, одним із важливих складових джерельного підґрунтя наукового пошуку є аналіз періодичних видань того історичного періоду, якому вони були притаманні. Особливо, коли є можливість вивчати локальну пресу, що стояла найближче до соціально-економічних, політичних та інших запитів тогочасних соціумів. У період російсько-радянської окупації України, а надто у часи її заключного етапу званого як "перебудова", такими були газети районного рівня і багатотиражки, що виходили в усіх адміністративних районах та великих підприємствах і помітних закладах УРСР. Оскільки вказані видання перебували у центрі трудових колективів західноукраїнських областей, що наприкінці 80-х рр. ХХ ст. були масовим носієм національно-демократичного руху, автор ставить перед собою завдання ілюстрації стрімкого переростання економічних незарадів "перебудови" у вимоги політичної реформи, поданої на тлі осмислення публікацій місцевої преси. **Методологія дослідження** ґрунтується на принципах дотримання історичної об'єктивності й неупередженості у трактуванні історичних фактів. У ході дослідження використано методи критичного і структурного аналізу та класифікації, систематизації й верифікації періодичного матеріалу локальної преси семи областей західної України. **Наукова новизна** історичної розвідки полягає у тому, що на

основі численної кількості періодичних матеріалів місцевої преси західноукраїнських областей реконструйовано маловідомі широкому загалу події, пов'язані із переростанням невдалих соціально-економічних реформувань “перебудови” у заклики до політичної реформи у СРСР й КППС. Як наслідок, у 1988 р. на XIX всесоюзній партійній конференції правляча з Москви комуністична верхівка країни змушена була проголосити передачу влади у руки радянських інституцій та зініціювати низку внутрішньопартійних змін, що, зрештою, у синтезі із виробничими незарадами спричинили розпад держави.

Висновки. Коли у 1985 – 1986 рр. новий керівник СРСР – генеральний секретар ЦК КППС Михайло Горбачов започаткував курс на умонтування фрагментів ринку у планове економічне тло, а у політичну надбудову – елементів демократичного суспільства, то у 1988 р. стало зрозуміло, що без комплексної політичної реформи не обійтися. Але на заваді постала природна несумісність авторитарних й демократичних принципів господарювання, що априорі вимагала цілковитої зміни перших на другі. Тому уведення госпрозрахунку та самофінансування лише у першій половині вказаного року дало тимчасово позитивний результат у вигляді швидкого збільшення заробітних виплат. Унаслідок розбалансування укладених минулоріч фінансових кошторисів підприємств і відомств із незапланованими витратами, у другій половині року розпочався процес стрімкого падіння і без того невисокого матеріального рівня жителів Галичини, Волині, Закарпаття й Буковини. Його доповнювали наростаюче ослаблення уваги до соціальних програм, дорожнеча й дефіцит тих товарів, що донедавна були у вільному доступі. Як результат, у трудових колективах західної України визріває переконання, що головним винуватцем кризи є КППС-КПУ та її локальні структури, нездатні до ефективного керівництва державою. Тому серед громадськості формується запит на політичні реформи, які віддалили б обласні, міські, районні та місцеві партійні комітети від розв'язання виробничих проблем на максимальну відстань.

Ключові слова: західна Україна, районна преса, багатотиражки, “перебудова”, соціально-економічні новачії, політичні реформи, національно-демократичний рух.

The Problem Statement. In the structure of the Soviet mass media of the second half of the 20th century, along with radio and television, its periodicals controlled by the pro-Russian communist government occupied a prominent place. Newspapers and magazines of that time were divided vertically into union, republican, regional, city, district and multi-circulation newspapers. In a horizontal dimension, they consisted of party, Soviet, trade union, international press and publishing houses working in the fields of culture, science, technology, education, sports, etc. Moreover, the two first segments were often united, which, in the opinion of the party apparatus, should testify to the unbreakable unity of the party and Soviet bodies in the country, where the real power was in the hands of the Moscow nomenclature of the central committee level.

The historical value of the district and multi-circulation press consists in the fact that, being the most local and operating among local residents and in the “thick” of labour collectives, it was the least censored by regional and city party committees. Before the beginning of the “Perestroika”, its cheap and generally uninteresting editions were compulsorily subscribed to by residents of the regions, according to the place of work.

In 1988, the western Ukrainian district press was represented by joint publications of the district committees of the CPSU-CPU and Soviet authorities. We mean district councils of people’s deputies with its executive subdivision – district executive committees. The number of such a press was equal to the number of administrative districts in one or another region. Lviv region consisted of 20 districts, Ternopil region – 16, Rivne region and Volyn region – 15 each, Ivano-Frankivsk region – 14, Zakarpattia region – 13, Chernivtsi region – 10 districts. There were 103 districts in total, and therefore the same number of district newspapers (State Committee of the Ukrainian SSR on Statistics, 1989, p. 13).

However, the mass-circulation press was the most numerous, since the majority of industrial enterprises and large agricultural collective farms, higher educational institutions and other important institutions of the republic published articles, which periodically appeared in large circulations and had their own editorial offices. Being inspected party committees even during the years of “Perestroika”, they were still the closest to a daily life of residents of the western regions of Ukraine, and therefore promptly reflected their social, economic, political, ideological, and later national and religious demands.

In 1988, the largest number of factories and plants was concentrated in Lviv region – 381 enterprises (Economic indicators, 1990, p. 24). 212 enterprises operated in Ivano-Frankivsk region (SCUkonS, 1989, p. 5.), in Zakarpattia region – 205 enterprises (State Committee of the Ukrainian SSR on Statistics, 1989, p. 6), in Ternopil region – 195 enterprises (Ternopil Regional Department of Statistics, 1989, p. 156), in Rivne region – 173 enterprises (National Economy, 1993, p. 142), in Volyn region – 167 enterprises (Results of the implementation, 1989a, p. 36), in Chernivtsi region – 151 enterprises (Results of the implementation, 1989b, p. 21). Thus, the production complex of western Ukraine united 1,484 factories and plants that were on an independent balance sheet (Main indicators, 1989, p. 74). Therefore, the number of multi-circulation press, taking into account departmental newspapers owned by scientific, educational, cultural and other institutions, did not exceed approximately two thousand editions.

When, at the end of 1988, the socio-economic initiatives of the new head of the USSR, Mykhailo Gorbachov, reached a dead end and caused a rapid deterioration in the material situation of the country’s citizens, labour collectives of Western Ukrainian enterprises and institutions naturally began to demand political reforms in the direction of narrowing the power amplitude of party committees, and therefore – CPSU-CPU in general. In the second half of the year, this process, supported by the councils of labour collectives (RTK), gained such momentum that the district and multi-circulation press could not ignore it.

The Review of Recent Researches and Publications. The evolution of “Perestroika” into a national democratic movement in the western regions of the Ukrainian SSR at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s was the object of scientific studies by domestic researchers. In this direction the following researchers continue working: Volodymyr Baran (Baran, 2003), Ihor Pidkova (Pidkova, 2001), Oleh Muravskiy (Muravskiy, 2011), Stepan Kobuta (Kobuta, Kuhutiak, Havryliv, 2002), Mykola Aliksiievets (Aliksiievets, Bilchuk, Boiko, 1993) and the author of this article (Chura, 2021). In the all-Ukrainian format, the processes of the collapse of the USSR are studied by Stanislav Kulchytskyi (Kulchytskyi, Aleksieiev, Sliusarenko, 2000), Heorhiy Kasianov (Kasianov, 1995), Anatoliy Rusnachenko (Rusnachenko, 1998). Among the scientific researches of recent years, there should be mentioned the works by Yuriy Kahanov (Kahanov, 2019) Iryna Ovchar (Ovchar, 2011), Aisel Omarova (Omarova, 2017), Serhiy Plokhii (Plokhii, 2019), Volodymyr Tarasov (Tarasov, 2016), Oleksandr Tertychnyi (Tertychnyi, 2014), Oleksandr Boiko (Boiko, 2021), Yuriy Shapoval and Oleksandra Yakubets (Shapoval & Yakubets, 2021) and Oleksandra Zinchenko (Zinchenko, 2024).

The vectors issues of the development of the Soviet press was raised by such scholars as Kateryna Yermieieva (Yermieieva, 2018), Aliona Yakubets (Yakubets, 2018), Ruslana Popp (Popp, 2018) and the others. However, the materials of the periodicals of the second half of the 80s of the 20th century in district and multi-circulation segment, they still remain outside the focus of domestic scientific opinion, which caused the author’s interest. Therefore,

the objective of the article is an attempt at a factual reconstruction of the evolution process of the socio-economic requests for “Perestroika” into political appeals at the stage of introduction of a political reform in the USSR – before and after the 19th All-Union Party Conference.

The source base of scientific research is regional and multi-circulation publications of enterprises of Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ternopil, Volyn, Rivne, Zakarpattia and Chernivtsi regions of Ukraine. The author analysed 33 newspapers representing the industrial and agrarian spheres of activity of the Soviet industrial press.

The Research Results. Even before the start of the conference – in January of 1988, workers and rank-and-file communists of Sambir glass factory of Lviv region in the local newspaper of the district committee “Chervonyi Prapor” expressed their fears not so much about the introduction of state financing and self-financing, unknown to them, which in their opinion could lead to a decrease in wages, but regarding the tools for the introduction of market innovations. In their statements, there was noticeable some hesitation regarding the expediency of an excessive control of party committees over the implementation of industrial innovations (Tymochko, 1988, p. 1). L. Tsiupka, the secretary of the party committee of the Nesteriv road-exploitation district No. 872, on the pages of the district communist party publication “Nove Zhyttia” reproached the regional party apparatus for the fact that the secretaries of the regional committee were not interested in the activities of the primary party organizations, and held few meetings with communists of small party groups. “Then let them not be surprised that members of party groups do not go to party meetings and do not carry out party assignments”, he summarized (Tsiupka, 1988, p. 1).

When the deputy general director of the “Kinescope” VO, a member of the central committee of the communist party of Ukraine, V. Apryntseva, expressed the opinion in the columns of the “Lampochka Ilyicha” newspaper that as a result of the introduction of new business conditions, more than a thousand people were expected to be laid off, the labour team became concerned that ordinary workers and communists would be the first to lose their jobs (Krykun, 1988, p. 2). Therefore, during the discussion of theses for the 19th party conference, an electrician V. Kabyshev openly asked the secretary of the party committee: why, during the transition to new economic conditions, only workers are reduced (Stybelska, 1988, p. 1).

The newspaper of the Lviv Vocational Education and Training Centre “Progress” “Vzuttiovyk” published an article called “Answers for Everything” in its columns. Its author, N. Roshchuk, logically placed the responsibility for difficult working conditions on the regional party leadership, which had been talking beautifully about “restructuring” for three years, but did not really want to be restructured (Roshchuk, 1988, p. 1). In the words of a brigadier M. Sobol, a delegate of the 19th party conference, the mass circulation of the Lviv Bus Plant warned the regional communist leadership: the factory party committee solves problems that come from the grassroots poorly, or does not solve them at all, which can have unforeseen consequences (Soroka, 1988, pp. 1–2).

Rank-and-file communists of Bolshivtsivsky bakery of Ivano-Frankivsk region M. Pankiv, V. Kolodiy, I. Yaskiv, L. Byshentsev expressed their surprise that for a long time they could not meet with the employees of the district committee to tell them about the progress of reforms at the enterprise. And this was when the members of the district committee incessantly announced frequent visits to grassroots party organizations. This information was written in the newspaper “Prapor Peremohy” – a periodical of the Galician district committee of the party. Subsequently, in the heading “Perestroika: Word and Deed”

there were published a number of publications about the progress of the district enterprises under self-financing conditions. The leitmotif of these articles was the common opinion of the labour groups that there were no positive consequences from the visits of various oblast commissions and there would not be any (Hural, 1988, p. 2).

In the columns of the district committee newspaper of the Nadvirna district “Radianska Verkhovyna”, the head of the animal husbandry department of the local agro-industrial association, I. Oliinyk, tried to explain to readers why interruptions in the supply of dairy products began in the district retail network. According to him, the quarterly milk production plan was fulfilled by 116%. And the question why these products did not reach the stores should not be addressed to him (Oliinyk, 1988, p. 1). It got to the point that a critical situation developed in Nadvirna forest plant, which caused the interference of the regional party leadership. At the meeting of the labour team, the employees of the farm spoke out against the administrative and party management of the enterprise, citing the fact that they continued to work as during the period of “stagnation” (Zabachynskyi, 1988, p. 1).

In August of 1988, the district committee newspaper of Rohatyn district “Zoria” published the first results of the introduction of new management methods in the words of the chief economist of the agro-industrial association V. Ilkiv, presented in the article “Examining the Farm Calculation”. It turned out that for half a year, costs for the production of plant and animal products increased significantly (Ilkiv, 1988, p. 1). The semi-annual consequences of the introduction of the communist party innovations were documented in the article “And there Could Be no Queues”. The indignation of the author O. Klymtsevych was caused not so much by the usual shortage of food products in the retail network, but by the increase in the number of peasants who went to Ivano-Frankivsk to buy meat and dairy products, making long queues (Klymtsevych, 1988, p. 3).

Interesting were the publications in the newspaper “Zoria Prykarpattia” by the spokesperson of Kalush City Committee of the CPSU-CPU. Its columns were filled with the column “How we are Served”, which was full of articles like “Such Indifference” (Levytska, 1988, p. 2), “Who Ate Candies?” (Havryliuk, 1988, p. 3), “Criticism in Packaging” (Trach, 1988, p. 3). In the articles there was written about a noticeable decrease in everyday goods on the shelves of grocery and industrial stores. Attention was drawn to the fact that the growing complaints of the public were caused by the lack of products that had not been in short supply recently.

The results of the implementation of a new economic model of management were summarized by the newspaper of the communists of Horodenkivsky district “Kolhospnyk Prydnistrovia”. Having published the results of a social development for the first half of 1988, the publication noted that 347.5 thousand krb. were not added to the plan of the total volume of merchandise turnover. The demand for various types of shoes and clothes, especially children’s, was not satisfied. Alcohol, tobacco, cereals, meat, dairy and confectionery products were not available for sale, the assortment of fruits and vegetables was poor, the need for detergents, personal hygiene products, televisions, refrigerators, washing machines and other household appliances, furniture and radio equipment, etc. (Kolhospnyk Prydnistrov’ia, 1988, p. 1).

When on January 1, 1988, the “Khlorvinyl” production association (PO) was transferred to a full economic accounting, on January 8, in the article of the plant newspaper “Kalushsky Khimik” there were expressed doubts about correctness of the methods of its introduction, according to the deputy head of the workshop S. Khomitskyi. Therefore, the head of the workshop advised the secretary of the party committee to interfere in production affairs less

and to deal more with ideological issues (Khomitskyi, 1988, p. 2). These suspicions were confirmed at the conference of the labour team of the plant on August 3, 1988. Reporting on the “achievements” for six months, the general director of the plant, O. Romanenko, stated that under the new economic conditions, there were not produced goods worth 1.3 million krb. As a result, awarding slowed down and many social programmes, including housing construction, were cancelled. This caused undisguised dissatisfaction among the plant workers. Working under harmful production conditions, they claimed various benefits, which were postponed indefinitely (Kaluskyi khimik, 1988, p. 1).

Against a visual background of dull regional and mass-circulation periodicals, the newspaper “Ahro” stood out favourably, belonging to the modern Kolomyia agricultural enterprise “Prut”. Made in an atypical bright colours and illustrated with advertising, the publication set itself the goal of being the local “pulse” of democratization and promptly covering the achievements of “Perestroika” (Ahro, 1988, pp. 4–5). This opportunity was provided by V. Tkachuk, the chairman of the board of the agricultural enterprise, a hero of the Soviet Union, awarded by two Lenin orders, who was personally acquainted with M. Gorbachov.

Therefore, critical articles about the consequences of the “updating” of the country and the party often found a place in its columns. Among them is an interview with the director of Kolomyia inter-business enterprise, V. Hridzak, published in the “Problems of Self-financing” column. According to him, as a result of ill-conceived reforms, costs for housing construction, expansion of rural infrastructure, purchase of seeds, fodder, and repair of equipment increased by 1.3 million krb. (Artsikhovskiyi, 1988, p. 2). Therefore, the publication of P. Sehal, a resident of Kolomyia, a member of the CPSU since 1940, a veteran of war and labour, and a personal pensioner of local significance, published at the address of the 19th Party Conference, was natural. Being a convinced communist, he said that it was time to distinguish between the functions of the party and state bodies, to abolish the industrial departments of the regional committee, city committees and district committees of the party, and to transfer the solution of all social problems to the competence of the executive committees of the councils of people’s deputies (Sehal, 1988, p. 3).

The newspaper of Communist Party members of Berezhansky district “Nove Zhyttia” published a polemic with H. Chaskovskiyi, the head of the executive committee of Lapshyn village council. Despite the declared political reform towards the transfer of power into the hands of the Soviet institutions, he emphasized the lack of a real expansion of the powers of local councils of people’s deputies. According to him, the government continued to be at the mercy of the party nomenclature (Chaskovskiyi, 1988, pp. 1–2). H. Syvak, a seamstress of Berezhany tailoring atelier “Prykarpattia”, tried to understand the reason for this situation. In the article “More Demanding” she noted that the bureaucratic actions of the party nomenclature, who should only deal with ideological issues, interfere in “Perestroika” (Syvak, 1988, p. 1).

The “Kolos” newspaper of Zalishchyky district committee of Ternopil region spared no epithets to praise the positive consequences of the state and Communist Party “updating” (Hubenko, 1988, p. 1). However, in the second half of 1988, its columns were full of sharply critical articles, central among them was the sprawling publication “Criticism is not a Quarrel, but Ideas in Favour of Perestroika”. A report on the work of the 16th district report-election party conference was published there. Among the 14 speakers there were M. Nykoruk – a head of the department of the “Zoloty Kolos” collective farm, M. Didych – a foreman of the Household Goods Factory, M. Koroliuk – a head of the leasing team of the

“Iskra” collective farm, M. Shmeliova – a secretary of the party organization of the public education department, I. Horuk – a foreman of the agricultural construction organization, S. Bolibrukh – a secretary of the party committee of the Tovsten hospital, T. Khmurych – a secretary of the party committee of educational and cultural institutions, V. Palchynskyi – a transport company welder.

Unanimously, they reproached the party leadership for slowness, one-sidedness, and sometimes unwillingness to implement democratic reforms and market management methods. The words of V. Haiyaniuk, the head of the rental cooperative that worked at the production base of the “Ukraina” collective farm, were indicative. He stated that he fulfilled the plan for the sale of meat and milk by 136%, providing the population with services in the amount of 30,000 krb. But the owners of the earned funds were the head of the collective farm and the chief accountant, who disposed of them as if they were their own, causing anger among the employees of the rental enterprise (Kolos, 1988, p. 1).

The column “Economic Comprehensive Education” was started by the newspaper of the Ternopil Combine Plant – “Kombainobudivnyk”. In the first half of 1988, from issue to issue, this factory publication explained to employees all the intricacies of introducing self-financing and painted vivid pictures of a bright future. Various administrative and party leaders published their articles there, always campaigning to work diligently under new conditions, and the results, they say, will not be long in coming (Kombainobudivnyk, 1988, p. 1). However, in the second half of the year, at a “round table” meeting of the labour team with the management, it turned out that the plant was in a financial trouble. The plant engineer M. Baisarovych, a grinder M. Kozitskyi, a locksmith Yu. Vasylykiv, a foreman Yu. Yehorov and a welder S. Bilyk claimed in the article “The Owner Means Frugal” that this happened under the conditions of compliance with all the instructions of the visionary party leadership and competent administration, which had been refined to the point that the factory did not even smell of self-support and self-financing” (Kombainobudivnyk, 1988, p. 1).

At the beginning of 1988, in the communist “district” newspaper of Horokhiv district of Volyn region, “Budivnyk Komunizmu”, there was published the extensive publication “Open Dialogue”. Local leaders, led by the second secretary of the district committee, L. Melnychuk, answered citizens’ questions on the telephone hotline. Among the ten questions, nine concerned the improvement of towns and villages of the district, and only one concerned the holding of seminars by the party committee secretaries. First of all, residents were interested in why in the third year of the “Perestroika” the shortage of consumer goods progressed, housing construction decreased, rural medicine declined, building materials became more expensive, etc. They asked the head of the district committee whether he should reduce the party’s interference in industrial affairs and switch to ideological problems (Budivnyk komunizmu, 1988, p. 1).

Six people took part in the discussion of a new statute of collective farms of the USSR, published on the pages of the newspaper of Liubeshiv district “Nove Zhyttia”. These are the heads of collective farms “Komunist” – H. Miroshnychenko, “Svitanok” – M. Hrynevych, “17 Veresnia” – O. Shukalovych, “Zoria Komunizmu” – A. Kurinchuk and secretaries of the party committees of collective farms “Chervony Partyzan” – M. Sheremet and “Bohdan Khmelnytskyi” collective farm – A. Parfesiuk. Four of them noted a sharp decrease in the financial focus of the regional leadership in solving social problems of the village. This provoked a noticeable condemnation of peasants, in the direction of the regional committee authorities, positioned as the chief one main (Nove zhyttia, 1988, p. 1).

At the meeting of the council of labour collective of VO “Volynprombud” the administration and the party committee were criticized for the lack of proper working conditions and positive results in the introduction of new forms of management, which reduced the wages of workers and employees of the enterprise. N. Hruzynska, a foreman of whitewashers of “Opariadbud”, V. Stasiuk, head of RTK M. Shokun, a foreman of plasterers of “Kovelprombud” spoke about this state of affairs in front of the management. On this occasion, the newspaper “Budivelnik Volyna” in the article “Overcoming Stagnant Waters” expressed an assumption: if things continue like this, the management of the enterprise may be left without executors of its instructions (Yukhymenko, 1988, p. 3).

V. Tchaikovsky, a correspondent of the newspaper “Holos Robochoho” of Lutsk VO “Osnastka”, prepared materials from the industrial meeting that took place on May 10, 1988. The speeches of the head of the department V. Khlamov, a deputy head of the workshop D. Dolych, the foremen H. Pashchuk, M. Melnyk, M. Savyk and V. Kurstak indicated the management’s misunderstanding of the methods of implementing innovations, which caused deterioration of the material situation of the labour team. The words of V. Kurstak were particularly telling. He said: “The labour team fulfills everything that is required, but does not receive benefits from state support. Therefore, there is no need to count on the support of workers” (Chaskovskyi, 1988, p. 2).

In January of 1988, the newspaper of Rivne District Committee “Slovo Pravdy” launched the “Open Letter Day” column. 23 district heads, including those of the district committee, had to give answers to more than 80 complaints received from residents of Shubkiv village. The lion’s share of complaints concerned the well-being of rural residents, starting with a low level of provision of consumer goods and ending with the issues of a slow housing and school construction and unsatisfactory medical care and the condition of roads. The majority of the authors of complaints turned to the party nomenclature, asking them where the party apparatus hides meat and dairy products. After all, the peasants sell it to the state at reduced prices, and it is not available on the shelves of city stores (Moroz, 1988, p. 1). The situation worsened even further when, in December of the above mentioned year, the chief zootechnician of the local agro-industrial association, O. Chupryna, made public data that out of 22 collective farms in the district, only 5 coped with the task of producing milk and meat (Chupryna, 1988, p. 2).

The article by S. Olishevsky, a vulcanizer of Ostroh Tire Repair Plant, “Following the Word of Business” opened the column of the same name in the district committee newspaper “Zoria Komunizmu”. As a member of the district committee, the author expressed the hope that tangible changes at the enterprise would begin with the implementation of the “Law on State Enterprises”, which would expand the rights of labour councils and narrow the influence of the party apparatus on production (Olishevskyi, 1988, p. 2). The correspondent of the newspaper “Zoria Komunizmu”, A. Suprun, in the publication “If Demandingness is Weakened”, placed the responsibility for the non-rhythmic work of Ostroh Maslosyrzavod on the secretary of the party committee, L. Melnychuk, who only distracted the rank-and-file communists with excessive demands for the fulfillment of party assignments (Suprun, 1988, p. 1).

At the end of 1988, the newspaper “Vysokovoltnyk”, which belonged to Rivne plant of high-voltage equipment, testified in the words of the head of the technical bureau Yo. Tumakha: the introduction of state financing and self-financing was the cause of constant disruptions in the technological process, which caused the reduction of salaries (Tumakha, 1988, pp. 1-2). Therefore, in the second half of the year, the newspaper columns were flooded with articles such

as “Why Are We Losing Profits?”. The head of the plant’s financial bureau, N. Hudz, found out that the transition to market conditions forced banks to monitor the fulfillment of credit obligations more carefully. The result: the excess of the loaned amount by 3.2 million krb. Under other circumstances, this debt would have been repaid by the state, but under market conditions it became the cause of a decrease in wages (Hudz, 1988, pp. 1–2).

One of the flagships of the industrial complex of Rivne region was Rivne nuclear power plant (RAES). In its newspaper “Enerhetyk” it was written about the party meetings, at which there was discussed the summing up of the first results of the plant’s work under the conditions of state support. From the critical speeches of the chief construction engineer V. Ohorodnyk, a chief mechanization engineer V. Liutykov, a foreman H. Okhrimchuk, lankova N. Klymchuk, it became clear that the reforms gave a positive result only a few months after the beginning of 1988. Then there was a short-term increase in wages, which devastated the financial funds not only of individual enterprises, but also of entire industries. Then there was the previous year design and estimate documentation, which quickly returned salaries to a usual low level (Enerhetyk, 1988, p. 1). That’s why, preferential payments and other preferences of RAES workers seemed unlikely. Therefore, the authors of the newspaper called for abandoning of a numerous management apparatus, optimizing unnecessary structural divisions – including the party ones (Energetik, 1988, p. 1).

As usual, reporting on the previous year overachievement of planned objectives by 108%, the editor of the “Shakhtar” newspaper of the “Ilnytsk” mine in Irshava district, Zakarpattia region, F. Markovtsii, sublimely described the expectations associated with the implementation of the “Law on Enterprise” (Shakhtar, 1988, p. 1). But in the same month, the communist party newspaper of Svaliavsky District Committee “Leninsky Shliakh” published the January meeting of the party committee of the local lumberyard, which was held in the presence of H. Kamenish, the first secretary of the district committee. To the question of rank-and-file communists A. Fales, H. Taliyan, P. Rebrantov, Yu. Fizer, Yu. Sabov, heads of workshops T. Honda and M. Yakym: why is the success of the “Perestroika” not visible? – the director of the plant V. Subotovskiyi answered that low indicators were explained by the introduction of market management methods. His opinion was supported by the first secretary of the district committee, who motivated this situation by the transition period from administrative to economic management methods (Olashyn, 1988, p. 1).

But such explanations were of a little help. In March of the same year, the employees of the woodworking plant came to the director and demanded to find out the reasons for the decrease in wages by 30 thousand krb., because there was the same quantity and quality of products as last month. Neither the administration nor the party committee gave a clear answer. Then the workers sent a collective complaint to the Union Minister for Forestry Industry with a demand to appoint a local nominee of the labour collective council as the director of the enterprise (Andriichuk, 1988, p. 1).

At the end of 1988, many such articles appeared on the pages of Transcarpathian “districts” and mass-circulation press. Especially in the columns of the communist newspaper of Berehivsky district “Chervony Prapor”. This was indicated by their names: “What Justified Itself And What Did Not?” (Dierke, 1988, p. 2), “Problems Remain” (Palish, 1988, 1), “Why are Milk and Meat Expensive?” (Dierke, 1988, p. 3) and many others. These publications more than visibly demonstrated how the fall of the already low material level gave rise to the levelling of communist power at local places and convinced the residents of the region of the party apparatus inability to ensure a proper level of their well-being.

It got to the point that in March of 1988, the “district” newspaper of Putylsky district committee of Chernivtsi region “Radianski Karpaty” published the article “Problems Still Exist” authored by V. Volskyi, the head of the department of propaganda and agitation of the district committee. According to him, the transition to self-financing and household accounting turned out to be more difficult than expected. Scholars did not have a clear idea of the essence of innovations, and the system of economic comprehensive education could not clearly explain it to them (Volskyi, 1988, p. 1). This state of affairs was evidenced by the interview of the newspaper correspondent S. Sopetyk with Yu. Skrypchuk, the foreman of the builders of the collective farm “Prohres”. “So the Reconstruction is Dormant”, he said, “so we will have to solve our problems on our own once again” (Sopetyk, 1988, p. 3).

The newspaper “Budivelnik”, a periodical of the Party Committee of Chernivtsi District of Ukraine, published the article “Under New Conditions”, dedicated to the two-year anniversary of the formation of the labour collective council. “To Be Honest”, said the machinist V. Vizniuk, “self-financing did not play a decisive role in the struggle for the implementation of the plan”. And the hosprozrakhunok did not cause any particular positive changes” (Vizniuk, 1988, p. 1). The above mentioned opinion was published on the pages of the newspaper of F. Dzerzhynsky Machine-Building Plant by the director of the enterprise V. Fotokakis. At the beginning of 1988, from the tribune of the 19th party conference, he said that “Perestroika” needed guarantees of the irreversibility of its processes. It is extremely necessary to reduce the management apparatus and the party apparatus as well. And the main thing is giving more opportunities for independence (Roztotska, 1988, p. 1). At the end of the year, the article with the eloquent title “Although Glasnost is not always Pleasant” was published in the pages of the newspaper of the communists of Storozhynetsky district “The Soviet Village”. The head of the collective farm named after Dzerzhynskyi M. Flekivchuk, the farm manager H. Kovtsun and the locksmith V. Savchuk stated that glasnost existed only on television, but glasnost in the payment of labour, housing construction and filling of stores with goods was absent as such (Levina, 1988, p. 1).

The Conclusions. Therefore, the analysis of the articles published in the columns of the Western Ukrainian regional and multi-circulation press shows that the first sprouts of disbelief of the residents of the region in the socio-economic innovations of the “Perestroika” appeared at the stage of its apogee in 1988. Incompatible with the planned economy, implementation of segmental market innovations in the form of self-financing and state self-support gave positive results only in the first half of the specified year. The positive results manifested themselves in the form of a short-term increase in wages, which quickly became inconsistent with last year’s planned financial estimates. Then the budgets were exhausted, which led to the reduction in salaries, the curtailment of social programmes, and an increase in the deficit of food and industrial consumer goods.

On this basis, the attitude of the Western Ukrainian public towards the initiator of reforms of the CPSU-CPU, in the format of its district committee and party committee units, deteriorated significantly. Gradually there came the understanding that the communist power was not capable of effective implementation of economic innovations, and therefore the political ones should be introduced to limit its influence on the production process. However, after the introduction of a political reform at the 19th All-Union Party Conference towards the transfer of power into the hands of the Soviet institutions, the negative attitude towards the party nomenclature continued to grow. The nature of the publications in the second half of the year indicated that the mistrust in the economic innovations of the party apparatus,

caused by the unfolding of the crisis, was also reflected in its political attempts to maintain dominance in the state created for itself.

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