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THE WEEKLY COMMENTATOR

UKRAINIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

Today is a far cry from the days of the years before when the observance of the anniversary of the Declaration of Ukrainian Independence in Kiev, ancient capital of Ukraine, on January 22, 1918, was observed by Ukrainian Americans alone, in form of commemorative exercises of various sorts. Within the past several years, the situation has changed. Now our fellow Americans, who are not of Ukrainian origin, are increasingly growing in number in the joining with us in observing this anniversary, and in the act of helping to advance the Ukrainian Cause.

Governors of States, mayors of cities, have formally proclaimed January 22nd as Ukrainian Independence Day. The Ukrainian blue and gold national banner will be flown tomorrow over City Halls and municipal parks.

As last year, prayers for Ukrainian national independence were offered, last Wednesday, January 19th, in the U. S. Senate and House of Representatives, by prelates of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and

the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The renewed energies of our Ukrainian Americans, the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, our press, are responsible for all this.

The prayer on Ukrainian Independence Day was offered in the House of Representatives by Monsignor Nicholas Babak, of St. Basil's Ukrainian Catholic College. The invocation in the Senate on the Ukrainian Independence Day was offered by Metropolitan Theodorovich of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

Governor Christian A. Herter of Massachusetts, Governor William G. Stratton of Illinois, Governor George M. Leader of Pennsylvania, and Governor Robert Meyner of New Jersey, officially proclaimed Ukrainian Independence Day.

The same was done also by Mayor Wagner of New York City, and mayors of Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, New Haven, Conn., Newark, N. J., Jersey City, N. J. and Youngstown, Ohio, and others as well.

Some texts of the above will appear in the forthcoming issue.

CHICAGOANS TO OBSERVE "UKRAINIAN DAY"

January 22nd of this year, Ukrainian Day will be observed this will be the 38th anniversary of the proclamation of the free and independent Ukrainian Republic, by a manifestation. The public Ukrainians the world



Members of the League of Americans of Ukrainian Descent State Organization of the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America and the Chicago Branch of the U.C.C.A. receive UKRAINIAN DAY PROCLAMATION from Mayor of the City of Chicago. From left to right, are: J. Mychalcmych, S. Kurovas, J. Duzansky, A. Zabrosky, Mayor Richard J. Daley, M. Siemens, T. Shpikula, H. Wjun, W. Lewyckyj, N. Domashevsky.

over and their friends will celebrate this day as a memorial to a once free Ukraine, while Ukrainian Americans will set aside this day, as well as week, to reassert their belief in the freedoms of all peoples and the reaffirm their conviction that tyranny and despotism cannot long prevail when men so believe.

In Chicago, Ill., the Ukrain-

JULIAN CHRISTMAS USHERED IN THROUGH CAROLING BY UKRAINIAN MALE CHORUS

(Allentown Chronicle and News, Allentown, Pa., Jan. 6, 1956)

Resounding on the street and in many a home tonight and tomorrow will be the greeting: "Khristos Razhdaysya."

Many people will have no idea of the meaning, but they will recognize a tone of pleasantness—even more so in the inevitable reply: "Slavim Yeho!"

The joyous greeting: "Christ is Born" and the reverent reply, "We praise him," are Julian calendar marks of Christmas.

In every Ukrainian home in Allentown tonight a dinner will be served with 12 "blessed foods." The Christmas holiday will continue through tomorrow, celebrated much in the manner of Christmas of two weeks ago, but adorned with innumerable charming customs which have been passed on from parents to children down through the ages.

Ukrainian Caroling

It is fitting indeed that tonight at 8 o'clock from station WSN, the traditional Ukrainian Christmas carols should be poured out onto the air waves, and again tomorrow, Julian Christmas day, over WKAP at 2:30 and finally Sunday at 1 p.m. over WSN.

These radio presentations climax a successful musical season of 20 concerts for the Ukrainian Male Chorus of the Lehigh Valley on the past year, six in the current holiday season.

Grand climax of the year will be the annual public Christmas concert at the Lehigh-Saengerbund Hall, 227 N. 5th St., at 7 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 15. On that occasion, for the first time, the chorus will appear in colorful attire: maroon kozoak-type trousers with gold waist sashes, and their handsome exquisitely embroidered blouses, which each member has individually styled in accordance with the expert handiwork usually of one of the feminine members of his family.

Christmas Celebrated by Ukrainian Group at Army Language School

"The Monterey Peninsula Herald" of Monterey, California reported (January 10, 1956 that on January 7th, "there were Ukrainians in our midst wishing others a merry Christmas. Among the people of the Army Language School this was an entire new phrase, for the Ukrainian language department was established in August, 1955, and for them it was the first Christmas celebrated in Monterey."

The report goes on to describe the Ukrainian Christmas Eve and Day customs in several paragraphs.

William Belyk; Financial Secretary, Adam Lesniak; Treasurer, John Butyn; Assistant Financial Secretary, Andrew Baron; Assistant Treasurer, Sam Sass; Controllers Michael Lytwyn, Frank Goy and Walter Bodnar.

Official installation, dinner and dance was combined with a gala Ukrainian New Year's party on January 14, 1956 at Sitch Hall, 506-508, 18th Ave., Newark, N. J. and was attended by 300 people.

Ontario, Cal. Museum Contains Artifacts of Ukraine From Ancients to Red

Under above head the the "Los Angeles Times" featured prominently, with illustrations, a report by Ann Frank about the Ukrainian National Museum and Library in Ontario, California, located at 312 East H Street.

Most of the items on display are the property of Kalerik Lissiuik, 122 E. Maple Avenue, who wants to acquaint the public with his native Ukraine's culture and customs, the "Times" writer reports.

Mr. Lissiuik, who formerly lived in New York, has been a soldier, industrialist, and motion picture producer. He served in the armed forces of the Ukrainian National Republic, before it fell to the Bolsheviks. He was sent to Siberia and escaped prison after two years and two months of a 20-year term, according to the account.

Lissiuik was in Carpatho-Ukraine at the time when Carpatho-Ukraine declared its independence in March, 1939. His son, who was filming scenes of the fighting between the Ukrainians and the invading Hungarians, was killed by the latter.

The "Times" article briefly summarizes Ukrainian history. Most of the articles in Lissiuik's collection were bought for a fraction of their true value.

"People just don't realize their value. To most of them it is just something old," he said, displaying a painting valued at \$5,000 that he purchased for \$47.

Museum Layout

In one room of the large, two-story house serving as the museum, Lissiuik and his assistant, Alexander Rishai, bind books and newspapers and make frames for the pictures. Another downstairs room contains the library which includes copies of a booklet written by Lissiuik, "For Land and Freedom."

Paintings of Ukrainian heroes, the country's elected leaders are hung on walls of two of the downstairs rooms, as are maps drawn in the 17th century showing the world as historians and map makers visualized it then.

A Living Record

An upstairs room has a representation of costumes of the country. Again, sharp yellows and reds are accented against backgrounds of black velvet. Pictures of interiors of Ukrainian homes indicate the people were fond of gay designs upon spotless white wall, use pleasing combinations of many colors in small patterns.

By establishing the museum, Lissiuik said he feels he will give following generations of Americans and former Ukrainians an insight into the country's ancestry.

"Some men live and die and leave no trace of their existence. This is what I will leave," the collector said. "The people of foreign countries have come here and have each contributed something to this country. If there is any culture, it is this mixture of all the cultures. A better understanding by one group for another is what will give the United States its great art, writings and philosophies."

students not only spoke, but understood the most difficult language after only four months of training, and without a trace of an accent, we were assured.

The innumerable dishes both of Christmas Eve and Christmas Day foods were not only prepared by the wives and families of the faculty, but were graciously served by these most charming ladies. There was kutia to start the meal; a variety of borsch; liver-filled and cabbage and egg filled rolls; there was stuffed meat rolls, kasha, meat and rice stuffed cabbage leaves, honey cake, and Napoleon cake, just to mention a few. Between courses, recorded Ukrainian music and group singing of students and faculty of Ukrainian Christmas songs added to the fun.

Hosting this historical initial Christmas dinner party, and launching a true understanding of Ukrainian Christmas

BENTON REPORTS ON HIS VISIT TO KIEV

William Benton, publisher of the Encyclopaedia Britannica and former U. S. Senator, travelled last October and November behind the Iron Curtain, with the objective of securing first-hand impressions of Communist propaganda, for a report to be published in the 1956 Britannica Book of the Year.

According to a press release issued from his office, he was able to dictate many tens of thousands of words shortly after his interviews, based on his notes.

Interviews Mayor

In his memorandum, entitled "A Visit to Kiev," Mr. Benton, who was formerly U. S. Assistant Secretary of State in charge of international information, tells of his interview with the O. I. Davydov, for the last seven years Mayor of Kiev, capital city of Ukraine and third in population and importance of the cities of the Soviet Union. Mr. Davydov is a mechanical engineer.

According to Mr. Benton, following the destruction of Kiev during the last war, the city is being systematically rebuilt. "Every building is new on Khreshchatik Street, which rivals in fame Moscow's Gorky Street and Leningrad's Nevsky Prospect." The tallest of buildings on this street are only seven stories high. The thoroughfare for the handful of automobiles and buses is some four or five times as wide as Fifth Avenue.

Mayor Davidov's 570,000,000-ruble city budget last year included the cost of 160,000 square metres of apartments, better than three times the pre-war rate.

Mr. Benton writes that he was the first American to visit Kiev's mayor. Until a couple of years ago, Kiev was a forbidden city. Like other cities in the Soviet Union, it was off bounds to foreign diplomats and journalists.

Accompanying Mr. Benton this trip was his assistant, Mr. Robert Tucker, an American specialist in Slavic studies who has previously served in the American Embassy, and is fluent in Russian and Ukrainian.

Talks With Kiev University Head

Only once did the two conduct an interview without one or both Intourist attaches who accompanied them. This was with Prof. Ischuk, Pro-Rector (Deputy Rector) of the Kiev University, and three members of his family. The rector is head of the Dept. of Ukrainian Language and Literature. Mr. Benton was informed by them that Ukraine contains 42,000,000 people. The mayor had previously told them that there's been no census in the Soviet Union since 1939. Prof. Ischuk correctly pointed the Ukrainian language and literature were not taught at the University in Czarist times.

The University of Kiev has high prestige in the Soviet Union. It has seven thousand students. Seventy percent are women. Only three hundred (the top percent) are graduate students. About two hundred are foreign students, from the so-called "people's democracies."

In Kiev there are twenty-nine independent "institutes" of higher learning. Many of these practice would be a part of the University. Prof. Ischuk

ORPHANAGE DONATION

As in previous years, the SS. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Holy Name Society of Jersey City raised funds at Christmas time for the benefit of the orphans under the care and supervision of the Good Sisters of St. Basil the Great in Philadelphia, Pa. This recent substantial contribution made, was in keeping with the annual custom established by the Society several years ago. Since that time it has been faithfully carried out each year.

