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\$1/\$2 in Ukraine

Yushchenko's Our Ukraine bloc wins nearly 25% of by-party vote in parliamentary elections

by Roman Woronowycz

Kyiv Press Bureau

KYIV – Viktor Yushchenko's Our Ukraine Bloc grabbed nearly a quarter of the by-party vote and led the way in the March 31 elections to Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada. It was the first time a political organization other than the Communists won the most votes in parliamentary elections. However, a strong showing by the pro-presidential For a United Ukraine in single-mandate district voting will give it the second largest number of seats in the next Verkhovna Rada.

Voter turnout was high by Western standards – nearly 65 percent – but less than usual for Ukraine, which generally can expect about 70 percent voter participation. Most active were voters in the western cities of Lviv, Ternopil, Rivne and Khmelnytskyi, all registering 70-75 percent participation. The least active were Crimean voters, 55 percent of whom turned out to cast ballots.

While only the international observer team from the Commonwealth of Independent States was ready to state that the elections were “super transparent” and “super democratic,” most observers – domestic and otherwise – said the various infractions and improprieties that did occur did not substantially alter the results.

President Leonid Kuchma, the “guarantor” of Ukraine's Constitution, according to the country's fundamental law,

thanked Ukrainian voters for their “high level of civic duty and consciousness” a day after the vote.

“The choice they made is the ultimate verdict. The will of the people cannot be doubted,” said Mr. Kuchma.

The president also said he is ready to cooperate with all the “constructive forces that are ready to share responsibility for the nation's future.”

Our Ukraine won a decisive victory over the Communist Party of Ukraine, which took second, and 31 other parties and blocs that had been registered for the third democratic elections to Parliament since Ukraine declared independence in 1991.

Four other political parties/blocs – less than had been anticipated – also gained the minimum 4 percent support from the Ukrainian electorate required to obtain parliamentary seats in the next Parliament.

While the Our Ukraine Bloc took 23.6 percent of the vote, the Communists took 20 percent. The For a United Ukraine Bloc came next with 11.81 percent, followed by the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc, with an unexpectedly strong 7.24 percent finish and the Socialist Party, equally surprising at 6.88 percent. The Social Democratic Party (United) qualified closest to the margin, with a disappointingly weak 6.27 voter support.

Ukraine's election law states that Verkhovna Rada seats

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AP/Viktor Pobedinsky

Viktor Yushchenko at a press conference on April 1.

Rada seat count

According to a report by Central Election Commission Chair Mykhailo Riabets delivered at a press conference on April 2, the following is a list of the seats currently held by various parties/blocs in the new Verkhovna Rada.

Seats won in by-party balloting:

Our Ukraine: 70
 Communist Party of Ukraine: 59
 For a United Ukraine: 36
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc: 21
 Socialist Party of Ukraine: 21
 Social Democratic Party (United): 18

Seats taken by party/bloc members who ran in single-mandate districts:

For a United Ukraine: 66
 Our Ukraine: 42
 Communist Party of Ukraine: 7
 Social Democratic Party (United): 5
 Democratic Party/Democratic Union: 4
 Socialist Party of Ukraine: 3
 Unity Bloc: 3
 Party of National Economic Development: 1
 Ukrainian Naval Party: 1

Seats won by independents who apparently have expressed allegiance to certain parties/blocs:

For a United Ukraine: 18
 Social Democratic Party (United): 3
 Our Ukraine: 1
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc: 1
 Democratic Party/Democratic Union: 1
 Unity Bloc: 1
 Ukrainian National Assembly/Ukrainian National Self-Defense: 1

Remaining independents: 67

International observers say elections free, but not fair

by Roman Woronowycz

Kyiv Press Bureau

KYIV – International observers from the West on hand for the March 31 parliamentary elections in Ukraine found them wanting in many aspects, as they reported at various press conferences held the day after the vote. Observer groups from both Europe and the United States graded these third elections to the Verkhovna Rada of independent Ukraine as free but not altogether fair, while underscoring that, nonetheless, improvements were evident.

Domestic observers also reported widespread infractions of election law and democratic procedures, but said that, overall, the improprieties did not significantly affect the outcome.

This year's parliamentary races were fraught with widespread accusations of voter intimidation, lack of access to the mass media for some candidates and the use of government resources to support favored candidates. While almost every defeated candidate and political organization had much to say about how voter fraud led to their downfall – and even the victorious parties noted their concerns about ballot falsifications – election day was much calmer than the run-up to it, according to initial reports filed by most observer groups.

The Committee of Ukrainian Voters, a civic organization that has established a reputable track record of observing elections in Ukraine over the past eight years, said during an April 1 press conference that many individual and minor infractions were registered across Ukraine by their 14,000 observers on March 31, but that, in general, “the voting took place in transparent circumstances and under many of the principles of democratic elections.” The CUV added that in the initial assessment there was “no reason to believe that the election results do not reflect the will of the citizens.”

The group underscored, however, that since the last elections the level of pressure by government officials and workers in campaigning in support of any party, which included direct pressure on individuals to vote for specific

candidates, had greatly increased.

Some 950 observers from many countries and international organizations on hand for the elections – including the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the European Union (EU), the Council of Europe (CE), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the U.S.-based International Republican Institute (IRI) – also observed Election Day polling in most of the regions of Ukraine. They agreed that, in general, the elections took place under democratic conditions.

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U.S. State Department comments on elections

Following is the full text of a statement on Ukraine's parliamentary elections issued by the U.S. Department of State and delivered on April 1 by Philip T. Reeker, deputy spokesman.

On March 31 the people of Ukraine went to the polls to select their Parliament. The Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe's Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) issued a preliminary statement today regarding the election, which pointed out that:

“The March 31 parliamentary elections indicated progress over the 1998 parliamentary polls, though “important flaws persist.”

“Improvements included a new election law that took into account international recommendations and a civil society engaged in the electoral process.

“However, a general atmosphere of distrust pervaded the pre-electoral environment due to factors

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ANALYSIS

Russia and the West compete over Kyiv's foreign orientation in the post-Kuchma era

by Nigel Pemberton
RFE/RL Newsline

The holding of Ukraine's third parliamentary elections on March 31 was only the prelude to presidential elections to be held in two and a half years when President Leonid Kuchma will step down after his second term ends. Russia and the West already have their respective favorite candidates, with Russia preferring Viktor Medvedchuk, head of the Social Democratic Party of Ukraine (United), and the West favoring Viktor Yushchenko, leader of Our Ukraine. Both candidates are in their 40s and the election of either will represent a changing of the guard from the older generation that has ruled Soviet and independent Ukraine to this point.

Russia is backing Mr. Medvedchuk because, of all the oligarchic parties, only the SDPU is able to enter Ukraine's elections as an independent force and still win more than the party of power, For a United Ukraine (FUU), which is composed of five parties. The SDPU is also the only oligarchic party with a recognizable leader who has presidential ambitions, and has strong ties to Russia through its heavy involvement in Ukraine's energy market. Ironically, the SDPU includes former President Leonid Kravchuk in its top ranks – someone who has always been disliked in Moscow.

Russia is strongly supporting Mr. Medvedchuk through Gleb Pavlovskii's Fund for Effective Politics. (Mr. Pavlovskii is Russian President Vladimir

Putin's image-maker.). The fund aims to depict Mr. Medvedchuk as a "statesman" and in a softer light, and has launched an image campaign depicting a casual Mr. Medvedchuk, sans tie and wearing a sweater, in an attempt to overcome his image as a cold leader who is distant from the public.

The use of Russian public relations experts in Ukraine began in the 1999 presidential elections, and they are likely to play an increasingly active role in the 2004 presidential elections. The difference between their activities and those of Western organizations and countries who have provided funds for Ukraine's civil society, media and election monitoring is that Russian involvement is non-transparent, never openly discussed and unaccountable.

Ukrainian pro-presidential election blocs – the main customers of Russian image-makers – therefore, have double standards when they accuse only the West of interference in Ukraine's affairs. (The only pro-presidential bloc to use a Western PR company is the Greens.)

Western assistance to Ukraine's elections was characterized in an interview in Holos Ukrainy by the head of FUU, Volodymyr Lytvyn, as "international administrative resources." Mr. Lytvyn was trying to evade the question of FUU monopolization of "domestic administrative resources" in the elections. U.S. Helsinki Commission members have ridiculed this as harking back to the Soviet era, when Western criticism of human rights abuses was condemned by the Soviet Union as "interference in

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Nigel Pemberton is a Toronto-based specialist in post-Soviet affairs.

Ukrainian election as "strategic football"

by Jan Maksymiuk
RFE/RL Newsline

President Leonid Kuchma on March 22 termed "unprecedented" the March 20 resolution by the U.S. House of Representatives urging the government of Ukraine to ensure a democratic, transparent and fair parliamentary election on March 31. "Are we a nation, or are we a football playing field for strategic partners?" Mr. Kuchma asked indignantly.

Last week, Russian Ambassador to Ukraine Viktor Chernomyrdin was quoted as saying that Russia is with those parties and election blocs in Ukraine that call for the development and deepening of relations between the two countries. He suggested that some constituent forces of Viktor Yushchenko's Our Ukraine bloc do not pursue such a goal, adding that this "cannot but worry us."

Other Russian officials and politicians were not so elusive about Moscow's political preferences in the Ukrainian ballot. Russian presidential administration chief Aleksandr Voloshin said that For a United Ukraine, the Social Democratic Party (United) of Ukraine, and the Communist Party of Ukraine are the forces that promote strengthening Russian-Ukrainian relations. "Unfortunately, [Our Ukraine]

includes political forces that have overtly anti-Russian positions," he added.

And Dmitrii Rogozin, the head of the Russian State Duma's International Relations Committee, noted that if "nationalist forces" win the upcoming parliamentary election in Ukraine, Moscow and Kyiv may face problems in bilateral relations. U.S. officials are extremely reserved about openly declaring with whom their political sympathies are in Ukraine, but it is no secret to anyone that Washington would like to see the pro-Western and pro-reform Yushchenko emerge as the winner of the March 31 vote. This position is widely shared in Europe. While not seeing Ukraine as ready for integration with Europe right now, European politicians seek to make the country a friendly buffer zone separating the expanding NATO and European Union from Russia.

"Ukraine has a European history, European life, and European civilization," OSCE Parliamentary Assembly head Adrian Severin asserted in Kyiv in March. But many in Ukraine, among both the electorate and politicians, have remained unimpressed.

Despite the fact that as many as 33 parties and blocs are vying for mandates in the 450-seat Verkhovna Rada, the current election seems to have polarized the Ukrainian electorate into two camps – one of the "Western option" (supporters of Our Ukraine) and the other of the

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Jan Maksymiuk is the Belarus, Ukraine and Poland specialist on the staff of RFE/RL Newsline.

NEWSBRIEFS

Yulia to Our Ukraine: join opposition

KYIV – Yulia Tymoshenko, the leader of the eponymous election bloc, told journalists on April 2 that the results of the parliamentary election mean a "crushing defeat" for the authorities, the UNIAN news service reported. She said that For a United Ukraine obtained some 12 percent of the vote mainly due to pressure, threats and vote rigging. She also said there is every chance to unite democratic forces in the Verkhovna Rada. Ms. Tymoshenko noted that Viktor Yushchenko's Our Ukraine, the Socialist Party and her bloc could pool efforts to form a democratic parliamentary majority and change the government. "All this again depends on a decision by the Yushchenko bloc. If he tries to seek compromises with a political force that is no longer present in society, that is with the government's team, these plans unfortunately will fail," 1+1 Television quoted her as saying. (RFE/RL Newsline)

PM doubts coalition with Communists

KYIV – Prime Minister Anatolii Kinakh said on April 2 that he is

"absolutely certain" that "official cooperation" between the For a United Ukraine bloc and the Communist Party in a parliamentary majority in the new parliament is "unreal and impossible," the UNIAN news agency reported. He added, however, that both groups could cooperate on individual issues. Kinakh also said the new Parliament has no "real chances" to amend the Constitution of Ukraine in line with the April 2000 referendum. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Leader to leave jail for Rada

KYIV – Andrii Shkil, the leader of the Ukrainian National Assembly-Ukrainian National Self-Defense (UNA-UNSO), was elected a national deputy to the Verkhovna Rada in a single-mandate constituency in Lviv Oblast, the UNIAN news service reported on April 2. Mr. Shkil has been in jail for more than a year, facing charges of organizing violent clashes with police during an anti-presidential protest in Kyiv on March 9, 2001. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Yushchenko cites setback to democracy

KYIV – Former Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko said on April 1 that the Ukrainian parliamentary ballot the previous day was held according to a "donor scenario," under which votes were taken from some parties and blocs and added to others, STB Television reported. He added that Our Ukraine's observers registered some 10,000 violations at polling stations and will prepare lawsuits within the next five days. "There is an impression that Ukrainian democracy will be set back by about four years," Mr. Yushchenko noted. (RFE/RL Newsline)

CIS, Russian monitors: vote was fair

MOSCOW – Some 200 CIS observers said in statement on April 1 that the March 31 parliamentary elections in Ukraine were "free, transparent, democratic and legitimate," ITAR-TASS reported. According to the UNIAN news service, a similar opinion was expressed by election monitors from the Russian State Duma. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Candidate killed on eve of ballot

IVANO-FRANKIVSK – Mykola Shkribliak, the vice-chairman of the Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast and an election candidate from the Social Democratic Party (United), died of gunshot wounds on March 30, resulting from an attack the previous night by unidentified gunmen,

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Clarification

In a news item headlined "Clarification," RFE/RL Newsline this week noted that the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists mentioned in an "RFE/RL Newsline" item filed on March 27 was registered by Ukraine's Ministry of Justice in 1993 under the legal name of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists in Ukraine. The group should not, however, be associated with the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists founded in 1929.

In addition, The Weekly on April 4 received a statement from the Kyiv-based leader of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, Mykola Plawiuk, in which he underscores that his organization has no relation to the OUN referred to in the RFE/RL item published last week. In fact, Mr. Plawiuk writes, the name of the OUN has been abused by various political circles, especially by Communist and pro-Russian forces, as they conduct anti-American campaigns. Mr. Plawiuk went on to suggest that, in fact, there is no such thing as an Anti-American Front in Ukraine, but that this is just another aspect of the rampant disinformation campaign aimed at discrediting Ukraine.

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ELECTION RESULTS: A look at the party balloting by oblast

Following are the results of the by-party balloting in each oblast of Ukraine, plus the cities of Kyiv and Sevastopol. Numbers listed are percentages of the total vote. (Parties receiving less than 4 percent are not listed.) The map below shows the party/bloc that earned the most votes in each oblast.

Autonomous Republic of Crimea

Communist Party – 34.03
 Social Democratic Party (United) – 12.49
 Our Ukraine Bloc – 9.90
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 5.86
 Russian Bloc – 4.71

Vynnytsia Oblast

Our Ukraine Bloc – 29.43
 Socialist Party – 21.26
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 13.48
 Communist Party – 11.71
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 6.28

Volyn Oblast

Our Ukraine Bloc – 57.53
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 13.33
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 7.91
 Communist Party – 5.33

Dnipropetrovsk Oblast

Communist Party – 31.85
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 11.44
 Social Democratic Party (United) – 9.58
 Our Ukraine Bloc – 6.33
 Winter Crop Generation Team – 4.67
 Natalia Vitrenko Bloc – 4.59
 Socialist Party – 4.43
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 4.32

Donetsk Oblast

For a United Ukraine Bloc – 36.84
 Communist Party – 29.75
 Social Democratic Party (United) – 4.64
 Natalia Vitrenko Bloc – 4.57

Zhytomyr Oblast

Our Ukraine Bloc – 21.95
 Communist Party – 18.86
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 12.79
 Socialist Party – 11.18

Social Democratic Party (United) – 7.25
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 6.66

Zakarpattia Oblast

Our Ukraine Bloc – 36.63
 Social Democratic Party (United) – 13.99
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 10.26
 Communist Party – 6.01
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 4.40

Zaporizhia Oblast

Communist Party – 33.40
 Social Democratic Party (United) – 10.66
 Our Ukraine Bloc – 7.93
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 7.91
 Natalia Vitrenko Bloc – 5.21

Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast

Our Ukraine Bloc – 74.64
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 9.60

Kyiv Oblast

Our Ukraine Bloc – 25.15
 Socialist Party – 12.44
 Communist Party – 10.90
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 10.54
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 9.78
 Social Democratic Party (United) – 4.48

Kirovohrad Oblast

Communist Party – 22.20
 Socialist Party – 15.16
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 13.29
 Our Ukraine Bloc – 10.01
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 9.86
 Social Democratic Party (United) – 6.37

Luhansk Oblast

Communist Party – 39.68
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 14.39
 Social Democratic Party (United) – 9.44
 Natalia Vitrenko Bloc – 4.41

Lviv Oblast

Our Ukraine Bloc – 63.88
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 17.15

Mykolaiv Oblast

Communist Party – 29.29
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 14.14

Social Democratic Party (United) – 12.09
 Our Ukraine Bloc – 5.99
 Socialist Party – 5.37
 Natalia Vitrenko Bloc – 4.94

Odesa Oblast

Communist Party – 26.19
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 14.32
 Social Democratic Party (United) – 8.00
 Socialist Party – 7.53
 Our Ukraine Bloc – 6.62
 Natalia Vitrenko Bloc – 4.17

Poltava Oblast

Socialist Party – 22.05
 Our Ukraine Bloc – 20.48
 Communist Party – 17.67
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 8.07
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 6.18

Rivne Oblast

Our Ukraine Bloc – 54.80
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 10.63
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 9.91
 Communist Party – 5.34

Sumy Oblast

Our Ukraine Bloc – 18.53
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 17.10
 Communist Party – 16.50
 Socialist Party – 15.20
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 7.45
 Natalia Vitrenko Bloc – 4.66

Ternopil Oblast

Our Ukraine Bloc – 69.01
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 18.84

Kharkiv Oblast

Communist Party – 30.65
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 15.42
 Social Democratic Party (United) – 10.32
 Our Ukraine Bloc – 5.93
 Natalia Vitrenko Bloc – 5.16
 Winter Crop Generation Team – 4.72
 Socialist Party – 4.61

Kherson Oblast

Communist Party – 31.37
 Our Ukraine Bloc – 11.97

Social Democratic Party (United) – 7.98
 Socialist Party – 7.79
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 7.34
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 4.39
 Natalia Vitrenko Bloc – 4.08

Khmelnytskyi Oblast

Our Ukraine Bloc – 34.83
 Communist Party – 13.42
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 12.66
 Socialist Party – 8.71
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 8.20
 Social Democratic Party (United) – 4.49

Cherkasy Oblast

Our Ukraine Bloc – 27.00
 Socialist Party – 18.98
 Communist Party – 13.31
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 11.11
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 4.91
 Social Democratic Party (United) – 4.49

Chernivtsi Oblast

Our Ukraine Bloc – 46.27
 Social Democratic Party (United) – 10.07
 Communist Party – 8.17
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 7.25
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 5.51

Chernihiv Oblast

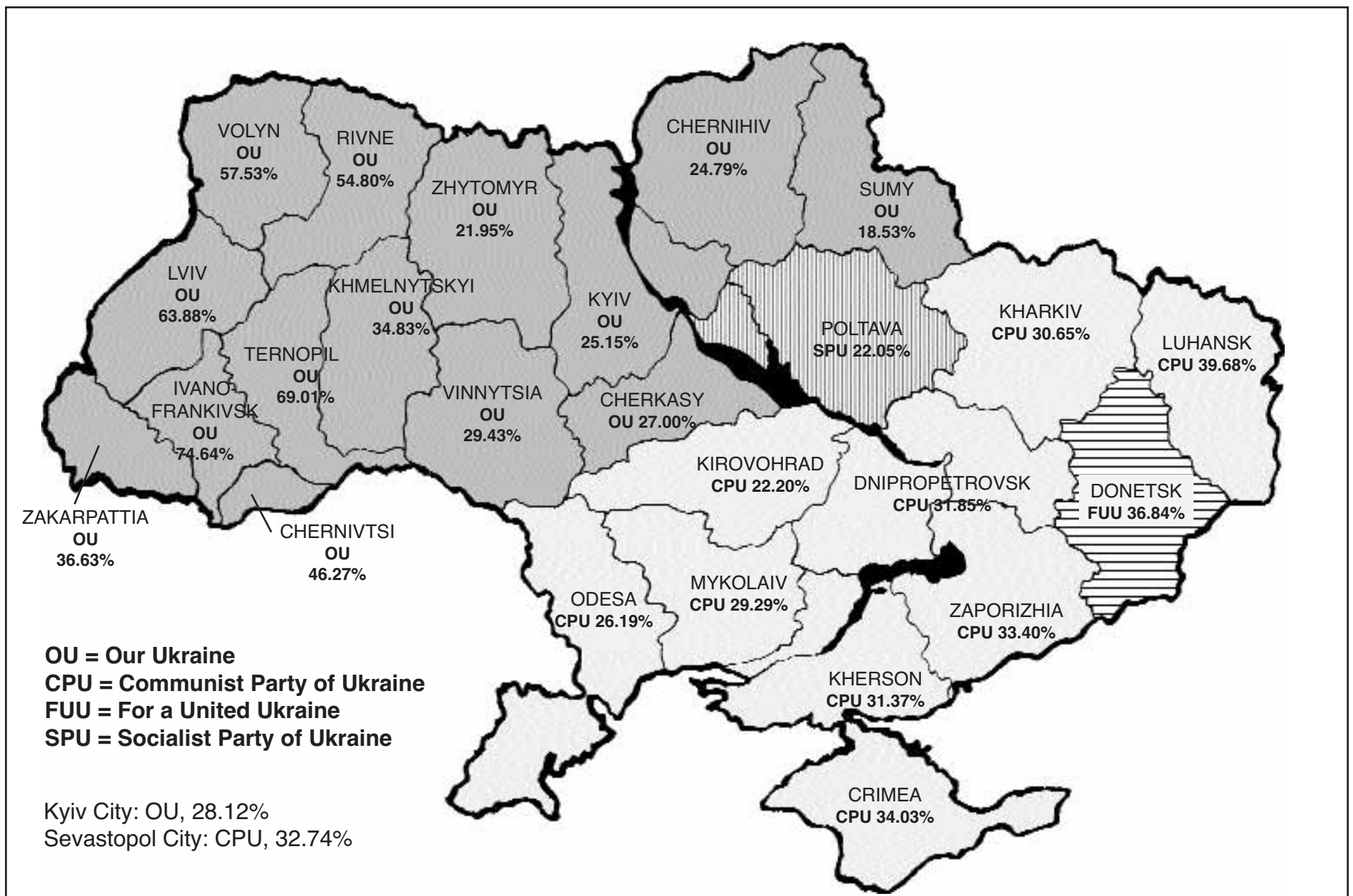
Our Ukraine Bloc – 24.79
 Communist Party – 16.55
 Socialist Party – 15.23
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 8.58
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 7.26

Kyiv

Our Ukraine Bloc – 28.12
 Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc – 12.84
 Unity Bloc – 11.72
 Communist Party – 9.06
 Social Democratic Party (United) – 4.84
 Socialist Party – 4.28
 Natalia Vitrenko Bloc – 4.20

Sevastopol

Communist Party – 32.74
 For a United Ukraine Bloc – 13.29
 Russian Bloc – 8.86



Greens shut out as party fails to reach 4 percent level in by-party balloting

by Roman Woronowycz
Kyiv Press Bureau

KYIV – The Party of Greens of Ukraine, frequently subject to criticism for its questionable fervor for ecological issues, but never for its support of issues dear to President Leonid Kuchma, whom it often backed, apparently fell out of favor with Ukraine's voters and perhaps the president as well in the last few weeks before the election.

Party leaders said during a press conference on April 2 that, while that may be the case, they also suspected extensive voter fraud had as much to do with the end results, in which the party obtained barely 1.3 percent, or some 215,000 votes in a country of 50 million. As a result, Ukraine's Greens, whose name, critics have long said, has as much to do with the color of money as with the color of trees, will no longer have a seat in the Parliament.

Chairman Vitalii Kononov said he believes that more than a million votes were

stolen from his party, primarily because the party failed to either join or expressly support for one of the major blocs.

"The error we made was that we did not bloc with anybody," explained Mr. Kononov. "We did not cause conflicts either, but because we refused to enter partnerships we left ourselves open."

He said he also believes the party did not succeed in getting its ideological message of ecological correctness out to the voters.

However, what was most perplexing to party leaders, explained Mr. Kononov, was how its ratings fell so quickly and steeply in merely two weeks. Indeed the Party of Greens of Ukraine (PGU) had maintained what seemed like a fairly strong and consistent rating of between 3.5 and 5.5 percent two weeks before the election, at which time election law forbade the publishing of pre-election surveys.

While those figures could not assure party leaders that their spots in the next

Verkhovna Rada were sealed, the numbers were far higher than what the final tally showed. Mr. Kononov noted that only the Union of Women for a Future political bloc, which had seen a meteoric rise, had shown a similarly drastic rating drop. Mr. Kononov said he is convinced his party's vote tallies were reduced by "administrative manipulation" of voting results.

"We were approached by people who asked whether they could take our votes because we would not be allowed through anyway," said Mr. Kononov.

Mr. Kononov added that, while he had a good idea of who was responsible for the fraud, he had no desire to reveal names. He also said that while the PGU was gathering documents to submit evidence to various European organizations, including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe, it had no plans to appeal the vote count to a Ukrainian court.

"Everybody who got in is happy, and no one is going to allow our claim to be heard," said Mr. Kononov.

The PGU and the Union of Women for a Future were not the only ones that saw what looked like opportunity turn to defeat in the last weeks of the election. The controversial and radical National Deputy Natalia Vitrenko, leader of the Progressive Socialist Party who headed a political bloc named after her, also witnessed a decline in her fortunes, falling 0.78 percent short of cracking the 4 percent barrier of voter support that was needed for a political party or bloc to gain a seat in the Parliament. Her Progressive Socialist Party had been part of the first two Ukrainian Parliaments.

While admitting she was disappointed, Ms. Vitrenko said she was ready to wait for the next elections. In the meantime she would bide her time building political organizations, including an anti-American group and a national revival movement.

International observers ...

(Continued from page 1)

However, in an example of the very different ways in which the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union and the West perceive political processes and elections, observers from these regions gave strikingly different assessments of elections to the Verkhovna Rada.

CIS Executive Secretary Yurii Yarov, head of the CIS observer mission to the Ukrainian elections, asserted on April 1 while presenting his organization's preliminary report that transparent elections had occurred with only minor "technical" flaws hampering the process. However, observers from several European organizations were more critical during their own press conference later that day, stating that, while substantially free, the polling was not altogether fair.

Mr. Yarov said his team of CIS observers, which included Russian State Duma deputies, noted "some difficulties and violations, but none that would bring the democratic aspect of the elections into question."

"There were no violations of election law other than problems with technical procedures," explained Mr. Yarov. "The people's intent was realized."

His assistant, Dmytro Bulakov, went even further, the next day calling the elections "super transparent" and "super democratic," and far better than anything he had observed in the CIS to date.

George Folsom, president of the U.S.-

based International Republican Institute and his observer group viewed the parliamentary vote a little differently. Mr. Folsom explained that his group had discerned systemic shortcomings.

"There was an evident lack of fairness in these elections. To the extent that they did not meet international standards," said Mr. Folsom.

European and U.S. observers noted that there were still too many systemic problems, as well as uneven access to the media for all participants in the electoral process, the illegal use of government resources by authorities, and threats of violence and beatings. Another concern was the large number of voters who were bussed into precincts where they were not registered and allowed to make their picks there based on court-issued change-of-location tickets.

OSCE observers also mentioned the large number of ballots used in some areas – up to eight were issued in the city of Kharkiv for various district, municipal and central elections, and five in Kyiv – and the confusing way in which they were written.

OSCE observer team officials echoed the technical problems noted by the CIS observer team as well, which included understaffed election commissions and commissioners improperly trained in voting and ballot counting procedures. They agreed that election officials had failed to provide proper accommodations and sufficient voting booths in many instances, which resulted in crowded facilities, long

lines and people voting near windowsills or outside the polling precinct. All observers acknowledged that family voting and voting by the head of household for all members, traditions carried over from the Soviet period, continued as well.

Andreas Gross, vice-president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) said that only about 25 percent of the 1,500 precincts the 438 OSCE observers visited seemed to be in full compliance with Western standards.

"We were satisfied with only one out of four polling stations," explained Mr. Gross. "In three out of four we observed proceedings that did not make us happy as workers for democracy."

Jan Wiersma, president of the European Union's EU-Ukraine Cooperation Committee, added that a positive trend toward more open and democratic elections in Ukraine was evident in general, but that major problems still needed to be resolved.

"The positive thing in these elections was the growing engagement of civil society, which offers a great perspective for the future for this country," explained Mr. Wiersma. "The worse thing is that the election campaign cannot be considered fair."

The U.S. State Department agreed for the most part with their European counterparts in a statement issued in Washington on April 2. Spokesperson Philip Reeker added, however, that the Ukrainian government could be blamed for not ensuring

fair elections.

"We're particularly disappointed that officials did not take steps to curb the widespread and open abuse of authority, including the use of government positions and facilities, to the unfair advantage of certain parties," said the State Department spokesman.

Nonetheless, European and U.S. observers agreed with the findings of both the CIS team and the Committee of Ukrainian Voters that, in the preliminary analysis, the systemic problems and individual infractions were not sufficient enough to have seriously affected the results.

They also emphasized that the parliamentary elections in Ukraine were a marked improvement over the 1999 presidential vote and the previous 1998 elections to the Verkhovna Rada. The Western observers, especially those from the EU region, kept the accent on the progress that Ukraine had shown in its move towards developing a democratic system. They expressed encouragement and a desire to continue to help Ukraine move forward.

"In the last decade since independence, some substantial progress has been made on many fronts in a country where statehood and Western-style democracy continue to be fairly new," noted Bruce George, vice-president of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

Mr. Folsom, president of the IRI echoed Mr. George's remarks.

"Progress has been made, but more improvements are still needed," he stated.



A woman looks at posters that show candidates running in her district, prior to casting her ballot at a polling station in Kyiv.

U.S. State Department...

(Continued from page 1)

which included flawed implementation of the legal framework, illegal interference by the authorities in the electoral process, and abuse of administrative resources, including allegations of pressure on public employees to vote for certain candidates. Media coverage was highly biased, and opposition candidates did not have equal access to electronic media.

"The role of the Central Election Commission and the judiciary in the immediate period ahead in promptly and transparently tabulating and publishing the results and addressing disputes will be instrumental in formulating final conclusions."

The United States concurs with the OSCE mission's preliminary statement. We are disappointed that the government of Ukraine did not move in a proactive manner to ensure a level playing field for all

political parties. We are particularly disappointed that officials did not take steps to curb the widespread and open abuse of authority, including the use of government positions and facilities, to the unfair advantage of certain parties.

We support OSCE's intent to send a follow-up mission to Ukraine after the certification of results in order to assess the extent to which international commitments and standards for democracy have been met.

We commend the many Ukrainian non-governmental organizations, election monitors, journalists and ordinary citizens who worked toward an election process consistent with international democratic standards. We hope the new Parliament will strive to advance democratic and economic reform within Ukraine and to shape a government that is accountable to its citizens and compatible with the political norms of the Euro-Atlantic community.

Leading candidate from Ivano-Frankivsk fatally shot two days before election

by Roman Woronowycz
Kyiv Press Bureau

KYIV – A leading candidate to Ukraine's Parliament from Ivano-Frankivsk was shot to death less than two days before the elections in what law enforcement officials are calling a political assassination.

According to Ukrainian state militia reports, an unidentified assailant shot Mykola Shkribliak on March 29 at approximately 10:10 p.m. as he was about to enter his apartment building, firing at least a dozen rounds at the candidate, nine of which found their mark. Mr. Shkribliak, 42, was raced to a local hospital where doctors operated on him without success. He was announced dead about four hours afterwards.

Assistant Procurator General Oleksander Bahanets said on the morning after the killing, which he identified as a contract hit, that law enforcement agencies were not excluding the possibility that someone murdered Mr. Shkribliak in connection with his run for a parliamentary seat.

The death further brought into question the legitimacy of what has been a contentious election season in Ukraine filled with reports of fraud, underhandedness and mudslinging.

Mr. Shkribliak, oblast director of the Social Democratic Party (United) and the assistant chairman of the oblast energy department, was in a tight race with National Deputy Roman Zvarych in a rural district of Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast with a history of strong nationalistic underpinnings. The district includes the counties of Dvorianskyi, Yaremche and

Verkhovyna. Slava Stetsko, the leader of the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists, previously held the seat representing the district.

Adding more color to the race is the fact that Mr. Zvarych, who was born in New York to Ukrainian immigrants, gave up his U.S. citizenship to become a Ukrainian citizen in 1994.

The race for the seat in District 90 was filled with mudslinging and underhanded tactics, explained Mr. Zvarych, a member of the Our Ukraine Bloc of Viktor Yushchenko, during a press conference in Kyiv on April 3, four days after he had taken 61 percent of the vote to win the district handily.

Mr. Zvarych, who is not a suspect in the murder and has not been questioned by police, said various tactics had been used against him to get him out of the race.

He explained that in several flyers that had passed through the district, he had been accused of being a CIA spy and a Zionist agent, as well as a Taliban supporter of Osama Bin Laden.

In fact the U.S. Embassy issued a statement on April 1 calling reports that Washington was somehow involved in the killing of Mr. Shkribliak as "just plain wrong." The statement was directed at the newspaper *Kievskie Vedomosti*, which is controlled by the SDPU. The newspaper ran a story on April 1 implying that a representative of the U.S. Embassy had met with Mr. Shkribliak prior to his death and threatened him with harm if he did not withdraw from the race.

Mr. Zvarych said that he had come under pressure not to run in the district even before the campaign season began.

In November, Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast Chairman Mykhailo Vyshyvaniuk had told Mr. Zvarych that all the administrative resources at his disposal would be utilized against the former U.S. citizen.

Mr. Zvarych also explained that, if indeed the killing of Mr. Shkribliak was politically motivated, it was undoubtedly done either to invalidate the elections or besmirch and cast a dark shadow over his own name. On the eve of elections the oblast election commission had considered suspending polling in the region at the urging of its chairman, a fellow member of Mr. Shkribliak's SDPU, until late into the night, when a decision was made to proceed as originally intended.

"I cannot exclude [the possibility] that in order to make sure that I did not get elected my opponent was killed. If they would have killed me I would undoubtedly have become a hero," explained the Our Ukraine member. "I was explicit in that I am a Ukrainian nationalist and I was running under the blue-yellow Ukrainian flag and the black-red flag of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists. In order to make me a political corpse, they needed to kill my opponent."

Mr. Zvarych said the violence also might have been aimed at him because authorities were angry that he had spoken openly with voters about the high level of corruption, including the illegal taking of oil and natural gas deposits and the timber resources of the Carpathian Mountains in the Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast.

Mr. Zvarych added that he did not have any idea specifically who ordered the hit, but noted that, based on information he had received, "there was no way



Mykola Shkribliak

to exclude that it could have been a politically motivated killing." Still, he expressed surprise at the quick decision made by authorities only a few hours after the murder to exclude other possibilities.

Due to his position as a highly placed administrator in the region's Department of Energy, Trade, Investment and External Affairs, Mr. Shkribliak was a key player in the oil and gas and timber industries. Coincidentally or not, several top-ranking members of the Social Democratic Party (United) have vast business interests in the same industries. At least one news source said on April 3 that Mr. Shkribliak had hired bodyguards early last year after receiving death threats.

Yushchenko's Our...

(Continued from page 1)

are won in a mixed election system, in which 50 percent of the 450 parliamentary members are chosen in multi-mandate districts by-party polling, while the other half are picked in single-mandate voting, where voters choose a single individual to represent their district.

The For a United Ukraine bloc remained only slightly behind Our Ukraine due to a strong showing in the single-mandate district voting, where it won 66 of the other 225 seats. Our Ukraine came next with 42 seats, followed by seven other parties with single digit numbers.

With the district votes tallied, at press time Our Ukraine retained the most members in the next Parliament, a current total of approximately 112, followed by the For a United Ukraine with about 102 members expected. Next should come the Communists with some 66 national deputies, the Socialist Party with 24, the SDPU with 23, and the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc with 21.

Independent candidates won the rest of the seats – 93 in all – many of them contestants who had decided not to reveal their political loyalties before the results were in. It turned out after the vote that 18 of them were actually For a United Ukraine bloc sympathizers. Another eight also revealed various party ties, including one affiliated with Our Ukraine, leaving 67 unaligned for the time being.

Several of the parties and blocs that failed to gather 4 percent support in the by-party voting nonetheless managed to get representatives elected in the districts, including the Women for a Future Bloc, the Democratic Union, the Yednist Party and the Yabluko Party, and will be represented among deputies in the Verkhovna Rada.

The biggest loser in this year's elections was the Party of Greens of Ukraine, which

could muster only 1.3 percent support after gaining entry into the Parliament in the 1998 elections for the first time ever with 5.5 percent of the tally (see related story on page 4).

The Progressive Socialists failed to win seats for the first time ever, falling just short of the 4 percent barrier with 3.22 percent. The Democratic Union/Democratic Party Bloc, the Yabluko Party and the Yednist Party were other political groups that failed to gather the needed points after pre-election surveys had given them a chance of winning seats.

Geopolitically, the map of Ukraine remains very divided, with the center-right forces aligned with Mr. Yushchenko and the Our Ukraine Bloc dominating the western oblasts of Ukraine. The Communist Party retained control over much of the south and some of the east, although it suffered large losses of seats in the Donetsk and Luhansk, where the For a United Ukraine Bloc established a near monopoly. However the pro-presidential bloc does not show well on the map because, other than in the heavily populated Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, as well as the Kharkiv area its victories were scattershot across districts in all the regions of Ukraine.

When reduced to district representation, the picture showed support for Yulia Tymoshenko and her bloc strongest in a diagonal swath of central localities running from around Vinnytsia to about Poltava.

There were fears that elections in the Crimea might be ruled invalid after widespread protests on the peninsula, provoked by a district court's removal of Leonid Hrach, the chairman of the autonomous republic's Parliament, as a candidate to the peninsula's legislature. A court order led to fears that Mr. Hrach might receive the most votes even though officially not a candidate. Mr. Hrach had threatened to grind the electoral process to a halt if he was not included in it, but the vote proceeded. While many

people voted for the man who is considered one of the "godfathers" of Crimea, support for him was not overwhelming, and the CEC ruled that there was no reason to invalidate the elections held there.

The problems in Crimea were among many Ukraine faced during a turbulent and controversy-filled campaign season, which from the very first official day of campaigning, New Year's Day, was filled with mudslinging, disinformation, smear tactics and even the murder of a candidate (see story above). Along the way there was much talk about the illegal use of government resources by the For a United Ukraine bloc, which was led by President Kuchma's chief of staff, Volodymyr Lytvyn, as well as uneven access to the mass media, which is largely controlled by supporters of Mr. Lytvyn's bloc and members of the SDPU.

On election day observers and candidates were warned of efforts to use fraudulent ballots and of election commissioners who might put too much weight on their own choice during the vote count. There were extensive reports of voter intimidation and of electors being bussed in from outside regions to vote with questionable election chits supposedly supplied by courts. But, in the end, most agreed that while extensive, the various election law inconsistencies did not change the outcomes of the races.

In order not to have to rely exclusively on the Central Election Commission, observers and sociologists joined before the vote to support an extensive exit polling operation on Election Day. The survey, organized by Democratic Initiatives, a civic organization that receives most of its funding from abroad, determined that the Our Ukraine bloc, should receive about 25 percent of the vote, the Communist Party, 20.5 percent; the For a United Ukraine Bloc, 10.6 percent; the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc, 7.9 percent; the SDPU, 7 percent; and the Socialist Party, 6 percent. With a one percent margin of error, the exit poll became

fairly indicative of what the eventual count would look like.

Just to be sure, the Our Ukraine Bloc and the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc held parallel vote counts. Mr. Yushchenko said during a press conference as the returns were still coming in that he trusted the electorate, but not the election commissioners.

"To quote Stalin, if you will pardon me for doing so, elections are not determined by the voters, but by the vote counters," explained Mr. Yushchenko.

In the end, the Our Ukraine Bloc's alternative count showed their support to be a couple of percentage points higher than the CEC results, but did not indicate excessive error or fraud. The parallel vote by the Tymoshenko Bloc correlated even more closely to the CEC results.

The three parties and three blocs that crossed the 4 percent barrier will now set out to attempt to build factions large enough to form a majority, for which a minimum of 226 members is needed. A majority would allow a group to dictate the membership of the Verkhovna Rada presidium and appoint committee chairs.

If one of the blocs or parties succeeds in forming such a faction, President Kuchma has said he will allow that faction to form the next government as well.

The new Parliament is expected to be seated at the end of April or beginning of May, and will work for a four-year period.

* * *

In mayoral elections in the city of Kyiv also held on March 31 Oleksander Omelchenko easily won a third term, with a landslide 63 percent support shown by residents of the nation's capital.

Mr. Omelchenko's closest rival was another Omelchenko, this one named Hryhorii. The defeated Mr. Omelchenko, a national deputy and a member of the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc, could muster only 16 percent support. Hryhorii Omelchenko, did get re-elected to Parliament, however.

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USUF project director speaks on community partnerships

by Olenka Dobczanska

WARREN, Mich. – Vera Andrushkiw, project director of the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation's Community Partnerships Project (CPP), recently spoke at a reception here at the Ukrainian Cultural Center.

Ms. Andrushkiw's presentation on March 2 included a lecture on the activities of the USUF, in particular, its Community Partnerships Projects, and the publication of Petro Ficaj's book, "Township Government in Michigan." The event, which was sponsored by the Shevchenko Scientific Society, Ukrainian National Association's Detroit District Committee, Ukrainian National Women's League of America Branch 96, and the Ukrainian Cultural Club, was attended by approximately 100 people from the greater Detroit area.

Ms. Andrushkiw acquainted the audience with the foundation's mission and activities. Some USUF programs mentioned by Ms. Andrushkiw included: Business Links, an effort to disseminate information about Ukrainian businesses to American counterparts; the Books for Ukraine Project which has successfully distributed over 500 books of various subjects to educational institutions across Ukraine; the Krasnodon Mine Disaster Fund, which collected and dispersed over \$13,000 in donations for the widows and children affected by the tragedy; and USUF's collaboration with the University of South Alabama in the Ukrainian-American Birth Defects Program.

Ms. Andrushkiw explained how the USUF Community Partnerships Project has been an invaluable tool in achieving the USUF's goal to facilitate democratic development, encourage free market reform and enhance human rights in Ukraine. Through the CPP, Ukrainian municipal officials experience peer-to-peer exchanges with their American counterparts, and partnered and non-partnered cities in Ukraine receive training at regional training centers. These CPP activities have stimulated networks of progressive governments and have promoted international awareness in the United States and in Ukraine.

CPP cities frequently go beyond official program activities and use innovative ideas and volunteerism to improve their communities and to achieve more transparent, democratic municipal governments in Ukraine. The enthusiasm of CPP cities is seen in Cherkasy, which L. D. McMullen, an expert on water issues in the United States, visited for two weeks to study the city's water and how authorities might improve its water quality. Des Moines recently sponsored a

business fair and fashion show on its partner city, Cherkasy, at a mall in Des Moines, Iowa. Omaha's new NGO, Omahans for Orphans, held a silent auction and dance that raised \$12,740 for the orphanages of its partner city, Artemivsk. The success of such innovative ideas among CPP communities maximizes the program's impact in Ukraine and motivates new reform efforts, Ms. Andrushkiw pointed out.

Dr. Alexander Serafyn of the Ukrainian National Association, one of the opening speakers that night, said "The audience was very impressed by the reaction of the people in Ukraine. They are seeing the light and accepting a way of doing things a little differently. There's a definite willingness [on the part of Ukrainians] to learn or to acquire the knowledge. When they apply that knowledge, they do it because it works."

The reception also featured opening remarks by Dr. Paul Dzul, president of the Shevchenko Scientific Society.

Following her remarks on the CPP, Ms. Andrushkiw introduced Mr. Ficaj and his book, which was recently translated and distributed across Ukraine by USUF. Prior to the presentation that night, many in the audience had wondered about the relevance of the book to Ukraine. However, following Mr. Ficaj's words, the audience became aware of the book's prospective influence in promoting democracy at the local level in Ukraine.

Mr. Ficaj first told the audience about the substantial lack of information on the influence and responsibilities of local government in Ukraine and the need for that knowledge to ensure a successful transition to democracy for Ukraine.

"Democracy can be fostered in two ways: first, from the top down, through governmental imposition, or from the bottom up, the local populace," stated Mr. Ficaj. "I decided to publish my work on local self-government in order to show how democracy can start at the local level."

His book, "Township Government in Michigan," provides explanations of township government functions and duties of township officials in the United States. The book is enhanced with introductions by Prof. Tom Sinclair of Binghamton University in New York and local self-government expert in Ukraine, Volodymyr Parkhomenko, excerpts from U.S. President Thomas Jefferson and French philosopher Alexis de Toqueville; and a translation by Dr. Victor Lychyk.

For further information about the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation call (202) 347-4264 or e-mail usuf@usukraine.org.



Vera Andrushkiw of the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation with Petro Ficaj.

Insure and be sure. Join the UNA!

THE UKRAINIAN NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FORUM

Chicago Convention Committee announces program

CHICAGO – Delegates to the 35th convention of the Ukrainian National Association to be held at the Marriott O'Hare Hotel on May 24-28 are in for a special treat.

Various cultural and religious events have been planned by the Chicago Convention Committee to give the five-day conclave a unique Chicago flavor and to attract local participation.

The convention committee has been meeting for over a year and has adopted the motto "Together We Will" to underscore the need to redeem the dream of UNA pioneers and to re-establish a UNA presence in the Ukrainian American community.

Gala concert

The UNA concert will be held on Saturday, May 25, at 7 p.m. at Ridgewood High School, a few miles from the Marriott. Bus transportation will be provided for all delegates and guests.

Scheduled to perform are:

- the Zenon Modrytskyj Chamber Ensemble, a renowned group of Fourth Wave Ukrainian musicians;
- the ODUM Bandura Ensemble, a popular local musical group of talented musicians;
- the ISKRA Dance Ensemble, an unusually talented group of young Ukrainian dancers;
- the SURMA CHOIR, a Chicago institution currently celebrating its 50th season;
- Vasyl Skilsky, Fourth Wave folk sopilka instrumentalist extraordinaire;
- the CHAR-ZILLYA Bandura Ensemble, a recently formed group of Fourth Wave musicians;
- vocalist Olenka Novyk;
- the violin due of Daria Horodyskyj and Vera Mucha-Hytra; and
- the Ridna Shkola Choir, young people in love with Ukrainian music.

Religious services, tour and banquet

Sunday morning will begin with a bus ride to the Ukrainian Village for a special 9 a.m. liturgy celebrated by Ukrainian Catholic Bishop Innocent Lotocky at St. Nicholas Cathedral.

Attending will be Ukrainian Orthodox Archbishop Vsevelod, who will concelebrate a moleben service with Bishop Lotocky following the liturgy.

Following the moleben, a complimentary brunch-reception for all delegates and guests will be hosted by Selfreliance Ukrainian American Federal Credit Union members at the newly constructed Selfreliance building around the corner from the cathedral.

Time permitting, a tour of The Ukrainian National Museum and the Ukrainian Museum of Modern Art will be arranged. Buses will then take delegates and guests to the hotel in preparation for the banquet.

The gala convention banquet will be held at the Marriott Hotel on Sunday evening. Askold Lozynskyj, president of the Ukrainian World Congress, and Myron B. Kuropas, UNA historian and The Ukrainian Weekly columnist, who is an honorary member of the UNA General Assembly, are scheduled to be the featured speakers.

Entertainment will be provided by the well-known comedic team of Ihor Baczynsky and Ron Cahute and their Las Vegas-type routine titled "Ukrainian Follies."

For more information, readers are urged to visit the convention website at: www.unaconvention.com.



St. Nicholas Cathedral in Chicago.

NY/NJ professionals support The Weekly's 'Copies for Congress'

PARSIPPANY, N.J. – The Ukrainian American Professionals and Businesspersons Association of New York and New Jersey have come through with support for The Ukrainian Weekly's "Copies for Congress" project by sending a donation of \$500.

The donation was received at The Weekly's editorial offices in mid-March, along with a letter signed by Leonid Mazur, UAPBA president.

"The Ukrainian American Professionals and Businesspersons Association of New York and New Jersey is pleased to present The Ukrainian Weekly with a check for \$500 for the 'Copies for Congress' project. We wish you much success with this project and we are pleased to work together with you serving our Ukrainian community," Mr. Mazur wrote.

Thus far, six Ukrainian American credit unions, one Ukrainian American institution, two professionals' organizations and two individuals have responded to The Ukrainian Weekly's letter of November 16, 2001, soliciting donations for its "Copies for Congress" project, which provides free subscriptions to all members of the U.S. Congress. The Weekly has now received \$8,600 in donations to this project.

A Ukrainian Summer

Appears May 5 in The Ukrainian Weekly

Travel to Ukraine to study culture ...

Rediscover Kyiv...

Go to summer camp...

Learn Ukrainian folk dance...

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THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY



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THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY

Ukraine's third parliamentary elections

The big news in Ukraine's third parliamentary elections was that former Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko's Our Ukraine bloc won more than 23.6 percent of the vote. The other big news was that this marked the first time a bloc other than the Communist Party had won a plurality of votes in a parliamentary election in Ukraine.

Any way you look at it, Our Ukraine, known in Ukrainian as Nasha Ukraina, was the winner. Besides winning in terms of the party vote, getting 6.06 million votes to the Communist Party's 5.15 million (20 percent), Our Ukraine also won 112 seats to For a United Ukraine's 106 and the Communists' 66 (these are the totals when the results of voting on by-party lists and single-mandate districts are added).

What makes Our Ukraine's showing even more significant is that it took place in circumstances that could hardly be called fair and equal. There was no level playing field in these parliamentary elections, as readers who have been following developments in Ukraine are well aware. The full power of those in power and their so-called "administrative resources" were brought into play to favor the favored – the For a United Ukraine bloc headed by Kuchma crony Volodymyr Lytvyn, who happens to be the president's chief of staff. It should be noted that Mr. Lytvyn was allowed to stay on in his post while other officials were required to take leaves for the duration of the election campaign (the better to control the allocation of valuable resources, my dear).

The Committee of Ukrainian Voters, while reporting that "there was no reason to believe that the election results do not reflect the will of the citizens," also emphasized that the pressures exerted by government officials in order to influence voters' choices had greatly increased. There were reports of intimidation, blackmail, "black PR," disinformation such as reports that the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists had created an "Anti-American Front," and dirty politics like choosing a name for a bloc that is meant to deliberately confuse voters, or capitalize on someone else's good reputation.

RFE/RL Poland, Belarus and Ukraine Report quoted Mr. Yushchenko as saying in an interview with *Ukrainska Pravda*: "I haven't seen elections that were more cynical. ... Disinformation and cynicism are the main [barrier] separating us from democracy."

Despite all of the foregoing, Our Ukraine won big and its deputies will enter the next Verkhovna Rada as a powerful force. To be sure, there are other strong forces, and no one group alone has a majority (226 votes, or 50 percent plus one of the 450-member Rada), much less a constitutional majority (two-thirds of the 450 deputies' seats – the number of votes needed to approve a change in the Constitution).

What affiliations are established among parties and blocs, and with the 93 independent candidates who have won seats in the Parliament, remains to be seen. (Indeed, as this issue of *The Weekly* went to press, there already were some discrepancies in the number of seats reportedly held by parties/blocs due to the fact that some independents once elected declared their allegiances to various groups.) The true picture will emerge only once the new Verkhovna Rada convenes.

For now, though, we are heartened by the achievements of Our Ukraine and hope that the next Parliament of Ukraine will succeed in propelling Ukraine toward democracy, a free market economy and a Western orientation.

April
7
1998

Turning the pages back...

Four years ago to the day, Roman Woronowycz of our Kyiv Press Bureau reported from the Ukrainian capital that the Central Election Commission had announced the official results of the party list voting to the Verkhovna Rada, but had put off publishing

official results in the vote for single-mandate representatives.

CEC Chairman Mykhailo Riabets said at a press conference that the commission had received so many complaints of election law violations and fraud in the single-mandate balloting portion of Ukraine's new election system that it would withhold publishing results for the time being.

Mr. Woronowycz noted that both parties and individuals who took part in the March 29, 1998, elections, independent Ukraine's second parliamentary ballot, alleged widespread fraud, although most international and domestic observer organizations said election violations were minor and did not affect the outcomes of the races.

The official results at press time four years ago were: Communist Party, 84 seats; Rukh Party, 32; Socialist/Agrarian Party bloc, 29; Greens, 19; National Democratic Party, 17; Hromada Party, 16; Progressive Socialist Party, 14; Social Democratic Party, 14.

When the party voting results cited above are combined with preliminary single-mandate results, Mr. Woronowycz reported, the Communists were guaranteed a strong bloc of 123 seats, but not the absolute majority of 226 needed to control the Parliament.

When presented geographically, the election picture divided the map of Ukraine into three distinctive ideological sections. As one moved from west to the east, the political picture turned redder and redder.

In western Ukraine the Rukh Party decisively took five of eight oblasts: Volyn, Rivne, Lviv, Ternopil and Ivano-Frankivsk. Chernivtsi, at the Moldovan border, went to the Communists, while the Transcarpathian region voted for the Social Democratic Party (United).

In central Ukraine the Socialists held a strong grip on the Khmelnytskyi and Cherkasy oblasts and came close to the Communists in the other eight central oblasts. The Communists and the Socialists combined for 36 percent of the vote in these oblasts. Once east of the Dnipro River, with the exception of the Poltava Oblast, it was all Communists, including the southern Ukrainian autonomous republic of Crimea.

Of the nine eastern oblasts, only Sumy and Dnipropetrovsk did not go Communist. The Sumy region was a stronghold of the Progressive Socialist Party, and Dnipropetrovsk was in the Hromada Party camp, as shown by the 36 percent vote for the party headed by Pavlo Lazarenko.

"Election authorities announce official results of party list voting" by Roman Woronowycz, *The Ukrainian Weekly*, April 12, 1998, Vol. LXVI, No. 15.

NEWS AND VIEWS

The new face of AIDS in Ukraine

by Alexander B. Kuzma

In the 1930s the world stood by and watched as between 6 million and 10 million Ukrainians starved to death during the man-made Terror Famine perpetrated by Joseph Stalin. For decades thereafter, our community pledged to remember the victims of the Terror Famine and to honor their memory by swearing that never again would we allow so many Ukrainians to die from another Holocaust.

Today, a very different specter is stalking Ukraine. According to demographers and health researchers at the United Nations Office of Population, a rapidly unfolding epidemic threatens to devour as much as 40 percent of Ukraine's population by the year 2050, overshadowing the death toll of 1933-1934, the Stalin purges and Chernobyl combined. What makes this new threat particularly frightening and insidious is the lack of awareness surrounding the crisis and the reluctance to confront the enormity of the threat. With few exceptions, even staunch Ukrainian patriots and prominent leaders of the Ukrainian diaspora are loath to discuss it.

When Ukraine won its independence in 1991, AIDS was virtually unheard of as a problem affecting the nation. By 1994, only a handful of cases had been registered in the country. By the year 2000 there were over 35,000 registered cases of HIV infections, and 2,000 of these were among children, according to the Doctors Without Borders – Odesa. Based on studies of unregistered AIDS patients, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that the actual number of infected persons is approaching 400,000, or nearly 1 percent of the population. The WHO warns that Ukraine now has the fastest growing rate of HIV infection in Europe.

Even today, our diaspora is inclined to ignore AIDS as a problem that primarily affects intravenous drug users, homosexuals and prostitutes. Consciously or not, we have ignored AIDS as an issue that is not appropriate for discussion in polite company.

Unfortunately, the stereotype of AIDS victims is quickly being overwhelmed by a fast-spreading epidemic that is now striking newborn children, married couples and patients undergoing surgery without proper-

Alex Kuzma is the executive director of Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund. CCRF is currently seeking to strengthen prenatal testing programs for HIV/AIDS in Lviv and Odesa.

ly safeguarded blood supplies. According to a feature article that recently appeared in *The New York Times*, AIDS has now moved well beyond Ukraine's most marginalized citizens. It has entered the mainstream of Ukrainian society and Ukrainians' lack of understanding of the illness and false sense of security carries very grave implications for the future.

The World Health Organization estimates that as much as one percent of the Ukrainian population is HIV-infected, and this number is expected to grow exponentially unless aggressive action is taken. As bleak as this prognosis may be, we have to face reality. For anyone who cares about Ukraine and its future, AIDS is fast becoming an unprecedented public health menace and arguably the number one threat to Ukraine's well-being.

With Chernobyl we saw how a public health disaster could drain the resources and sap the economic vitality of a fledgling nation. Ukraine and the world community have spent billions of dollars in addressing the aftermath of Chernobyl and trying to safeguard the public from further contamination. In many ways, Western aid programs have helped to blunt the impact of Chernobyl by providing the equipment and training Ukraine desperately needed to upgrade nuclear safety and to treat children suffering from cancer and birth defects. When given the tools they need, Ukrainian hospitals have scored dramatic successes in reducing infant mortality, improving remission rates for leukemia and saving the lives of children stricken with thyroid cancer. U.S. government-funded immunization programs have helped to extinguish cholera and diphtheria epidemics before they could devastate the Ukrainian countryside.

An even more massive effort will need to be launched to confront the AIDS epidemic now sweeping the country. So far, the bulk of AIDS cases have been identified in the regions of Odesa and Mykolaiv, with Kherson and Donetsk not far behind. If there is any good news, it is that relatively few cases have been diagnosed in the western and northern provinces – at least so far. Even so, the explosion of AIDS cases in the southern oblasts clearly shows that all regions of Ukraine are extremely vulnerable, and the world community has precious little time to waste.

The diaspora may be tempted to wash its hands of this issue. It would be much easier

(Continued on page 10)



At Symferopol's Infectious Disease Hospital, this young girl born with a cleft palate was diagnosed with AIDS. Doctors could easily correct her cleft palate with routine surgery, but are reluctant to perform the procedure for fear of HIV contamination. Photo by Joseph Sywenkyj, whose photography project on AIDS was financed by the Ukrainian Medical Association of North America, the Ukrainian National Home of Willimantic, Conn., and the Visual Arts Foundation.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

UNA should award major scholarships

Dear Editor:

Recently I received the annual UNA scholarship winners of The Weekly and was prompted to write this letter. As usual, it is wonderful to see our young UNA members in all their "academic" glory, arming their parents and grandparents with bragging material for their next foray into the "hromada."

Reading the article by Oksana Trytjak I was very impressed to find out that the UNA awarded over \$23,000 in scholarships to its members for the 2001-2002 year. Reading on I noticed that Ms. Trytjak encouraged parents and grandparents with young students to "make sure they are members of the UNA so they too can qualify for an award."

Realistically speaking, are \$100-\$175 awards (the cost of two to three books) an actual enticement for parents, faced with the high cost of college, to buy UNA policies? Would it not be more beneficial to the UNA if they offered one or two highly competitive, prestigious and substantial (\$7,500 minimum) scholarships?

These scholarships could be designed to not only reward one or two outstanding UNA members, but also as a very effective marketing tool to promote the UNA's financial services and philanthropy. Perhaps the scholarship recipients could be required to submit articles to the UNA's publications or act as ambassadors for the UNA during their award year.

I'm confident the fine people at the UNA could work out the details to make UNA scholarships beneficial to both students and the UNA.

Taras Ferencevych
Jersey City, N.J.

A reaction to letter re rock/pop series

Dear Editor:

The Very Rev. Dr. Ihor Monczak's letter to the editor (February 24) on Ukraine's wannabe Madonnas raises some broader issues of popular and religious culture and symbolism. However blasphemous the "pop icon's" exploitation of religious symbols may be (though "Madonna," incidentally, is her given name), at least it has resonance in a society that still recognizes their value. Its success is evidence of the continued vitality of Christian symbolism in American society.

This is less the case in Europe (where a 1990s survey revealed that the Olympic rings were more broadly recognized than the cross), and far less so in most of the former Soviet Union, where atheism's most effective weapon was ignorance (one is reminded of the anecdote about the New Russian who, buying a gold crucifix, mistakes Jesus on the Cross for an acrobat on a trapeze). Not even blasphemy – which is, after all a grudging acknowledgment of the divine – is possible where God is ignored, His symbols forgotten.

True, relying on a spiritually moribund West for cultural leadership may symptomize an ignorance, or neglect, of Ukraine's own resources – or insufficient creativity and cultural confidence to draw on them in an original contemporary idiom. As it happens, in one respect our spiritual tradition seems peculiarly well-suited to modern popular culture: its emphasis on image, evidenced by its architecture, icons and expressive church ritual. It is up to

today's artist to find a credible, authentic connection between tradition and modernity – to recognize, as it were, both the signs of the times and timeless signs.

Andrew Sorokowski
Rockville, Md.

Ukraine may still choose third road

Dear Editor:

The 20th century Ukraine had suffered a multitude of tragic and ruinous events. Starting with World War I in 1914, Russian Revolution in 1917, loss of short-lived independence of Ukraine (1918-1920), the 70 years of communist rule in Ukraine (with loss of intelligentsia and peasantry, Kremlin-made terror famine in 1932-1933 which caused death of seven million people), the horrors of World War II, UPA heroic struggle, Chernobyl nuclear disaster in 1986, just to name a few.

It ended however with hopeful signs: fall of Nazism and peaceful dismantling of Communism, and glorious proclamation of independence of Ukraine on August 24, 1991.

We are entering the 21st century full of hope, but also anxiety. Will the democracy, civil society, economic well-being with a satisfactory living standard for Ukrainian citizens and Ukrainization of the government prevail as part of the Western European community? Or will Ukraine slowly drift to the East?

That brings us to today's political and economic climate, which has changed and is still changing dramatically, but in which Ukraine has to find its rightful place.

Today's political realism is such that the concept of independence (or sovereignty) and unilateralism is being replaced by multilateralist independence. In other words, independence in its true meaning does not exist any more, it belongs to history.

Ukraine as an autarchy, i.e., having an independent national policy economic self-sufficiency, cannot exist at the present time. This autarch, or rather the lack of it affects not only Ukraine, but actually all developed, supposedly self-sufficient nations, including the world's most powerful countries, who can no longer pretend to have genuine independence, because in the strict sense of the word "national independence" exists only with complete economic independence, (for example in 19th century America). Instead, economic interdependence is the reality in today's world. This interdependence affects not only the economy of each nation, but also its foreign policy, political trends, alliances, geopolitical planning, including military interventions, etc. So, by creating economic and political blocs or alliances, nations are trying to secure their economic and political well-being. The European Union is an example. Why is this happening? Because history teaches us that a poor economy in any given country leads to political instability, loss of democratic ideals, social unrest, emergence of radical or totalitarian parties (e.g., Germany after World War I).

That is why economic well-being in today's world supersedes in importance all ethnic, nationalistic, even political aspirations or sentiments in most European nations. This need for economic well-being and stability and, therefore, the need for interdependence is dramatically evident in the fact that many European nations gave up their centuries-old monetary units and accepted the euro as the common currency in order to simplify economic transactions and gain a more favorable economic climate. The EU nations plan to have rich member-countries share their wealth with

poorer members in order to achieve not only economic stability, but also equality and a satisfactory standard of living for people of all its member-states. Certainly a noble and idealistic quest!

In order to have stable nationhood, Ukraine has to develop a healthy economy, which in turn makes it necessary for it to join a proper alliance. This brings us back to the EU and to Ukraine's past history. Our history gives us warning that the wrong alliance can have disastrous and detrimental consequences that are still evident today, i.e. the Treaty of Pereiaslav.

On the other hand, one could write a "fantastic history" (a new and popular literary genre in which one writes a historical scenario based on "what if..." about another alliance: what would Ukraine be like as a nation today, if our great Hetman Ivan Mazepa, who formed an alliance with Sweden's King Charles XII, had a majority of Ukrainian patriots rally to his cause and had a large faithful Kozak army with which he defeated Peter the Great's Russian army in the battle of Poltava in 1709?

Ukraine's decision to look to West or East in the future will be of historical significance and of paramount importance.

By joining the EU Ukraine will be able not only to have military security, but, "even more importantly, permit Ukraine to safeguard its cultural, linguistic and political autonomy in the interdependent political constellation in which EU now finds itself," as stated by well-known economist Dr. Bohdan Hawrylyshyn in his article in The Ukrainian Weekly on February 3.

By joining the Russian-Belarus alliance, however, Ukraine not only will lose again its economic and political autonomy, but also the above-mentioned linguistic and cultural identity.

Because there is strong resistance to join any economic or political alliance, Ukraine might choose the third road. Through skillful economic and political maneuvering, Ukraine might achieve a satisfactory economy on its own and remain neutral for the time being.

G. Myroslaw Burbelo, M.D.
Westerly, R.I.

An expression of gratitude to MD

Dear Editor:

Over the past two years I have been seen by several internists and specialists. Even with their seemingly impressive credentials, they failed to successfully diagnose my illness. I was given an array of medicines, told to go home and take it easy, but the

pain and discomfort that I was experiencing steadily increased. On September 11 of last year I finally turned to Dr. Lubomyr Woroch.

I met Dr. Woroch some 20 years ago – he literally saved my mother's life. I hadn't turned to him earlier because I never thought that I needed the services of a surgeon and I had also moved out of state. Once I placed myself under Dr. Woroch's care, I knew that I was in the best of hands and that I was going to get better and quickly.

Within a few weeks of my first appointment, even though the results of a battery of tests came back negative. Dr. Woroch continued to pursue the cause of the pain I was experiencing. He could have given up and told me it was just my nerves (an answer that comes all too easily to most doctors when it comes to female patients, and one that I heard all too often these past two years). Due to his thoroughness and determination, however, in early January of this year, Dr. Woroch finally confirmed the cause of my pain and advised surgery to correct the problem.

Dr. Woroch's warmth, compassion and skill as a surgeon are truly remarkable. With his trademark sense of humor, he has an uncanny ability to set you at ease. He prepared me for surgery by carefully detailing the procedure and what I could expect. He answered my hundredth question with the same patience and warmth as the first. His reassuring manner made all my years and anxiety just vanish. I had absolutely no trepidation in going through with the surgery.

Dr. Woroch is very tough when it comes to protecting his patients and expecting them to receive the best of care. This point is well understood by his surgical team and the rest of the hospital staff. They know he's the best, and so are they. This is evident by how closely and smoothly they work together and the respect he garners from them. The care and support I received at the ParkCare Pavilion of St. John's Hospital in Yonkers, N.Y. was truly exceptional. The nurses, aides and technicians were very professional and extremely attentive – even more so when they realized that I was one of Dr. Woroch's patients.

Throughout these past few months, Dr. Woroch has had only one interest in mind and that was to ensure that I received the best medical care possible. I wanted to share my appreciation for Dr. Woroch with the Ukrainian American community.

I am confident that St. John's Hospital is very proud to have such a truly dedicated physician on staff – a man who was born to be a doctor.

Eugenia M. Sudylo
Bethel, Conn.

To the UNA membership:

- In accordance with the UNA By-Laws, Article 17, all branches, district committees and individual members are invited to submit their proposals for the good and welfare of the association to the UNA Executive Committee. These proposals will be reviewed, and approved or revised, by the Executive Committee, which will then recommend them to the UNA convention's Committee on Revision of By-Laws for its consideration. That committee will then recommend to the convention what action should be taken. Please address such proposals to: Ukrainian National Association, Att'n: Executive Committee, 2200 Route 10, P.O. Box 280, Parsippany, NJ 07054.

- Any proposals for amendments to the UNA By-Laws are to be submitted to the Committee on Revision of By-Laws, which will consider the advisability of the change or revision suggested, and will then present its recommendation for consideration by the convention. Such proposals are to be submitted to the chairperson of the Pre-Convention By-Laws Committee, Taras Szmagala Jr. Please address proposals regarding by-laws changes to: Ukrainian National Association, Att'n: Taras Szmagala Jr., 2200 Route 10, P.O. Box 280, Parsippany, NJ 07054.

– UNA Executive Committee

Three Ukrainian institutions are burglarized in Toronto

by Petro Lopata

TORONTO – During the last two weeks of March three Toronto Ukrainian institutions have been burglarized, leaving some in the community pointing to the start of a crime wave targeting Ukrainians in this city. The three organizations targeted in the burglaries – the Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Center (UCRDC), the Children of Chernobyl Canadian Fund (CCCCF) and the scouting organization Plast – are all charities.

The Plast and CCCC break-ins were assessed by the same police officers, who made the observation that the two break-ins had much in common and that investigators suspected the same burglars were responsible for both. When the UCRDC break-in was brought to their attention, they said they would compare the evidence found at all three. The police investigation is continuing.

The first robbery occurred overnight on March 14-15 at the UCRDC, located in the St. Vladimir Institute building near downtown Toronto. According to Nadia Skop, UCRDC executive administrator, staff left the building on March 14 at 7 p.m. after a meeting. When she arrived for work the next day at 10 a.m., Ms. Skop said she found the offices had been ransacked, and that computers and a safe were missing.

Ms. Skop said although there wasn't any money in the safe, it contained the master betacam cassette of "Harvest of Despair," the award-winning UCRDC-funded documentary on Ukraine's artificial famine of 1932-1933, valued at \$6,000. She pleaded for the return of the cassette, which has no re-sale value, saying that "no questions" would be asked.

Ms. Skop also expressed her surprise over the fact that of all the organizations housed in the St. Vladimir Institute, only the UCRDC had been targeted by the burglars. Though it appears the UCRDC was singled out in this incident, "We're going to be enhancing security throughout the whole building," Ms. Skop

explained.

After the burglary at the UCRDC, the spate of crimes shifted to Bloor West Village, a strip of Bloor Street West spanning from streets High Park to Jane, with a significant and visible Ukrainian presence. Here, over the evening of March 25-26, both the Plast headquarters and the building at 2118 Bloor Street West – within five minutes walking distance of each other – were burglarized by unknown perpetrators.

According to Plast employee Zenon Waschuk, missing from the scouting organization's offices are two older-model computers, while a fax machine and printers were left behind. Though there were no immediate signs of forced entry into the building, Mr. Waschuk said that the safety-glass doors to Plast's second-story offices were broken with such force that glass shards lay as far as seven meters away from the doors.

At 2118 Bloor Street, where the Children of Chernobyl Canadian Fund is headquartered, again, only the second story was targeted.

Andy Cottrell, who handles maintenance and is part-owner of the building, said a hole had been broken through a wall to enter the joint offices of the CCRF and Help Us Help the Children. A music school and an information technology company that also are found on the second floor were burglarized as well.

Mr. Cottrell breathed a sigh of relief as he told The New Pathway that steel doors in a second-story hallway prevented the burglars from entering the Ukrainian Canadian Art Foundation, "Kontakt" television studio and other tenants' offices.

The ground floor of the building houses a number of retail shops, the Consulate General of Ukraine in Toronto and an office of the Ontario Ministry of Transportation.

(The article, which was originally published in The New Pathway, a Toronto-based newspaper, and is reprinted with permission, has been edited for clarity by The Ukrainian Weekly.)

Councilman Stefan Tatarenko seeks second term in Clifton, N.J.

by Andrew Nynka

NEW YORK – In a February 7 letter to the Ukrainian community, Councilman Stefan Tatarenko of Clifton, N.J., announced his campaign for re-election.

Mr. Tatarenko, who entered politics in 1991 when he was first elected to the Clifton Board of Education, called the coming May 14 election a "critical" step and stressed his outreach to the Ukrainian community for support.

He cited among the growing number of 76,000 Clifton residents, approximately 1,000 Ukrainian families, which according to Mr. Tatarenko, were "an always active and vibrant part of the Clifton community."

Mr. Tatarenko called his campaign for a second term a "possible stepping-stone to the next level of government – Passaic County freeholder." The seven members of the Board of Freeholders are elected at large to three-year staggered terms and are considered legislators for the county level.

Among the issues facing the next city council, Mr. Tatarenko cited the development and rapid population growth in Clifton. He pledged "to maintain the quality of life that we want to maintain, we need the schools that we deserve in Clifton." He also added that, because of the town's favorable geographic location, town representatives should continue to solicit such large companies as the Swiss pharmaceutical giant Hoffman-LaRoche to establish their headquarters in Clifton in an effort to stimulate the local economy.

After being re-elected to the Clifton Board of Education in 1994, Mr. Tatarenko chose not to seek a third term in 1997. In 1998 he ran for and won a four-year seat on the seven-member City Council. Although the City Council actually elects the mayor, traditionally the candidate with the most votes is selected mayor of Clifton.

The 55-year-old politician has been an active member in the Ukrainian American community for over 24 years



Stefan Tatarenko

as a member of the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America and the Ukrainian Orthodox League. Mr. Tatarenko has held various management and sales positions in the textile industry for the past 32 years and currently works in Manhattan.

Mr. Tatarenko said that one of his successes in office has been his ability to stay politically free from party machines, which frequently offer candidates financial support in return for their adherence to party lines. He said that contributions have come from places as far as Washington, D.C., and Virginia in an effort to "support my campaign through funding from my Ukrainian constituency so as to keep free from money trappings."

Mr. Tatarenko emphasized the financial difficulties in running even a local campaign and urged those interested in supporting his bid for re-election to contact Mr. Tatarenko, by phone at (973) 797-4920, by e-mail at stefantatarenko@aol.com, or by writing to 25 Friar Lane, Clifton, NJ 07013. He also urged all those interested in his campaign, to attend his April 17 fund-raiser at the Valley Regency in Clifton at 7 p.m.

The new face...

(Continued from page 8)

to pretend that the AIDS crisis in Ukraine is none of our business, that it poses only a vague or remote threat to our friends or relatives. But if we stop to think about our families' real life situation, we will find that the threat is not nearly as remote or exotic as it seems. It would be naive to believe that this is a threat restricted to prostitutes or drug users. Anyone who requires a surgical procedure or a blood transfusion will be at risk as long as Ukrainian hospitals lack effective blood-testing technology and as long as doctors fail to follow universal precautions.

We have seen in the United States how informational campaigns and early testing have helped to level off and stem the tide of HIV infection. In Ukraine, a number of organizations such as Zhinocha Hromada, Doctors Without Borders and the Salus Foundation have developed very innovative programs to mobilize local communities against AIDS and especially to alert young people to the tremendous dangers involved. Unfortunately, these programs are woefully underfunded.

To its credit, the Ukrainian government and the Ministry of Health have now begun to recognize the AIDS crisis in its magnitude and have devoted the year 2002 to develop new strategies to combat the pandemic. Even with the government's

increased involvement, it's expected that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international relief groups will play a key role in educating the public and putting in place the laboratories and medical resources needed to prevent the spread of the disease.

It will not be easy to mobilize Ukrainians against this new and unfamiliar kind of threat. We are accustomed to pointing the finger at outside forces and personalizing the enemy. Emotionally, it is much more gratifying and less complicated to focus on the victims of Chernobyl or the victims of Soviet repression. It will be harder to muster the same level of enthusiasm to combat a health crisis that began with victims whose lifestyles and personal choices may have contributed to their condition. But blaming the victim no longer makes sense when newborn children, surgical patients and spouses are becoming stricken.

Many diasporites have grown fond of pontificating about the low moral standards and the promiscuity of post-Soviet Ukrainians. We can choose to remain in denial, but putting on airs of moral superiority will not solve this problem. As a matter of Christian compassion and national self-interest, the struggle against AIDS must become a top priority for our Churches, our financial institutions and our youth groups – no matter how uncomfortable we may feel in confronting the reality of the epidemic.

At a minimum, we need to protect

unborn children from HIV infection that can be transmitted from mother to child. Whatever our prejudices may be, we can all agree that children should be protected before their life even starts. Early prenatal testing and administration of drugs such as nevirapine have been shown to be extremely effective in protecting newborns and the unborn from their mothers' virus.

Prevention programs cannot stop with infants. For the children's sake, we need to protect the parents as well. Given the appalling conditions in many orphanages, Ukrainian society can ill afford an expanding generation of orphans whose parents are being decimated by AIDS, as is the case in Romania, Thailand, and much of the Third World. Ukrainian institutions (especially churches, schools and universities) need to launch a concerted drive to impress on sexually active adults how much they are placing their lives and their children's future in peril.

We need to devote similar resources to protect Ukraine's blood supply so that unsuspecting patients will not be infected by routine surgery, as was the case with tennis champion Arthur Ashe and Hollywood socialite Elizabeth Glazer. A particularly chilling case was reported in Donetsk a few years ago where a doctor donated his blood for five of his pediatric patients, not knowing he had been infected with HIV during a training program in the West.

The Ukrainian American medical community needs to be in the forefront of development programs to upgrade Ukraine's ability to test for the virus and to intensify prevention programs. There is an equally important role to be played by athletes, musicians, artists and philanthropists in expanding the informational campaign.

Even without AIDS, the health crisis in Ukraine was already daunting, and humanitarian organizations in the diaspora had their hands full combating the aftermath of Chernobyl and other widespread illnesses. Unfortunately, we can no longer ignore an even more monstrous threat that could cripple the entire medical infrastructure of Ukraine.

Our community's response to the AIDS epidemic will be just as much a test of our national character and our collective will as any of the epic military struggles or political movements that preoccupied earlier generations. The sooner we make the commitment to this crusade, the more lives will be saved and the more Ukrainians will be spared the agony that comes with this deadly illness.

For more information on the AIDS crisis in Ukraine, readers are urged to consult the United Nations AIDS website at www.unaids.org. Readers may also contact Irene Oleksiak at CCRF, 1358 Whalley Ave., New Haven, CT 06515; telephone, (203) 387-0507; e-mail, info@childrenofchornobyl.org.

Readers choose the best Ukrainian stamps of the decade



The "Founding of Kyiv" souvenir sheet from 1997.

by Ingerit Kuzych

For the past 10 years, it has been my pleasure to present the annual Heorhiy Narbut Prize for the best-designed Ukrainian stamp. Last year a special edition of the Narbut Prize was set up to determine "the best stamp issue of Ukraine's first decade of independence."

The balloting for this Special Narbut Prize has now been concluded and two souvenir sheets have been declared co-winners. Between themselves, the 1997 "Founding of Kyiv" souvenir sheet and the 2000 "Wildflowers of Ukraine" souvenir sheet nabbed 60 percent of all the votes. The closest challenger was a "Yaroslav the Wise" souvenir sheet from 1999 with 13 percent.

Both winning items are striking for their uniqueness and beauty. The first depicts the legendary founders of Ukraine's capital: the brothers Kyi, Schek, and Khoryv, and their sister Lybid. According to the ancient manuscript "Povist Vremenykh Lit" (Tale of Bygone Years), the siblings established the city some 1,500 years ago on a wooded, hilly site overlooking the Dnipro. Kyi, a powerful and popular ruler, traveled down the river to Constantinople to visit the Byzantine emperor, who "received him with great respect and honor."

Surrounding the two 40-kopiyka stamps that dominate the 100-by-80-mm sheet, are miniature vignettes that illustrate aspects of this tale. Along the top, on either side of the word "Kyiv" are various wooden buildings of the early town. Shown along the bottom are the sailing ships of Kyi's expedition to Byzantium. Along the sides, interspersed with ancient motifs, is the story itself, written in Ukrainian. The Cyrillic microprint may be read quite easily with the aid of a simple magnifying glass. All in all, a very original and imaginative design.

The same description applies to the other winner, a large (130-by-150-mm) souvenir sheet depicting both Ukraine's floral and feminine beauty. Ukrainian women often use flowers to adorn themselves, particularly at festivals and celebrations. A different flower highlights each of the 10 30-kopiyka stamps of the souvenir sheet. Six of the depicted wildflowers compose the floral wreath worn by a hazel-eyed young lady. (Such dark-colored eyes, *kari ochi*, are frequently lauded in Ukrainian song and poetry.)

Starting in the upper left, the flowers in the oversized headdress are marigold (*chornobryvtzia*), camomile (*romashka*), hollyhock (*malva*), and the field poppy (*mak*). The middle left stamp shows peri-



The "Wildflowers of Ukraine" souvenir sheet from 2000.

winkle minor (*barvinok*). This plant plays a special significance at Ukrainian weddings, where wreaths of periwinkle are made for both the bride and groom. The middle right stamp displays the last flower in the headdress, the bachelor's button or cornflower (*voloshka synia*). It is frequently used to decorate wedding wreaths.

The remaining four wildflowers making up the field in front of the central figure are: morning glory (*kruchenii panychi*), lilies (*lileya*), peonies (*pivonia*), and bluebells (*dzvonyky*).

Participants in this Special Narbut Prize balloting obviously felt strongly that these were the two best philatelic designs from Ukraine's first decade. In the final voting, however, the "Founding of Kyiv" sheet actually nosed out the "Wildflowers" sheet by two votes. Nevertheless, I could not bear to see either of these lovely works of art lose.

Since both issues stood out so strongly

from the rest of the field, and since the voting was so close, I have decided, as sponsor of the Narbut Prize, to declare the two souvenir sheets co-winners. After all, this competition is meant to promote and popularize Ukraine's philatelic designs, not in any way to denigrate. It is not like the Olympics, where a single winner usually must be determined.

The prize money will be divided among Volodymyr Taran and Oleksander Kharuk (the "Founding of Kyiv" designers) and Kateryna Shtanko (the "Wildflowers of Ukraine" designer). Congratulations to all three of these excellent artists.

We can now look forward to equally enthralling philatelic designs in Ukraine's second decade of stamp production. Next month's "Focus on Philately" will feature Ukraine's stamp and souvenir sheet issues of 2001 and allow readers to choose their favorites from the first year of the new decade.

NEWSBRIEFS

(Continued from page 2)

Ukrainian media reported. Oblast Chairman Mykola Vyshyvaniuk commented that the killing was of "a clearly political character." Rival parties publicly condemned the killing. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Yushchenko feared vote rigging

KYIV – Viktor Yushchenko, the leader of the front-running Our Ukraine election bloc, told journalists on March 28 that he feared parties loyal to President Leonid Kuchma hold too much sway over the media and local electoral committees, and alleged that too many ballots have been printed for the March 31 parliamentary election, Reuters reported. "It seems to me that, as Stalin once said, 'The most important thing in the election is not who the electorate voted for, but who counts the votes,'" Mr. Yushchenko noted. "I fear that the authorities can falsify the election. And there is a lot of evidence for this." Mr. Yushchenko also said

Russia has interfered in the election campaign in Ukraine by commenting on "which Ukrainian political force is more or less dear" to it, the UNIAN news agency reported. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Lithuanian president visits Kyiv

KYIV – Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus on March 28 paid a one-day visit to Kyiv, where he met with his Ukrainian counterpart Leonid Kuchma, Ukrainian media reported. The two presidents signed a declaration providing for the establishment of the Council of the Presidents of Lithuania and Ukraine, which is to convene at least once a year and address the most topical issues of bilateral and regional cooperation. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Web radio service launched

KYIV – Panorama Radio Service – an Internet project sponsored by the Open Society Institute (Budapest), the International Renaissance Foundation (founded by George Soros), the Global

Conflict Prevention Fund (Great Britain), and the Canadian Foundation – was launched in March, UNIAN reported on March 28, quoting the project's manager, Vadym Kastelli. Panorama is not going to broadcast news directly but put up its bulletins as audio files on the Internet at <http://rsp.kiev.ua>. Local radio stations can take the files for broadcasting free of charge. (RFE/RL Newsline)

New press secretary is named

KYIV – President Leonid Kuchma has appointed 26-year-old Aliona Hromnytska as his spokeswoman, Ukrainian media reported on March 22. Since 1999 Ms. Hromnytska has worked with the private ICTV Television where she was responsible for reporting on the activities of the presidential administration. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Bloc leader cites 'Yugoslav scenario'

KYIV – Bohdan Boiko, the head of the National Movement of Ukraine election bloc (a Rukh splinter group), recently claimed that the opposition – Our Ukraine,

the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc and the Socialist Party – is planning, with U.S. assistance, to stage a coup according to the "Yugoslav scenario," Inter Television reported on March 12. Mr. Boiko told journalists that the opposition is going to declare the official results of the March 31 election falsified and create a separate Parliament based on an alternative vote calculation. According to Mr. Boiko, a key role in this plan will be played by the Razumkov Center of Political and Economic Studies, which he claimed is run by sociologists trained in U.S. military institutions. "We have not planned a joint participation in exit polls on the day of the election," Razumkov Center Director Anatolii Hrytsenko commented. Our Ukraine, the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc and the Socialist Party have formerly declared their intention to organize an alternative vote count in the election. Viktor Yushchenko said Mr. Boiko's allegations are "paranoid," adding that "there have to be fools in the world, otherwise the clever will not stand out." (RFE/RL Newsline)



FOCUS ON PHILATELY

by Inger Kuzych

How many Scythians were there?

The ancient Scythians who lived on Ukrainian territory were renowned as fierce warriors, yet at the same time they were connoisseurs of exquisite artwork. Known primarily as a nomadic folk, these enigmatic people bequeathed to posterity various unique gifts. They were the first people in the world to invent trousers, which aided them in their riding. Their dazzling gold metalwork was incredibly detailed, depicting animals so frequently that an artistic Scythian zoomorphic style has been coined.

In warfare they are credited with the invention of the powerful double-curved bow, which could carry an arrow distances much further than conventional bows (Figures 1 and 2). They may also have developed chain mail, which offered superior protection in battle, but was lighter than the scale armor of the time (Figure 3). They paraded over the Ukrainian steppes for some 500 years (7th to 3rd centuries B.C.) and lingered in Crimea until the 3rd century A.D. Today their most visible remains are their scattered burial mounds (kurhany).

New Scythian stamps

An earlier "Focus on Philately" article already dealt with the Scythians and their fabulous gold artwork, but a new stamp series begun this year by the Ukrainian stamp production firm Marka Ukrainy provides a wonderful excuse to revisit these fascinating Ukrainian forebears. The new series is titled "History of the Military in Ukraine" and the first issue of four 40-kopiyka stamps depicts various types of Scythian warriors (Figure 4).

The first stamp depicts a light cavalryman in action, firing his bow at the enemy over the rear of his mount. Scythian tactics were to advance on an enemy shooting fusillades of arrows. They would plunge forward as if to attack, but at the last instant wheel away and launch a fresh volley of arrows over the rumps of their retreating horses, thus leaving the dust-enveloped enemy in disarray. The expression of a "parting shot," meaning a surprise attack just when the victim assumes the battle – verbal or otherwise – is over, may well have come from this Scythian tactic.

The second stamp shows heavily armed Scythian infantrymen engaged in a sword battle against Greek warriors. The former wear mail shirts and hoods, and carry square- or crescent-shaped shields. The third stamp presents a mounted Scythian king passing on orders to a young warrior. A typical Scythian burial mound may be seen in the background with several offering fires lit on it.

The final stamp prominently displays a mounted female warrior-archer, identified as an "Amazon." Many Scythian burials have been found of women buried with weapons. Although most Scythian women probably did not fight, there likely was a feminine warrior class.

A great deal of what we know about the Scythians was set down by the Greek historian Herodotus. Although derided in ages past as a teller of tall tales, over the past century or so many of the "tales" he set down have proven to be accurate. It is for this reason that one of his eyewitness stories deserves a closer examination.

The bronze cauldron

Most of Book Four of Herodotus' Histories deals with the Scythians. Paragraph 81 is particularly fascinating as it provides clues to the size of the Scythian population.

Herodotus writes:

"It was impossible for me to find out exactly the size of the Scythian population; I kept receiving conflicting reports of their numbers. Some people said there were huge numbers of Scythians, while others said that there were few of them – few genuine Scythians, that is. However, I was shown something relevant to the issue. Between the Borysthenes [present-day Dniro River] and the Hypanis [present-day Buh River] there is a district called Exampeus, which I mentioned a short while ago [in a previous paragraph], when I was talking about the brackish spring there which flows into the Hypanis and makes the water undrinkable. Now, in Exampeus there is a bronze vessel which is six times as big as the bowl that Pausanias the son of Cleombrotus set up at the mouth of the Euxine [Black] Sea. For the sake of anyone who has not seen Pausanias' bowl, I should explain that the vessel in Scythia easily

holds 600 amphoras of liquid, and that it is six fingers thick. Now, I was told by the local Scythians that this bowl was made out of arrowheads. What happened was that one of their kings, who was called Ariantas, wanted to know how many Scythians there were, so he issued a proclamation that every Scythian was to bring a single arrowhead, and that anyone who failed to do so would be put to death. A huge quantity of arrowheads were brought, and the king decided to use them to make this bronze vessel, and he chose this place, Exampeus, to be its site. That is what I heard about the size of the Scythian population."

A fortunate purchase

Not that long ago on e-Bay a coin dealer from Florida was offering two bronze arrowheads of the 7th to 4th century B.C. described as coming from Ukraine. I was immediately interested and in checking out the photograph recognized the arrowheads as being of Scythian style. I quickly put in bids sufficiently high to make sure I acquired the two items.

Figure 5 displays various types of Scythian arrowhead styles. Note that they are all barbed. This attribute was intentionally added by the Scythians in order to ensure that removal of arrows would cause additional damage to their victims (and,

therefore, frequently their deaths). The two arrowheads I was able to purchase most closely resemble the second and sixth from the left.

Having these Scythian arrowheads and carrying out some calculations I have been able to come up with an approximation of the number of Scythians living in Ukraine in the middle of the 5th century before Christ (Herodotus lived ca. 485-425 B.C.). Readers "numerically challenged" may wish to skip the calculation details and proceed directly to the final section of this article.

The calculations

We do know the approximate modern equivalents of the measurements mentioned by Herodotus. A breadth of 16 fingers was considered the equivalent of one foot, so six fingers would equal 0.375 feet or 4.5 inches (the thickness of the cauldron). An amphora of the time held approximately nine gallons.

In order to determine how many arrowheads were used to make the cauldron, one must first figure out how much bronze was melted to make such a huge vessel. For my simplified calculations, I assumed the cauldron took the shape of a hemisphere (half a

(Continued on page 14)

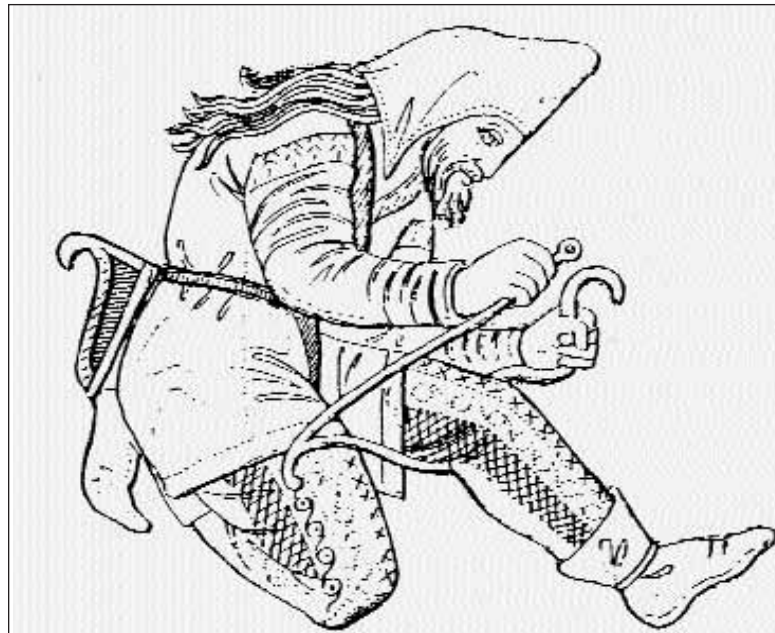


Figure 2. A Scythian stringing his bow, detail taken from a 2,400-year-old golden vase. This over-under-leg stringing method was necessary to be able to string the powerful weapons.



Figure 4. The first in a new series of stamps reviewing historic Ukrainian military periods. The initial set honors the ancient Scythians.

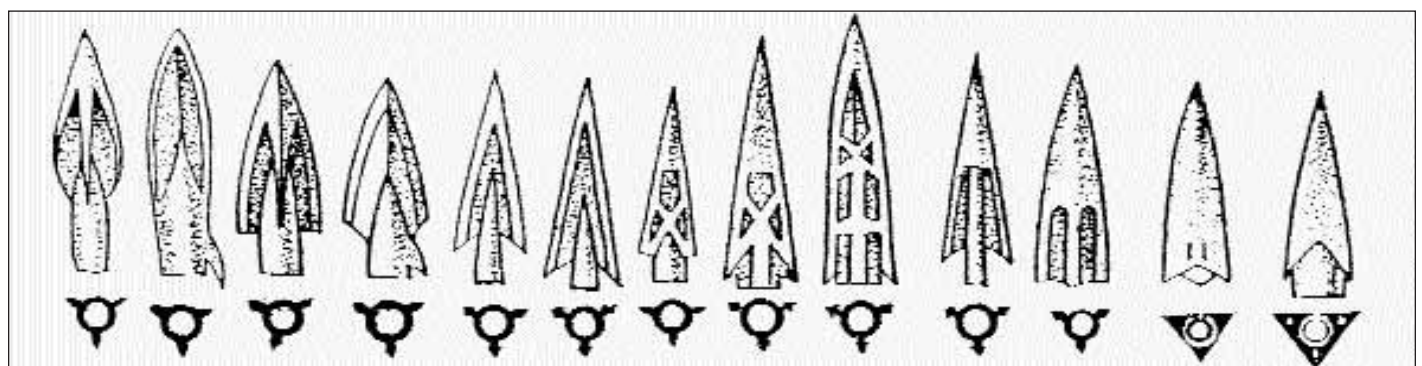


Figure 5. Scythian tri-finned arrowheads. Note the barbs, which made these arrowheads very difficult to remove.

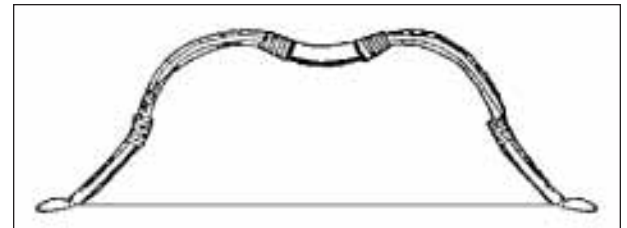


Figure 1. The Scythian composite bow was only about two and a half feet long. This size was especially suited to mounted bowmen such as the Scythians, who were rated the best archers in the world.

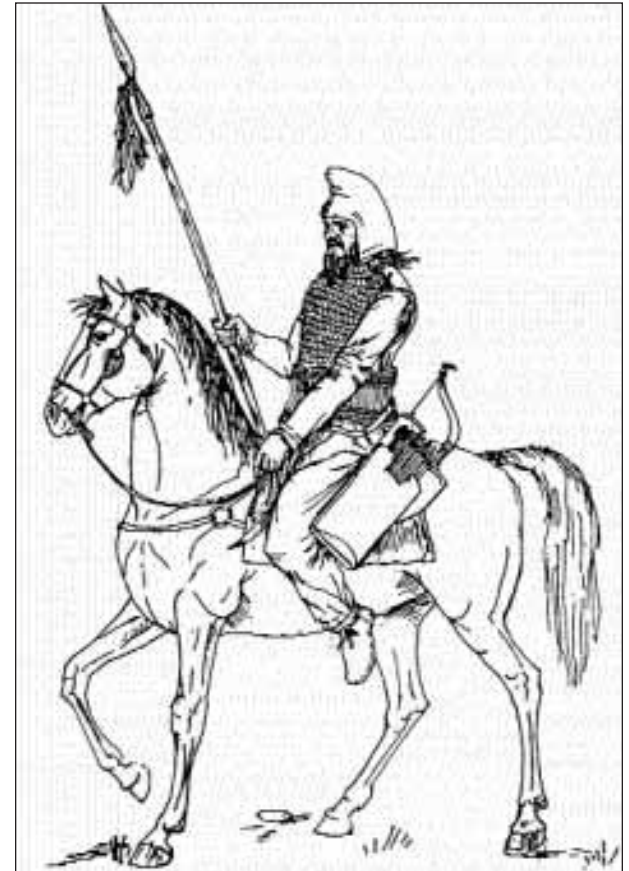


Figure 3. A mounted Scythian warrior of the 7th century B.C., based on finds near the village of Shunka, in the Kyiv Oblast.

Ukraine's Gregory Hlady makes his mark in theater in Quebec

by Alexandra Hawryluk

MONTREAL – Immobilized in pools of overhead light the seven colorfully costumed actors were in stark contrast to the all-black loft of the Infinitheatre in Montreal. One would think that the sight of a black-robed Garbiel Gascon, the venerable French actor, draped in a purple veil, and the sight of Héloïse Depocas in white Kabuki make-up wearing a long, scarlet dress from India, a girl in a black-and-white Ukrainian costume, and a young man in a tan trench coat – both with wire mesh wings on their backs – would be enough to suggest that the spectators might be in for something unusual.

Yet, from the moment this tableau sprang into action right to the very end of the two-hour presentation, the creator and director of “Kateryna’s Dreams,” Gregory Hlady, never ceases to amaze, never fails to move his audience.

Inspired by the magical and mysterious atmosphere of Mykola Hohol’s story “A Terrible Vengeance,” Mr. Hlady creates a theater piece that immerses the spectator in the invisible current that flows, in Jean Vanier’s words, “beneath the brightly painted surface of our ordered lives.” Unlike a conventional play concerned with narrative and conflict resolution, “Kateryna’s Dreams” presents the audience with a sequence of psychological and spiritual revelations centered on dying, grieving and longing in which, as in our dreams, time is thrown out of whack. The past, the future, the present moment, the long-dead ancestors, the living, and those about to die, ancient ritual, flashes of humor, are all intertwined into one magical, dynamic whole.

Although the play seems to be about the death of the family patriarch (Gabriel Gascon) and the reaction to that death by his wife (Valentyna Blagodatska), his son (Gregory Hlady), his daughter Kateryna (Héloïse Depocas) and Kateryna’s husband (Pierre-André Côté), it is really about each character’s encounter with their own death, their own quest for meaning and connectedness. It is only when these characters discern their ancestors’ footprints on the path they themselves are treading and when they become aware of the ancestors’ loving presence at the gate, that they recover confidence and hope.

Curiously, this is not a gloomy piece of theater, but rather one in which our perception of death, bereavement and the

Alexandra Hawryluk is a radio commentator working in Montreal.

hereafter is clarified to the point where we lose our apprehension and begin to see the cyclical process of life and death as a wonderful, heart-rendering, but surprisingly joyful, spiritual adventure.

Mr. Hlady believes that in order to make sense of life and in order to understand our destiny “We need to get in touch with the past. That is an absolute necessity – to know who you are, who were your parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, your ancestors.” For him the experience of ancestors, as it is distilled in ancient folk songs, is the key. So, it is not surprising that he chose the ancient Ukrainian lament as a means of introducing his audience to understanding human experience in a new way. The natural delivery of these powerful songs, the evocative voice of Ms. Depocas (Kateryna), the haunting quality of the ensemble singing, along with the sensitivity of the musicians, especially the violinist Ivan Zavada, heightened the sense of immediacy, so much so, that even the Ukrainian lyrics become secondary to the total effect.

But there were moments where the non-Ukrainian audience was at a disadvantage. Although the cosmic anguish of regret embodied in the guardian angel’s cry over the dead patriarch: “On the way from hell, I lost the keys to paradise. Oh, God have mercy on me” moved the whole audience, it nevertheless touched more deeply those who understood Ukrainian. On the other hand, language is not a barrier when death turns lovely Kateryna’s world upside down. Despairing, she climbs a gymnast’s rope and hanging above the funeral bier in a beautiful head-down arabesque sings out “Sertse rozryvaye.” Nor was the poignancy of Mr. Gascon’s “Kru, kru” – the refrain of the “Cranes” (Zhuravli) lament – lost on the audience.

But there are other, more subtle reasons for using these old, half-forgotten songs. While singing these laments, Mr. Hlady explained, “You create a kind of trace in time and space. You get into a melody as if you were entering a tunnel, or a road you must follow. So you travel in it and suddenly, you feel a new dimension opening up. You get into an altered state of consciousness which is very close to meditation, to chanting ... [because] singing is an expression of the very core of the soul.” And as strange as it may sound, the audience feels this change and something of the actors’ experience resonates in them, too.

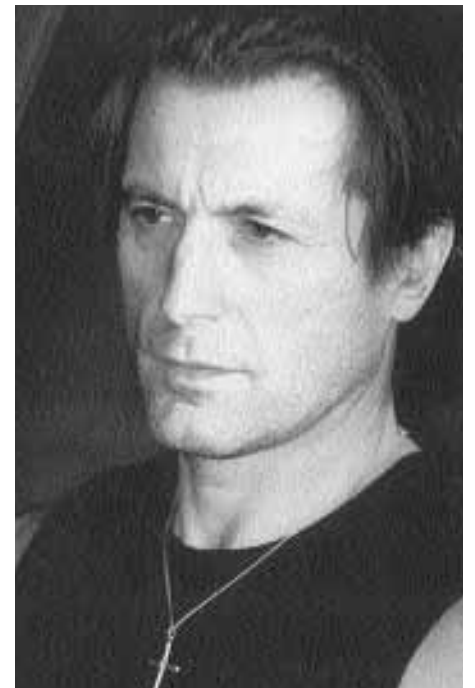
Mr. Hlady’s theater friends and students, however, would not be surprised by any of this. Like Mr. Hlady, Yaroslav Fedoryshyn, the artistic director of Lviv’s

Resurrection Theater (Voskresinnia), believes that “Theater is, after all, an expression of our inner world. It’s a search for self.”

Mr. Hlady, however, takes this idea a little further. He believes that theater should not just stimulate thought, but it should also dare to confront important transcendental issues. Under the influence of poetic cinema, especially Sergei Paradzhanov’s “Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors” and Leonid Osyka’s “The Stone Cross” and the experimental theater of Poland’s Jerzy Grotowski, Mr. Hlady is committed to expressing ideas in the mode of magic realism. That is, he is more interested in giving his audiences a unique experience, than telling them a story. So, myth, ritual, naturally delivered song, live music, symbolism and what Mr. Hlady calls “the topography of dreams” serve as tools for creating that experience for audiences everywhere.

Not only have his enthusiasm for exploring experimental technique, his solid acting and directing skills given him a special niche in Canadian alternative theater, but they have also taken him to Austria, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland and Ukraine, where he has conducted master classes for actors and directors interested in the expressive qualities of magic realism.

In Canada, where he has been living for the past 10 years, Mr. Hlady has been lauded for his innovative approach to Harold Pinter’s “The Homecoming,” his exciting French adaptation of Franz Kafka’s “Amerika,” and his extraordinary adaptation of Vladimir Nabokov’s “The Prisoner” at Canada’s National Theater School in Montreal.



Gregory Hlady, actor and director.

The surprising thing is that this native of Lviv, now working largely in French Quebec, is able to use Ukrainian culture as a dramatic medium and use it not for its anthropological interest, but rather for its ability to communicate the cumulative wisdom of generations past, for its ability to cast new light on the understanding of the human condition.

“Kateryna’s Dreams” premiered at Infinitheatre in Montreal on February 28 and continued to play to a full house until March 10. It was funded by the Ukrainian Canadian Foundation of Taras Shevchenko, Canada Council, The Arts Council of Quebec and The Arts Council of the Urban Community of Montreal.

Gregory Hlady: a short biography

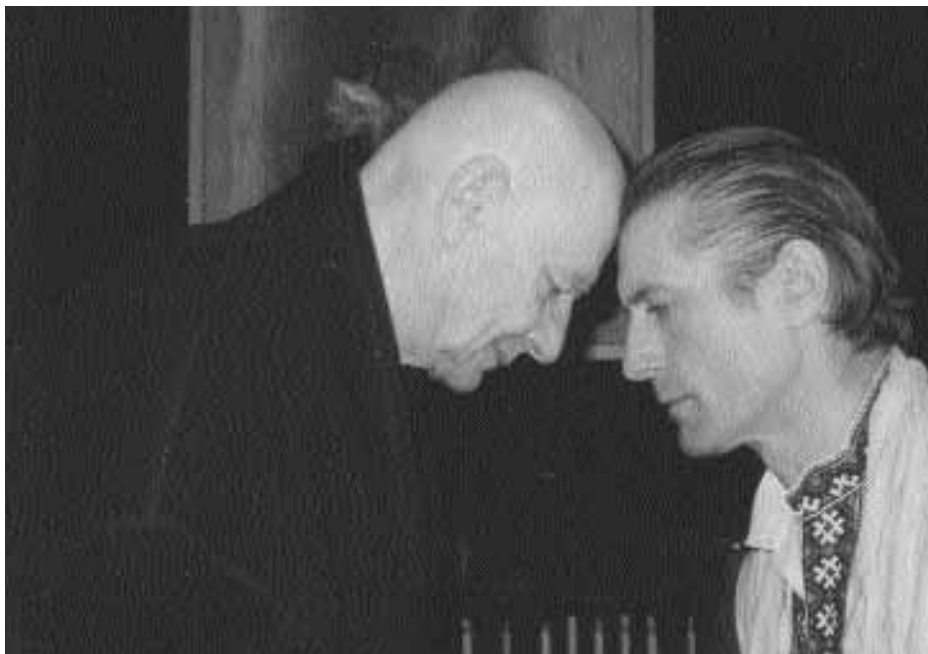
Born in the picturesque Ternopil region of Ukraine, Gregory Hlady (Hryhorii Hladyi), upon completing high school moved from Lviv to Kyiv and graduated from the Karpenko-Karyi Theater Institute with a degree in acting and cinema. Impelled by an interest in directing, he enrolled in the directors’ program at the State Institute of Theatre Arts in Moscow, where he studied under the tutelage of the gifted Russian director, Anatoly Vassiliev. As one of Vassiliev’s outstanding graduates Mr. Hlady quickly became one of the most sought-after stage and cinema actors and directors in Eastern Europe.

However, Mr. Hlady’s approach to theater was not well received by the Soviet authorities. So, in 1989 he left Kyiv for Tallinn, Estonia. In 1990, however, a contract to perform in “Six Characters in Search of an Author” took him to Montreal. His French-language production of Franz Kafka’s “Amerika” brought him critical acclaim in both Montreal and Brussels. But it was his production of Harold Pinter’s “The Homecoming” that won him Quebec Theater Critics’ Award for best directing in the 1991-1992 season.

While directing plays as diverse as Dostoyevsky’s “The Idiot” (Lausanne, Switzerland), Ionesco’s “Exit the King” and Sophocles’ “Electra” (Montreal), Mr. Hlady has also conducted master classes in Austria, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Switzerland and Ukraine. In 2000 he rejoined Vassiliev’s company to play Salieri in “Salieri and Mozart” in Rome. Last year, he appeared in a Paramount film “The Sum of All Fears” and this year, he plays the lead in Kim Nguyen’s new feature film “Le Marais.”

Currently, the Ukrainian actor is appearing in Paula de Vasconcelos’ Montreal theatre production of “The Other.” Mr. Hlady speaks English, French, Lithuanian, Polish, Russian and Ukrainian, and makes his home in Montreal.

– Alexandra Hawryluk



A scene from “Kateryna’s Dreams,” with Gabriel Gascon in the role of the father and Gregory Hlady, in the role of the son.

The Weekly’s collection of materials about the Famine

The Ukrainian Weekly’s official website contains the largest collection of materials on the Internet dedicated to the Great Famine of 1932-1933 in Ukraine.

Located at www.ukrweekly.com, the special section includes a chronology of the Famine years, eyewitness accounts, editorials, media reports, stories about observances of the Famine’s 50th anniversary in 1983, scholarly articles, interviews with journalists who reported on the Famine, transcripts of testimony on the Famine commission bill ultimately passed by the U.S. Congress, texts of statements before the U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, references and other documentation, as well as the full text of The Ukrainian Weekly’s special issue on the Great Famine published on March 20, 1983. The section is completely searchable.

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2000

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How many Scythians...

(Continued from page 12)

sphere) and its volume was 5,400 gallons (600 amphora times 9 gallons/amphora). The formula for the volume of a sphere is $\frac{4}{3} \pi r^3$ where r is the radius of the sphere. Since half the volume is 5,400 gallons, the sphere has a volume of 10,800 gallons or 10,800 x 231 cubic inches (there being 231 cubic inches per gallon).

Knowing this, we can compute the radius of the inner sphere to be approximately 84.1 inches. The outer radius is 84.1 + 4.5 inches (4.5 inches being the thickness of the cauldron wall). From this we can compute the volume of the outer sphere. The difference between the outer and inner volumes is the volume of the shell of the sphere and it is 421,740 cubic inches. Half of that is the volume of the hemispheric shell of the cauldron or 210,870 cubic inches. This volume would be the approximate bronze volume of the melted arrowheads.

Having determined how much bronze composed the cauldron, the final determination is to figure out how much volume was taken up by an average arrowhead. This was accomplished by dipping my two arrowheads in a test tube (graduated in cubic centimeters; cc) partly filled with water. The two arrowheads displaced almost exactly 1 cc of water (therefore, on average, each displaced one half cc). Since there are approximately 16 cc in a cubic inch, it would have required about 32 arrowheads to make up a cubic inch of bronze. Multiplying 32 times 210,870 cubic inches yields 6,747,840 arrowheads or the possible population of ancient Scythia two and a half millennia ago. So, if Herodotus' tale is true, the pile of arrowheads collected by King Ariantas must have been immense.

An assessment

A population of 6.7 million or so, to me at least, seems overly large – about triple or quadruple what I would have expected the population of the time to be. Much depends on my estimate of 32 arrowheads per cubic inch. It certainly could be that my arrowheads are not representative and that Scythian arrowheads were generally larger (which would leave fewer of them per square inch and, therefore, would indicate a smaller Scythian population). I would invite anyone with access to such arrowheads to determine how much space they displace and to see if your figure(s) approximate mine.

Early population figures for Ukrainian territories are simply unknown. The Encyclopedia of Ukraine mentions that the population of Ukraine in 1629 A.D. was 5 to 6 million and in 1764-1774 was over 8 million. So, a comparable population two millennia earlier seems far fetched.

On the other hand, even though I am somewhat skeptical of my own result, it may have been possible that the rich Ukrainian lands did support a huge ancient population. Maybe one even larger than the figure I calculated. After all, Herodotus does write that the vessel "easily holds 600 amphoras of liquid." In addition, the cauldron almost certainly was not perfectly spherical and so would be much larger than what was calculated.

In another part of his Histories, Herodotus describes the different tribal groupings of the Scythians. Far from all being nomadic pastoralists, several of these were sedentary and agricultural: the Callipidae, the Alazones and the Aroters among them. Populations of settled groups do tend to be considerably larger than those of nomadic herdsman.

So, in the end, it is up to the reader to decide what the population of ancient Scythia might have been. I invite feedback and may be reached at: ingert@starpower.net or at P.O. Box 3, Springfield VA 22150.

Ukrainian election...

(Continued from page 2)

“pro-Russian option” (supporters of For a United Ukraine, the Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party) – to a much greater extent than any previous election campaign in the country. Polls by several independent polling centers concurrently suggested over the past few months that Our Ukraine might obtain up to 50 percent of the vote in western Ukraine and definitely less than 10 percent in eastern Ukraine, while the pro-government For a United Ukraine and the Communists may count on substantial support primarily in eastern and southern regions.

Confronted with the unpleasantly high popularity of Mr. Yushchenko’s Our Ukraine among voters in western Ukraine, For a United Ukraine campaign planners have resolved to mobilize as yet undecided voters by appealing to anti-

U.S. sentiments in the country. Mr. Yushchenko’s Our Ukraine, along with the vociferously anti-presidential Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc and the Socialist Party, has been accused of preparing a U.S.-sponsored “Yugoslav-scenario” coup in Ukraine. According to this sinister plan, the opposition was allegedly going to declare the official results of the March 31 election falsified and create a separate Parliament based on an alternative vote calculation. An important role in this plan allegedly was to be played by U.S.-trained sociologists from the Razumkov Center of Political and Economic Studies.

Moreover, a documentary broadcast three times by ICTV Television and 1+1 Television this month unambiguously suggested that Ukraine’s infamous tape scandal – which implicates President Kuchma and other top officials in the murder of independent journalist Heorhii Gongadze – was used by Washington to exert pressure on Mr.

Kuchma in order to depose him and install Yushchenko. For many observers of Ukrainian politics, the documentary was primarily intended to sow distrust in Mr. Yushchenko by suggesting to Ukrainians that he is plotting behind the scenes with Americans to the detriment of his native country.

To polarize voters even more, Communist lawmakers questioned the legality of the registration in 1992 of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kyiv Patriarchate and accused it of appropriating property from the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate. It is hardly possible to imagine a more improbable defender of “canonical Orthodoxy” than the Communist Party, but this issue was purposely publicized by the Ukrainian Communists. The Communists know that the faithful under the Kyiv Patriarchate are more likely to support the pro-Western Mr. Yushchenko in the election, so they have tried to curry favor with those under the Moscow Patriarchate in order to win their votes or at least to inflame the religious antagonism and deepen Ukraine’s “west-east split” for the duration of the election campaign.

It is no wonder that Ukrainian voters, bombarded with these “strategic football” issues in the state-controlled media and a cacophony of accusations and counter accusations of foul play, were actually not paying much attention to what the competing parties and blocs propose in socioeconomic portions of their election programs. Many polls pre-

dicted that Our Ukraine – with a moderately reformist economic program – could obtain some 100 seats in the Verkhovna Rada, but that the pro-presidential For a United Ukraine – by using administrative levers, intimidation of voters, and massive advertising in the media – would get no fewer. And this would almost certainly mean that a new government would be very similar to the one Ukraine now has.

The current election campaign was not an exception to the string of election campaigns that independent Ukraine has already faced: the stakes were very high and the play was habitually foul. But when summing up post-election gains and losses, it turns out that the preservation of the status quo is the only unquestionable consequence of all the preceding political commotion. The best prospect for Ukraine after March 31 would be to see a Parliament that could prevent President Kuchma from amending the Constitution and staying in office for a third term.

What Ukraine primarily and urgently needs is to embrace a positive and efficient economic program, not a civilizational or geostrategic choice between the West and the East, or between Washington and Moscow. This is what all Ukrainians, including those from “nationalist” Halychyna and “socialist” Donbas, would apparently accept without reservations and animosities. Unfortunately, Ukraine’s political elites still appear to be incapable of offering and/or agreeing on such a program.

Russia and the West...

(Continued from page 2)

internal affairs.”

Oligarchic parties such as the SDPU and FUU are fanning anti-Western sentiment on television stations they control by accusing the United States of interference in Ukraine’s internal affairs and of being behind a so-called “Brzezinski Plan” to replace Mr. Kuchma with Mr. Yushchenko. Rossiiskaya Gazeta argued that Western assistance to the Ukrainian elections is merely a cover to support Our Ukraine and obtain a pro-U.S. Parliament that “would drive a wedge between Moscow and Kyiv.”

Such was the theme of the film “PiAr” aired on ICTV and directed by Charles Clover, a former Kyiv correspondent for the Financial Times. In his coverage for the Financial Times, which has since been disavowed by the daily, Mr. Clover had accused Mr. Yushchenko of financial malpractice while serving as chairman of the National Bank of Ukraine.

Russian officials have yet to overcome their penchant for intervening in the internal affairs of CIS states, as evidenced by Viktor Chernomyrdin. The Russian ambassador to Ukraine acts more like a regional governor than an ambassador when he complains about U.S. resolutions on the Ukrainian elections – clearly an area that is normally the preserve of the domestic Foreign Affairs Ministry, not a foreign ambassador.

Russia would like to see Ukraine continue its tilt toward Russia that began even prior to the “Kuchmagate” scandal in 2000. In the last two years, Presidents Kuchma and Putin have met a record 18 times. Russian – not Western – capital is becoming increasingly active in the Ukrainian economy, and by 2005 it will influence the production of 70 percent of the goods manufactured in Ukraine.

In the current elections, Russian officials have openly declared their hostility to Mr. Yushchenko’s Our Ukraine as an anti-Russian, pro-Western and nationalist bloc.

Dmitrii Rogozin, the head of the Russian State Duma’s International Relations Committee, has used Soviet-era rhetoric to reintroduce allegations that “Ukrainian nationalists” who are members of Our Ukraine were involved in “criminal activities” during and after World War II.

Russia’s open support for the Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU) and oligarchic/pro-presidential parties in the 2002 elections is due to its prioritization of geopolitical issues in the Commonwealth of Independent States, as

witnessed by its support for Sovietophile and authoritarian regimes in Belarus and communist Moldova. Russian presidential administration chief Aleksandr Voloshin has admitted that Moscow backs FUU, the SDPU, and the CPU, and is hostile to Our Ukraine.

The 2002 parliamentary elections therefore, have laid out the framework for the presidential elections in two years’ time. As Russia’s concern is only geopolitical, it supported two of the three political groups in Ukraine – the Communists and the oligarchs. In contrast, the West has an interest in both geopolitical and reformist issues in Ukraine and thus backed the reformist camp, that is, Mr. Yushchenko and Our Ukraine.

The first political group that Russia supports in the CIS is made up of communists and Sovietophiles; as is the case in Belarus and Moldova. However, this option is unlikely to be successful in Ukraine. Therefore, Russia is lending its support also to the second oligarch camp, which has been implicated in corruption, prefers a non-transparent economic and political system and can envision Ukraine’s return to Europe only “together with Russia.” Russia’s favored presidential candidate from this second political group is the SDPU’s Mr. Medvedchuk, who heads Ukraine’s most vilified oligarchic group.

Neither the Communists nor the oligarchs are favored by U.S. and Western organizations such as the European Union, and the West is left only with the reformers represented by Mr. Yushchenko and Our Ukraine. In contrast to Mr. Medvedchuk, Mr. Yushchenko has no corrupt past, supports a transparent reform process that the West has long asked Ukraine to implement, and backs Ukraine’s integration into the EU and NATO independent of Russia.

All three of Ukraine’s political groups (Communists, oligarchs and reformers) support Ukraine’s membership in the EU. Nevertheless, only the reformist Our Ukraine camp is willing to undertake the necessary domestic policies that would replace rhetoric with real reform.

Over the next two years, both the West’s favorite Mr. Yushchenko, and especially Russia’s favorite, Mr. Medvedchuk, will attempt to ingratiate themselves with President Kuchma to obtain his blessing as his successor. As with former Russian President Boris Yeltsin and his appointed successor President Putin, President Kuchma’s price for his blessing will be immunity from prosecution, something that Mr. Medvedchuk will more easily be able to grant than Mr. Yushchenko would.



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NEW RELEASES

Roman Klun's "Passion of the Angel" CD

STONEY CREEK, Ontario – "Passion of the Angel" is the latest and second Ukrainian world-music recording by Roman Klun, an award-winning producer, sound engineer and arranger recognized for his accomplishments in the music industry.

In "Passion of the Angel," Mr. Klun appears as arranger, vocalist and songwriter, as well as instrumentalist, along



Cover of Roman Klun's new CD.

with close friends and colleagues – among them guest vocalist Renata Duma and Jen Chapin, and fellow musicians Ron Cahute, Karen Elizabeth Aniol, Bill Dillon, Harvey Jones, Dave King, Mark Zubek, Dave J. Young and Rob Fakete.

The disk comprises four traditional songs in contemporary arrangement by Mr. Klun; two melodies to the poetry of Taras Shevchenko – "My Thoughts" and "Learn, My Brothers," in an arrangement

by Mr. Klun; and "Extended Welcome," written by Mr. Klun, a composition that won a Genie Award for best film theme song.

Also featured are "Terrace on the Terrace," a traditional melody performed by Mr. Cahute; "Stairs on the Hill," with music by Michael Hampson, with East Indian texture and lyrics by Mr. Klun; and the hymn "Amazing Grace."

Notes to "Passion of the Angel" provide background information and the source of inspiration for each piece, be it the 1980 Canadian performance of the Ukrainian group Kobza, which proved to be a seminal experience in the genesis of Mr. Klun's first CD, titled "Ancestors" (1999); the experience of having lived in New Orleans and New York City, and worked in record production and engineering with many talented artists and musicians; the journey of self-discovery in travels throughout England, France and Austria; or the profound experiences that formed part of Mr. Klun's trip to Ukraine in 2000, especially to Shevchenko's burial mound in Kaniv and to the Pecherska Lavra Monastery in Kyiv.

A frequent subtext in Mr. Klun's work is the experience of revelation and rebirth, arising out of a return to and communion with the ancestral source.

"Passion of the Angel" is dedicated to Mr. Klun's father, Jaroslav, a prominent Ukrainian Canadian choreographer, founder of the Rusalka and the Chaika Ukrainian dance ensembles of Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Hamilton, Ontario,

(Continued on page 19)

Paul Bojack's first video film release

LOS ANGELES – Since its release last November, "Glass, Necktie," a first feature video film by writer-director Paul Bojack by El Cinema, has been screened at various venues in Los Angeles, New York and Dublin and was an official selection of the AIF on-line film festival.

The film has also garnered critical acclaim in publications such as the LA Weekly, the Los Angeles Times and Film Threat which variously commend Mr. Bojack for a work comprising many strong components, among them, a well-crafted and -paced plots, complex and engaging story, insightful characterization as well as wry humor and "comedic menace."

"Glass, Necktie" deals with a man's involvement in an odd relationship with a married couple which turns into a dark, absurd and menacing contest of infidelity and control.

Film Threat's Brian Bertoldo said the film "paints a disturbing picture of deception and infidelity amongst a group of friends," in what is "a complex and engaging story that pays off with some remarkable insights into characters we cross paths with every day ..."

The LA Weekly noted that Mr. Bojack "creates an atmosphere of humor and comedic menace ... the weird undercurrents crashing through the marital relationships send the plot spiraling in a wholly unexpected direction," while "the characters and their connections are defined through rapid crosscutting, [as] an eccentric and wryly humorous vibe asserts itself."

The Los Angeles Times characterized Mr. Bojack as "an ingenious plotter" with "a good grasp of human nature," going on to say that "Glass, Necktie" looks good ..."



Paul Bojack (Boychuk)

The film, done on a micro-budget, is shot on black and white super 16 mm film. The cast features the following actors: Kirk Stricker, Dorothy Gallagher, Jeff Bergquist, Eric Cadora and Nancy Ferguson.

The film's score is by Mark Mothersbaugh. Mr. Mothersbaugh, formerly of the band Devo, has written music for "Rushmore," "It's the Rage," "The Royal Tenenbaums" and numerous other films and TV shows. His score for "Glass, Necktie" was singled out for praise in the Los Angeles review.

Mr. Bojack (a.k.a. Roman Paul Boychuk), was born and raised in New York City, and graduated from Rutgers University, majoring in psychology and English.

A self-taught filmmaker, his previous

(Continued on page 19)

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The lecture will take place on
Saturday, April 13, 2002, at 6:30 p.m. at the
Ukrainian Institute of America
2 East 79th St, New York, NY

A wine and hors d'oeuvres reception with
Prof. Marynovych will follow.

Tenor Misha Didyk to appear with Philadelphia opera in April

PHILADELPHIA – Tenor Misha Didyk will appear with the Opera Company of Philadelphia at the Academy of Music in Bellini's "The Capulets and the Montagues," an opera based on the Romeo and Juliet theme. Mr. Didyk will appear in the role of Tebaldo, Guilietta's suitor, with the opening performance to take place April 7.

Mr. Didyk is the leading tenor of the National Opera of Ukraine in Kyiv, his home company. A graduate of the National Academy of Music in Kyiv (1991), he continued with post-graduate studies at the academy and in 1993 studied with Anna Maria Bondi in Paris.

He made his debut at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow as Alfredo in "La Traviata" in 1997 and debuted with the Finnish National Opera in 1998 in a new production of "Anna Bolena."

He made his American debut in the fall of 1999 in gala opera concerts with the Opera Company of Philadelphia appearing opposite Denyce Graves and Samuel Ramey.

Mr. Didyk joined the New York City Opera during the 2000-2001 season as the Duke in a new production of "Rigoletto." That season he also appeared in that role with the New Israeli Opera in Tel Aviv, made his Italian debut appearing in the title role in "Don Carlo" in Genoa and appeared, to great critical acclaim, with Opera de Puerto Rico as Pinkerton in "Madama Butterfly."

This season he made his debut with Opera Pacific in "Rigoletto" and returned to Philadelphia as Pinkerton



Misha Didyk

for a new production of "Butterfly." His debut in upcoming new productions include the role of Macduff in Verdi's "Macbeth" in Marseille, France, and as Rodolfo with Opera Pacific in "La Bohème."

The Opera Company's new production of "The Capulets and The Montagues" runs from April 7 through 21 at The Academy of Music, Broad and Locust streets. For tickets call Ticket Philadelphia at (215) 893-1999. The production will be broadcast live on WHY-91FM on Sunday, April 21, at 8 p.m.

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Toronto's Vesnivka Choir to perform 2001-2002 season finale concert in April

by Sonia Solomon

TORONTO – Toronto area musical lovers are in for a treat with Vesnivka Choir's 2001-2002 season finale on Sunday, April 21. Musical Director Kvitka Kondracka has chosen works by contemporary Ukrainian composers as the focus of this performance featuring guest piano soloists Luba and Ireneus Zuk. The Toronto Ukrainian Male Chamber Choir also will perform with Vesnivka Choir in the "Showcase of Contemporary Ukrainian Composers" at 3 p.m. at the MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto.

The Zuk duo needs no introduction to Ukrainian music audiences in Canada and the United States. Ireneus Zuk is professor and director of the School of Music at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario while Luba Zuk is associate professor in the Faculty of Music at McGill University in Montreal and at the Ukrainian Free University in Munich. The duo has been active in promoting music by Canadian and Ukrainian composers.

Luba Zuk has been invited to participate as a jurist and adjudicator at competitions and festivals in Ukraine over the past few years. This experience has allowed her to meet and work with composers and musicians. Luba Zuk and Ms. Kondracka share a passion for finding new musical works and have been busy putting together what they hope to be an exciting and interesting concert.

Ms. Kondracka's friend and colleague, composer Lesia Dychko, has been invaluable in helping them make new contacts in the Ukrainian musical milieu. Ms. Dychko is a member of the executive of the Ukrainian Composers Association and has been very active fostering contemporary music at festivals, competitions and concerts in Ukraine and abroad. In a recent conversation with Ms. Kondracka, Ms. Dychko reported that 25 concerts featuring works by new composers have been planned this spring in Kyiv alone.

For this spring concert, the Zuk duo will be performing works composed especially for them. Suite No. 1 was written for the Zuk by Zhanna Kolodub in 1992; it consists of contrasting movements based on Ukrainian folk songs and dances. Hennady Lashenko's "Idem per Idem," composed in 1992 after the Duo's debut appearance in Ukraine, is based on the melodic and rhythmic elements of Ukrainian folklore of the Hutsul region.

The duo will also perform Halyna Ovcharenko's Hopak and Ms. Dychko's "Dramatic Triptych," written in 1993. Elements of Ukrainian ritual chants, folk songs and dances serve as the thematic basis for three contrasting movements with distinct pianistic sonorities. After hearing the Ukrainian premiere of the work in Kyiv in 2000, Ms. Dychko revised it substantially. The Zuk duo will perform the revised composition.

One of the things that drives the Vesnivka Choir's musical director to search for new music and compositions is that she faces a constant dearth of music written exclusively for women's voices.



Vesnivka's Kvitka Kondracka

Vesnivka will be performing works by Yevhen Stankovych, whose "Slovo O Polku Ihorevi" premiered at the "Days of Ukrainian Music in Warsaw" in June of 2001. Stankovych's "Kolo Moyi Khaty Zatsvily Blavaty" was first performed by Vesnivka Choir at the International Choral Olympics in Linz, Austria, in July 2000. Toronto audiences will be able to hear it at this concert for the first time. Works by Donetsk composers Oleksander Nekrasov and Volodymyr Stetsenko also will be featured.

The newly formed Toronto Ukrainian Men's Chamber Choir will join the Vesnivka Choir in three pieces by Viktor Kaminsky, Volodymyr Stetsenko and Istvan Marton. Piano accompaniments were composed by Ukrainian Canadian composers Zenoby Lawryshyn and Larysa Kuzmenko.

This spring concert marks the end of a very busy 2001-2002 season for Vesnivka. In November 2001 the choir performed a concert featuring works by Mr. Lawryshyn. The choir's annual Christmas concert saw the premiere performance of the Toronto Ukrainian Men's Chamber Choir, formed by Ms. Kondracka to have an ensemble to perform compositions for mixed voices and broaden the range of repertoire available to Vesnivka. The generous financial support of the Canada Council for the Arts, the Toronto Arts Council and the Ukrainian Canadian Foundation of Taras Shevchenko has been invaluable in making these concerts possible.

What's next for Vesnivka Choir? Ms. Kondracka plans to travel to Ukraine later this year and collect more new music. For starters, she has been in touch with Mr. Stetsenko in Donetsk, who is delighted that his works are being performed in Canada and has agreed to write more for the choir. Plans for the 2002-2003 season are under way and will be announced when details have been finalized.

For more information about Vesnivka Choir, readers may log on to www.vesnivka.com.

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Roman Klun's...

(Continued from page 16)

respectively; as well as to Mr. Klun's abiding sources of inspiration, Taras Shevchenko and the late singer Volodymyr Ivasiuk.

According to Petro Lopata of Novyi Shliakh of Toronto, the CD is remarkable for its rich layers of sound and, although it gives voice to traditional Ukrainian folk motifs, it is "obviously not for the timid listener." Mr. Lopata forewarns the prospective listener not to "expect plodding remakes of the old folk standards," going on to note Mr. Klun's "iconoclastic, personal take on "Dumy Moyi," with words by Shevchenko."

"Passion of the Angel," an Innsbruck Records production, is available for \$18.95 plus \$1.50 shipping and handling. For orders and additional information call (905) 662-9304; e-mail world-voice@sympatico.ca; or visit the website www.innsbruckrecords.com.

Mr. Klun is a recipient of the Genie Award, Canada's most prestigious film/movie industry honor, presented in 1999 for his work as a producer, engineer

and arranger. He was also awarded the Canadian Recording Industry Association's 4X Platinum Award for engineering work on Sarah McLachlan's hit single "Possession."

A lecturer at Recording Arts Canada, he has been affiliated as sound engineer with such companies as Sun Microsystems and has worked with such singers and musicians as Mmes. McLachlan and Chapin, Blaise Pascal, Tony Levin and Mr. Dillon.

Mr. Klun has co-produced and engineered the first-ever recording of Bishop Isidore Borecky officiating at a church liturgy at St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church in Toronto (2000). Since 1992 he has been co-producer and engineer of the Ron Cahute/Burya recordings and the children's series "Barabolya."

He has made numerous appearances on CFMT-TV's "Svitohlad" Ukrainian program and is a frequent performer at Canada's National Ukrainian Festival and at Toronto's Bloor Street Festival.

A dedicated dancer since his youth, he has danced professionally with Roma Pryma-Bohachevsky in New York and was an instructor in Ms. Pryma-Bohachevsky's summer dance workshops, and has traveled the globe with various professional dance troupes, orchestras and ensembles.

"Glass, Necktie," released by El Cinema, is available on video and DVD in independent and small video chain stores in the United States and Canada. For background information, synopsis and reviews, visit www.razorfilms.com/glassnecktie.html or call (310) 712-3457. To purchase "Glass, Necktie" go to www.amazon.com or www.videoflicks.com.

Paul Vojack's...

(Continued from page 16)

work includes a short video titled "The Infidel (Don't Call Me)," which was awarded a Gold Plaque at Intercom International Film and Video Festival and was a finalist in the Nashville Independent Film Festival.

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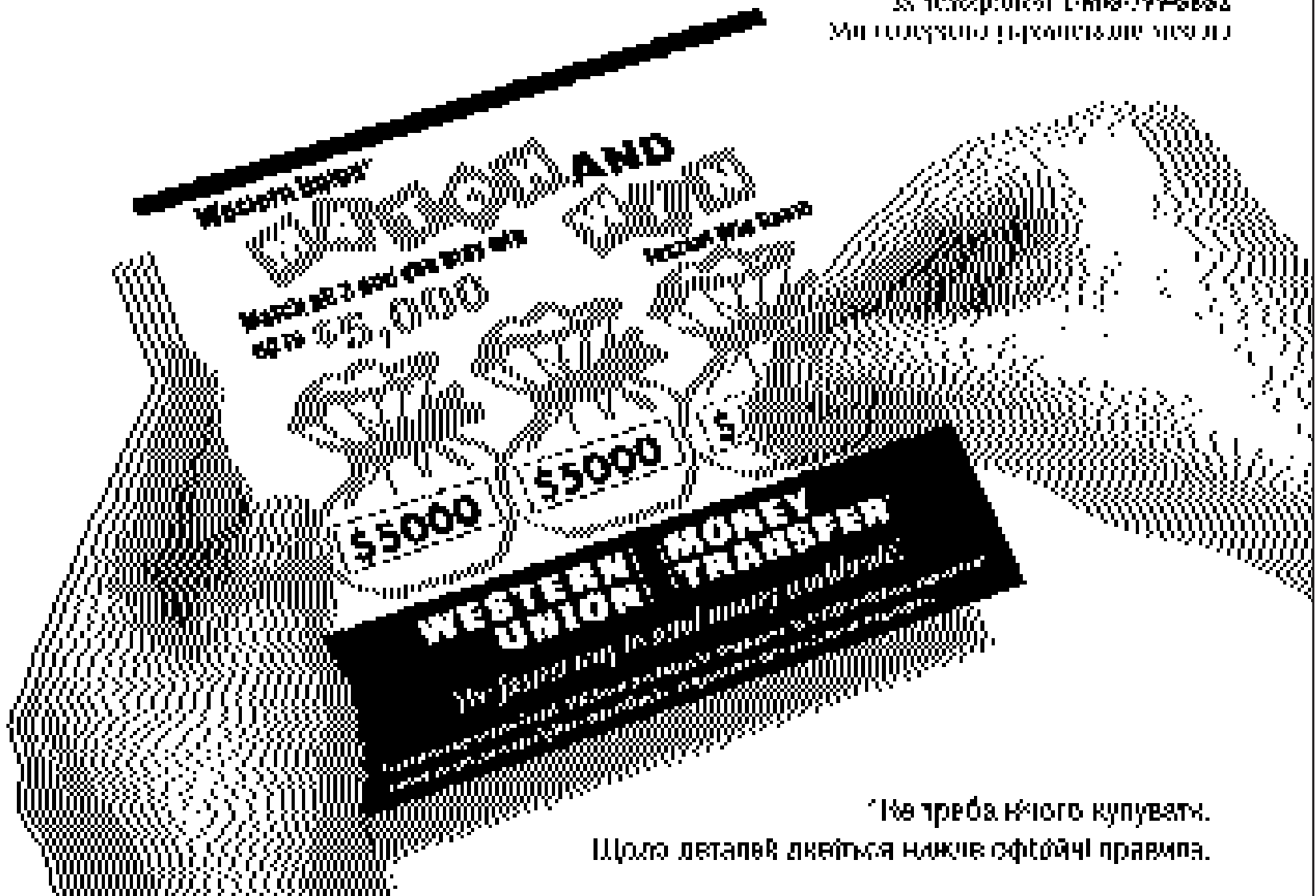
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Ukrainian pro hockey update

by Ihor Stelmach

Caps winger Bondra reflects on All-Star hockey experience

To Washington's Ukraine-born right winger Peter Bondra, the annual NHL All-Star Game is Christmas and New Year's Day all rolled into one.

"It's a holiday of hockey," said Bondra, who has made five All-Star game appearances.

The excitement of participating in the league's showcase game still hasn't worn off a player selected in the eighth round of the 1990 NHL Entry Draft. From meeting celebrities and legends of hockey to attending dinners and parties, to competing in the skills competition, to the game itself, the All-Star experience means a really packed weekend.

"It feels great to be singled out as one of the best players in the game," he said. "It's like a reward. It's something special and always such an honor to be there. For me, it's a close second to the Stanley Cup Finals."

Meeting Hall of Famers and playing with future ones excites Bondra the most. He's talked hockey with Gordie Howe a couple of times. Bondra even ran into Boston Bruin immortal Bobby Orr in a hallway before his first appearance in 1993. He only knew Orr from highlight films.

Orr "approached me in the hallway and he knew my name," Bondra recalled. "I was shocked. I just kind of had my eyes wide open."

Bondra is much better acquainted with players like Mario Lemieux, Scott Stevens and Paul Coffey, all of whom have given Washington fits in the playoffs. One game a year, though, they're Bondra's teammates. He faced Wayne Gretzky on the other side.

"You have a chance to go out there and meet all the good players you compete against that you don't know personally," he said. "It's great for hockey."

Bondra played with Jaromir Jagr in four All-Star Games: 1993 in Montreal, 1996 in Boston, 1998 in Vancouver and 1999 in Tampa Bay. That fact helped the two quickly become friends when Pittsburgh traded Jagr to the Capitals last July.

Both men grew up in the former Czechoslovakia, and Bondra has driven Jagr – the only player entering the current season with more goals since 1993 than Bondra – to a number of practices and games to ease his transition.

"I got a chance to know Jaromir in the last couple of All-Star Games," he said. "This way, you know him a little better. I had a chance to sit down and talk to him, to see what he does in the games, and to chat about it."

Of course, it's one thing to simply appear in a game. It's entirely different to help determine the eventual outcome. Bondra has certainly made his presence felt, and in more than one game.

He skated on a line with former New York Ranger Mike Gartner in 1993, when Gartner won Most Valuable Player honors by scoring four goals. Bondra contributed a goal and an assist as Adam Oates centered them in the East's 16-6 victory that year.

In 1997 Bondra skated with Eric Lindros and John LeClair, two-thirds of Philadelphia's Legion of Doom line, and he recorded two assists, as the East won handily, 11-7.

Prior to the 1998 game, the NHL changed its All-Star format from East versus West to North America against the World. It's a change Bondra endorsed.

"I like the new format," he said. "The game became more challenging. It's a little

tighter."

All-Star Games are typically higher scoring than regular season and playoff games, a fact that doesn't bother the sniper Bondra.

"I would say it's more exciting for the fans," he said. "It's more fun than a regular game. Nobody is going to change the style to commit to defense."

Bondra also has done well in the skills competitions, winning the fastest skater award twice, in 1997 and 1999, and finishing second in 1998 to New Jersey's Scott Niedermayer.

"In a race like that, it's a split second that makes a difference," said Bondra, who has also participated in the hardest shot competition. "You can't have a bad start or a missed step."

The game attracts more than just hockey stars, and Bondra likes it that way. It's his chance to rub elbows with the elites of music, movies and television, artists such as singers Alanis Morissette and Bryan Adams, actors Tim Robbins and Dennis Leary, and sitcom heavyweights Michael J. Fox and Matthew Perry.

"You have a chance to meet all kinds of people," he said. "I met some big-time actors and movie stars. They participate in the games, too. It's really nice."

The big-name entertainers are part of the hype that surrounds All-Star week. Even the players get swept up in it, and Bondra admits he's not immune.

"You go for dinner and you go to the parties," he said.

They also give a lot of interviews. When Bondra played in the Stanley Cup Finals in 1998, there were some 500 reporters covering hockey's championship games. To him, it seems like there's more at NHL All-Star Games.

"I couldn't believe it," he explained. "I was overwhelmed. In the morning, during the day and when you play the game, you have to go up into the stands and talk to different people. It's fun to see what kind of interest you draw."

If sharpshooting Peter Bondra is anywhere near an ice rink, rest assured things will be very interesting. Very interesting, indeed.

UKRAINIAN NHL REPORT CARDS

OLEG TVERDOVSKY – C: Has struggled to fit into new coach Bryan Murray's system.

VITALY VISHNEVSKI – C: Career progress slowed in third season

TONY HRKAC – B+: Lone veteran who has fulfilled expectations on lowly club.

DARCY HORDICHUK – C: Started poorly, played better while temporarily serving enforcer role.

ALEXEI ZHITNIK – A: Showing more discipline and getting two-way results consistently.

RICHARD MATVICHUK – B: Dug himself out of deep early season plus-minus hole.

BRAD LUKOWICH – C: Hasn't followed up on breakthrough season of last year.

JOEY TETARENKO – C: Willing pugilist/grinder with limited NHL skills.

DENIS SHVIDKI – Incomplete. Injuries and demotion for ice time in minors.

KEN DANAYKO – C+: Injuries and age catching up to this lifetime Devil loyalist.

CURTIS LESCHYSHYN – B: Shows solid veteran leadership on ice and in dressing room.

RUSLAN FEDOTENKO – B: Gaining

(Continued on page 23)

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Ukrainian designers from Cherkasy showcase their fashions in Iowa

by Miriam Bates

WASHINGTON – Four fashion designers from Cherkasy, Ukraine, showcased their exclusive designer fashions with a free fashion show for the public in Des Moines, Iowa, at Merle Hay Mall on January 26.

The Ukrainian fashion show, in which volunteers from the Des Moines community modeled beautiful and unique casual, business and formal ensembles, involved a larger issue than women's finery. To Mayor Preston Daniels who gave the opening welcome at the exhibition, "[It] is more than just fashion. It's an opportunity to promote economic development and broaden the diversity and cultural understanding in the city."

The fashion show is one example of Des Moines' growing interest in Ukraine since its involvement in the USAID-Foundation's USAID-funded Community Partnerships Project (CPP). Since 1997 CPP has partnered 14 American and Ukrainian cities, including Cherkasy and Des Moines, to address municipal issues in Ukraine such as housing, social services and economic development.

The Des Moines and Cherkasy communities have both benefited from the

Ukrainian fashion exhibition. Public awareness and understanding of cultural diversity has increased, and new avenues for business and economic development benefiting both cities have been established.

The fashion exhibition was also highlighted by the opening of Goods and Services of Cherkasy, a Ukrainian store featuring the designer fashions, custom-ordered, made-to-measure clothing, personal consultations with the designers, and Ukrainian arts and crafts. Visitors to the store had the opportunity to receive personal consultations with the designers and to meet the craftsmen to place special orders of unique Ukrainian ironwork. Visitors were also able to view videotapes of the Cherkasy region and the art and culture of Ukraine.

Sponsors for this event included the City of Des Moines, International Training, Education and Business Services, Iowa Council for International Understanding, Des Moines Water Works, and Merle Hay Mall. Merle Hay Mall, Capitol City Graphics, Signs Now, the Ruan Companies, Commercial Federal Bank and U.S. Cellular donated in-kind services or financial support.

PREVIEW OF EVENTS

(Continued from page 24)

per person. Reservations should be made by April 15 by calling Dr. Alexander Serafyn, (248) 646-5882. Donors of \$1,000 and more will have their names permanently displayed in the Ukrainian Heritage Room; all donations are tax-deductible.

RINGWOOD, N.J.: "Stride and Ride to Build" – a walk/bike-a-thon for The Ukrainian Museum Building Fund, will be held in Ringwood State Park. Registration: 9 a.m. The walk covers an easy three-mile course. The mountain bike route is a challenging seven-mile ride. Bikers must be at least 14 years old. A picnic, including Uncle Ronnie and his Barabolya Show, will start at noon. Participants are asked to raise \$150 per individual and \$250 per family. There will be terrific prizes for top fundraisers. Non-participants are welcome to join the picnic and entertainment. Suggested donation: \$50 per family. More

information is available at www.ukrainian-museum.org or by calling Olenka Terleckyj, (973) 771-1156.

Monday, April 22

TORONTO: The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, Toronto Office, is holding a lecture by Oleksander Halenko, Shklar Fellow, Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, Harvard University, titled "Venturing into the Sociology of Islamic Slavery: The Case of Non-Muslim Slaves in 16th Century Ottoman Crimea." The lecture, co-sponsored by the department of Near and Middle Eastern civilizations and the CIUS Seminar Series, Toronto Office, will be held at the University of Toronto, Bancroft 4, Bancroft Hall Room 200B, at 2-4 p.m. For more information call (416) 978-6934.



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Olympus Fencing Camp June 30 - July 13
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Roma Pryma Ukrainian Dance Camp July 21 - August 3
For beginning and intermediate level dancers age 7 to 16. Program includes ballet, Ukrainian folk dances. Contact: Roma Pryma-Bohachevsky, 382 Decatur Ave, Shirley, NY 11967 Tel: 631 281-7243

Ukrainian Sitch Sports School July 28 - August 17
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Pro hockey...

(Continued from page 21)

confidence around net as double-digit goal total will attest.

TODD FEDORUK – C: Physical player, but must stay away from bad penalties that might hurt team.

DRAKE BEREHOWSKY – C: Brought in from Vancouver to add veteran blueline depth.

KEITH TKACHUK – A: In best shape of career and definitely playing like it.

SERGEI VARLAMOV – B: Keeps providing reasons for more ice time.

DAVE ANDREYCHUK – B: Leadership in locker room for young club has been huge.

WADE BELAK – C: Versatile tough guy who flips between defense and wing who can duke it out.

PETER BONDRA – A: Boundless energy, power play sharpshooter.

ANDREI NIKOLISHIN – A: Tough, gritty, good passer and team leader.

DMITRI KHRISTICH – C: Starting to show a desire to be good again.

STEVE KONOWALCHUK – Incomplete. Injured. His return should spark team big time.

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