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Russian Duma negates decision dissolving USSR

by Marta Kolomayets
Kyiv Press Bureau

KYIV — The Russian Duma — the lower house of that country's Parliament — adopted a resolution on March 15 reversing a Soviet legislative decision made in December 1991 that renounced the 1922 treaty forming the Soviet Union.

In effect, this resolution denounces the Belaya Vezha pact of December 1991, and calls for the rebirth of the USSR — an action that sent alarming signals throughout the former Soviet republics, including Ukraine.

Voting overwhelmingly — 250-98 with no abstentions — that the break-up of the Soviet Union was illegal, Communist and nationalist forces in Russia offered a strong sense of what is brewing in the

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UNA executives review finances, discuss mergers

JERSEY CITY, N.J. — The Ukrainian National Association's Executive Committee held its regularly scheduled meeting here at the fraternal organization's Home Office on March 8. Uppermost on the agenda was a review of the UNA's financial status, continuing merger discussions with two other Ukrainian fraternal organizations, the sale of the UNA's headquarters building in Jersey City, and selection of a hotel for the UNA's next convention scheduled to take place in Toronto in May 1998.

The meeting was chaired by the president, Ulana Diachuk. In attendance were: Vice-President Nestor Olesnycky, Secretary Martha Lysko, Treasurer Alexander Blahitka, Director for Canada Peter Savaryn and Vice-Presidentess Anya Dydyk-Petrenko. Also present to report on the meeting in their respective newspapers were Editors-in-Chief Zenon Snylyk of Svoboda and Roma Hadzewycz of The Ukrainian Weekly.

First on the agenda following a review of the minutes of the previous Executive Committee meeting was the treasurer's report.

Report of UNA Treasurer

As of December 31, 1995, the UNA's ledger assets rose to \$75,535,225 — an increase of \$1,412,009 or 2 percent. This compares with an increase of only

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U.S. secretary of state denounces Duma resolution

by Marta Kolomayets
Kyiv Press Bureau

KYIV — In yet another reaffirmation of the growing relationship between the United States and Ukraine, Secretary of State Warren Christopher arrived in Kyiv on March 19 for a six-hour visit to meet with top government officials — including President Leonid Kuchma, Prime Minister Yevhen Marchuk, Foreign Minister Hennadiy Udovenko and Parliament Chairman Oleksander Moroz.

Mr. Christopher denounced the Russian Duma for its March 15 vote on reconstituting the Soviet Union, calling it “highly irresponsible.” He was to travel to Moscow on March 21 following a visit to Prague where he addressed Central and East European foreign ministers.

“It was disturbing to us, as I know it was for Ukraine, for President Kuchma was certainly correct when he said that the tide of history cannot be turned back. Ukraine and other countries of the former Soviet Union are independent, sovereign nations. Any unilateral attempt to change their status will be rejected by the international community,” said the American diplomat.

His comments to reporters, delivered after a 45-minute meeting with President Kuchma at the Mariyinsky Palace, were the sharpest warning to date made by an American official about the mood in the State Duma on the eve of presidential elections in Russia, where popularity polls show Communist Party leader Gennadiy Zyuganov commanding a strong lead.

Secretary Christopher said: “The United States feels that the action of the Duma is a highly irresponsible one. It seems to be designed to have a certain quality of intimidation. It simply seemed prudent to make known our views in advance.” He offered his assessment during a brief joint press conference with Foreign Minister Udovenko.

Secretary Christopher, who has met with President Kuchma three times in the past six weeks — during a brief encounter in Helsinki, an official working visit in Washington and now a meeting in Kyiv — hailed Ukraine as a “very important partner for the United States.”

“The many times we are meeting I think is a good index of the importance of the relationship between our countries,” noted Mr. Christopher in emphasizing and endorsing U.S. support for the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of Ukraine.

He also noted that the U.S. “appreciates Ukraine's determination to develop a pragmatic relationship with Russia, based upon mutual respect for each nation's sovereignty.”

President Kuchma condemned the vote by the Russian Duma, pointing out that, while it was not legally binding, “it cannot be neglected from a social and political point of view.”



Efrem Lukatsky

Secretary of State Warren Christopher with President Leonid Kuchma in Kyiv.

“I think it will spur Eastern European countries wanting to join NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) to become more active,” added the Ukrainian leader.

“In spite of the decision taken by the Russian Duma, Ukraine has determined its

position regarding NATO and is committed to this position,” he noted, explaining that Ukraine wants to remain a neutral state unaffiliated with any military bloc.

Ukraine's position regarding NATO

(Continued on page 8)

State Department says Ukraine makes progress on human rights

by Yaro Bihon

Special to The Ukrainian Weekly

WASHINGTON — Ukraine's human rights record in 1995 got a better than passing grade in the U.S. State Department's annual human rights report released on March 6.

“Over all, Ukraine continued to make significant progress toward building a law-based civil society,” the report states, noting that the “already low” rights violations in 1994 decreased further in 1995.

The report found some problems, however, in the “unreformed legal and prison systems, occasional government attempts to control the press, beatings by police and prison officials, limits on freedom of association, restrictions on foreign religious organizations, societal anti-Semitism, some discrimination against women, and ethnic tensions in the Crimea.”

Ukraine continues to take steps toward replacing its 1978 Soviet Constitution, such as the Constitutional Accord between the president and Parliament accepted last June, the report says. But while progress has

been made toward ensuring an independent judiciary, the report adds, “the Soviet tradition of political interference in judicial decisions continues to affect the judicial process.”

At the behest of Congress, the State Department began reporting on the state of human rights in foreign countries in 1977. Then, it covered the 82 countries receiving U.S. assistance. Since then, the mandate has been broadened to all member-states of the United Nations, and this year's report covers 194 countries.

The detailed, 6,500-word report on Ukraine notes that there were no political prisoners, “no known political killings by government agents,” nor any “politically motivated disappearances” in Ukraine in 1995. (The yet-unexplained disappearance of a Rukh leader, Mykhailo Boychyshyn, happened in January 1994.)

While the Ukrainian Constitution prohibits torture and inhumane treatment of those arrested or imprisoned, the State Department says that police and prison officials “regularly beat”

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FOR THE RECORD

Ukraine's Foreign Affairs Ministry reacts to Russian Duma resolution

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on the occasion of the adoption of the resolution of the State Duma of the Russian Federation "On Deepening the Integration of the Peoples Who Had Been United in the USSR, and the Abolition of the Resolution of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR of December 12, 1991" (This statement was released in Washington by the Embassy of Ukraine.)

On March 15, 1996, the State Duma of the Russian Federation adopted a resolution "On Deepening the Integration of the Peoples Who Had Been United in the USSR, and the Abolition of the Resolution of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR of December 12, 1991." The above-mentioned Resolution of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR of December 12, 1991, had denounced the agreement on the creation of the USSR.

With regard to the above, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine is authorized to state the following.

In Ukraine, the adoption of this resolution by the State Duma of the Russian Federation is assessed as an attempt by certain political circles in Russia to revive the former USSR. Hopes of reviving the former unitary state have no juridical and no international legal basis, and do not correspond to the real political situation that exists, today in both the development of independent

countries that have been established on the territory of the former USSR, and in the development of the CIS at large. Ukraine condemns such actions as a threat to peace and stability not only for these countries, but for the entire world as well.

Over four years have passed since Ukraine has realized its right to self-determination pursuant to universally recognized principles and norms of international law delivered in the Charter of the United Nations and the Helsinki Final Act. The will of the Ukrainian people to create an independent Ukrainian state has achieved the highest form of legitimacy in the results of a nationwide referendum, which took place on December 1, 1991. Almost 92 percent of the population voted for Ukraine's independence.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine is authorized to state that the adoption by the State Duma of the Russian Federation of the above-mentioned resolution does not entail any legal consequences for Ukraine, inasmuch as it is an internal act of the Russian Federation and cannot have extraterritorial jurisdiction. In addition, the implementation of such a resolution in fact would signify the withdrawal of Russia from the Commonwealth of Independent States with all its unpredictable consequences.

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Kyiv-Mohyla Academy students hold Ukraine's first careers fair

by Marta Dyczok

KYIV — Students of the University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy are once again setting new trends in Ukraine. On February 21 they held the first-ever University Career Fair in Ukraine.

Twenty-five leading Western and Ukrainian companies and organizations set up information booths in the main building of the university advertising job opportunities for the coming year. Resumes in hand, students went from booth to booth looking at the options open to them.

Amid the buzz of excitement, Kateryna Smahlyi, one of the students organizing the event, checked that everything was running smoothly. Last spring Ms. Smahlyi had spent a few months as an intern at the University of Alberta Career and Placement Center. Upon returning she decided to organize a Career Fair at her home university.

"When in Canada I realized that students can have a large impact on their university, and I want my university to be world class as well," she said. "I'm really pleased to see how successfully this Career Fair has turned out and that there are students lining up to speak to representatives of each company," Ms. Smahlyi added.

Among the participants were Arthur Andersen, Ernst and Young, Coca Cola, Digital Computers, the European Commission, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and the Ukrainian telecommunications company UTEL.

Serhiy Yevtushenko, another student organizer, said, "I am sure that 100 companies and organizations would have liked to participate, but then the event would have to be held in a sports arena. Since we could only accommodate limited numbers, we

chose the most prominent and prestigious companies to participate this year."

Students taking responsibility for their own future is a very hopeful sign for Ukraine. In the past, university students were placed in jobs by the government upon graduation. The University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy is the first university in Ukraine to completely break with this pattern. Like in Western countries, it offers students an education, charges tuition fees and does not expect its graduates to pay a debt to the state through controlled employment.

To help students find jobs after graduation, the university last year set up the first University Job and Career Center in Ukraine. This center, with assistance from the International Renaissance Foundation, organized the Career Fair. The center has two full-time employees, and the rest of the staff are students of the university, like Ms. Smahlyi, who work part-time.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Ukrainian employers were in the minority at the Career Fair. The organizers admitted that it was difficult to explain the concept to Ukrainian companies and organizations, which are not used to open recruitment and hiring policies.

The students, on the other hand, are learning and using job search skills. Because of their attitude and abilities, UKMA students are much in demand by Western companies working in Ukraine.

Andriy Hraban, a second-year student who attended the Career Fair, commented, "I came here to look at possibilities for getting a job in the future. I talked to six or seven companies and they were interested in my CV, but they are looking for people to start full-time right away. For me studying is more important right now."

NEWSBRIEFS

Civic Congress calls for renewed union

KYIV — "To struggle for a renewal of the union on the territory stretching from the White to the Black seas, from the Baltic to the Pacific Ocean," that is the strategic task announced at the sixth conference of the Civic Congress of Ukraine, as reported on March 17. Over 100 delegates gathered to listen to CCU chairman Oleksander Bazyluk, who announced that in the past year alone, the party's membership had doubled. The CCU is now active in 20 oblasts of Ukraine, but, according to Mr. Bazyluk, the organization "does not strive for quantity, rather we need active and professional people." Mr. Bazyluk said the party supported the Russian State Duma's denunciation of the 1991 Belaya Vezha accords, which created the Commonwealth of Independent States. Among other things, the CCU supports the transformation of Ukraine from a unitary to a federal state, and a nationwide referendum on state symbols and language prior to the adoption of a new constitution. In related news, Mr. Bazyluk was elected head of the Congress of Russian Organizations of Ukraine, a just-created umbrella organization of 35 ethnic Russian groups scattered throughout 19 oblasts. Among the member groups of the KROU are the Movement for the Rebirth of the Donbas, the Luhanshchyna Community of Don Cossacks and the Republican Party of the Crimea, all groups known for their pro-Moscow orientation. (Respublika)

Lukashenka favors Duma vote...

MIENSK — Belarusian officials met at President Alyaksandr Lukashenka's residence on March 18 to discuss work on a confederation agreement between Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan that is expected to be signed at the end of the month or in early April, ITAR-TASS reported. According to Mr. Lukashenka,

who recently visited Moscow and signed a number of political and economic documents with Russian President Boris Yeltsin, union between the countries, and especially Russia and Belarus, is dictated by the times and cannot be rejected. He said all reasonable political forces in Russia and Belarus must work with the presidents to correct past mistakes. Mr. Lukashenka recommended that the Belarusian Parliament look into ways of speeding up the integration process at its next session, and said he would be willing to attend the session if Parliament would support his proposals. On March 15, the former collective farm director commented on the Russian Duma decision denouncing the 1991 Belaya Vezha accords abolishing the USSR. "Regrettably," he told Russian Television, "the former union cannot exist now." Mr. Lukashenka asserted that he would cooperate with everyone favoring a new union and that the shape of this union would depend on the positions of the parliaments and presidents of the participating states. He noted that the union could be even closer than before. (OMRI Daily Digest)

...while protesters denounce his policies

MIENSK — About 3,000 protesters marked Belarus' Constitution Day on March 15 by denouncing President Alyaksandr Lukashenka's drive for reunification with Russia. Many carried the white-red-white national flag introduced soon after the collapse of Soviet rule but since replaced at Mr. Lukashenka's urging. Three days earlier, in a televised debate on Belarusian Television, Syarhei Kalyakin, general secretary of the Party of Communists of Belarus, and Mikalai Statkevich, head of the Social Democratic Hramada, debated the merits of Mr. Lukashenka's policies of tight integration with Russia. Mr. Kalyakin said he did not

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More on spelling it "Kyiv"

PRAGUE — Andriy Ozadovsky, Ukraine's ambassador to the Czech Republic, has appealed to the Open Media Research Institute as well as Czech officials and publications to refer to the Ukrainian capital as "Kyiv" rather than "Kiev," reported OMRI in a note to subscribers on March 17.

In an interview with OMRI, the ambassador explained that a special Ukrainian government commission last

fall ordered its representatives to appeal to governments and periodicals to switch to the Ukrainian transliteration.

Mr. Ozadovsky said the Ukrainian government has formally appealed to the United Nations to use Ukrainian transliterations of place names in official documents and references. The U.N. has agreed to comply with this request, according to OMRI.

As of March 15, OMRI has been using "Kyiv" in its publications.

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Vitaliy Keis on the state of Ukrainianization in the Donbas

NEW YORK — Dr. Vitaliy Keis, professor of English at Rutgers University's Newark campus and native of the Donbas region of Ukraine, recently returned from a semester-long teaching stint in Slavianske, a medium-sized city in the Donetsk Oblast. Prof. Keis taught at the Slavianske State Pedagogical Institute, the leading teacher-training institution in the oblast and the center of Ukrainianization efforts in the heavily Russified Donbas.

This interview was conducted by The Ukrainian Weekly editorial assistant Yarema A. Bachynsky. It also draws on material presented by Prof. Keis in January during his appearance before the Shevchenko Scientific Society in New York.

CONCLUSION

At the Shevchenko Scientific Society talk, you cited a part of President Leonid Kuchma's most recent Independence Day commemoration speech. You mentioned that, according to Mr. Kuchma, it is very important that the government support the development of Ukrainian language and culture, but that it be done on a regional level. You stated that perhaps the president may not really understand how this support is carried out.

That paragraph, where he spoke about how only oblasts should deal with the culture/language questions, even saying that in Soviet days the central government took care of this sphere with well-known results, this strikes me as rather odd. Perhaps now is the time for some affirmative action vis-à-vis the Ukrainian language. Perhaps we should interfere to set things right. Yes, the president's logic is sort of odd, saying essentially that, well, now that Russian is in place in Ukraine, we should not interfere.

But that is not why I cited that paragraph. I did it to show how this "Ukrainianization" operates. There is a "cult of the director" in the Ukrainian educational system. Every subordinate fears and imitates his or her overseer or superior. Because of this, they tend to listen to Kyiv, but if the order is weak or indefinite, its interpretation will be according to the subordinate's personal whims, desires and prejudices. So, if the order comes to have a Ukrainian-language school within a certain distance of another Ukrainian-language school, some school is picked, given official status as a "school with Ukrainian as the language of instruction."

But what does this really mean? Let us look at School No. 4 in Slavianske, officially designated a school with Ukrainian as the language of instruction, and recommended to me as such by the head of the regional (raion) educational department A. Kachulin. There are 32 classes and 913 students; of the 32 only 10 classes are taught in Ukrainian, while 22 are taught in Russian. So a mere 246 out of 913 students ever actually take courses in the Ukrainian language [other than the minimal study of Ukrainian as prescribed by the Ministry of Education for Russian language-of-instruction schools; see chart, in Part I of this interview]. The rest all learn in Russian. And this is officially a school with Ukrainian as the language of instruction.

Moreover, it used to be that in order to compromise the teaching of the Ukrainian language, the qualifications for becoming a Ukrainian-language teacher were set very low, as was the teachers' pay. Although this is no longer done through party diktat, the system continues under the "cult of the directors."

I met a teacher of Ukrainian literature, Tetiana Hlushchenko, who speaks no Ukrainian herself and who was very surprised when I questioned how she could teach Ukrainian literature without knowing the language. She said, in a very angry tone, that "Yes, we read Lesia Ukrainka in Ukrainian and discuss it in Russian. What's the difference if we understand everything. These are fraternal languages!" She could not comprehend my dismay.

And there are many such teachers around. Prof. Horbachuk is slowly placing his students (institute graduates) and replacing some of these hacks. But he cannot just fire these people, because the regional educational department and Mr. Kachulin will react mercilessly. The head of the Slavianske City Council, Oleksander Zhylytsov and Mr. Kachulin, both Ukrainophobes of the first order, were put in place still in Gorbachev's time. As long as people of their attitudes remain in place, the battle of the minds will continue. Messrs. Zhylytsov and Kachulin stifle Prof. Horbachuk whenever possible.

Prof. Horbachuk gets around such problems by contacting individual schools directly, and he finds willing collaborators among some of the principals and teachers. For example, he has influenced the principal of Slavianske School No. 1 to start self-Ukrainianizing, even though the school is officially a Russian language of instruction facil-



Prof. Vitaliy Keis (center) with first-year students of the philology section at the Slavianske State Pedagogical Institute.

ity. At that school of 1,100 students, Prof. Horbachuk has been permitted to cobble together two advanced (lyceum) 11th grade classes, where all instruction is in Ukrainian. Because there are not enough qualified teachers at the school, professors and graduate students from the institute teach these two classes. And since they have created these, some of the other classes have of their own volition gone over to Ukrainian. This is all being done without and in spite of official directives.

Prof. Horbachuk also entices students to the institute by setting up advanced 11th grade classes at the institute itself. These are open only to those competent in all facets of the Ukrainian language and are in effect a way of securing guaranteed admission to the Institute. For people like Prof. Horbachuk and others this is the only way to continue advancing Ukrainianization. He is also not without sympathizers at higher levels, for instance, Maria Bilokobylenko, the chief methodologist for the Slavianske region and an instructor at the institute. So a net of Ukrainianizers exists, but government intransigence and even active interference does not help the process.

Who decides from what sources and what books to order? Are texts delivered, are they printed in Ukraine? Who sets the curriculum for government schools in Slavianske and the Donbas area?

There is a huge problem with textbooks. First of all the book budget is always limited. This applies also to periodicals. I personally subscribed the institute for \$200 of Ukrainian periodicals; for Americans \$200 may not seem like much, but in Ukraine this money has some meaning. As to the textbooks they are ordered from the Donetsk Oblast department of the Ministry of Education. You order a certain amount of Ukrainian texts and Donetsk sends you Russian-language versions or different texts altogether. One weird example: There is a math textbook, originally written in Ukrainian, by an author whose last name is Bohdanovych. This book was specially translated into Russian for use in Donetsk Oblast schools. The original is in Ukrainian, but for Donetsk it is put into Russian.

An even stranger example exists. Slavianske Kindergarten No. 5 ("Kvitonka") is the only fully Ukrainianized such facility in the entire city. After a long struggle, a Ukrainian as language of instruction first grade was added to the kindergarten. A Ukrainian alphabet primer was ordered. Instead, the facility received Russian alphabet primers printed in 1993. Yet this was Ukraine in 1995. So one may conclude that the Donetsk Department of the Ministry of Education of Ukraine orders its textbooks from Moscow, not from Kyiv.

Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka, some six months ago, ordered that newly printed texts on Belarusian history, language, culture etc., be thrown away and replaced with the old Soviet-era texts. This proved impossible because the Soviet texts had been destroyed following independence and so Mr. Lukashenka tucked tail between legs and denied ever having issued such a decree. Do you know of any similar directives given by Donbas authorities, e.g. the disposal of new texts (approved by Kyiv) and the reinstatement of Soviet texts?

I did not hear of that sort of stuff. All over the place,

many Ukrainian-teaching instructors are using Prof. Taras Hunczak's history text, to my pleasant surprise. Even in the villages, when you take a two-hour train ride and visit some obscure place, even there the Ukrainian-language instructors are using new texts funded, quite often, by the diaspora. But some of those students at School No. 5, the prestigious school mentioned previously, told me that there they still use the old Soviet history and other texts. The principal is the wife of the ex-Communist Party boss for the Slavianske region.

What percentage of students in Slavianske attend school with Ukrainian as their language of instruction? Is this percentage increasing? Decreasing? Staying the same?

Slavianske is a city with, according to the 1989 census, 70 percent ethnic Ukrainian composition. There should be, at the minimum, two schools with Ukrainian as the language of instruction to every one Russian-language school. Of 21 schools, none are Ukrainian-language of instruction. True there is School No. 4, which is a cynical laugh at the law on language. In Pidlisne, a nearby village, there is a Ukrainian school but the principal speaks not a word of Ukrainian. Now let's look at the Slavianske region. It is 80 percent ethnically Ukrainian. Of 19,023 students only 1,096 learn in Ukrainian as their language of instruction, i.e., less than 6 percent of all students.

Even when parents sign petitions calling for the opening of Ukrainian-language schools, these calls fall on deaf ears. Neither Mr. Zhylytsov nor Mr. Kachulin allow our children to learn in their native language. I know Mr. Kachulin well from an end-of-semester school holiday ceremony. A student forgot to play the national anthem, as required by law, at ceremony's end. The rector tried to remind the student, but Mr. Kachulin literally jumped in front of the rector, who was standing next to me and prevented it. In this manner Mr. Kachulin and others seek to stop Ukrainianization and the development of Ukrainian patriotism.

Another fine example of Ukrainophobia: a Rukh activist in Slavianske asked Hertruda Halantsova, principal of Slavianske School No. 12, to at least consider obeying the law on language. Her response was a curt "Over my dead body." Such hatred and lunacy are widespread throughout the Donbas. For example, in the Kirov region there are 23,057 students enrolled in 25 schools, with not a single Ukrainian school to serve them. Only 236 students learn in Ukrainian language of instruction classes. This is about 1 percent of all the students in that region. And yet some 42 percent of the population classified themselves as Ukrainians there in the 1989 census.

How did people react to your presence in their midst? Were you considered a foreigner/outsider? An American? Ukrainian? Something else?

An interesting question with two answers. On the one hand, as Prof. Horbachuk said to me, for them I was like a man from Mars. At the institute no one knew anything significant about the diaspora nor had they made any strong diaspora contacts. On the other hand, people said to me that the fact my roots are from the Donbas was a

(Continued on page 14)

Russian Duma...

(Continued from page 1)

country that borders Ukraine to the north and east.

Although the vote has no legal force (it is a resolution, not a bill), it has perturbed the democrats in Russia, as well as democratic forces in other former Soviet republics.

"You cannot turn back history; history cannot be rewound like a tape in a recorder. Ukraine decided its fate and confirmed its independence in a referendum," said Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma on the day of the vote in Russia.

His predecessor, Leonid Kravchuk, who signed the Belaya Vezha accord along with Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Belarusian leader Stanislau Shushkevich, said the action could signal "the beginning of the collapse of the Commonwealth of Independent States," a weak body of 12 former Soviet republics.

Rukh leader Vyacheslav Chornovil agreed that the denunciation of the Belaya Vezha accord may lead to the dissolution of the CIS, adding that the vote reaffirmed the 1922 treaty on the formation of the Soviet Union.

"Rukh has always been against the CIS, an imperial-type superstructure. And, we [the people of Ukraine] have exercised our right to self-determination, as outlined by the Soviet Constitution, by opting for independence in 1991," he noted, putting a positive spin to the recent events in Russia.

"We must look towards Russia's president, who has considerable constitutional powers, including dissolution of the Duma," said Mr. Kravchuk, who also called on "constructive and healthy forces in Parliament to unite and prevent Ukrainian leftists from going on a rampage."

Russian President Yeltsin, who is scheduled to arrive in Kyiv in early April for a state visit, condemned the move in the Duma, calling it "scandalous" and "irresponsible."

The Duma's vote heightened tensions in Moscow during this presidential election year, and its reverberations have been felt throughout former Soviet territory.

"As the guarantor of the Constitution, I will not stand any attempts to undermine the basics of Russian statehood and destabilize the situation in the country," said Mr. Yeltsin. He released a statement on March 16 and instructed Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov to notify foreign states and international institutions that the Duma's vote does not alter Russia's status, and is not legally binding.

President Kuchma criticized the Duma vote, saying it was "not to Russia's benefit and improper." He recalled that Duma members in Kyiv last month – Speaker Gennadiy Seleznyov and Gennadiy Zyuganov – had told Ukrainian leaders "that they had no intention of disturbing the past."

He noted that the resolution has "no legal consequences for Ukraine," but underscored that "the supreme legislative body of Russia has clearly shown its vision for the future."

Although most Ukrainian politicians agree that the Russian Duma vote will not threaten Ukraine's independence, many do see it as a way to activate left-wing forces in Ukraine, such as the Communist Party.

For example, a rally held on March 17 in Kyiv to mark the fifth anniversary of the referendum on the preservation of the USSR urged the Ukrainian Parliament to denounce the Belaya Vezha agreement, reported Interfax-Ukraine. The participants of the meeting, including Ukrainian Communist Party leader Petro Symonenko, passed a resolution stating that "the Russian State Duma decision on the de facto denunciation of the accords is a joyful event for all the working people."

"We see no violation of Ukraine's sovereignty in it, since the working people have nothing to divide," noted the statement. It also called for the "restoration of the full powers of the soviets and a course of socialist development."

Mr. Symonenko, who hosted Mr. Zyuganov on February 26 in Kyiv on the pretext of a parliamentary exchange, told close to 1,000 meeting participants (a figure reported by Interfax-Ukraine) that over the five years since the referendum, the "Soviet nations" have been "abused and humiliated" and have lost their social rights.

"In fact, Ukraine is now under the administration of the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and its emissaries," he told the crowd.

Ukrainian Deputy Volodymyr Moisienko, also a Communist Party member, urged the rally participants to "extend a hand to the peoples of Russia," echoing statements made by Mr. Zyuganov during his visit to Kyiv, when he told reporters at a press conference that the "dissolution of ties between Russia and Ukraine is an anomalous phenomenon."

An evening rally on March 20 organized by the Kyiv City Organization of the Ukrainian Laborers' Union drew a few hundred workers demanding an end to Ukraine's reforms and calling for the restoration of the Soviet Union. The participants of the rally, held near the Arsenal factory, expressed support for the Russian Duma decision on the denunciation of the Belaya Vezha accord of 1991 and urged the Ukrainian Parliament to support the Russian deputies' initiative.

During his visit to Kyiv on March 19, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher pointed out that the Duma's vote "had a certain quality of intimidation," a ploy reminiscent of old Soviet tactics.

Even Parliament Speaker Oleksander Moroz told reporters on March 15 that the State Duma in Russia "has taken a purely political decision, which is null and void for Ukraine. This is an internal affair for Russia."

"We should not draw any conclusions from this decision, or take any steps," he stated, reaffirming that Ukraine is guided by the outcome of the national referendum of December 1991, in which more than 90 percent voted for independence.

However, the speaker, who is also the leader of the Socialist Party in Ukraine, said that Russia's political decision may have an impact on a certain part of Ukraine's population.

Natalia Vitrenko, a former leader of the Socialist Party who was expelled from its ranks earlier this year and subsequently formed the Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine, voiced her disapproval of the Duma vote. "If the point at issue is a revival of the USSR the way it once existed, I am against it, since power was then dominated by Russia. Ukraine shall not be a province," she noted.

Political forces on the Crimean peninsula pointed out that the Duma vote may exacerbate the domestic situation in Ukraine – between Ukraine and the Crimea, as well as bilateral relations between Ukraine and Russia.

Serhiy Kunitsyn, chairman of the Union in Support of the Republic of Crimea Party, told Interfax-Ukraine that "the situation in the Crimea will be aggravated by far more than in Ukraine, since certain political forces will try to capitalize on it and again spark action to hold a referendum on the status of the Crimea."

Serhiy Shuvainikov, chairman of the Russian Party of the Crimea, told the news agency that the Russian State Duma decision "stands no chance of practical implementation and cannot serve as a basis for the restoration of the USSR." He added that the resolution, in his opinion, was a political move aimed at gaining additional political dividends for Mr. Zyuganov.

"This action will serve no useful purpose for the people of Russia. The Communists are not the force that can uphold the interests of the Russian people, including those in the Crimea," he concluded.

But Crimean Communist Party leader Leonid Hrach called the March 15 decision "an important political decision at this time," adding that "time will prompt a decision to move toward a military and political union."

Mr. Hrach's colleague in the Crimean Parliament, Vasyly Kyselev, chairman of the Druzhba Narodov (Friendship of Nations) agricultural firm, who supports the creation of a union of Slavic states, noted that "the restoration of the USSR is a dream," and that the move by the Russian Duma was a "bold political step."

Mustafa Jemilev, chairman of the Crimean Tatar Mejlis, told reporters in Symferopol that the Duma deci-



Ukrainian Parliament Chairman Oleksander Moroz (left) with Gennadiy Seleznyov, chairman of the Russian State Duma, during the latter's visit to Kyiv on February 26.

sion will not further activate pro-Communist and pro-Russian forces in the Crimea.

Calling the Duma's action "political madness," Volodymyr Yavorivsky, the chairman of the Democratic Party of Ukraine, said he does not see the action as a threat to Ukraine.

Ukraine's Foreign Ministry also responded immediately to the action by the Russian Duma, issuing a statement on March 15, which states that the resolution has no impact – political or legal – in Ukraine (see full text on page 2.)

The statement notes that the adoption of such a decision implies that Russia is withdrawing from the Commonwealth of Independent States – a move that carries unpredictable consequences. This, in turn, can cause a destabilization that will affect not only the CIS countries, but the world community.

The Duma's action had prompted President Eduard Shevardnadze of Georgia to suggest calling an emergency CIS summit to discuss the issue of the Duma vote.

"No one should think that only Russia is concerned over this matter. The point at issue is a comeback of totalitarianism, which affects the interests of all independent states of the Commonwealth," he said in Moscow on March 19.

Interfax-Ukraine reported on March 21 that the next CIS summit will be held in Moscow as scheduled on May 17, and that CIS heads of state will then discuss the Duma resolution of March 15.



Petro Symonenko (left), chairman of Ukraine's Communist Party, with Gennadiy Zyuganov, head of the Communist faction in the Russian Duma, during a press conference in Kyiv on February 26.

UNA executives...

(Continued from page 1)

\$531,794 a year earlier, noted Mr. Blahitka.

On premium income of \$4,720,553 from the UNA's insurance operations in 1995 netted a profit after dividends of \$1,246,711. However, fraternal expenses, although reduced, amounted to a deficit of \$1,691,451. This compares with sales of \$5,292,190 and net profit of \$958,486 for 1994, and a deficit of \$2,618,488 for fraternal expenses.

As of the end of 1995, the UNA had a surplus of \$8,664,912. Therefore, there is considerable improvement in the UNA's bottom line, noted the UNA treasurer. The final statistic is a loss in surplus of only \$881,158, compared with \$2,969,134 in 1994 and similar losses in the past two years. More than half of the loss in surplus, he added, was due to the building operation, which showed a loss of \$447,209 for the year 1995.

Annuity sales declined by approximately \$200,000, and bond interest declined by about \$600,000, due to decreasing interest rates. Mortgage loan interest, on the other hand, increased by approximately \$100,000 due to increased volume.

Interest received from the building corporation decreased to \$880,051 from \$888,861 a year earlier. Even though the building operation had a loss of \$447,000, as reported earlier, the building corporation did credit the UNA with more than \$800,000 of investment income, Mr. Blahitka pointed out. This does not include the \$440,000 the Ukrainian National Urban Renewal Corp. paid to UNA members on their promissory notes.

The UNA showed a deficit of approximately \$300,000 in its Soyuzivka operation, compared to a deficit of about \$400,000 a year earlier.

In 1995, the treasurer reported, the UNA had a loss of \$106,000 on the publication operation with a subsidy of only \$542,884, compared to a profit of \$26,000 with a subsidy of \$1,046,326 for 1994.

The UNA paid its members a dividend of \$503,873 in 1995, compared to \$1,019,720 in 1994.

As regards the UNA's headquarters building, Mr. Blahitka reported that total revenue from the building decreased by \$37,032, or 1.07 percent, in 1995.

Total operating expenses also increased by approximately 1.74 percent, mainly due to incurred payments of real estate brokers' commissions for leasing in 1994 and 1995.

Due to the success of the UNA's aggressive leasing program, the building is 97 percent occupied. However, a full-floor tenant, Mayer & Schwietzer, will not be renewing its lease in 1996. This may be a blessing in disguise, Mr. Blahitka said, since the UNA had wanted a longer-term tenant to benefit its rent roll and this has a large impact on the sales price of the building. The UNA now has the capacity to lease this space for a long term and at a higher rate, he added.

Mr. Blahitka said three real estate brokers had been interviewed in order to ascertain the market rate and terms for a building the size of the UNA headquarters.

In keeping with the General Assembly's directives, the sale of the building is proceeding, and the UNA is simultaneously looking for a new building, the treasurer reported, adding that the sales price of the UNA building would be enhanced if the UNA could vacate its space and lease it long-term prior to the sale in order to increase the building's rent roll.

Secretary's report

The UNA reported the following sta-

tistics as of December 1995 to state authorities: 61,126 members with a total of \$164,967,525 in insurance. In comparison, in 1994 the UNA claimed a membership of 62,301 with insurance in force of \$145,088,257, said the UNA secretary.

As has already been reported, over the last 10 years there has been a steady decrease in members, while the amount of insurance has been increasing. This year's membership attrition is less than what had occurred in recent years. In 1995, membership declined by 895 members, whereas in 1993 and 1994, the UNA experienced a loss of over 1,000 members.

While still cause for concern, this reduced attrition is an encouraging development, Mrs. Lysko noted. The UNA is continually searching for new ways to curtail the loss of members. One possible solution, which is beneficial to both the UNA and its members, is the Additional Insurance Program (AIP), which has been implemented since September 1995. Since that time to the end of January of this year, 923 members with paid-up policies have exchanged these policies for new single premium insurance plans, for a total of \$2,380,733 of insurance. From this amount the UNA has received \$240,800 in new premiums plus \$851,894 in cash reserves on the old policies. For the month of February the UNA gained 176 additional policies for the face amount of \$456,885, and total premiums of \$203,426. Of this amount, \$45,800 represents new premiums and \$157,626 is the existing cash reserve, Mrs. Lysko added.

At the end of December 1995, the newest class of term insurance was approved by all appropriate state authorities, reported the secretary. This new product will interest the younger generation because of its extremely competitive premiums, and Mrs. Lysko is now preparing materials to inform the branch secretaries and our membership about these new term insurance products.

In response to the requests of many branch secretaries, a brochure detailing the Universal Life Insurance offered by the UNA since 1992 is now available in Ukrainian. All branch secretaries will receive this brochure as an addition to the bimonthly newsletter, which is due in March.

The UNA secretary reported the following mergers:

In Canada, Branches 480 and 426 have joined with Branch 461; in the United States, Branch 191 has merged with 13; Branch 504 with 341; Branch 151 with 137; Branch 454 with 412; Branch 502 with 444; and Branch 23 with 67. Branches 250 and 501 have been dissolved due to lack of minimum membership.

Mrs. Lysko expressed sincere thanks to all branch secretaries who have given years of dedicated service to the UNA and its members. Additional praise and thanks go out to all those branch secretaries who have ensured a legacy of lasting leadership by recruiting a new generation to service.

In addition to continually working with branch secretaries and recruiting new secretaries in branches where the current secretary is no longer able to perform his or her duties, Mrs. Lysko said one of her primary concerns is the training of new personnel. On February 17-18, a workshop was held in the Home Office for professional insurance salesmen and branch secretaries with professional licenses. Ten secretaries who are either in the process of completing licenses or who are already licensed were in attendance. The workshop was conducted by Mrs. Diachuk, Joe Binczak, Mrs. Lysko and Lon Staruch.

Secretarial courses, which are offered to all new secretaries, will be held in June at the Soyuzivka estate. Invitations

will be sent to all new secretaries and secretarial aspirants, Mrs. Lysko added.

In January, three long-time exemplary branch secretaries passed away. Their obituaries were posted in the UNA's newspapers. Peter Pitner, the secretary of Branch 231 for 16 years, died on January 5; Stephen Evannitsky, secretary of Branch 276 for 33 years, died on January 11; and Peter Babych, who was the secretary of Branch 115 for 40 years, passed away on January 22.

As of December 31, 1995, Mrs. Lysko reported the following figures for UNA membership: Juvenile - 9,099 certificates for \$32,130,159; Adult - 19,234 certificates for \$74,497,945; ADD - 4,981 certificates for \$24,905,000; Active Total - 33,314 certificates for \$131,533,104; Paid-up total - 27,812 certificates for \$32,155,660.

Report of Canadian director

Dr. Savaryn reported that he had written an article on the UNA to all Ukrainian-language newspapers in Canada. He also noted that he is in the process of searching for younger persons to take on the responsibilities of branch secretaries, and is actively looking for ways to promote the UNA in Canada, for example by running advertisements in various publications and anniversary books.

Reports of vice-presidents

Mr. Olesnycky noted that since the last meeting of the UNA Executive Committee, as legal counsel he had been involved in both the merger negotiations with the Ukrainian National Aid Association of America and the Ukrainian Fraternal Association, and in examining the brokerage agreement for the UNA headquarters building, which has been put on the market.

As well the vice-president noted that he had participated in the first meeting of the UNA's newly organized investment committee.

Ms. Dydyk Petrenko reported that she had attended a meeting of the Chernobyl Challenge '96 committee held at the Embassy of Ukraine in Washington. Many issues were discussed, including costs involved with the planned commemorative concert scheduled for the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts featuring the Odessa Philharmonic, a national ecumenical service, rally and a candlelight vigil, plus topical conferences.

On February 21 the vice-presidentess attended a banquet sponsored by Freedom House honoring the president of Ukraine, Leonid Kuchma, which was held at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington. (She did not attend the banquet as a UNA representative.)

Ms. Dydyk went on to note that on March 2-3 she traveled to Soyuzivka to meet with Resort Manager John Flis and Office Manager Sonia Semanyshyn regarding summer 1996 entertainment programming. The trio discussed various possibilities, viewed promo videos and listened to audio cassettes of groups interested in performing at Soyuzivka. Several acts and bands have been booked, while others are still under consideration.

"It's a juggling process and will take several more weeks to complete, but we hope to have a varied and entertaining program for our guests and still keep within our budget," said Ms. Dydyk-Petrenko.

A strong show is planned for the season opener (July 4-7) with three of the most popular bands providing the music: Tempo, Fata Morgana and Burlaky from Montreal. A teaser ad will appear in April. Dates for all the camps have been set, and those ads are already running in the UNA's papers.

While at Soyuzivka the vice-presidentess said she had the opportunity to see the Q-Cafe for the first time. "It looks great. Hopefully, it will be in full operation by this summer," she noted.

President's report

Mrs. Diachuk began her report by focusing on organizing matters. She underlined that life insurance sales in the United States and Canada amounted to \$18 million in 1995 — with that total nearly evenly split between the two countries.

In the United States, 844 life insurance certificates were issued for a total of \$9,365,544 of life insurance coverage. In all, 229 branch organizers enrolled 699 new members insured for \$3,308,544; 145 members insured for \$6,057,000 were signed up by nine professional organizers. The latter also sold 72 annuity certificates for a sum of \$1,261,678.

In Canada, 187 new members were enrolled — 144 of them, or 77 percent, by the UNA's five professional organizers who work out of the Toronto office. The other 18 members were enrolled by branch organizers, among them Tekla Moroz, Branch 465, who signed up seven members; and Alexandra Dolnycky, Branch 434, who had six new members.

If one looks at the statistics for both Canada and the United States, Mrs. Diachuk continued, it is clear that the UNA's 15 professional insurance salespersons are successful: they sold 289 certificates for insurance coverage of \$12,237,914. This means that a full 28 percent of new certificates and 65 percent of the total amount of life insurance are sold by professional organizers.

Among branch organizers in the U.S., the following were the top organizers: Miron Piliptak, Branch 496, who enrolled 36 members; and Auditor William Pastuszek and Michael Turko, Branch 63, with 25 members each. Between 10 and 20 new members were enrolled by Paul Shewchuk, with 18; Christine Gerbeby, 15; Advisor Stefanie Hawryluk, 13; and Joseph Chabon, Anna Haras and Dr. Atanas Slusarchuk, 12 each.

Maritime Life, with whom the UNA is affiliated in Canada, is pressuring the UNA to increase the number of new certificates to 2,000 per year. Mrs. Diachuk said she had met on March 5 with the UNA's Director of Insurance Operations Bob Cook in order to prepare a three-year plan. An earlier meeting was held in Toronto on January 30, with the participation of Mr. Cook, Maritime Life representatives and Mrs. Diachuk to review the enrollment figures for the past year.

As regards the UNA's publishing operations, the president reported that the year-end figures showed income of \$1,168,182, and the UNA subsidized the publications to the tune of \$502,289. Together this amounts to \$1,670,471. In comparison, in 1994, income was \$784,719, and the UNA added \$908,866 — a total of \$1,774,585.

Income from subscriptions to Svoboda was \$486,154, which was an increase of \$287,441, or 145 percent more than in 1994. Subscriptions to The Ukrainian Weekly amounted to \$240,674, an increase of \$102,951, or 75 percent more

(Continued on page 12)

Addendum

In the February 11 issue of The Weekly, the page 10 article on the New York City meeting with Ukrainian Minister of Youth and Sport Valeriy Borzov omitted mention of the Ukrainian National Association's donation of \$10,000 to the National Olympic Committee of Ukraine, made at the February 4 fund-raiser.

THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY

The Russian Duma speaks its mind

Let's just say it right off the bat: The Russian Duma's resolution of March 15 — which attempts to turn the clock back by stating that the break-up of the Soviet Union in December 1991 was illegal — is dangerous.

Though it is merely a resolution, not a bill, and thus is not legally binding, it nonetheless gives the world reason to pause and ponder the developments in "democratic" Russia — not to mention its destabilizing effects regionally and worldwide.

The Communist-dominated Duma of the Russian Federation on March 15 voted overwhelmingly — 250-98 — to abrogate the Russian SFSR Supreme Soviet's resolution of December 12, 1991, which denounced the 1922 agreement on the USSR's formation. (This is just a preview of what could happen if the Communists come to full power — if their candidate wins the presidential election in June.)

The resolution in effect renounces the Belaya Vezha accord signed on the outskirts of Brest by Russia, Ukraine and Belarus in December 1991. That "Slavic summit" declared the end of the USSR "as a subject of international law and a geopolitical reality," and it proclaimed the formation of a community of three states, which today is the 12-member Commonwealth of Independent States.

Ukraine immediately denounced the Russian Duma's action in a statement issued by its Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "In Ukraine, the adoption of this resolution by the State Duma of the Russian Federation is assessed as an attempt by certain political circles in Russia to revive the former USSR," that statement notes. "Ukraine condemns such actions as a threat to peace and stability not only for these countries, but for the entire world as well." It goes on to underscore that almost 92 percent of the population (of Ukraine) voted for Ukraine's independence" and states that the Russian Duma's vote is "an internal act of the Russian Federation and cannot have extraterritorial jurisdiction."

Nonetheless, as President Leonid Kuchma pointed out, the Russian Duma resolution cannot be ignored from "the social and political point of view." He told U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, while he was visiting Kyiv just four days later, "I think you understand that Ukraine requires political stability as never before."

Mr. Christopher, in turn, tried to assure Ukraine: "Last week's vote in the Russian Duma to reconstitute the Soviet Union was highly irresponsible. It was as disturbing to us as I know it was to Ukraine. ... Ukraine and other countries of the former Soviet Union are independent and sovereign nations. Any unilateral attempt to change their status should be rejected by the international community." He later added, that the vote "had a certain quality of intimidation," and therefore, "it seemed prudent to make known our views in advance."

Prudent, indeed. The Russian Duma's action sent a collective shudder through member-states of the CIS who are looking to shore up the region's stability while building normal bilateral and multilateral ties among themselves, as well as the neighboring Baltic states. Estonian Foreign Minister Siim Kallas characterized the vote as "an intention to recreate the USSR, which would pose a threat to the entire world. The world should be concerned, not just us."

Indeed, it should. And it should not be content to accept Russian President Boris Yeltsin's assurances that "this resolution is nonsense and nothing will come of it." Instead it should contemplate the words of warning expressed by Mr. Yeltsin's press secretary, who said "The possible internal and international consequences of this decision could be of an unpredictable and explosive nature."

March
29
1864

Turning the pages back...

The Ruska Besida was a Ukrainian cultural educational club formed in Lviv in 1861 to provide a forum for social interaction and develop a program of literary and musical evenings,

lectures and concerts.

In early 1864, the club subsidized the creation of Ruska Besida Theater, the first Ukrainian professional touring theater. On March 29 of that year, the company staged the first Ukrainian language theatrical performance in Lviv, Hryhoriy Kvitka-Osnovianenko's "Marusia."

As it continued its activity, the RBT was occasionally sponsored by the Galician Diet (parliament), and staged productions throughout Galicia and Bukovyna and toured Poland. After the ban on theater performances was lifted in Russian-ruled Ukraine in 1881, the RBT became instrumental in the development of modern theater over the entire country.

Having begun with a Ukrainian repertoire in populist-realistic style (Ivan Kotliarevsky, Mykola Kropyvnytsky, Panas Myrny), in 1890s the company began staging Ivan Franko's realistic dramas and works by Western European playwrights, such as Friedrich Schiller, Georg Hauptmann, Henrik Ibsen, August Strindberg as well as that of Russian dramatists Anton Chekhov, Leo Tolstoy, Maxim Gorky and Mykola Hohol (Gogol).

The RBT branched out into opera, offering performances of Charles Gounod's "Faust," Jacques Offenbach's "Les Contes Hoffman," and George Bizet's "Carmen." In 1911, it began performances of Volodymyr Vynnychenko's psychological dramas.

Many prominent actors appeared on its stage, but none more so than Les Kurbas, arguably Ukraine's best actor and director.

After a hiatus caused by the first world war, the company resurfaced under the name Ukrainka Besida Theater, and in 1921-1924 it became a resident theater in Lviv. It merged with the Lviv Ukrainian Independent Theater in 1924.

Source: "Ukrainska Besida Theater," *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, Vol. 5 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993)

Kuchma and Moroz present Constitution to Parliament

by Marta Kolomayets

Kyiv Press Bureau

KYIV — In yet another historic step the co-chairmen of the Constitutional Committee, President Leonid Kuchma and Parliament Chairman Oleksander Moroz presented the draft constitution to members of the legislative branch during a special meeting on March 20.

The meeting, in the plenary session hall of the Supreme Council building, was broadcast live on Ukrainian television and radio, underscoring the significance of this event.

The co-chairmen addressed members of Parliament and, although the two leaders have not agreed on all points outlined in this substantive document, both agreed that Ukraine needs a constitution by no later than this summer.

However, as late as Wednesday morning, after more than two days of debate on how the draft constitution would be presented to Parliament, it was still unclear how the ceremony would look. The fact that such an apparently simple matter of procedure caused so much commotion does not bode well for the work of this legislative body in adopting this document.

In his opening remarks, President Kuchma described the meeting as an "extraordinary event in the socio-political life of Ukraine." He said, "The constitution is a preamble to the foundation on which we can build the legal base for our state, a promising way to overcome all problems and crisis situations, a guarantee of stability in the state, and a way to strengthen trust throughout the world community."

"Although we were among the first republics of the Soviet Union to adopt a declaration on state sovereignty in 1990, and began building an independent,

democratic state, we are the last to adopt a constitution," he noted.

Calling the draft constitution "European in spirit, Ukrainian in tradition," Mr. Kuchma said he hoped the Parliament would begin reviewing the draft document within 10 days.

Mr. Moroz noted that he would like to see Ukraine adopt a new constitution in May.

"Our situation demands that we constantly look for compromises, that we have the desire and the ability to listen to one another, and at least a minimal degree of trust toward our opponents," said Mr. Moroz during his opening statement. He added that the "current Parliament is politically unstructured, unstable, an amorphous majority and minority which makes adopting any decisions, especially those of a political nature, very difficult."

"Unfortunately there is a deficit of trust — among the polar forces in the Parliament, among the branches of power and among the electorate toward these powers," noted Mr. Moroz, as he harshly criticized both the national democrats in Parliament, as well as the president and his advisors.

Although he underscored the fact that a fundamental law, the constitution, is needed in Ukraine, he also pointed out that a procedure to adopt it has not yet been worked out by the Parliament. Thus, it remains unclear whether it will be adopted by the Parliament by a two-thirds majority, a simple majority, a national referendum or some other means.

"I support the adoption of the constitution of Ukraine — on a legal basis — because there should be no doubt in anyone's mind about the legitimacy of our country's fundamental law," said Mr. Moroz.

Shevchenko anniversaries: a recollection from the past

by Roman Sawycky

The Shevchenko anniversaries observed in 1961 and 1964 brought wide acceptance of Ukraine's bard and genius. New English translations of his poetry were stirring North America at that time. And when the Shevchenko monument was approved for erection in Washington, this freedom fighter became a subject of official government publications.

Around this time the distinguished novelist Ernest Hemingway was widely quoted as saying that he considered "Taras Bulba" by Mykola Hohol to be one of the 10 greatest books of all ages. This rating was most welcome, especially since the spirits of Hohol and Shevchenko have been associated throughout past decades, and both embodied a kind of energy rarely found in literary circles.

Another famous American author, namely John Steinbeck, added his voice to the proceedings, a voice entirely sympathetic to Shevchenko's "oeuvre" and convictions.

The presidential inauguration of John F. Kennedy (January 1961) featured the contemporary national poet Robert Frost. I recollect that in the summer of that year, 1961, while pursuing my studies at Middlebury College in Vermont, one sultry afternoon I visited a local bookstore in town. This establishment was really "on the map," as it was frequented by Frost, desiring to know how his books

were selling and wishing to chat with students from the college. (The poet's residence was not too far away from the town of Middlebury.)

That very afternoon the illustrious poet appeared at the bookstore. Having checked out the shelves with his collections of poetry, Frost spoke a few words with a student and then shuffled towards the exit.

I accosted him just a few yards from the door and politely introduced myself as a student of Ukrainian parentage. Keeping Steinbeck's sympathies in mind, I popped the question to his contemporary, Frost: "What do you think of Taras Shevchenko?" Almost immediately I noticed a certain reaction on the wrinkled face. The gray and bushy eyebrows tightened, but this suggested dissatisfaction rather than mental effort.

Turning away from me and heading straight for the door, Robert Frost muttered: "I don't give out opinions on modern poets." I stood alone now in the middle of the bookstore watching him depart. "I don't do that," he added emphatically, as the exit door thumped after him.

On recollecting this little adventure, I became convinced that the aging and hard-of-hearing Frost had confused the sound of the name "Shevchenko" with that of the modern Russian poet Yevgeniy Yevtushenko.

And we'll never know what Robert Frost's thoughts were on our bard and genius.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Re: "objectivity" of war crimes book

Dear Editor:

Re: "Book on alleged war criminals creates controversy in Canada" (February 18): The author of "War Criminals in Canada," Mr. J. McKenzie, claims to be "objective," yet he made no attempt to contact any Ukrainian Canadian organization with respect to the obviously still-controversial issue of bringing alleged war criminals in Canada to justice. Hardly an example of research skills at play.

And since he thanks Sol Littman and the Wiesenthal Center for their support he can hardly claim to be unaware of the fact that there was an organized and, thankfully, effective response to the "grossly exaggerated" claims made by some Jewish organizations on this subject.

As for the cartoons that Mr. McKenzie laces his tract with, they are not only misleading (by implying guilt, as the one of the late Mr. Kypyak does) but crude.

The fact also remains that the publisher, Detselig Enterprises, did receive a grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage to publish a work of remarkably poor quality that does identify, stereotype and defame the good name and character not only of individual Ukrainian Canadians but of our community as a whole. Ukrainian Canadian taxpayers may well wonder how their hard-earned dollars are being spent.

About the only "positive" comment one can make is that, typically, the product of Mr. McKenzie's pen and frenzied imagination is of such a low quality that it is very unlikely that anyone will take it seriously. Except, of course, for those self-styled "Nazi hunters" who continue to insist that there are lots of bad lads amongst us. But then they must, if they are to go on collecting their salaries for being "Nazi hunters."

Lubomyr Luciuk
Kingston, Ontario

The writer is director of research of the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Association.

Halychyna-Quebec comparison ludicrous

Dear Editor:

The letter to the editor by D.H. Struk (February 11) contains, in my opinion, his personal and biased interpretation of history rather than facts.

For example: his view on Ukrainian-French relations in Quebec and the Polish minority in Halychyna. To equate the situation in Quebec between French-speaking Canadians and Quebec minorities, to that of Halychyna's native Ukrainians and the Polish colonists who were specifically resettled into Halychyna, is ludicrous.

French-speaking Canadians who arrived on this continent somewhat earlier than many of us, should not, in my opinion, have the right to impose their will on the rest of Quebec's population any more than the rest of Canada to impose its will on the province of Quebec.

It is high time that the politicians of the English and French side of the equation got together and worked out a solution beneficial to both communities throughout Canada.

Why is it that the remaining third of Canadians of neither English or French origin have not up to now figured in this debate?

I, for one, would not wish to see the

Balkanization of Canada or its aftermath.

As for Ukrainians being labeled "unprincipled" by Mr. Primak (February 7), I would suggest that he was speaking on his own behalf and not for Ukrainians collectively.

He certainly did not speak for me.

Stephan Pasternak
Brossard, Quebec

You can't compare Halychyna, Quebec

Dear Editor:

In a letter of February 11, D.H. Struk wrote about "similarity between Quebec's plight in Canada and that of Ukrainians in Halychyna under Poland."

As the editor-in-chief of the Encyclopedia of Ukraine, D.H. Struk should know better. Under the Polish rule between the two world wars, Halychyna never had the prerogatives of Canadian provinces. It had no provincial legislature, no executive entity, and was not permitted to hold a referendum to choose its political status. The Ukrainian language had no standing in the government, unlike the French in Canada, much less any claim to primacy. The Polish government, to its eternal shame, permitted only one or two Ukrainian secondary schools to exist for the entire Halychyna. An analogy to the status of Quebec is egregious, and also foolish.

Boris Danik
North Caldwell, N.J.

Time to get involved, become empowered

Dear Editor:

We Ukrainian Americans have, are and will contribute to America by actively taking part in democracy; I am proud to actively serve in the Republican Party as a precinct delegate and encourage everyone to consider becoming one. We are the people who have contributed and are contributing to a better community, city, state and America.

We need to further our commitment for a better world by using our strongest weapon – our vote. We need everyone. Become a precinct delegate. Form a Ukrainian American Republican/or Democratic coalition. Get people to understand that we need one another by maintaining our heritage, religion, organizations and freedom to be all that we can be for each other.

Get involved. Let's empower ourselves!

Roman Kuropas
Warren, Mich.

About Ukrainian attitudes and Quebec

Dear Editor:

It is interesting to note that before 1991 the Ukrainian community often compared Ukrainian nationalism and Quebec nationalism. Since Ukraine is now independent, Quebec is compared to the Crimea.

For Quebecers/nationalists it was somewhat ironic to see how eager the Canadian government was to recognize Ukrainian independence, while remaining refractory to the fact, as D.H. Struk mentioned (February 11), that "the French are a distinct people, a nation within Canada."

Francine Boulet
Inverness, Quebec

CANADA COURIER

by Christopher Guly



A Ukrainian by a different name

Apparently, Saskatchewan Premier Roy Romanow likes to have fellow Ukrainian Canadian friends in high places.

From 1988 to 1994, medical physicist Sylvia Fedoruk occupied the lieutenant governor's chair in the Prairie province of 1 million people. Since 1994, it has been John Edward Neil Wiebe.

Although Canada's prime minister actually recommends the vice-regal appointment to the queen – since the lieutenant governor is constitutional representative of the crown – a provincial premier is expected to put forward a name. Old pals from their days at the University of Saskatchewan, Premier Romanow and Lieutenant Governor Wiebe have known each other for a long time – and they knew of their Ukrainian bond.

The name, Fedoruk, like Romanow, is an easy clue to heritage. With "Wiebe," it took some digging on the part of Saskatchewan's 18th lieutenant governor to uncover the Ukrainian connection. Already, the word is out.

When Ukraine's new ambassador to Canada, Volodymyr Furkalo, presented his diplomatic credentials to Governor General Romeo LeBlanc on February 14, Mr. LeBlanc was quick to point out the presence of the Ukrainian Canadian lieutenant governor from Saskatchewan in the audience.

In a telephone interview from his office in Regina, Lieutenant Governor Wiebe said he knew of his Ukrainian roots ever since he was a child growing up in Herbert, a town in southwestern Saskatchewan. Eight years ago, he learned a lot more about those roots when he found his great-grandfather's passport collecting dust in an attic.

As far as he can determine, the 59-year-old lieutenant governor's paternal great-great-grandfather, Jacob Wiebe, a Mennonite, left Holland for southern Russia in the late 1790s. He had received a parcel of land as a part of a settlement incentive from Catherine II. Jacob Wiebe married a Russian woman and raised a family in the town of Molochanks. Jacob's son, Jacob A. Wiebe, left the area and moved to the Crimea around 1850.

"Today, the region where Jacob Wiebe lived is part of Ukraine," said Lieutenant Governor Wiebe.

Eventually, the Wiebes left the Crimea for Kansas, where they lived before settling in Saskatchewan at the end of the 19th century.

After taking courses in arts, science and business administration at the University of Saskatchewan, the future lieutenant governor married a Welsh Canadian, Ann Lewis, in 1961. The two became farmers.

"Although the Wiebes were always farmers, neither my paternal grandfather nor my father worked in farming. I picked up the ball," said Lieutenant Governor Wiebe.

From 1971 to 1978, he served as a Liberal member of the Saskatchewan legislature for the Morse constituency, which incorporates Herbert. On May 31, 1994, Mr. Wiebe became his home province's lieutenant governor.

Getting to that office involved meeting Queen Elizabeth II.

"My wife and I had a wonderful expe-

rience when we met the queen," recalled Lieutenant Governor Wiebe. "We were only allotted 20 minutes with her, but, this Prairie boy must be fairly long-winded, because we spent over 35 minutes with her majesty. It was like the three of us sitting there in front of a fireplace talking."

What did the crown's Saskatchewan rep talk about with the queen?

"We're not allowed to talk about what we discuss privately with the queen outside of Buckingham Palace," said Lieutenant Governor Wiebe. "So, of course, realizing that, as soon as we got to our hotel room, I went and wrote everything down that I could remember, and now have it stored in a safety deposit box. After the queen passes away, and enough time has passed, my [three] grandchildren will be able to know what their grandpa talked to the queen about."

Despite his position of diplomatic neutrality, Lieutenant Governor Wiebe admits he's sympathetic to Queen Elizabeth's latest headaches over the divorce settlement involving the couple who were originally supposed to assume the throne. "I'm a strong family person, and believe a family is the richest blessing an individual can ever have. It's always very sad when you see a family break up such as this. The queen herself must be facing enormous personal pressure and strain. I think it's probably because of her influence that the marriage stayed together for as long as it did."

After going to London to visit the queen and going to Wales to visit some ancestral places claimed by his wife, Lieutenant Governor and Mrs. Wiebe plan to make a heritage pilgrimage to Ukraine in the next 18 months.

But even before he goes, Lieutenant Governor Wiebe is already talking like a proud Ukrainian son.

"Ukrainians are the second-largest ethnic group in Saskatchewan after the Germans," he boasted. "With the English and French at the bottom of the province's ethnic groups by population, I would dare say Saskatchewan is the most multicultural province in Canada."



John Wiebe, lieutenant governor of Saskatchewan.

Toronto concert to commemorate anniversary of Chornobyl disaster

by Oksana Zakydalsky

TORONTO – The oratorio “Sacred Dnipro,” composed by Valeriy Kikta with libretto by Sofia Majdanska, will form the central part of the program for the Chornobyl memorial concert in Toronto. The concert is being presented by the Canadian Ukrainian Opera Association and will feature the Lysenko Opera Chorus of Toronto, the Dnipro Choir of Edmonton and members of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

“Sacred Dnipro” was commissioned by the Dnipro Choir of Edmonton and given its world premiere in 1993. Mr. Kikta, who lives in Kyiv, was born in 1941 in Donetske Oblast and was a student and protégé of the noted Ukrainian composer Stanislav Liudkevych.

The Canadian Ukrainian Opera Association noted in a press release: “The main traits of his style are a clear melodism, individual harmonic language, rhythmic inventiveness and masterful instrumentation. Steeped in classical principles, Kikta incorporates contemporary compositional techniques with good taste and uses them for his artistic ends.”

The librettist, Ms. Majdanska, is a graduate of the Lviv Conservatory of Music. She began to write poetry as a student and has had many works published in Ukraine. She has written libretto and scripts for special celebrations such as the Chervona Ruta Festival (1989) and the Zoloty Homin poetry festival (1990) held in Kyiv.

The libretto for “Sacred Dnipro” is called an “oratorio-chronicle in 11 parts” and presents the sweep of Ukrainian history around the central theme of the Dnipro River. In outlining her subject, Ms. Majdanska writes, “Dnipro – the

eternal river, the eternal book through whose pages, year after year, century after century, flows our history...We – Slavs, Ukrainians – came here and stayed by the Dnipro because it was here that we found the pure bottomless source of life, wisdom and power; here we became conscious of ourselves as a people, as a nation. Without the Dnipro, we as a nation would not exist and neither would Ukraine.”

Ms. Majdanska quotes an 18th century French traveler who said that Ukraine, a land of milk and honey, attracted everyone like a magnet attracts iron. Yet, notes the poet, the magnetic power of Ukraine has also proved to be the source of the country’s tragedies as it attracted the death-bearing iron swords of the horde, the cannons of both Poles and Russians, and the machine guns of the Soviets.

The 11 parts of the oratorio are united by the development of the main theme – that of the sacred river Dnipro – the spiritual symbol of the nation. Each part of the oratorio deals with a different era in Ukrainian history and speaks in the language of the time. The author uses quotes from contemporary works, such as the chronicle “Litopys Ruskyi” and the epic poem “Slovo o Polku Ihorevi.” She begins the work with a quote in Latin from Teofan Prokopovych’s “Ode to Dnipro,” ending it with the same excerpt in Ukrainian.

Appearing throughout the oratorio is the heroine, our contemporary, who, writes Ms. Majdanska, “is not there to comment on the historical events nor to judge them. She longs to immerse herself, as a living drop of water, into the eternal flow of the river and to experience with her nation everything from the very beginning.”

The memorial concert will also mark the 20th anniversary of the Lysenko Opera Chorus. Founded in 1974 as the Canadian Ukrainian Opera Choir, the choir changed its name to the Lysenko Opera Chorus in 1990. One of the founders of the choir, and its conductor from the beginning, is Volodymyr Kolesnyk.

The first work staged by the choir, in December 1975, was Semen Hulak-Artemovsky’s “Zaporozhian Kozak Beyond the Danube.” Since then, the choir has been one of the most important factors of Ukrainian musical culture in North America and has brought many masterpieces of Ukrainian music to its audiences.

The Opera Choir presented the North American premieres of Anatole Vachnianyn’s opera “Kupalo” (1979) and Dmytro Bortniansky’s opera “Alkides” (1992) as well as the world premiere of Denys Sichynsky’s “Roxolana” (presented in concert in 1991).

The Opera Choir took part in the inaugural concert of Toronto’s Roy Thomson Hall in 1982, staging the North American premiere of Liudkevych’s symphony-cantata “The Caucasus” and the world premiere of Canadian composer George Fiala’s Symphony No. 4 “The Ukrainian Symphony.” Both these works were also presented in 1984 at New York’s Carnegie Hall with the American Symphony Orchestra to mark the 90th anniversary of the Ukrainian National Association.

In addition to its many appearances in Toronto and other Canadian cities – Ottawa, Hamilton, Montreal – and its two appearances in Carnegie Hall (the second was in 1981), the choir has traveled to Illinois (Chicago Lyric Opera theater in



Volodymyr Kolesnyk

1984 and Orchestra Hall in 1988), Ohio and Michigan.

The Opera Choir has taken part in several gala Ukrainian celebrations, such as the Millennium of Christianity in Ukraine, staging the world premiere of George Fiala’s Cantata for Piano and Choir at the Millennium Concert held in November 1987.

The Chornobyl Memorial Concert is being staged by the Canadian Ukrainian Opera Association under the sponsorship of the Ukrainian Canadian Committee and will be held on Sunday, April 28, at 3 p.m. at Massey Hall in Toronto.

For the record:

Christopher in Prague

In his speech on March 20 to a gathering of Central and East European foreign ministers in Prague, Secretary of State Warren Christopher had this to say about Ukraine’s position in the U.S. vision of the emerging integration of Europe:

We are determined to keep faith with the nations of this region, to open the door that Stalin shut when he said “no” to the Marshall Plan. No nation in Europe should ever again be consigned to a buffer zone between great powers, or relegated to another nation’s sphere of influence.

To achieve that end, President Clinton has advanced a broad-ranging strategy for European security. It includes a revitalized NATO, ready for the missions and roles of the next century. It includes support for deeper and broader European integration. It includes a strong and productive relationship with Russia. ...

Ukraine’s integration is especially important to stability and security in this region. That is why we value Ukraine’s participation in the Partnership for Peace, why we want NATO and Ukraine to build a strong relationship, and why we will participate in a major military exercise in Ukraine this summer. Yesterday in Kyiv, I reaffirmed America’s commitment to Ukraine’s freedom, independence and prosperity.”

U.S. secretary of state...

(Continued from page 1)

was also a topic of discussion that day during lunch, when the U.S. delegation of 12 and Ukrainian officials such as National Security Adviser Volodymyr Horbulin and Foreign Minister Udovenko discussed this topic.

“We will reinforce our cooperation with NATO and NATO member-states,” Mr. Udovenko told journalists later, adding that Ukraine is an active member of the Partnership for Peace program and is part of NATO operations in Bosnia.

Mr. Christopher said the U.S. “supports Ukraine’s growing ties to the West and European institutions, including the Partnership for Peace.”

Chornobyl issues raised

The problems of Chornobyl were brought up by the U.S. delegation during meetings with Ukrainian officials, including Foreign Minister Udovenko and Prime Minister Marchuk.

Mr. Marchuk said, “Ukraine proposes that a comprehensive agreement be signed to settle the issue of the closure of the Chornobyl nuclear power plant. Until now, the memorandum and other agreements signed between the two countries contained only common approaches.”

Foreign Minister Udovenko told journalists that “a political decision was made by the president of Ukraine and the government of Ukraine to decommission the plant.”

He explained that closing down the plant, however, is only one step in a complex process, because decommissioning Chornobyl will not solve the problems of safety at the station.

“The most important problems include what to do with the reactor and the facili-

ty shelter – the sarcophagus,” he added.

“When the G-7 met in Naples in 1994, they did not take into consideration the position of Ukraine,” he continued. “At the summit in Moscow on April 19-20 on nuclear safety we want to talk about the real problems of Chornobyl. Last year we lost an entire year on talks – and this ended only on December 20, with the signing of a memorandum. Lastly, Ukraine cannot independently solve the financial aspects of closing down the station; we need substantial aid,” he noted.

Mr. Christopher told reporters that the Ukrainian government had extended an invitation to Vice-President Al Gore to attend 10th anniversary commemorations in Ukraine on April 26. However, he issued “a small word of warning, stating that because it is an election year in the U.S., the campaign may preoccupy both the president and vice-president.” However he did note that the U.S. would donate \$10 million in medical aid and a mobile laboratory to monitor radiation.

The secretary of state also paid a brief visit to Pediatric Hospital No. 14, where children believed to be suffering from the effects of radiation from Chornobyl are treated. Mr. Christopher told reporters he was “immensely moved” by the visit.

Constitution’s influence

During his meeting with Secretary Christopher, President Kuchma observed that “events are now under way in Ukraine which will influence not only Ukraine,” explaining that these include the adoption of a new constitution. He added that there are also events in neighboring countries that will influence the situation in Ukraine, such as the elections in Russia.

“I think you understand that Ukraine

requires political stability as never before,” Mr. Kuchma told the U.S. diplomat.

Mr. Christopher noted, “We admire the steps Ukraine has taken on the path of economic reform, and I found of great interest the discussions now taking place in Ukraine with respect to constitutional reform.”

The American leader discussed the new constitution with Parliament Speaker Moroz, who noted that, “to ensure domestic stability in Ukraine, which impacts external stability, a democratic constitution is necessary with a clear separation of powers.” The Socialist Party leader emphasized that the version of the constitution presented to the Parliament does not meet this criterion.

Mr. Moroz also said, “Ukraine’s foremost need is not economic aid, but mutually beneficial cooperation.” “The world stands to gain from stable and economically powerful Ukraine, hence support for Ukraine is in the best interests of the international community.”

In turn, Mr. Christopher said “the U.S. is aware of Ukraine’s role in the world and will support it in every way possible, including financially.”

Among the members of Mr. Christopher’s delegation were Nicholas Burns, State Department spokesman; Jim Collins, senior adviser to the ambassador at large to the NIS states; Tom Donilon, Secretary Christopher’s chief of staff; and U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine William Green Miller.

The Ukrainian delegation included Minister of Environment and Nuclear Safety Yuriy Kostenko, Defense Minister Valeriy Shmarov and the Minister of the Cabinet of Ministers Valeriy Pustovoytenko, as well as Ukraine’s ambassador to the U.S., Dr. Yuri Shcherbak.

DATELINE NEW YORK: Experimental theater from Lviv

by Helen Smindak

The 174-seat theater building at 3 Les Kurbas St. in Lviv, near the Ethnographic Museum in the center of the city, is the professional home of an intrepid group of actors, drama students and production assistants who have been staging unique productions for the past eight years under the direction of Volodymyr Kuchynsky.

The company has been experimenting with new methods and drama techniques to achieve a close relationship between actors and audience. To do this, it employs a number of elements – dance, gesture, movement, sound, light, texture and audience participation.

For the second time since the group's founding in March 1988, Mr. Kuchynsky and fellow members of the Les Kurbas Theater are spending several weeks in New York, this time under the auspices of the Harriman Institute and Columbia University's Oscar Hammerstein II Center for Theatre Studies.

Heralded as one of the most innovative and acclaimed drama groups in Ukraine, the company presented "Games for Faust" at Columbia's Miller Theater last month. (See review in *The Weekly*, March 17.) The play, based on Dostoyevsky's novel "Crime and Punishment," won awards for best play at the Khersones Games International Festival in Sevastopol in 1994 and the Golden Lion International Festival in Lviv in 1995. The company itself was voted the best Ukrainian theater at the 1995 international Les Kurbas Conference in Kyiv.

This weekend, after a sequence of workshops, rehearsals and performances that took this avant-garde troupe around New York City, to Soyuzivka, Philadelphia and some New Jersey centers, the group returns to the Columbia campus with a performance of "Grateful Erodiy" (March 22, Miller Theater, Broadway at 116 Street). The play is a staging of a parable by the 18th century Ukrainian philosopher Hryhoriy Skovorada, dealing with the issues of proper upbringing, altruism and the true nature of happiness.

Ballet, music, recitation, lighting, color and art figure prominently in the production. Costumes are by Nina Lapchuk of Kyiv, whose textile designs, as it happens, are on display at The Ukrainian Museum through April 14.

Mr. Kuchynsky and two of the actors, Natalka Polovynka and Andriy Vodychev (who gave sensitive performances in "Games for Faust"), found time recently to meet with this writer and share some insights into their work. Soft-voiced, eyes bright with intensity, they spoke in mellifluous Ukrainian as they described their abiding passion: the Les Kurbas Theater of Lviv.

The company consists of eight actors, all in their 30s; all but two are natives of Lviv or the Lviv region.

Ms. Polovynka, a graduate of the Lviv Music Conservatory, was born in the Vinnytsia region; Mr. Vodychev comes from the Crimea and studied at the Kharkiv State Theater actors' studio.

Mr. Kuchynsky, the artistic director, worked as an actor at the Sumy Theater of Musical Comedy and Lviv's Zankovetska National Theater, and studied acting with Anatoliy Vasiliev in Moscow. He co-founded the theater with a fellow member of the Zankovetska Theater, Oleh Drach, a dynamic actor who has won best actor awards at two international theater festivals.

Their colleagues are Tetyana Kaspruk, an alumna of the Zankovetska Theater who joined the Les Kurbas Theater in 1988, and Oksana Tsybmal, Yurko Mysak and Oleh Tsiona, who were members of the Les Kurbas Theatre drama studio before joining the company as

full-fledged actors.

With them on the U.S. trip, in charge of lighting and sets, is set designer Andriy Humeniuk. At home in Lviv are 10 assistants who work behind the scenes.

As I chat with my guests – the director, bearded, dark-eyed; the poetic-looking Mr. Vodychev, shoulder-length hair framing a sensitive face; and the slender Ms. Polovynka, her elegant features highlighted by high cheekbones – I learn that the company developed from a small group and began life as the Lviv Youth Theater-Drama Studio in March 1988. It was officially designated the Les Kurbas Theater in October 1990.

"That was like a reward that was given to us by the authorities; the name is renowned, and we felt highly honored," observes Mr. Kuchynsky. Les Kurbas is the brilliant Ukrainian theater director who worked in Kyiv in the 1920s and 1930s; he perished in a Soviet concentration camp sometime after 1937.

For the first two years, the company had no quarters. Sometime after the group settled in the theater it now calls home, it learned that the building had served the famous Les Kurbas Theater Company. It is a fitting coincidence, for there are distinct parallels between the Kurbas and the Kuchynsky concepts and treatment of theater.

The new company has been troubled by two major problems: censorship and a lack of funds. Its premier production in 1988, "The Garden of Non-Dissolving Sculptures," based on two works by leading contemporary poet Lina Kostenko, was forbidden because it had not been previewed by censors, as Soviet rules dictated. To get around the ban, the company refunded money to ticket holders and invited the public to attend performances billed as "rehearsals."

Later that same year, there were some problems in presenting unpublished works of the dissident poet Vasyl Stus. Theatergoers insisted on seats for Friday's performance (the company stages productions on weekends only), refusing to buy tickets for Saturday and Sunday performances because (they explained) the authorities would most certainly prohibit any Stus work after the first night.

Once Ukraine became independent, it was possible to undertake Dostoyevsky or any work the company wished to stage. "Now only our financial problems smother us," Mr. Kuchynsky declares with a sigh.

Company members shrug off any suggestion that actors are worse off than other citizens, pointing out that life is difficult for everyone in economically depressed Ukraine. As a professional theater company, the Les Kurbas Theater receives support from the regional administration, although this is minimal and just enough for the theater to continue to exist.

The company feels it is a pity that civic authorities and the Ministry of Culture do not have the means to assist a group that officially represents the Ukrainian theater.

Mr. Kuchynsky explains: "Our theater is the only Ukrainian-speaking theater that represents Ukraine at international festivals. From that aspect, it would be desirable for us to produce more plays. We stage one production each year or every one-and-a-half to two years. We simply do not have the money to do more. When we are invited to a festival, the costs of our trip are financed by the government. We go to the festival, we perform, we return, and that's the end of it."

He says he believes "something should be done so that groups that represent Ukraine might have the means to work at full strength and stage first-rate productions."

Although the state pays for the actors' subsistence, funds for set decoration, lighting, costumes and other theatrical expenses must be found elsewhere. Financing is required for the company's current project to mark the 125th anniversary of the birth of poetess Lesia Ukrainka, specifically "The Sky-Blue Rose" and "The Stone Master," both already in rehearsal.

What keeps the company alive and functioning is the assistance proffered by organizations like the Soros Foundation (which financed the U.S. trip), and donations from individuals, business firms and organizations (in the U.S., the Ukrainian Journalists' Association and the Ukrainian Language Society). For the U.S. sojourn, Ukrainian Americans are providing accommodations, meals, transportation, contacts and other assistance. Company members say they are particularly grateful to Olha Kuzmowycz and Yuriy Tarnawsky.

Their spirits are uplifted, report the actors and director, by the response of audiences everywhere, in Ukraine, Russia, Poland and the U.S. Mr. Vodychev remarks, "We have fans in Kyiv, and we are very popular in Kharkiv; they're awaiting our next visit. The public was entranced by our performance of 'The Court of Henry III' and sat through four hours without anyone leaving the theater."

Language poses no barrier to understanding the productions of the Les Kurbas Theater, according to Mr. Kuchynsky and his colleagues. Theatergoers who respond to the mood and atmosphere of a performance, listening "with heart and soul," seem to understand the plot and characterizations better than Ukrainian-speaking patrons who absorb every word of dialogue.

Participation by the company in annual festivals and international projects bring rewards. Prizes and awards are earned for outstanding performances, and there are opportunities to exchange ideas and learn new teaching methods that can be used to

change the old repertoires and stereotyped methodologies still prevalent in Ukraine.

"Whether it's Grotovski [in Italy] or Vasiliev [in Russia] or Anne Bogart [of the New York-based, Saratoga International Theater Institute] or the Yara Arts Group [in New York], all these exchanges of knowledge and experience are important," Mr. Kuchynsky declares. "This knowledge can be amassed in Ukraine so that young people who work in our theater and other theaters can benefit from it."

For Ms. Polovynka and Mr. Vodychev, the workshops conducted by the Les Kurbas Theater are extremely vital, and they offer their views on this subject.

Mr. Polovynka observes that the training workshops which are part of the theater's activity (workshops, rehearsals, performances) provide a way "to achieve some kind of dramaturgy, to find oneself as an actor and as an individual, and also to find a common language with actors from other theaters. Training workshops enable us to associate on an international level."

Mr. Vodychev adds his evaluation: "Workshops are necessary both for the working actors, to check on the development of their own interpretations and expressions and to determine whether they are still on the right course, as well as for the development of the young actors who come to our theater."

A final question from me, about the future of the Les Kurbas Theater, brings a thoughtful answer from Mr. Kuchynsky: "The future of the theater depends on how serious we are, how responsible we are, how we apply ourselves to build a theater that is a living culture."

As I leave the conference room, I overhear the threesome discussing a newly scheduled engagement – a performance of "Games for Faust" in Maplewood, N.J., on March 31.

I stop to jot a memo in my notebook, not the Maplewood date (I've already seen "Faust") but a reminder to myself: "Drop in at 3 Les Kurbas St. on next trip to Lviv."



Yuriy Tarnawsky

Andriy Vodychev (Raskolnikov) and Oleh Drach (Svidrigaylov) in a scene from "Games for Faust."

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Ukrainian pro hockey update
by Ihor Stelmach

A great big deal

Speculation had swirled around Wayne Gretzky for several weeks and the strain of worrying about his future showed on the boyish face of hockey's greatest player.

Finally, on February 27, it was over. The sport's career-leading scorer was on his way to the St. Louis Blues.

For days he politely gave the same answers to the same questions asked by packs of reporters, friends and fans.

"It's mentally draining," he said of the inquisitions. "Every city I went to, hordes of people wanting to know what I was doing."

Gretzky rejected a contract that would have allowed him to finish his career with the Los Angeles Kings.

"In life, strange things happen, and this is one of them," he said. "No one has the answer on why it's come to this."

The trade ended a turbulent period that began in early January when the Great One went public with his demands that the Kings upgrade their talent, or he would consider leaving.

It was a shocking stance for a man known as hockey's nicest player, on and off the ice.

"It's been the hardest six weeks of my career," he said. "It's been unfair for me and my wife."

Gretzky, 35, leaves the city where he achieved all of his major NHL records, including scoring his 802nd goal on March 23, 1994, making him the game's career scoring leader.

His only failure was not helping the Kings win the Stanley Cup - his greatest desire upon arriving from Edmonton nearly eight years ago.

The Kings came close to a championship in 1993, losing 4-1 to Montreal in the finals, including three straight overtime defeats.

"In a lot of ways, it was as much fun to get to the finals that year as it was winning four championships with Edmonton, because we weren't expected

to get there, and we did," Gretzky said. "That was probably my best memory here and something I'll never forget."

A nine-time MVP, Gretzky won four Stanley Cups with Edmonton before a blockbuster deal sent him to the Kings.

His arrival on August 9, 1988, sparked hockey interest in southern California and ensured regular sellouts at the Forum. Gretzky is credited with bringing two NHL expansion teams to the state; getting new rinks built to handle the explosion of junior hockey teams; and spawning the in-line skating craze.

"We did a lot of great things here in eight years," he said.

Losing in the finals marked the beginning of a free-fall that hit bottom last year before new ownership took over the financially strapped franchise.

Gretzky watched closely as close friend and former owner Bruce McNall was convicted of bank fraud, and he cringed as his teammates' paychecks bounced until Edward Roski and Phillip Anschutz bought the team.

"These owners came in and had to clean up a lot of mess," he said. "I felt the brunt of that more than anyone, because I knew more than anyone what was going on."

But even Gretzky didn't know a trade would come off when he departed an afternoon meeting on February 27 at the Forum, still undecided about signing a new deal. He was making \$6.5 million this year and becomes a free agent this summer.

Los Angeles offered a contract covering the rest of his playing days, and then wanted to move him into a front office role for an additional five to 10 years, Kings governor Bob Sanderman claimed. Financial terms were not disclosed.

"It was very difficult because they were so classy to me," Gretzky said. "It was a hard decision at home with my wife."

In the end, the lure of playing under Blues coach Mike Keenan and alongside

(Continued on page 11)

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Pro hockey...

(Continued from page 10)

Brett Hull, and living in his wife's hometown of St. Louis won out.

"It wasn't a financial issue," he said. "We felt it was probably best for the Kings, the city, the fans and myself that we head in this direction."

The Kings traded their franchise player for rookies Craig Johnson, Patrice Tardif and young prospect Roman Vopat, in addition to a fifth-round draft pick this year and a first-round selection in 1997.

"These are their three best prospects without a doubt. What we did was the best for the Kings," General Manager Sam McMaster said. "The first-round draft selection in 1997 is huge for the Kings."

Hrudey joins Kings' crease

The weeks kept flying by, and suddenly it had been six months between NHL starts for 34-year-old Los Angeles Kings' Ukrainian goaltender Kelly Hrudey.

Hrudey finished last season facing a barrage of Winnipeg Jets' shots on May 2, 1995, when the Kings won on the second to last day of the season. His next start did not come until November 22, 1995, against the New York Islanders.

Hrudey suffered a torn ligament in the ankle just before training camp, and his rehabilitation turned into a nightmare as he was beset by numerous setbacks.

"I didn't realize it was six months, although it seemed like it at times," said Hrudey, who is in his 13th NHL season.

Hrudey's return was a rocky one, a 5-2 loss to the Islanders, in which he was victimized by his porous defense. The Islanders outshot the Kings 39-18, and had two power-play goals; rookie defenseman Aki Berg committed a major blunder - a blind drop pass behind his own net on the Islanders' third goal.

"I was very happy the game hadn't passed me by, as far as speed and what-not," Hrudey said. "It wasn't the result I wanted, but nobody beat me with a straight shot - that's one of the barometers for whether I'm feeling comfortable."

For goaltender Byron Dafoe, one sub-par outing rarely kept him on the bench very long, as coach Larry Robinson promptly put him back in the crease for

the next game.

But that was earlier in the season.

The combination of a surging Hrudey and a struggling Dafoe has forced Robinson to alter what had been a consistent rotation. Hrudey went through an eight-game stretch in which his goals against average was 1.80 and his save percentage was 95.3.

Meanwhile, Dafoe hadn't won a game in a stretch of four appearances, going 0-3-0, and getting pulled twice.

Robinson said he still has faith in Dafoe's abilities.

"I still believe in both my goalies," Robinson said. "Without them we wouldn't even be close. (Goaltending) is the farthest thing from my mind right now."

UKRAINIAN UTTERINGS: In a February 3 overtime win over the Isles, the Caps' Peter Bondra tallied four goals, including three in the third period...Ukrainians making waves during All-Star skills competitions included Oleg Tverdovsky (fastest skater while still with Anaheim) and Washington's Peter Bondra (hardest shot and fastest skater)... The lowest-paid NHLer, Vancouver's Jim Sandlak, making \$125,000 a year, was recently released by the Canucks. It is doubtful Sandlak will see NHL rinks again. Mighty Ducks' GM Jack Ferreira said much-improved Oleg Tverdovsky used to be an equal opportunity defenseman: "He'd create chances at both ends of the rink." Ferreira said the 19-year-old is much more consistent as a sophomore than he was as an NHL rookie last season. Apparently Tverdovsky was so consistent this year, he was quickly traded to Winnipeg in early February. The Ducks picked up super-scorer Teemu Selanne...Wayne Gretzky was selected NHL Player of the Week for the 41st time, but only the sixth since joining the Kings...One of the most over-looked stories the past two seasons is Peter Bondra's amazing scoring contribution to the Washington Capitals. He led the NHL by a significant margin last season, accounting for 25 percent of all Washington goals. Three players tied for second, scoring 19 percent of their teams' goals. In the first half of 1995-1996, Bondra upped his share to about the 30 percent mark...



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MEETING WILL BE ATTENDED BY:

Alexander G. Blahitka, UNA Treasurer

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Ukraine's Foreign...

(Continued from page 2)

Ukraine, as a founding member of the Commonwealth of Independent States, from the very beginning of the CIS's existence has followed a course aimed at deepening and broadening equal and mutually advantageous cooperation within the framework of the Commonwealth, and consequently declares that the forms of its participation as well as its status in the Commonwealth of Independent States are determined in accordance with legislative acts adopted by the Supreme Council of Ukraine during the ratification of the agreement on the establishment of the CIS, and with relevant reservations. Ukraine will continue to act with the understanding that the establishment of the CIS permitted, under new historical

conditions, the preservation of the close and multilateral ties that existed between the republics of the former Soviet Union, and that the formation of the CIS prevented the spread of dangerous tendencies on the territory of the former USSR that could lead to general instability and serious conflicts.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine is forced to state that in the context of continuous strengthening and deepening of bilateral as well as multilateral ties within the framework of the CIS, certain political forces in some of the member-states of the Commonwealth have taken steps that could substantively complicate the situation in the CIS. It is precisely in this manner that the above-mentioned decision of the State Duma of the Russian Federation could be considered.

Kyiv, March 15, 1996

UNA executives...

(Continued from page 5)

than the previous year.

Income from advertising was \$315,102, a figure higher by \$13,931. Donations to the press fund amounted to \$26,555, or \$16,403 more than in 1994.

In general, expenses were lower in 1995 than in the previous year. The only exception was the cost of postage. All expenses totaled \$1,694,716, a sum \$67,135 less than in 1994. Notable decreases were seen in salaries (\$67,578), correspondents' payments (\$9,335), newsprint/paper (\$18,416), and in the costs of printing (\$9,155).

Postage costs, grew to a total of \$564,116, an increase of \$42,447. Postage costs for one year's subscription to Svoboda are \$47.70; this means that in the case of a single member's subscription fee, a sum of only \$27.30 is left over to cover all other expenses associated with producing Svoboda.

In terms of subscribers, the news about the newspapers was not as good, as the number of Svoboda subscribers fell by 1,240, while the number of Weekly subscribers decreased by 1,063 during the one-year period between February 1995 and February 1996.

Mrs. Diachuk also reported on the operations of Soyuzivka. In 1995, she noted, the costs of accommodations was separated from the cost for meals and, in general, this has proved to be successful. Income increased by \$76,000 and expenses decreased by \$267,356. The resort's snack bar has been rebuilt at a cost of \$82,000 and has been transformed into the Q-Cafe.

Other developments reported by Mrs. Diachuk included the following:

- The UNA's campaign to raise donations for the National Olympic Committee of Ukraine has already yielded \$10,470, and a check for \$10,000 was presented in February to Valeriy Borzov, president of the NOC Ukraine and minister of youth and sport.

- Nearly \$25,000 has been raised for the UNA Fund for the Rebirth of Ukraine as a result of Christmas card sales among Svoboda subscribers.

- Preparations for the 10th anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster are

under way. The president noted that the UNA is part of the Chernobyl Challenge '96 coalition indirectly, as a member-organization of the Ukrainian American Coordinating Council.

- The first issue of the UNA's bilingual newsletter to members, called The UNA in Focus, has already been prepared and will soon be mailed to all members whose current addresses are known to the Home Office.

- The UNA is preparing to set up a homepage on the Internet. Two UNA advisors, Stefko Kuropas and Nick Diakiwsky, are heading the project.

- Dr. Myron Kuropas's history of the UNA is nearly ready to be printed. The photos for the book are now being prepared for publication.

- The UNA president participated in a meeting organized by the Central and East European Coalition with President Bill Clinton.

- The UNA president attended a reception hosted by Ukraine's Ambassador Yuri Shcherbak in Washington to focus on the U.S. visit of President Leonid Kuchma.

Executive Committee decisions

The Executive Committee reviewed information presented by Mrs. Diachuk on four hotels in downtown Toronto that could host the UNA's 1998 convention. A decision was made to hold the convention at the Hilton International.

As regards mergers with two Ukrainian fraternal organizations, the UNA officers reported that several meetings had been held with the Ukrainian Fraternal Association and the Ukrainian National Aid Association of America and that negotiations are continuing. The discussion of conditions for the mergers was off the record.

Finally, the executives turned their attention to the matter of selling the UNA headquarters building. Several potential buyers had viewed the premises, but no bid has been accepted. In the meantime, the UNA is looking for a new home, probably in Morris County in New Jersey.

At the conclusion of their meeting, the UNA officers voted to financially support the two Florida concerts that will honor Ukrainian composer Mykola Kolessa.

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If you are not receiving regular delivery of The Weekly, we urge you to file a complaint at your local post office. This may be done by obtaining the U.S. Postal Service Consumer Card and filling out the appropriate sections.

State Department...

(Continued from page 1)

detainees and prisoners. Conditions of pre-trial detention "routinely fail to meet basic human rights standards," the report says, but adds that prison conditions for convicted inmates "appear to comply fully with minimum international standards."

The leadership of both the executive and judicial branches has supported the idea of an independent judiciary, but reforms of the existing system have not been completed, the report says, and they are now pending adoption of the new constitution. Neither has the Constitutional Court been appointed to resolve disputes over new legislation, the report adds.

Many of Ukraine's prosecutors and judges were appointed in Soviet times when, according to the report, political influence was the accepted norm. "It is unclear how free the judiciary is from influence and intimidation by the executive branch of government," the report notes. On the regional level, it says, judges, prosecutors and other court officials "appear to remain closely attuned to local government interests."

The State Department report found fault with the practice of having the prosecutor, and not a judge, issue search warrants, that the Security Service of Ukraine can conduct intrusive surveillance and searches without any warrant, and that the police can stop vehicles arbitrarily and without probable cause.

The report notes that a 1991 law provides for freedom of speech and the print media, and criticism of the government is tolerated. The broadcast media, however, remain under state ownership and management.

Freedom of assembly is curtailed by a law stipulating that permission for a demonstration must be obtained 10 days before a planned demonstration. The report also blamed elite Interior Ministry troops for using "excessive force" in July 1995 in breaking up the funeral of Patriarch Volodymyr in front of St. Sophia Cathedral.

Also circumscribed "by an onerous registration requirement" is the freedom of association, the report says. Organizations must register with the government, and many government agencies with registration functions have, at one time or another, abused them "to prevent citizens from exercising their right of free association for purposes of which the government does not approve."

The report notes that there is no state religion in Ukraine and that the government has not interfered in the registration of minority religions requested by Ukrainian citizens. Non-native religious organizations, however, have had their activities restricted by a law passed by the Supreme Council in December 1993.

A citizen's freedom of movement within the country is no longer restricted by law, the report says, but there is a requirement for registering one's residence and place of employment, without which a person can be denied access to such social benefits as free medical care.

Ukraine allows its citizens the right to change the government, and, the report adds, they have by electing a new presi-

dent and a new Parliament. As for the role of women in politics, the report notes that they are well-represented on the local and oblast levels and less so at the national level, where there is one woman of Cabinet rank and 16 deputies in Parliament.

The Ukrainian Constitution prohibits discrimination based on sex, race and other such considerations. The report adds, however, that the government "has not taken steps to effectively enforce" these prohibitions. Prosecutions for sexual harassment or discrimination are unheard of, the report says, and dark-skinned young men who match the Caucasus criminal stereotype are frequently harassed by the police.

The State Department says the Ukrainian government is publicly committed to the defense of children's rights and that there is no pattern of familial or societal abuse of children in Ukraine.

On the rights of religious minorities, the report notes that Jews, the second largest minority in Ukraine, "have expanded opportunities to pursue their religious and cultural activities."

"The national government has protected the rights of the Jewish community and speaks out against anti-Semitism," the report states. "However, non-governmental manifestations of anti-Semitism continue, exemplified by the growth of UNA/UNSO, an ultra-nationalist extremist group...."

On the positive side, the report points out that Lviv Oblast authorities, after several years of delay, have allowed the local Jewish community to erect a monument at the site of a World War II German concentration camp and that the government "made a major effort" to ensure that pilgrims of the Bratslav Hasidic Jewish sect were able to visit the tomb of their founding rabbi in Uman on the occasion of the Jewish new year.

The report noted "only isolated cases of ethnic discrimination in Ukraine," thanks to the 1991 Law on National Minorities, which "played an instrumental role in preventing ethnic strife by allowing individual citizens to use their respective national languages in conducting personal business and by allowing minority groups to establish their own schools."

Russian speakers in eastern Ukraine complained about the increased use of Ukrainian in schools and in the media, the report said, and in the Crimea, the Ukrainian and Tatar minorities "credibly complain of discrimination by the Russian majority and are demanding that Ukrainian and the Crimean Tatar language be given equal treatment to Russian."

As for human rights in Russia, the State Department Human Rights Report noted that, "while Communist totalitarianism has been succeeded by electoral democracy, the future (there) remains uncertain."

The reporting year 1995 "saw continued and widespread use of Russian military force against civilians in Chechnya, the undermining of official institutions established to monitor human rights, and the continued violation of rights and liberties by security forces."

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7:00 p.m. Dr. David R. Marples, professor of history at the University of Alberta, and director of the Stasiuk Program on Contemporary Ukraine with the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies. A lecture "Chernobyl: Ten Years Later", with question and answer period following. Convocation Hall, University of Toronto.

APRIL 22-29 PHOTO EXHIBITION

"Remember Chernobyl - 10th Anniversary of Chernobyl disaster"
Toronto City Hall rotunda

FRIDAY, APRIL 26

7:00 p.m. Requiem Service
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7:45 p.m. Candlelight procession to Convocation Hall, University of Toronto

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Vitaliy Keis...

(Continued from page 3)

positive factor, because I was considered one of "the locals." I'm from Donbas and they knew that. I was born only 32 kilometers outside of Slavianske. A Halychany (Galician) would not have had the same reception or impact. On television I always, as did they, highlighted my local origins. Even the Russian papers emphasized that my great-great-grandfather was from the Donbas.

Locals found my passionate patriotism a bit novel and at times incomprehensible. They are patriotic, but they were totally amazed that someone who had left so long ago would express such a strong bond with and fervor for his country and people. They could not understand why I acted like a "Halychany-Bandiora," although I must say they were very pleased with this. Second, they were impressed that after 50 years abroad I spoke fluent and "normal" Ukrainian. The students and youths were particularly influenced by this. They would frequently ask me "Don't you speak English over there?" And I would respond that I speak Ukrainian much of the time back in the U.S. This was a wonder to them. Even a pro-Communist journalist wrote that he believes I am from the Donbas, because I have so many relatives here, but that he cannot refute the possibility that I was sent here by the CIA.

Taking the above into account, what advice could you give to Ukrainian Americans spending time in eastern Ukraine, perhaps as part of the Ukrainian National Association's Teaching English in Ukraine program, taking into account the fact that most Ukrainian Americans have roots in

western Ukraine, with its allegedly different mentality?

Well, first I would always emphasize that I am a Ukrainian and naturally my local roots. It is hard for me to give this sort of advice, because I am one of them (the Donbas people). I understand their psychology. My parents were from there, they spoke the same "surzhyk." It is best to be understanding about the finer points of the language issue. Speak Ukrainian all the time, but do not correct people when they use Russisms like "da," as this is very confrontational. Remember that not all Ukrainian speakers are Ukrainian patriots, just as many Russian speakers are very patriotic Ukrainians.

Two days after arriving in Donetsk, where, incidentally, I lectured for one week at the university, I met an elderly Ukrainian man who spoke only Russian. He told me he spoke no Ukrainian because his father had been ashamed of the language; he in turn, was ashamed of being unable to speak it. But in his old age languages are not learned with ease or speed.

So who is the real Ukrainian, this old gentleman, or some knave with a last name ending in "-enko" but who writes that the Russian-speaking population is being threatened with forced Ukrainianization and ethnic cleansing in the Donbas? Precisely for this reason, confrontation should be used only in those moments where blatant Russification or Ukrainophobia stare you in the face. And there confrontation must be resolute and unwavering, regardless of whether you hail from the eastern or western parts of Ukraine.

Now the last question, on a different tack. Last summer Ostankino Russian Television was relegated to a secondary channel by the Ukrainian authorities. What effect has this had on the viewing habits of Donbas residents?

I can answer only based on anecdotal evidence. Most of the television programs are in Russian, while the radio is chiefly Ukrainian. So that's good, especially the fact that radio broadcasts from Kyiv are listened to widely by the locals. Only a few hours of Donetsk radio programs break the Ukrainian dominance of the spectrum. However, Ukrainian television programs are generally less interesting and/or of poorer quality than their Russian counterparts, with the result that both the local population and I (if I had the time to sit down and watch), would favor the Russian programming. But this is a problem that the Ukrainian government can and must solve, the sooner the better.

At this point I would like to thank several organizations which have contributed significantly towards helping make my stay in Slavianske a success and have supported efforts to help Ukrainianization continue in the Donbas area. I am especially grateful to the League of Ukrainian Orthodox Sisterhoods in the U.S.A. for providing scholarship/stipend funds for five students at the State Pedagogical Institute in Slavianske and four students at Donetsk State University. Likewise, I thank from the bottom of my heart the Coordinating Committee to Aid Ukraine for their funding of 64 Xeroxed copies of Ukrainian émigré literature texts and for funding the shipment of seven large boxes of specialized literature to the institute.

In the near future I will be organizing an effort to provide donations of funds, texts and the like to the institute to support, among other things, the production of a Ukrainian-language student periodical there, as well as to support the faculty and students of the Institute, with Prof. Horbachuk at their helm, in their important work of Ukrainianizing the Donbas - step by step and bit by bit.

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Newsbriefs

(Continued from page 2)

feel that agreements recently reached between the presidents of Belarus and Russia did not infringe on Belarus' sovereignty. Mr. Statkevich cautioned, however, that the creation of supranational structures and the presence of foreign troops on Belarusian territory, which are ignored by the state-controlled media, do present a threat to the country's sovereignty. (Reuters)

Gas leak kills six in southern Ukraine

ODESSA — A gas leak in a tower block killed six people on March 20 and left three others in the hospital in this southern port city, officials said the same day. A civil defense spokesman said the six victims died in their sleep. Emergency services had treated the others and taken them to the hospital. The cause of the accident is under investigation. Accidents with gas pipes and other public utilities are common throughout the territory of the former USSR as maintenance has declined sharply. (Reuters)

UT blaze ascribed to negligence

KYIV — The March 9 fire that caused major damage to Ukrainian Television and Radio's main studios here was apparently caused by employee negligence, a special investigative team announced on March 10. A Ministry of Internal Affairs spokesman said that a UT employee had not followed fire prevention guidelines, which may well have led to the fire. The suspect's name has not been released. (Respublika)

It's lights out for 7,000 enterprises...

KYIV — Energy Minister Oleksiy Shcheberstov on March 12 said power has been cut to 7,000 factories that have failed

to pay their electricity bills, Reuters reported. Mr. Shcheberstov said more than 40,000 enterprises have outstanding bills amounting to \$980 million, meaning that 30 percent of electricity and 50 percent of heating has been supplied for nothing. He stressed that the Energy Ministry could not "carry such a burden for very long." The country's energy suppliers have been under great strain because of unusually cold temperatures, a coal miners' strike, and Russia's decoupling Ukraine from their joint power grid after Ukraine began using more than its normal share of electricity. (OMRI Daily Digest)

...as rent, utility subsidies face the axe

KYIV — Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Pynzenyk said Ukraine will cut subsidies for consumer rents and utilities by 20 percent, Ukrainian agencies reported on March 12. He added that the government is planning to eliminate these subsidies altogether in 1997. (OMRI Daily Digest)

Sarcophagus to last 10-15 years

KYIV — Ukrainian Minister of the Environment Yuriy Kostenko said the steel-and-concrete tomb encasing the Chernobyl nuclear reactor will last only another 10-15 years, reported UNIAN on March 16. That is half the time originally estimated, Mr. Kostenko said, and hastens the need to extract the damaged reactor's remaining 200 tons of nuclear fuel and 3,000 tons of water. The process of removing the waste could cause some radioactive leakage and threaten the Dnipro River. Mr. Kostenko also said there was no sense in continuing the resettlement of people still living in contaminated areas to other regions because the radioactivity had decreased and government funds would be better spent on clean-up, improved medical care and applying alternative farming methods. (OMRI Daily Digest)

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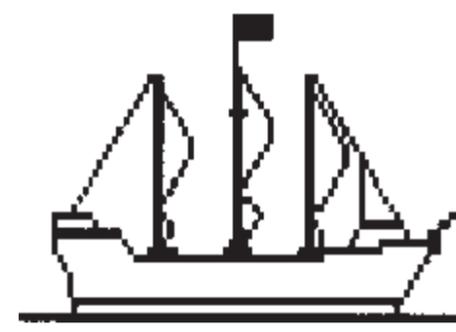
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PREVIEW OF EVENTS

Friday, March 29
Rescheduled due to weather conditions

NEWARK, N.J.: The Rukh Educational Foundation of New Jersey hosts a forum with Prof. Vitaliy Keis of Rutgers University, who will speak on "The Donbas: Neglected Battlefield for National Identity." Prof. Keis taught at the State Pedagogical Institute in Slavianske, Ukraine, during the fall 1995 semester. The event, in the auditorium of St. John Ukrainian Catholic Church, starts at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call (201) 762-0211.

Friday - Sunday, March 29 - 31

CLEVELAND: The Ukrainian Museum-Archives presents an Easter Bazaar at their premises, 1202 Kenilworth Ave. Pysanky and supplies, ceramics, artwork, photographs, jewelry, beadwork, books and greeting cards will be available. A demonstration and film on pysanka-making will be shown. Museum hours: Friday, 7-9 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sunday, 1-5 p.m. For further information, call (216) 781-4329.

Sunday, March 31

NORTH WINDHAM, Conn.: Doryshka Ukrainian Dance Ensemble hosts a pancake breakfast on Palm Sunday, 8 a.m.-noon at the Ukrainian National Home, Route 6. There will also be a bake sale and raffles. Donation: adults, \$3.50; children 12 and under, \$2.50. For more information, call (860) 423-9564.

WHIPPANY, N.J.: All are invited to the Annual Easter Bazaar sponsored by the UCCA, Morris County Branch, from 10:30 a.m. at St. John Ukrainian Catholic Church, Jefferson Road and Route 10 East. For more information, call (201) 989-1988.

MAPLEWOOD, N.J.: The Burgdorff Cultural Center presents the Les Kurbas Theater from Lviv in "Games or Faust," based on Fyodor Dostoyevsky's "Crime and Punishment." The matinee is at 3 p.m. Tickets: adults, \$12; children and seniors, \$10. For reservations, call (201) 378-2133. Tickets are also available at Robin Hutchins Gallery, 179 Maplewood Ave., Maplewood, N.J. For directions call (201) 763-9124.

CLIFTON, N.J.: The annual Easter Bazaar will be held at Holy Ascension Ukrainian Orthodox Church, 635 Broad St., at 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Come for the pysanky, egg-decorating supplies, breads, pastries, lunch and take-out. Free admission. For more information, call (201) 777-4920.

Tuesday, April 2

EDMONTON: The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies and the Ukrainian Professional and Business Club invite all to the 31st annual Shevchenko Lecture on "Chornobyl: Its Health, Environmental and Economic Impact on Ukraine." The lecture, by Dr. David Marples, professor, department of history and classics and director, Stasiuk Program, CIUS, starts at 7:30 p.m. at 2-115 Education North, University of Alberta. A social follows the lecture at the Faculty Club; cash bar. For more information, call CIUS at (403) 492-2972.

Thursday, April 4

CAMBRIDGE, Mass.: The Harvard Ukrainian Studies Institute invites all to "Ethno-political Problems in Contemporary Ukraine," a lecture by Serhij Rymarenko, Institute of Ethnic and Political Studies, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and visiting scholar at the institute. The lecture starts at 4 p.m. at the seminar room, 1583 Massachusetts Ave. Free admission. For more information, call (617) 495-4053.

"Assassination" screenings continue

NEW YORK — The Ukrainian Congress Committee of America and Oles-Film present screenings of "Assassination," a film about the murder of Stepan Bandera, leader of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists. The film, which has been touring North America during the past months, will be screened in the following locations during the coming weeks:

- Saturday, March 30, at 6 p.m. — Passaic, N.J., at the Ukrainian Center, 240 Hope St.;
- Sunday, March 31, at 6:30 p.m. — Whippany, N.J., at St. John's Church hall, Route 10 and Jefferson Road;
- Saturday, April 6, at 5 p.m. — Yonkers, N.Y., at the Ukrainian Youth Center, 301 Palisade Ave.;
- Saturday, April 20, at 5 p.m. — Newark, N.J., St. John Ukrainian Catholic School, Sanford Ave.;
- Sunday, April 21, at 4 p.m. — Uniondale, N.Y., St. Volodymyr Parish Center, 226 Uniondale Ave.

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