

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

VLADIMIR P. TIMOSHENKO (1885 – 1965)

Vladimir Timoshenko, Emeritus Professor of Commodity Economics in the Food Research Institute, died in Menlo Park, California on August 15, 1965, at the age of 80. He first came to Stanford on temporary appointments in the Food Research Institute in 1928-31, and was on its permanent senior staff from 1936. He continued active for almost a decade and a half after he became emeritus in 1950. A thorough and productive scholar, he stood "in the first rank among students of Russian and Soviet agriculture," and was a valuable contributor on agriculture and business cycles.

Professor Timoshenko spoke and wrote English, Russian, Ukrainian, and French, and was an able reader of German, Czech, and Polish. This exceptional competence was coupled with wide experience born of residence in Imperial and Soviet Russia, France, Germany, and Czechoslovakia, and travel elsewhere in Europe. It was matched in breadth by his extensive reading and knowledge about European history, Ukrainian and Russian politics, economic theory (with emphasis on economic cycles and trade), climatology, agricultural resources and practices in Eastern Europe, and Soviet economic plans and performance. All this made him a highly prized colleague, frequently consulted and invariably generous and helpful.

Timoshenko's early education was in the Ukraine, where he was born in Chernigov Province on April 25, 1885. His higher education was in St. Petersburg, where he spent the years from 1902 to 1912. He first studied mathematics, mechanics, and civil engineering, later economics, statistics, and political science. The St. Petersburg Polytechnic Institute awarded him his degree in Economic Science in 1911.

After compulsory military service in the Russian Army in 1912-13 he served first as assistant economist in the Ministry of Transport in 1913-14, and later as economist in the Ministry of Agriculture, 1914, engaged on a reclamation project in Turkestan. After Russia entered the war, he was called to duty as Second Lieutenant in the Army, and put in charge of a camp for Austrian prisoners in Asiatic Russia. In 1916-17, the last year of Russia's participation in the war, Timoshenko was appointed assistant commissioner and later commissioner of fuel, serving on the Commission that controlled fuel distribution. After the Russian revolution he returned to his native Ukraine, then the Ukrainian National Republic, where he served as economic adviser to the Minister of Commerce. In 1919 he attended the Peace Conference in Paris as a councilor on trade and economics to the Ukrainian delegation. There he met his future wife, Odette A. L. Leger, a native of Rouen.

During 1922-28 he served the Ukrainian University of Prague in various capacities, holding the rank of professor from 1925, and in the last year the added title of Dean of the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences. While at the Ukrainian University he contributed a number of articles and reviews to leading economic and statistical journals,

and also published two long books, the first on Cartels and Trusts, the other on The World Market for Staple Products (both in Ukrainian).

Timoshenko's first year in the United States, 1926-27, was spent at Cornell University on a fellowship from the International Education Board. There he was awarded a Ph.D. and elected to Sigma Xi. From 1928 to 1934 he was at the University of Michigan, associated particularly with the Bureau of Business Research, where he wrote two issues of Michigan Business Studies: "The Role of Agricultural Fluctuations in the Business Cycle" and "World Agriculture and the Depression." Within this period he also wrote two monographs for the Food Research Institute, relating respectively to the Danube Basin and to Russia as producers and exporters of wheat, which were published in the Institute's periodical Wheat Studies and a notable book, Agricultural Russia and the Wheat Problem, published in 1932. In 1934-36 he was a senior agricultural economist in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture.

The stream of Timoshenko's publications continued to flow throughout his active and emeritus years at Stanford. His authoritative studies on Soviet agricultural policies and their effects, and on the variability of wheat yields and output in major producing regions of the world, remain outstanding.

During World War II Professor Timoshenko served for a time in Washington as consultant to the U. S. Office of Strategic Services. After the war he served a year and a half as a statistical analyst on agricultural production in the U. S. Office of Military Government in Berlin.

Professor Timoshenko was active in professional societies and a valued participant in conferences. His published contributions to international conferences on the Soviet economy were particularly noteworthy, continuing through 1959, when he participated in a conference of economists at the Institute for Study of the U.S.S.R. at Munich. He was a member of the American Economic, Farm Economic, and Statistical Associations, the Royal Economic Society, the Econometric Society, the Scientific Society of Shevchenko, and the Ukrainian Free Academy of Arts and Sciences. During the last ten years of his life Professor Timoshenko remained active in the work of the Ukrainian Free Academy, heading its Western Section and assuming much responsibility for its social-economic department.

Dr. Timoshenko is survived by his wife Odette; his daughter Pauline, the wife of Dr. W. D. Moore of Palo Alto, and five granddaughters; and by his brother, Stephen P. Timoshenko, Emeritus Professor of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics. To them we of the Academic Council express our pride in his notable career and extend our deepest sympathy.

Joseph S. Davis
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