
THE SOVIET UNION

PARTY PARALYSED

Ukraine stamps on Communists

IN A further move to cripple Ukraine's Communist Party, the parliamentary presidium yesterday voted to halt Communist activities in the republic, to impound the party's property, and to freeze its bank account.

The presidium is empowered to rule by decree when parliament is not in session. Its decisions stand until the report of a commission investigating the Communist Party's complicity in last week's failed coup is agreed.

The small Lenin statue at the Writers' Union has already been removed and early yesterday evening crowds gathered at the base of the city's imposing Lenin statue in the newly-christened central Independence Square. They sprayed Lenin with a swastika as policemen looked on.

"We are peacefully liquidating Communist

**From Susan Viets
in Kiev**

structures," said Volodymyr Filenko, a leader of the new coalition of opposition forces, Independent Democratic Ukraine (IDU)

The swift attack on Communists, who held the union's second largest republic in an iron grip as recently as two years ago, has left the party confused and paralysed. Its pre-coup membership of 2,700,000 (out of a total 52m) is reported to be dwindling fast. Three of the 15 Communists in the 25-member presidium have left the party.

The head of the Communist faction in parliament, Oleksander Moroz, wryly noted: "You can't resign from the party, it's illegal."

Ukraine's Interior Ministry and KGB were yesterday sealed for the investigatory commission. More than ten regional Communist Party headquarters have been sealed following the weekend's closure of the Central Committee headquarters in Kiev. Documents revealed yesterday indicate that Ukraine's Communist Party prepared for the introduction of a state of emergency in Ukraine after the coup.

Cautioning against a witch-hunt, the IDU leader and presidium member, Oleksander Yemets, said: "We made a resolution to stop Communist Party activities but we are not after individuals." He also warned against the uncharitable attitude of some opposition members, saying: "We have created an independent Ukraine but the question is now whether we will be able to create a democratic Ukraine."