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## Holocaust Memorial Museum to digitize Ukrainian Museum-Archives' DP collection



Yaro Bihun

Holocaust Memorial Museum Collections Director Michael Grunberger (left) and Ukrainian Museum-Archives Director Andrew Fedynsky congratulate each other after signing a cooperation agreement in Washington to digitize the Cleveland-based Museum-Archives' post-World War II collection of documents and stories about non-Jewish victims of Nazism.

by Yaro Bihun

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in Washington and the Ukrainian Museum-Archives (UMA) of Cleveland have signed a cooperation agreement to digitize UMA's collection of archived materials from post-World War II Displaced Persons (DP) camps.

The agreement was signed on February 6 at the Holocaust Museum in Washington by UMA Acting Director Andrew Fedynsky and USHMM Collections Director Michael Grunberger, as witnessed and applauded by representatives of their museums, the U.S. government, and Ukrainian American and other interested organizations.

Opening the event, Mr. Grunberger noted that digitalizing UMA's collection – “one of the world's most important collections of Ukrainian history and culture” focusing on the post World War II period – will help “ensure that our collections document the stories of non-Jewish victims of Nazi persecution as well.” And having that information digitalized will make it available “to anyone, anywhere and anytime.”

Also focusing on the importance of having this information available to all, Mr. Fedynsky stressed that it is needed by people and nations as well.

“If you don't have a past, you don't have a future,” he said. “That's why we have a Holocaust Museum. That's why we have a Ukrainian Museum-Archives – it's to preserve the evidence of the past.”

Mr. Fedynsky noted that the Ukrainian government has already signed an agreement with the U.S. Holocaust Memorial

Museum to preserve and share such historical items with the world.

Among those attending the signing ceremony were representatives of Sens. Sherrod Brown and Rob Portman, Rep. Marcy Kaptur, Orest Deychakiwsky of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, Jurij Dobczansky of the Shevchenko Scientific Society and the Library of Congress, Bohdan Kantor of the Library of Congress, who is a DP camp researcher, and Ukrainian National Information Service Director Michael Sawkiw Jr.

In May 2016, a Holocaust Museum delegation visited the UMA to assess the scope and quality of its DP camp collection, and in September it proposed this cooperative digitization project. As noted by its international outreach officer Jaime Monllor, one of the Holocaust Museum's collection goals is documenting non-Jewish victims of persecution by the Nazis and their collaborators:

“The UMA's collection of Ukrainian DP camp serials, of rare published victims' memoirs and of other related personal paper collections are of great importance for, and a significant complement to, the study of the Jewish Holocaust, and we believe that to understand these events fully, this primary evidence should be preserved for future generations of scholars, students, genealogists and others.”

The actual work on the collection will be conducted by Archival Data Systems (AIS), based in Kyiv. Over the past decade, AIS has digitized more than 10 million pages of cultural-historical documents, working with institutions like Ukraine's Central Archives,

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## Kyiv in “wait and see” mode over Trump policy toward Ukraine

by Mark Raczkiewicz

KYIV – Ukraine is still “watching and waiting” when it comes to U.S. President Donald Trump's policy towards its strategic partner and his stance towards the Donbas war that Russia has stoked since April 2014.

Being gauged in every world capital for his unorthodox policy views and governing style, the 45th American president said he wasn't taken aback when Kremlin-backed forces escalated fighting in eastern Ukraine within 24 hours of his phone conversation with Russian President Vladimir Putin on January 28.

Asked by Fox host Bill O'Reilly, “Did you take that as an insult?” Mr. Trump responded: “No, I didn't because we don't really know exactly what that is. They're pro forces. We don't know if they're uncontrollable. Are they uncontrollable? That happens also. We're going to find out. I will be surprised, but we will see.”

Ukraine's presidential office didn't comment on the interview, while Mr. Trump vowed to learn who “controls” the forces attacking Ukraine's east despite an abundance of evidence pointing to Russia.

Until President Petro Poroshenko meets with Mr. Trump during the second half of this month, Ukrainian political scientists refrained from commenting on what, and how, America's policy will change toward Kyiv.

“Uncertainty is a big factor here because you don't know what to expect,” said Iryna Bekeshina, director of the Democratic Initiatives think tank. “Historically, as strategic partners, policy was always more or less anticipated. Now it's unclear. But Russia also doesn't really doesn't know what to expect [from the U.S.]”

A positive sign is that Mr. Trump chose to speak with Mr. Poroshenko instead of delegating the task to a subordinate.

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## Canadian military mission in Ukraine planning ahead despite deadline, says MP

by Christopher Guly

Special to The Ukrainian Weekly

OTTAWA – Although the Canadian government has yet to announce an extension to Operation UNIFIER in western Ukraine, Canadian soldiers who have been training their Ukrainian counterparts there since 2015 are planning well into 2018, according to a Canadian member of Parliament who was in Ukraine last month.

Former Conservative Cabinet Minister Peter Kent, who now serves as the Official Opposition foreign affairs critic, said in an interview that Lt. Col. Wayne Niven, who commands the Canadian military mission in Ukraine, and Roman Waschuk, Canada's ambassador to Ukraine, told him that they have received “no instructions” to conclude the operation despite a March 31 deadline.

“They have no plans to leave and continue to make plans with Ukraine and with other democratic countries involved there to continue their work through the year and into next year. I was pleased to hear they would be there for some time to come,” said Mr. Kent, a member of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, who was in Kyiv in January with his committee colleagues as part of a 12-day, fact-finding mission to Ukraine, Latvia, Poland and Kazakhstan.



Office of MP Peter Kent

Member of Parliament Peter Kent.

Canada's military training mission falls under the mandate of a joint task force that includes Ukraine, the United States and the United Kingdom.

However, the Canadian Armed Forces always do “contingency planning for various scenarios, both at home and abroad,” said Jordan Owens, a spokeswoman for Canadian Defense Minister Harjit Sajjan, in an e-mail to The Ukrainian Weekly. “It is

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## ANALYSIS

## Merkel-Poroshenko meeting shows deep freeze of "Normandy" format negotiations

by Vladimir Socor  
Eurasia Daily Monitor

German Chancellor Angela Merkel received Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko on January 30, in Berlin, for an "exchange of views" on the "conflict in Ukraine," "the peace process and the implementation of the Minsk armistice" (Bundeskanzlerin.de, January 27, 30). Those code words are widely used in Western Europe to avoid designating that conflict as a state-on-state aggression and Russia as the aggressor. Yet, the assault of Russia's proxy forces on the Ukrainian-held town of Avdiivka (under way since January 29) brought some clarity in Berlin. It also caused Mr. Poroshenko to cut short his visit.

Nevertheless, the Berlin meeting indicated a reassessment of the situation on Ms. Merkel's part (and even by several Social-Democrat leaders – see below), which had become apparent well before the Avdiivka battle. Berlin seems to understand more clearly that Russia is fueling hostilities in Ukraine's east while pressing for a negotiated outcome that Western leaders could neither politically accept nor politically sell.

Negotiations in the "Normandy" format – Russia, Germany, France, Ukraine – have not been held since the October 2016 Berlin summit. That meeting supposedly authorized the drafting of a "road map" for political settlement in the Minsk Contact Group. But that process is also destined to fail as long as it seeks to empower the Donetsk and Luhansk "people's republics" against Kyiv. This is how the Minsk process has been structured from the outset, under the Normandy format's supervision.

Both Minsk and Normandy, however, failed to overcome Kyiv's skillful defense of its interests. No further meetings are currently planned in the Normandy format at any level. The Normandy format can now be regarded as frozen (unlike the simmering conflict on the ground).

The meeting in Berlin contrasted with the traditional spirit of Normandy meetings in three significant ways (Bundeskanzlerin.de, January 30):

First, this meeting's bilateral format precluded a Moscow-Berlin-Paris common position against Kyiv (as was often the case in the Normandy group's meetings). Given the absence of the Russian side and Berlin's own apparent reassessment of the situation, Chancellor Merkel was clearly more receptive to Ukrainian concerns at this meeting.

Second, Ms. Merkel no longer asked Ukraine to accept the holding of "elections" in the Russian-controlled Donbas, preparatory to negotiating a "special status" for that territory. These are the declared political goals of the Minsk armistice and of the Normandy negotiations, which (if implemented) would legitimize Russia's control of the territory and the local authorities.

And third, Ms. Merkel declared, "We have just realized, yet again, that the ceasefire does not exist." This was not simply a reaction to Russia's proxy assault on Avdiivka, but – as Ms. Merkel's wording made clear – a recognition that Russia's military commitments under the Minsk documents remain unfulfilled and unenforceable. This, in turn, vindicates Ukraine's political line of defense: namely, that Russia's breaches of the military and security clauses make it impossible for Ukraine to deliver on the political clauses of the Minsk armistice ("elections" and "special status" for Russia's proxies).

While functionally moribund, the Normandy format is not dead and will never be declared as such, regardless of what it may or may not deliver. Chancellor Merkel briefly remarked in the press conference that "Negotiations and resolution [of the conflict] are only possible in the Normandy format." This remark could well be seen as diplomatic ritual, but it takes on a new significance with the inauguration of Donald Trump's presidency in the United States. European governments may want to keep the Normandy format afloat – even if barely – to hedge against a bilateral U.S.-Russia understanding that would sideline the Europeans.

Meanwhile, the Germans and French themselves do not seem keen to invoke the Normandy format publicly. President François Hollande and Chancellor Merkel did not mention it when meeting in Berlin three days before Mr. Poroshenko's visit (Bundeskanzlerin.de, January 27). The German and French ministers of foreign affairs, Sigmar Gabriel and Jean-Marc Ayrault, respectively, did not mention the Normandy format either when meeting in Paris two days before Mr. Poroshenko's Berlin visit (Auswaertiges-amt.de, January 28). Thus, no coordination seems to have taken place between the Normandy group's German and French members, ahead of Mr. Poroshenko's visit to Berlin. A German-Ukrainian bilateral relationship is more important and certainly more beneficial to Ukraine than the counterproductive Normandy group.

The reassessment of Russia's conduct has further solidified Ms. Merkel's support for continuing with the European Union's economic sanctions until Russia changes its policy. While she remains the coagulating factor in Germany and in the European Union on this issue, some other key policymakers are firming up their support for sanctions on their own accord. Even French President Hollande, the sanctions dove in the Normandy forum, has told U.S. President Trump in their introductory phone call that "Sanctions can only be lifted when the Minsk agreements are fully implemented" – even while "continuing and intensifying dialogue with Russia" (Elysee.fr, January 28).

Support for sanctions seems to grow in Germany's Social-Democrat Party, which is undergoing a leadership reshuffle. The SDP's most popular figure, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, has resigned as foreign affairs minister (January 27) and is resigning his party membership, having been designated to become president of Germany, a symbolic post without policymaking attributes. His debilitating influence on German policy overall is receding. Mr. Steinmeier (and others in the SPD) had hinted all along at easing the sanctions through understandings with Russia at Ukraine's expense.

The new foreign affairs minister, Sigmar Gabriel (also SPD), had shared that position until recently. But, in his maiden visit abroad as Germany's top diplomat, Mr. Gabriel declared in Paris that "implementing the Minsk peace process is the only way that sanctions can be lifted" (Agence France-Presse, January 28). The former ambiguity seems to be no longer there. According to Mr. Poroshenko's readout of his meeting with Mr. Gabriel in Berlin, the new minister supports prolonging the existing EU sanctions on Russia, both Crimea-related and

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## NEWSBRIEFS

### Senators seek veto power on sanctions

WASHINGTON – A group of U.S. senators has introduced legislation that would hamstring any effort by President Donald Trump's administration to lift sanctions imposed on Russia for its actions in Ukraine. The bill, called the Russia Sanctions Review Act, has both Republican and Democratic backers and comes amid mounting concerns in Congress about the Trump administration's policy intentions toward Russia. Mr. Trump has repeatedly signaled he wants more cooperation with Russia in areas like the fight against international terrorism, particularly in Syria. But his administration has made statements about Ukraine and other issues that echo Russia's perspective, in contrast to the previous U.S. administration. Sens. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) and Ben Cardin (D-Md.) are among the group backing the legislation that would impose strict congressional oversight and veto power over the Trump administration if it sought to lift sanctions on Russia. "The reason for the Russia Review Act is that we've heard the president speak several times about potentially reducing or eliminating sanctions," Sen. Cardin told reporters on February 8. "So it's aimed at getting consultation from Congress and, if necessary, action from Congress, if the president were to change our policy on the current sanctions without the broad support and understanding of Congress." The bill is co-sponsored by Sens. John McCain (R-Ariz.), Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), Claire McCaskill (D-Mo.), and Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio). Sen. McCain said in a statement after the legislation was introduced that easing sanctions against Russia "would send the wrong message as [Russian President] Vladimir Putin continues to oppress his citizens, murder his political opponents, invade his neighbors, threaten America's allies, and attempt to undermine our elections." He added, "Congress must have oversight of any decision that would impact our ability to hold Russia accountable for its flagrant violation of international law and attack our institutions." (Carl Schreck of RFE/RL, with reporting by Mike Eckel)

### Trump discusses Ukraine with NATO chief

WASHINGTON – The White House says President Donald Trump has discussed the conflict in eastern Ukraine during a call with NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg and agreed to attend a meeting of alliance leaders later this year. The statement on February 5 said the two "discussed the potential for a peaceful resolution of the conflict" in eastern Ukraine, without providing details. The previous U.S. administration and other allies slapped sanctions on Russia for its illegal 2014 annexation of Ukraine's Crimea region and in retaliation for Moscow's support for separatist militants in eastern Ukraine, where a flare-up in fighting has killed at least 35 in the past week. Mr. Trump in the past has criticized NATO, once calling it "obsolete," and has expressed a desire for warmer relations with Russian President Vladimir Putin, worrying some European leaders about his level of commitment. In the call, Mr. Trump expressed "strong support" for NATO but urged fellow members to contribute more financially, in line with his campaign vow to get members to increase their funding for the alliance. The White House added that Mr. Trump agreed to attend a meeting of NATO leaders in Europe in May. (RFE/RL, based on reporting by AFP, Reuters and TASS)

### Lavrov: Trump position differs from Obama's

MOSCOW – Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Sergei Lavrov says he views U.S. President Donald Trump's opinion about the conflict in Ukraine as "a qualitative change" compared to that of Barack Obama. Mr. Lavrov told the state-owned news agency TASS on February 7 that Mr. Trump's position on the situation in Ukraine is to monitor how the two sides are behaving in the conflict. "The Obama administration... tried to demand everything from us and absolve [Ukrainian President Petro] Poroshenko," Mr. Lavrov said. In a recent interview with Fox News, Mr. Trump said the United States has insufficient information about the developments in eastern Ukraine. (RFE/RL, based on reporting by TASS)

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**NEWS ANALYSIS****Russia's war in Ukraine does not help Kremlin to befriend Trump**

by Pavel K. Baev  
*Eurasia Daily Monitor*

The sharp escalation in artillery battles in the Donbas war zone one day after the January 28 telephone conversation between U.S. President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin was certainly not a coincidence. No leaks about the content of the 45-minute-long exchange have appeared in the Russian media, and the official summary amounts to mere platitudes. But the anticipation had been extraordinarily intense (see *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, January 30).

Commentaries about a possible lifting of sanctions came so thick that for the first time in years, it was not Mr. Putin's name that was mentioned most often in the Russian media but the name of a foreign leader (*Interfax*, February 1; see EDM, January 2).

Public opinion surveys have duly registered the quick decline in Russians' negative attitudes toward the U.S., from the peak

of 81 percent in early 2015, down to 49 percent now. Of these unfavorably inclined Russians, only 9 percent expressed a strongly negative attitude, compared with 39 percent two years ago (*Levada.ru*, February 2). Ukraine is presently seen in Russia in a darker light than the U.S., with 15 percent expressing a strongly negative attitude; and this perception quite possibly informs the behavior of the combatants enduring a harsh winter in the Donbas trenches.

The two-year-old ceasefire in eastern Ukraine has never been stable, and tensions were building for weeks before exploding in the massive cannonade during the closing days of January (*Novaya Gazeta*, January 31). It is possible, but improbable, that an order to open fire from the big guns came directly from Moscow – or for that matter from Kyiv. It is certain, however, that junior officers and minor warlords on the ground have plentiful incentives to take military matters into their own hands (*Republic.ru*, February 2).

For Ukraine, it is important to ensure that this tragic war is not forgotten in the West; and for the motley Russia-backed rebels, it is essential to establish they are a key party to this major European conflict (*Polit.ru*, February 2). The degree of control over the tactical situations along the "ceasefire" line by the top brass in Moscow is uncertain, but Russia surely could have stopped the shelling of civilian targets in Avdiyivka – and did not (*Novaya Gazeta*, February 2). This industrial satellite of Donetsk is of no great strategic importance, but it is perfectly positioned to test the changes in the big political picture of this deadlocked war (*RBC*, February 1).

The Kremlin put the blame for the Avdiyivka battle squarely on Ukraine, emphasizing that this war was not a topic of conversation between Messrs. Putin and Trump (*Newsru.com*, February 1). That omission kept the Russian war-maker-in-chief in the dark about the position of the new U.S. "decider." Mr. Putin wanted to be sure that Mr. Trump really did not care about the Ukrainian calamity (*RBC*, February 3). But what he ultimately heard from Washington days later was not quite the message he had hoped for: Nikki Haley, the newly appointed U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, spelled out in her first statement at the U.N. Security Council a "strong and clear condemnation of Russian aggressive actions" (*Moscow Echo*, February 3). The artillery duels are still raging, but the intensity has since remarkably subsided.

What made the timing of that surge in fighting rather unfortunate for Mr. Putin was that the Iranian leadership decided the moment was right for a ballistic missile test. The response from Mr. Trump's skeleton administration was swift and demon-

stratively tough: the U.S. Department of the Treasury announced new sanctions targeting 13 persons and 12 companies, including from China (*Kommersant*, February 3). In the agitated domestic U.S. political arena, this step is unusually uncontroversial, and Defense Secretary James Mattis followed it up by calling Iran the world's main sponsor of terrorism (*RBC*, February 4).

This resolute stance puts the carefully cultivated Russian-Iranian proto-partnership under pressure (*Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, February 3). The Kremlin had announced preparations for a visit to Moscow of Iran's President Hassan Rouhani. But now, such a good-neighborly meeting becomes quite awkward and unhelpful for Russia's much-desired improvement of relations with the United States (*RIA Novosti*, January 31). The war in Syria is the only "marketplace" where Mr. Putin has assets for bargaining with Mr. Trump. Yet, without Iran, the Russian plan for pacifying Syria by empowering President Bashar al-Assad's embattled regime cannot work.

Another disturbed political arena where the Ukrainian crisis resonated most strongly is Europe, and Putin's intrigues on this continent combine the export of corruption with cyberattacks (*RBC*, February 3). He paid a visit to Hungary on February 2, seeking to reward those European leaders who remain on speaking terms with him (*Kommersant*, February 3). He is also keen to hear how these leaders respond to Mr. Trump's casually skeptical attitude toward the European Union (*Novaya Gazeta*, February 2).

The sound of big guns reminds the fidgety Europeans about the need to unite in the face of a direct threat, so Ukraine's

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**Trump and Poroshenko have phone conversation**

PARSIPPANY, N.J. – The presidents of the United States and Ukraine had a telephone conversation on Saturday, February 4, discussing several topics, including the ongoing war in Ukraine's east.

A readout of the call released by the White House, Office of the Press Secretary, reported: "President Donald J. Trump just had [5 p.m. Saturday] a very good call with President Petro Poroshenko of Ukraine to address a variety of topics, including Ukraine's long-running conflict with Russia. "We will work with Ukraine, Russia, and all other parties involved to help them restore peace along the border," said President Trump. Also discussed was the potential for a meeting in the near future."

The Presidential Administration of Ukraine released a longer report about the telephone conversation, noting: "Petro Poroshenko congratulated Donald Trump on his inauguration as the head of the United States and called for the strengthening of a dialogue with the new U.S. Administration at all levels. Both leaders express readiness to explore additional

steps to enhancing the strategic partnership between Ukraine and the United States."

The Ukrainian readout also reported: "Particular attention was paid to the settlement of the situation in Donbas and to achieving peace by political and diplomatic means. The two leaders expressed deep concern about the spike in tension and deterioration of humanitarian situation, especially in the area of Avdiyivka. They stressed on the need for establishing immediate ceasefire regime. The President of Ukraine expressed gratitude to the Head of the White House for firm support of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity."

Kyiv's readout concluded by noting: "Petro Poroshenko highlighted the need to intensify economic and business ties in order to assist in creating new employment opportunities and boosting the welfare of citizens of both countries. They also talked about the forthcoming visit of President Petro Poroshenko to Washington, the preparation of which will be in focus of Ukraine's foreign minister's travel to the U.S."

**Ukrainian Caucus co-chairs condemn escalation of violence in eastern Ukraine**

WASHINGTON – The co-chairs of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus, Reps. Andy Harris (R-Md.), Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio), Brian Fitzpatrick (R-Pa.) and Sander Levin (D-Mich.), on February 2 issued a statement on the escalation of violence in eastern Ukraine.

They wrote:

"We call on Russia-controlled separatists to immediately stop the violence in eastern Ukraine, honor the ceasefire and withdraw heavy weapons. We reaffirm our support for the Minsk accords and stand in strong opposition to all efforts that would encourage military action against Ukraine.

"As co-chairs of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus, we are deeply concerned with loss of life and the deteriorating human-

itarian condition in Avdiyivka, in eastern Ukraine, since heavy fighting broke out on January 28. According to Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), at least eight people have died in the last three days, and 17,000 civilians, including 2,500 children, do not have access to water, electricity, or heat in below freezing temperatures. With each continued day of fighting, their condition becomes more dire.

"The United States must stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our European allies and with the Ukraine people, who have demonstrated time and again their will for a sovereign and democratic country, free from Russia's interference. We strongly urge Russian authorities to respect human life and abide by the ceasefire."

**Current Time network launches news on 24/7 digital and TV stream**

RFE/RL

WASHINGTON – Current Time, whose mission is to bring real news to Russian-speaking audiences everywhere, on February 7 formally launched its 24/7 digital and TV stream.

An up-and-coming player in the Russian media market, Current Time is engaging audiences from Lithuania to Kazakhstan and providing an alternative to Kremlin-sponsored media. The day-long video stream builds on the successes of individual daily news programs started in 2014 and 2015.

First and foremost a digital news and current affairs network, Current Time's daily line-up features hourly live newscasts and sharp political debate, in addition to innovative programs covering business, entrepreneurship, civil society and culture. It is also a leading destination for documentary films that are otherwise unavailable inside Russia.

"Led by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in cooperation with the Voice of America (VOA), the Current Time digital network is a signature accomplishment of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG)," said BBG CEO and Director John Lansing. "Current Time embodies all of the priorities I set forth to maximize the agility, efficiency and impact of the BBG networks and allow us to more effectively address the rapidly evolving global media environment."

Public demand for Current Time's content is reflected in its wide distribution network, comprising 32 cable affiliates in Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Germany and Israel. Its live video stream is available across Eurasia, to more than 7.3 million subscribers of 36 satellite, cable and IPTV services. The stream is also hosted on the digital platforms film-on.tv and MeGoGo, with more than 100 million monthly users, and on the Eutelsat Hotbird-8 satellite, which reaches 135 million households from Iceland to Turkey.

While TV remains the dominant media platform in much of Current Time's target region, the network's innovative digital unit takes the network's content direct to growing mobile and web audiences, who have viewed its clever social videos on corruption, politics and the ordinary challenges of daily life more than 160 million times in 2016 on Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, and Russian social networks such as VKontakte and Odnoklassniki. An average of 1 million people per month visited the network's website and mobile news and video apps.

The network's Russian name, "Nastoyashchee Vremya," has a triple meaning that aptly describes Current Time's purpose: to provide its Russian-speaking audience content that is truthful, current and real.

## ANALYSIS

# If Trump hands over Ukraine, he will make Russia great again

by Pavel Felgenhauer  
Eurasia Daily Monitor

Over the course of the past month, President Donald Trump significantly (by over 25 percent) surpassed President Vladimir Putin by the number of citations he has garnered in the Russian media. This is the first time since 2011 that anyone has superseded Mr. Putin as the most popular media person in Russia (Interfax, February 1). The Russian press and political observers, as well as the state agitprop TV propaganda machine, have been actively promoting Mr. Trump as a friendly and ideologically close leader who will radically change U.S. foreign and domestic policy to in effect make Russia great again.

According to Sergei Karaganov, a pundit and businessman with well-established long-term Kremlin connections, the world is in a prewar situation, but Washington and Moscow may jointly decrease tensions and "prevent a world war, the possibility of which has been increasing recently." Russia has forcibly stopped the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's expansion, "which would have inevitably led to war, if not checked," continued Mr. Karaganov, adding "The EU has lapsed into a long-term crisis, and it would be good if Trump and Putin could establish new 'rules of play' in Europe and decrease military tensions." Western sanctions imposed on Russia must be scaled back and an agreement reached to "depoliticize Ukraine, which will surely disintegrate if it continues to be a bone of contention of foreign powers."

Mr. Karaganov further argued that an agreement must be achieved to make Ukraine and "other similar states permanently neutral" (Aif.ru, January 18). The Kremlin-connected business mogul did not specify what other countries must be declared "permanently neutral" together with Ukraine by means of a Trump-Putin deal. But the most obvious list might include Moldova, Georgia, Finland and Sweden.

**Moscow seems to be offering little of substance in exchange for the U.S. renouncing Ukraine and Crimea, all of the post-Soviet space and more.**

On January 28, Messrs. Trump and Putin had a phone conversation that both sides lauded as highly successful. Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Sergei Lavrov described the talks as "good in the political and personal dimensions." According to Mr. Lavrov, both leaders, "without dipping into details," found lots of common ground and coinciding national interests "in different spheres," which included fighting jihadist terrorism in the Middle East and the Ukrainian situation.

To move forward the "conceptual understanding" apparently reached by Messrs. Trump and Putin, both have agreed, Mr. Lavrov asserted, to continue work at a regular expert level. These proposed meetings would look for specific points of mutual interest and figure out how to organize practical joint cooperation "to solve world problems." The exact time and format of these expert consultations will be worked out soon, according to Mr. Lavrov, "once Trump's foreign policy team is fully put together." White House Chief of Staff Reince Priebus, National Security Advisor Gen. Michael Flynn, as well as White House Chief Strategist Stephen Bannon were reportedly in the room when Messrs. Trump and Putin parleyed by phone (Interfax, January 30).

The Moscow foreign policy elite is straightforward in what it wants from the Trump White House, and these demands are more or less in line with what Mr. Karaganov outlined before the January 28 Trump-Putin phone call. According to Valery Solovey, a leading professor of MGIMO (a state university affiliated with the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and created during Communist rule to train career diplomats), the future deal with Trump will be hammered out in expert talks that are already beginning. Mr. Solovey reasoned that the Trump team wants Russian assistance with destroying the Islamic State (IS) and help in dealing and deterring Iran and China. In return, Russia

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	Zachariasewych, Vera & Zenon	Hawthorne, CA
\$40.00	Gamota, Christine & Dan	San Jose, CA
\$25.00	Andrushkiw, Vera	Troy, MI
	Antoniak, Zenon	Richland, WA
	Baran, Andrij	Saratoga Springs, NY
	Biskup, Marta	Cranford, NJ
	Bonacorsa, Christine	Belleville, NJ
	Craig, Anastasia	Reseda, CA
	Czartorysky, Victor	Brooklyn, NY
	Diachuk, Ulana	Rutherford, NJ
	Diaczuk, Zenko	Boonton, NJ
	Dushnyk, Mark	Bedminster, NJ
	Holubec, Lev & Halyna	Oak Brook, IL
	Hordynsky, Slava	Springfield, NJ
	Hron, Ihor & Olya	Osprey, FL
	Hrycyk, Hanna & Orest	Syracuse, NY
	Humnicki, Michael	Murfreesboro, TN
	Iwach, Eugene & Anna	Manhattan Beach, CA
	Karmazyn, Olga	Aliquippa, PA
	Karpenko, Tetiana	Southfield, MI
	Kebalo, Martha & Orest	Briarwood, NY
	Klymenko, Walter	Dade City, FL
	Komichak, Raymond & Jaroslawa	Pittsburgh, PA
	Kotcherha, Nicholas	Buffalo Grove, IL
	Krowicky, Stanislawa	Farmington Hills, NY
	Krupsky-Marenin, Lydia	Centennial, CO
	Kulyk, Teofil & Barbara	Plant City, FL
	Kuzmowych, Chrystyna & Truvor	Great Falls, VA
	Kyzyma, George	Dresher, PA
	Levytska, Vera	New York, NY
	Liber, Peter & Adrianna	Wheaton, IL
	Mandzy, Eugene	East Hanover, NJ
	Mazuryk, Jozeph	Danville, CA
	Melnitchenko, Eugene	Owings, MD
	Melnyk, I	Plains, PA
	Moroz, Eugene	Concord, MA
	Peleschuk, Stefan	Stamford, CT
	Petriv, Vsevolod	Malsen, MA
	Polowczak, Walter	Naperville, IL
	Pyk, E	La Grange, IL
	Rasiak, Ruslan	Leesburg, VA
	Rozhin, Jurij	Sterling Hts., MI
	Skirka, Nicholas	Yonkers, NY
	Skrybailo, Stephan	Charlottesville, VA
	Spotts, Alex	Hudson, FL
	Stawnychy, George & Zorina	Kinnelon, NJ
	Szpyhulsky, John & Christina	Iselin, NJ
	Trenkler, Helen	North Providence, RI
	Tunstall, Inia	Annandale, VA
	Wronskyj, Wolodymyr	Greenlawn, NY
	Yurechko, Olga	Middletown, NJ
	Zalucky, Don	Guilford, CT
	Zobniw, Lubomyr	Binghamton, NY
\$20.00	Ariza, Olga	Napels, FL
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	Hlynsky, Boris	Vienna, VA
	Kilar, Roman & Tania	North Ft. Myers, FL
	Nadozimy, Victor	Cleveland, OH
	Pashesnik, Irene	Coatsville, PA
	Pylyp, Romana	Riverside, CT
	Rogutsky, Irene	Little Neck, NY
	Samotulka, Daria	Hillsborough, NJ
	Sawchak, Patricia & George	Rydal, PA
	Sochan, Ihor	Woodcliff Lake, NJ
	Swanson, Ann	Palo Alto, CA
	Sydorak, Oksana & Gerald	Hillsborough, CA
	Sydorowych, Julia	Syracuse, NY
	Wasylykevych, Paul	Cary, NC
	Zynych, Tania	Yardley, PA
\$15.00	Bohdan, Michael & Nancy	Cranford, NJ
	Dziwak, Walter	Lake Hawatha, NJ
	Hallick, S	Duluth, GA
	Hawrylko, Tom	Clifton, NJ
	Matkowsky, Stephen	Rochester, NY
	Mutlos, Galyna & George	Hallandale Beach, FL
	Rudnyk-Mackenze, Romana	Los Angeles, CA
	Warvariv, Taras	Tuscon, AZ
\$10.00	Bortnyk, John	Forked River, NJ
	Boyko, Christine	Springfield, VA
	Bubniak, Jaroslav & Oksana	Monroe, NY
	Ferraro, Tatiana	Yorktown Hts., NY
	Goot, Ann	Moretown, VT
	Helbig, Julian	Venice, FL
	Jennings, Maria	Greendale, WI
	Kish, Steven	North Arlington, NJ
	Klecor, Alexander	North Brunswick, NJ
	Konopelski, James	Liverpool, NY
	Krislatyj, Maria	Cleveland, OH
	Leoczko, Natalia	Matthews, NC
	Lysko, Martha & Wolodar	Cranbury, NJ
	Melnik, Nicholas	Fullerton, CA
	Metrovsky, Walter	Warren, NJ
	Myers, Mary & Tom	Rochester, NY
	O'Hara, Michael & Roma	Astoria, NY
	Pakula, Lida & Benjamin	Dearborn, MI
	Pankiw, Inna	Port Charlotte, FL
	Pawlowych, Lubomyr	Union, NJ
	Porytko, Bohdan	Morristown, NJ
	Romanyshyn, Peter	Arvada, CO
	Shmigel, Nadia	Briarwood, NY
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	Smith, Christine	Harrisburg, PA
	Syzonenko, Walter & Christine	Randolph, NJ
	Treszenewsky, Julia	Wilmington, DE
	Walchuk, Orest & Christina	Pittstown, NJ
	Wasylyk, Maria	New York, NY
	Zozulak, Maria	Ellicott City, MD
\$5.00	Balahutrak, Lydia	Houston, TX
	Kalman, Nina	Fort Collins, CO
	Kovalevsky, Nicholas	Tiffin, OH
	Kozak, Helena	Jenkintown, PA
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	Pastushenko, Tatiana	Hewitt, NJ
	Petrina, Bohdan & Dagmar	Yonkers, NY
	Prokopovych, Irynej	Calabasas, CA
	Shecheglov, Yaroslav	East Elmhurst, NY
\$2.00	Goras, Stephan	Jersey City, NJ
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# THE UKRAINIAN NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FORUM

## Ukrainian Music Institute carols at UNA Home Office



PARSIPPANY, N.J. – Two students of the Ukrainian Music Institute of America branch at the Ukrainian American Cultural Center of New Jersey, accompanied by their teacher and a parent, brought Christmas carols to the Home Office of the Ukrainian National Association on January 17. Seen above (from left) are: teacher Lilia Kushnir, Marta Kowal, Sophia Kowal and Liliana Tomko.

## Plast scouts bring 'koliady' to UNA



PARSIPPANY, N.J. – A group of carolers from Plast Ukrainian Scouting Organization stopped by the UNA Home Office on January 11 to share the joy of Ukrainian Christmas traditions, bringing carols (koliady) and best wishes (vinshuvannia) to the Ukrainian National Association's officers and employees. The group was from Plast's Newark, N.J., branch, which is based at the Ukrainian American Cultural Center in Whippany, N.J. Seen above are: (front row) Monia and Marchyk Hurley, (back row) Orest, Andrey and Pavlo Pencak, and Jaroslava Mulyk.

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**Ukrainian National Association**

## THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY

### Trump administration's mixed messages

At the beginning of this year, we noted that no one was quite sure what the new Trump administration would bring. The concern among our readers and our community was palpable then, and it continues to be so. And it isn't only Americans who are anxious. As Mark Raczkiwycz reports from Kyiv, Ukraine and its people are "watching and waiting" to see what President Donald Trump's policy toward Ukraine turns out to be. One of the main reasons for our trepidation, to put it plainly, is the lack of a coherent policy toward Ukraine and its aggressor, Russia.

On January 28 the new president spoke with Russian President Vladimir Putin. According to a White House readout of the call, they spoke about "terrorism and other important issues of mutual concern." The Kremlin said the two leaders agreed to establish "partner-like cooperation" on international issues, including "the crisis in Ukraine."

Within 24 hours after that phone call, Russian-backed forces attacked Avdiivka. Questioned on February 3 by Bill O'Reilly of Fox News about the stepped-up violence in Ukraine's east, Mr. Trump offered this strange response "...we don't really know exactly what that is. They're pro-forces. We don't know if they're uncontrollable? Are they uncontrollable? That happens also. We're going to find out. I will be surprised, but we will see." Things got stranger still when Mr. O'Reilly noted that Mr. Putin is a killer, and Mr. Trump responded: "There are a lot of killers. Do you think our country is so innocent? Do you think our country is so innocent?"

Then Mr. Trump apparently told Ukrainian National Deputy Yulia Tymoshenko in Washington on February 2 that he wouldn't abandon Kyiv and that it's too soon to lift sanctions on Russia. Speaking with President Petro Poroshenko on February 4, he promised: "We will work with Ukraine, Russia and all other parties involved to help them restore peace along the border" (N.B.: the problem is not "along the border" but on Ukrainian territory).

Meanwhile at the United Nations on February 2, U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley took a strong and clear position in condemning Russian aggression. "The United States stands with the people of Ukraine, who have suffered for nearly three years under Russian occupation and military intervention. Until Russia and the separatists it supports respect Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, this crisis will continue," she stated. The new ambassador also spoke of Crimea: "Crimea is a part of Ukraine. Our Crimea-related sanctions will remain in place until Russia returns control over the peninsula to Ukraine."

Back in Washington, the State Department had expressed concern on January 31 "with the recent spike in violence in eastern Ukraine around Avdiivka-Yasynuvata." Curiously, the statement cited Ukrainian military and civilian casualties, but not who caused them. Vice-President Mike Pence, speaking of the Russian aggression in Ukraine, told ABC News on February 5: "We're watching and very troubled by the increased hostilities." Asked whether sanctions on Russia will remain in place as long as Russia violates the ceasefire in Ukraine, the VP was non-committal: "That's a question that will be answered - in the months ahead."

So, what we're left with is this: President Trump has vowed to "find out" the nature of the forces fighting against Ukraine, as if the true actor and aggressor was unknown, and the administration is "watching." But the time for watching has long passed. His administration's mixed messages on policy toward Ukraine and Russia, expressions of moral equivalency and improvisational approach to governing, cannot be allowed to continue while Ukraine's people die daily.

Feb.  
12  
1950

### Turning the pages back...

Sixty-seven years ago, on February 12, 1950, the 40-member Dumka Male Chorus (since 1959 known simply as the Dumka Chorus of New York, and incorporating female and male voices), held its debut concert at New York's Beethoven Hall.

Attracting some 300 guests, the choir's performance was compared, by M.M. for The Weekly, to the 350-voice chorus of seven New York-area Ukrainian Catholic Church choirs under the direction of Olexander Koshetz. "...By the jealously guarded standards of this Koshetz legend, all succeeding choirs and directors of the metropolitan area have been judged till the legend fades from the memory of all who heard or sang in the Koshetz chorus, or until another master sets new standards."

"Under the direction of Longin Krushelnysky, the chorus showed such mastery of choral harmony, cleanness of attack, dynamics and diction, and such an intelligent and instant response to the director's every gesture, that one could easily hope for the additional and needed mastery in the near future of the fluid phrasing, the delicate counterpoint and the sensitive 'feel' for each song that has seldom been heard since the Carnegie and Town Hall concerts of the combined choruses [under Koshetz]. ...Needless to say the audience at this excellent debut-concert rewarded the choristers and its director with prolonged applause that won two encores," wrote M.M.

The evening's events included the concert, a prosfora dinner and dance. The concert portion included mostly Ukrainian Christmas carols, "shchedrivky" and Ukrainian religious hymns. The dinner featured a traditional Ukrainian Christmas Eve menu, and dance music was provided by Amor, under the direction of Wolodymyr Hentish.

The concert was noted as "a fine example of cultural contribution the newest Ukrainians are making to the American way of life - a contribution to be proud of... the Dumka chorus will provide listening pleasure for years to come, of the many fine choral compositions we possess."

The Dumka Chorus of New York, under the direction of Vasyl Hrechynsky, continues to enchant audiences with its performances, regularly providing their 50-60 voices for the annual Holodomor commemoration at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York. For more information, readers may visit [www.dumka.org](http://www.dumka.org).

Source: "Dumka Male Chorus makes New York debut," by M.M., *The Ukrainian Weekly*, February 17, 1950.

## FOR THE RECORD

### Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organizations calls on Australian government to take action

Following is a February 1 release from the Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organizations, which represents 22 top Ukrainian organizations in the country and is a member of the Ukrainian World Congress.

The Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organizations (AFUO) today called on the Australian government to condemn the current escalation of activity of Russian-terrorist forces in the Donbas region in eastern Ukraine.

In a letter to the minister for foreign affairs, Julie Bishop, the AFUO calls on the Australian government to officially protest to the Russian Federation and demand it cease hostilities immediately and comply strictly with the ceasefire.

There have been verified reports of continuing attacks in the area of Avdiivka in the Donbas, with the use of heavy artillery and mortars. The most recent attacks have occurred in the past two days.

According to the Anti-Terrorist Operation Headquarters and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine reports, Russian troops continue to shell Ukrainian positions, which has resulted in casualties and the destruction of property.

Twenty-five thousand residents of Avdiivka are now without water, electricity and heat. Given the harsh weather conditions and the continuing shelling by militants, the humanitarian situation in the

area continues to deteriorate.

In its circular, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine has stated the following:

"These current actions by the Kremlin may qualify as a war crime, a gross violation of the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, the unlawful, wanton and extensive destruction of property not caused by military necessity."

"The current escalation in the Donbas indicates that the Russian Federation continues to blatantly ignore its obligations under the Minsk Agreement with a view of preventing the stabilization in the Region and in achieving any progress in the security and humanitarian spheres"

The AFUO also calls on the Australian Government to strengthen the political, economic and diplomatic pressure on the Kremlin as this dangerous escalation in the Donbas may lead to a humanitarian catastrophe in the region and a further escalation of warfare.

There is no doubt the issue of Russian aggression in Eastern Ukraine has fallen off the radar in the light of other international events. We appreciate that the Australian Government is monitoring the situation. However, the time has now come again to become far more proactive in sending strong messages internationally that Australia condemns the Russian aggression and will assist Ukraine to ensure that our common values and principles are not eroded or compromised.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### No to Stalin beer; join the protest

Dear Editor:

The Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) is selling a beer produced by Nickel Brook Brewery labeled "Bolshevik Bastard," (Product #406348). Aside from the label being adorned with a Communist hammer and sickle, which for millions of people represents oppression, persecution and even genocide, the label is even more offensive for sporting an image of Stalin, a mass murderer.

While I do not disagree he was both a "Bolshevik" and a "bastard," I find it very offensive, indeed hateful, to find myself in an Ontario government store where I am confronted by the visage of this villain. I cannot imagine that the LCBO would ever allow for Hitler's image or the Nazi swasti-

ka ("Adolf's Ale?") to be displayed on any product stocked or sold from any of its stores.

In short, this is an utterly unacceptable form of marketing, not only insensitive to the suffering of millions of people who made Canada their home after fleeing Stalinist tyranny but hateful to the memory of those who perished.

Let's get this product removed immediately from every LCBO store across the province. It shouldn't be restocked until the brewery removes this completely repulsive label, both the Stalin image and the Soviet hammer and sickle. Neither is "funny" and no such imagery should ever have been tolerated in an Ontario government store.

Join the protest. Send your e-mails directly to these LCBO officials: [genevieve.tomney@lcbo.com](mailto:genevieve.tomney@lcbo.com) and [christine.bujold@lcbo.com](mailto:christine.bujold@lcbo.com).

Lubomyr Luciuk  
Kingston, Ontario

## Quotable notes

"In recent days, there has been a sharp spike in violence in Ukraine, and I mourn the loss of eight Ukrainian service members who have been killed in the fighting. The United States needs to stand up for principles. I call upon Russia and its separatist proxies in eastern Ukraine to abide by the terms of the Minsk protocols and immediately cease the violence, which affects so many civilians in the region.

"It is incumbent upon the Senate to clearly express its support for the sovereignty of Ukrainian and solidarity with our close allies in Europe. That is why I was glad to work with Sen. [John] McCain and eight other colleagues on a bipartisan basis on legislation to codify existing sanctions into law as well as increase pressure on Russia to comply with its international commitments. The Senate must move on this legislation."

- Sen. Ben Cardin (D-Md.) ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, in a statement released on February 2.

## Faces and Places

by Myron B. Kuropas



## CROSSCURRENTS

by Andrew Sorokowski



### Celebrating St. Nicholas and its flock

While most Ukrainian Americans have been focusing on events in Ukraine, others have been concentrating their attention closer to home. This was true back in the day. It is true today.

Thanks to the pioneering foresight of Ukrainians of the second immigration and their offspring, Chicago's Ukrainians have reason to celebrate this year. St. Nicholas School is commemorating 80 years of existence. A gala fund-raising banquet is planned for Saturday, February 25, at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare Grand Ballroom.

Many distinguished graduates have passed through the doors of St. Nicholas during the years, including Boris Lushniak, former acting U.S. surgeon general, Illinois Sen. Walter Dudycz, as well as Boris Antonovych and Myron Kulas, both of whom served in the Illinois General Assembly.

While Ukrainian ethnic heritage schools existed since the 1890s, there were no day schools until Father Pavlo Tymkevych, a member of the famed "American Circle" of Ukrainian Catholic priests, established a dormitory-type "bursa" in 1904. It failed, as did similar efforts that followed.

Education remained static until the arrival of Bishop Constantine Bohachevsky in 1924. The first permanent parochial day school, St. Joseph's, was established in Philadelphia in 1925. The name was later changed to St. Basil's to avoid confusion with the many Roman Catholic schools named St. Joseph that existed at the time.

Bishop Bohachevsky, considered by many as the "father" of Ukrainian Catholic education in the U.S.A., initiated a nationwide campaign of school building. Under his leadership accredited full-time schools were founded in Pittsburgh (1933), New Kensington, Pa. (1936), Chicago (1936), Hamtramck, Mich. (1936), Newark (1939) and Watervliet, N.Y. (1940). Of the three schools founded in 1936, only Chicago and Hamtramck are still up and running in 2017.

I spoke with Roma Tobiansky, principal of Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic School in Hamtramck, and she informed me that they too plan big fund-raising festivities for this year. I asked where Fourth Wavers send their kids, and guess what – many send them to a tuition-free charter school.

Surviving since 1936 hasn't been easy. The population of Chicago's Ukrainian Village has changed over the years. At one point, the eparchy considered selling the school to the Chicago Public Schools. Fortunately, this didn't happen. A cadre of younger Ukrainian professionals came to the rescue. Today, St. Nicholas has a new principal, a new school board, a STEM program affiliation and expanding technology offerings. Given that a large number of students are Hispanic, there are two language offerings, Ukrainian and Spanish.

When Lesia and I were members of the first board of education, tension existed

between St. Nicholas and Ss. Volodymyr and Olga, a Ukrainian Catholic parish down the block. A truce of sorts was reached during the episcopate of Innocent Lotocky, a saintly man who did his best to heal the wounds of the past. Unfortunately, even today most "V and O" parents prefer to send their children to tuition-free public schools.

Catholic schools have a long history in America. The mission of Catholic education originated in the evangelical mandate of Christ: "Go and teach all nations."

The first parochial school in the United States was St. Mary's in Philadelphia, founded in 1783. Overcoming a host of obstacles, American Catholics eventually built the largest private school system in the world. At its height in 1965, there were 13,500 schools serving 5.6 million students of which 4.5 million were primary.

The Second Vatican Council of 1962-1965 was a watershed in Catholic history that breathed fresh air into a Church that had become defensive and immovable. Included among the many reforms were the expansion of the missionary role of the laity, the increased significance of local bishops, and the clarification of the position of Eastern-rite Catholics by Pope Paul VI, who promulgated "Orientalum Ecclesiarum" during the conclave. Today the universal Catholic Church breathes with two lungs, one Western, one Eastern.

At the same time, unfortunately, Vatican II had a profoundly negative impact on many priests and religious who lost their way. They exited the Church in alarming numbers. In 1965 there were 180,000 women religious in America, most of whom taught in Catholic schools. Today, fewer than half that number are active. Nevertheless, dedicated laypeople alongside religious maintain distinctively Catholic schools characterized by mutual respect, sound academic and theological instruction, provision of the sacraments and diversity. Such is the case in Chicago. Attend a liturgy at St. Nicholas and you will often hear Hispanic altar boys responding in Ukrainian.

St. Nicholas Cathedral School is not out of the woods. Our eparchy is currently without a bishop. We sorely need a dynamic prelate who can set our people on fire. We need more people like the wonderful young men and women who took it upon themselves to save the school.

The St. Nicholas Cathedral School banquet on February 25 promises to be a spectacular affair for alumni and its loving flock. It should be a fitting tribute to the pioneers who built the school and to those who sustained it. The banquet will either signal a renaissance for Ukrainian Catholic education in Chicago or a last hurrah. Lesia and I will be there. Please join us.

Myron Kuropas's e-mail address is [kuropas@comcast.net](mailto:kuropas@comcast.net).

### "Words, Words, Words"

Some words are a key to the spirit of our time. This is particularly true of trendy words. It was remarked long ago that "whatever" summarizes an attitude bereft of solid truths or principles, and that the ubiquitous "like" is emblematic of a culture of imitation, artificial and inauthentic. The widely used "random" suggests a universe where everything happens by chance and nothing has purpose or meaning. The pervasive "grab," one could theorize, reveals the acquisitive mindset of an aggressively materialist culture.

Some words are generational. The proliferation of childish expressions like "scary" and "way more" betokens the immaturity of the Baby Boomers, or perhaps the infantilism of coddled Millennials. Other words, dignified and even profound in themselves, have become trite through over-use: "passionate" (as in, "He is passionate about truffles") is a notorious example. The related "compassion," which conveniently bridges religious and philosophical divides, has become undeservedly banal. One can hardly read a description of a chocolate dessert without gagging on the hackneyed "decadent."

And then there are the recent and disturbing phrases "post-truth" and "alternative facts." The first, of course, is a logical impossibility, a marker of social attitudes rather than a descriptor of reality – rather like Nietzsche's "God is dead." The latter is more insidious, echoing the "multiple truths" posited by the very intellectuals who now complain that a certain administration has turned their ideas against them. Perhaps there is such a thing as earthly justice.

Ukraine has its share of words and phrases that mirror the Zeitgeist. The term "fobiynyi" encapsulates a whole range of phobias current in both Ukraine and America. I have seen an accomplished diaspora intellectual taken to task for using terms like "homophobia" and "Islamophobia." But what, exactly, is a phobia? The Greek "phobos" means fear. We thus have acrophobia (fear of heights) and triskaid-ekaphobia (fear of the number 13). The term has also come to mean "hate," even though there is a perfectly serviceable Greek term for that, "misos" (as in "misanthropy" and "misogyny"). Since hate is often born of fear, however, there is a certain logic in words like xenophobia (Ukrainian: "ksenofobiya") – we hate the foreign because we fear it.

Fear, of course, can be reasonable. But a phobia is by definition irrational, being an inordinate or unreasonable fear. Whether certain fears are reasonable is debatable. Hence the problem with words like "Islamophobia." Some would argue that a fear of Islam, or of Muslims, is rational because of their history of violence. Others would counter that the hatred born of such a fear is irrational, especially when directed towards ordinary Muslims or towards a religion with such a broad spectrum of interpretations (see Qur'an 2:256).

What about Ukrainophobia and Russophobia? Russian fear of Ukrainians may be reasonably based on the possibility that Ukrainian ideals of freedom and democracy might undermine the Putin regime. Ukrainian fear of Russia is rational because Russia is big, aggressive and at war

with Ukraine. Thus, there is no such thing as Ukrainophobia or Russophobia in the sense of a pathological condition. But if we understand these terms to mean "hate" rather than "fear," they become meaningful, if regrettable. There are Russians who hate Ukrainians, and there are Ukrainians who hate Russians.

It is not only the "fobiyni" words that have caught on in Ukraine. And though its political culture differs from ours, the same problem arises when politically loaded words gain currency. Thus, those who use "racism" or "progressive" are presumed to be liberals or leftists. Yet a phrase like "social justice," which some consider leftist, has long been used, for example, in Catholic social teaching, which is hardly socialist. That Marxist favorite, "oppression," can legitimately be used in a non-Marxist sense.

Yet the terms we use can signal our view of an entire issue. Whether we say "fetus" or "unborn child" is a fair predictor of our attitude towards abortion. Using the words "living in sin," "cohabiting" or "living together" conveys a moral judgment, or a lack thereof. While "gay" is positive and "homosexual" is neutral, the gay movement has adopted the negative "queer" and, through playful irony, transformed it into a token of pride. Similarly, many have turned Hillary Clinton's "deplorable" into a badge of honor.

Widespread use of a certain vocabulary can even establish a way of thinking. Thus, the popularization of Freudian terms like "ego," "repression" and "sublimation" has perpetuated the Viennese doctor's theories, even when they have been disputed or discredited. Moreover, popular but careless use of catch terms derived from high theory, such as Einstein's "relativity," can spread misinformation and misunderstanding.

Another way in which words can be deceptive is the euphemism. During the Vietnam war, "collateral damage" became notorious, though it could also be categorized as military jargon, like "friendly fire." It has surfaced again in connection with drone strikes. The phrase "a woman's choice" is telling because of what it does not tell: what it is that is being chosen. Even more euphemistic is "our right to control our bodies" – as if it were a matter of suppressing the hiccups. Euphemisms protect those who condone acts like abortion and drone strikes – both of which, though they differ in specific intent, kill innocents who happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time – from excessive candor.

Although nominalists might disagree, one can argue that if a word exists, there must be a reality behind it. The Loch Ness monster may not really exist, but "Nessie" is a durable legend. Yet if every word depicts a reality, does inventing a word create a new reality? The acronym LGBT, for example, has turned an imagined community into a real one – much as happened, according to Benedict Anderson, with nations. Some imaginings, to be sure, are best forgotten. Hence the recent furor in Germany over bringing back words like "völkisch," which raise the ghost of the Third Reich.

Words, then, are dangerous. Use them carefully.

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#### Opinions in The Ukrainian Weekly

Opinions expressed by columnists, commentators and letter-writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of either The Weekly editorial staff or its publisher, the Ukrainian National Association.

# United Nations Security Council discusses the situation in Ukraine

## Ambassador Volodymyr Yelchenko

*Statement by Volodymyr Yelchenko, permanent representative of Ukraine to the United Nations, at the U.N. Security Council briefing on the situation in Ukraine, February 2.*

I thank the briefers for the updated information they provided on the attack on town Avdiivka (Donetsk region of Ukraine) by the Russian occupying forces and their proxies that led to humanitarian emergency in the area.

Distinguished colleagues, Ukraine continues to be fully committed to implementing the Minsk agreements in their entirety. The president of Ukraine has stressed on many occasions that there is no military solution in the Donbas; Ukrainian government is strongly focused on the peaceful and diplomatic means in this regard. Ukrainian forces continue respecting the ceasefire; they have a strict order to open fire only in response to attacks and assault actions of Russia-backed militants.

On the contrary, Russia as the party to the conflict in Donbas and its proxies blatantly violate Minsk agreements from the very beginning. They continued their attacks and occupied several Ukrainian towns and localities. As for now, Russian proxies occupied about 1,700 square kilometers leaving far beyond the contact line agreed in Minsk on September 19, 2014.

Before the "crisis in Avdiivka" there was the battle for Debaltseve two years ago, captured by Russian forces immediately after Minsk summit on February 12, 2015, and contrary to decisions taken by leaders of Ukraine, Russia, Germany and France.

In early hours of Sunday, 29 January, Russian army and its proxies began massive artillery attacks on Avdiivka and its suburbs from Donetsk and Yasynuvata residential areas, which are under control of the Russia-led terrorists, and sent assault units to storm positions of the Ukrainian armed forces. The Russian forces used multi rocket launcher systems Grad, tanks, 152mm and 122mm artillery, 120mm and 82mm mortars. All these weapons are forbidden under the Minsk agreement. On 29 January alone, the Ukrainian positions were shelled nearly 400 times.

According to the information that we just received, 15 minutes before the start of this briefing the separatist forces resumed shelling of residential areas of Avdiivka using high-caliber artillery systems. Several residential buildings were hit, there are several fires around the town. One of the shells exploded close to a temporary heating station that was set up by the Ukrainian authorities to provide Avdiivka residents with warmth in these freezing temperatures.

Shelling intensified on 30-31 January, including aimed at the objects of civilian infrastructure. As a result, the Donetsk water filtration plant and Avdiivka coke plant, which provides heat for Avdiivka, are now de-energized.



Ukraine's Ambassador to the U.N. Volodymyr Yelchenko, speaking at the Security Council on February 2.

The city is left without water, electricity and heat. Current temperature in Avdiivka is minus 18°C; without central heating civilians will not survive. Sixteen thousand people ended up without water, electricity and heating, including 2,000 kids. Just imagine, 2,000 kids. Without heating. At minus 18°C. Ukrainian Emergency Services prepared to evacuate people from Avdiivka.

Numerous attempts of the Ukrainian services to repair damaged infrastructure have been consistently blocked until February 1, 2017, by the Russia-led terrorists, which continued shelling, and by Russian part of the Joint Center for Control and Coordination (JCCC), which provided security guarantees necessary to reach the destroyed objects with unreasonable delay.

Destroying critical infrastructure and thus creating a humanitarian disaster is a terrorist tactic aimed primarily at civilians. This tactic obliterates the Russian propaganda myth about "peaceful miners" who fight against authorities with their shotguns. Locals would never do this to their neighbors, but those who came to Ukrainian soil as aggressors to destroy Ukrainian statehood do not hesitate to damage factories, houses, power lines. This tactic is not new for the Russian forces.

The mentioned Russia's actions may qualify as a war crime. Ukraine will add evidence related to the recent escalation and indiscriminate attacks on the civilian infrastructure to our claim against Russia on terrorism to the International Court of Justice. This is the first but very important step in bringing Russia to justice for its mounting violations of the U.N. Charter and international law.

Distinguished colleagues, the Ukrainian government announced the emergency in Avdiivka. We have managed

to sustain the functioning of the heating system at a minimum level and to avoid a quick degradation of the situation into a humanitarian disaster. Eleven warming centers were set up, scores of field kitchens were deployed, kindergartens and hospitals function in the emergency mode. Additional police units were deployed to protect civil order and help in timely response to the emergency.

Events of recent days became a test for monitoring and coordination mechanisms in Donbas. Since the outbreak of hostilities, Ukraine repeatedly, literally hundreds of times, requested Russian representatives at the Joint Center for Control and Coordination (JCCC) to use their influence to stop hostilities. Out of 230 requests made in the period from 29 January until 1 February 2017 to stop hostilities in the area around Avdiivka, all but two were ignored. On 31 January, Ukraine called for an urgent VTC meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG) to stop tensions. Again, the Russian side and their proxies in Donbas did not show up, claiming that this is not the right time. Seriously? Not the right time?

Despite calls from all corners for a ceasefire and withdrawal of heavy weaponry, the militants continue shelling day and night. On 1 February, despite the appeal of the Trilateral Contact Group for immediate and comprehensive ceasefire at the region of Avdiivka, Russian militants did not stop shooting even at the repair team that was trying to fix the damaged power line. They shelled residential buildings and last night shelled one of the roads assigned for the evacuation of civilians. This is war crime and nothing else. Look at this picture. This is an apartment building in Avdiivka. At least 1,500 people lived there. It was shelled by terrorists. Inhabitants rushed out into freezing cold. It was -20 C degrees outside. This is beyond evil. Perpetrators, those who pulled the trigger and those who gave orders, should face justice. And they will.

It has to be mentioned that, while the content of the said appeal was discussed in the Trilateral Contact Group, the Russian side was against the formulations regarding repair work at the energy and power supply infrastructure. This is another clear evidence of the Kremlin's intention to create a humanitarian catastrophe in Avdiivka as it was done by the Russian army in Aleppo.

Two Ukrainian soldiers died and 14 were wounded in the past day. All together, 20 Ukrainian soldiers were killed and 134 were wounded by the Russian hybrid forces and Russia-backed militants since the beginning of this year.

We call on the Russian Federation to follow the ceasefire and to ensure the necessary secure conditions for the repairing works.

Distinguished colleagues, the attacks on and near Avdiivka in the last days, as well as the continuing Russian aggression, underscored two important trends.

(Continued on page 19)

## Ambassador Nikki Haley

*Remarks by Ambassador Nikki Haley, U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations, at the U.N. Security Council briefing on the situation in Ukraine, February 2.*

Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, Undersecretary-General [Jeffrey] Feltman, Undersecretary-General [Stephen] O'Brien, and Ambassador [Ertugrul] Apakan for your useful and comprehensive briefings today.

This is my first appearance in this chamber as the permanent representative of the United States. It is an immense honor for me to sit behind the United States placard and to follow in the footsteps of so many giants of American diplomacy. It is humbling to be part of a body whose responsibility is nothing less than maintaining international peace and security. I look forward to working closely with each of you on this council. The United States is determined to push for action. There is no time to waste.

I consider it unfortunate that the occasion of my first appearance here is one in which I must condemn the aggressive actions of Russia. It is unfortunate because it is a replay of far too many instances over many years in which United States representatives have needed to do that. It should not have to be that way. We do want to better our relations with Russia. However, the dire situation in eastern Ukraine is one that demands clear and strong condemnation of Russian actions.

The sudden increase in fighting in eastern Ukraine has trapped thousands of civilians and destroyed vital infra-



Ambassador Nikki Haley, U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations, addresses the Security Council on February 2.

structure. And the crisis is spreading, endangering many thousands more. This escalation of violence must stop.

The United States stands with the people of Ukraine, who have suffered for nearly three years under Russian occupation and military intervention. Until Russia and the separatists it supports respect Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, this crisis will continue.

Eastern Ukraine, of course, is not the only part of the country suffering because of Russia's aggressive actions. The United States continues to condemn and call for an

immediate end to the Russian occupation of Crimea. Crimea is a part of Ukraine. Our Crimea-related sanctions will remain in place until Russia returns control over the peninsula to Ukraine. The basic principle of this United Nations is that states should live side by side in peace.

There is a clear path to restoring peace in eastern Ukraine: full and immediate implementation of the Minsk agreements, which the United States continues to support. For the people in eastern Ukraine, the stakes are high. With each passing day, more people are at risk of freezing to death or dying from a mortar blast.

The United States calls on Russia and the combined Russian-separatist forces to fulfill their commitments in the Minsk agreements and fully restore and respect the ceasefire. The Minsk agreements require the disengagement of forces and withdrawal of heavy weapons from both sides of the contact line. This is the formula for a sustainable ceasefire. Pulling back forces and taking heavy weapons out of this area will save lives. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Special Monitoring Mission must also be granted full, unfettered access. The presence of OSCE monitors can help calm tensions.

Cooperation on this issue is possible. Earlier this week, both Russia and Ukraine supported this council's unanimous call to return to a ceasefire. It was the first time in years that this council was able to come together on Ukraine. The parties on the ground should heed this signal and hold their fire. The United States expects that those who can influence the groups that are fighting – in particular, Russia – will do everything possible to support an end to this escalation of violence. Thank you.



# The word “maidan”: Where it comes from, what it means

by Thomas M. Prymak

*Philologists, who chase  
A panting syllable through time and space,  
Start it at home, and hunt it in the dark,  
To Gaul, to Greece, and into Noah's Ark.*

William Cowper (1731-1800)

For a short period in 2014, the name of the central square in Kyiv called the “Maidan” became known throughout the civilized world. That was because it was the place where the Ukrainian people gathered to overthrow the unpopular regime of Viktor Yanukovich, who appeared to be attempting to set up a new dictatorship in Ukraine with renewed ties to Russia. This pro-Western, pro-EU, democratic movement, came to be called by Ukrainians the Revolution of Dignity, or “the Euro-Maidan.” The “Euro” part of this word was clear to all. But for Westerners the “maidan” part required some explanation by visiting journalists who, however, generally ignored it or, at most, stated simply that it was a Ukrainian word for “town square.”

Little did the Western public know that this was only a very small part of the story, for although the word “maidan” was used in Kyiv and some other eastern Ukrainian cities with the meaning of town square, it was less used in western Ukraine, where the old Slavonic word “ploscha” (square) and the loan from German via Polish “rynek” (marketplace), were more frequently employed. So where does the word “maidan” come from? And why does it remain well-known in the East, but unknown in the Western world, unfamiliar to other Slavic lands to the west, and even little-known in western Ukraine?

The simple answer to this question is that “maidan” (sometimes spelled “maydan” or “majdan”) is a loan word into Ukrainian (and also into Russian) from Turkish, or from the Turkic languages of Central Asia. In those tongues, a maidan was an open place where trade or military exercises took place. So, like very many other words of Turkic origin in Ukrainian – like Kozak (Cossack), otaman (military leader of the Cossacks), kish, or more frequently, kosh (army) and such – it came into Ukrainian from the languages of the Turks and Tatars of early modern times.

Of course, the story does not end there, because even in the Turkic languages “maidan” is not a native term, but rather is a loan word. In fact, it came into the Turkic languages from Persian (an Indo-European language), where it had pretty much the same meaning. The “maidan” (pronounced more like “meidan” in modern Persian) or central square of the magnificent old Iranian/Persian city of Isfahan is actually famous throughout the entire Islamic world!

This loan took place because the nomadic Turks and settled Iranians were in close contact with each other in central Asia from very early times. From Persian it also entered Arabic (probably shortly before, or after, the Muslim conquest of Iran in the 7th century), was given an Arabic twist by those early Arab conquerors, and then reentered Persian in a slightly different form.

However, according to some philologists, even the Persians did not invent this word; rather these scholars derive it from Aramaic, an old Semitic language once spoken widely throughout the Middle East and used as an administrative language in the ancient Persian Empire. Aramaic, of course, is famous as “the language of Jesus and the first apostles,” as certain Christian immigrants to North America from Iraq, Iran and Syria, who today speak a more modern form of that language, are fond of pointing out to us.

But how has this very ancient Middle Eastern word been used over the centuries in Ukrainian and the other Slavonic languages, and what is its place in Ukrainian life

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The scene on Kyiv's Maidan – Independence Square – on January 19, 2014.

and literature?

The Ukrainian encyclopedist Yevhen Onatsky sums it up most succinctly by giving three different meanings to the word: (1) A town square, especially a square with a marketplace or a “bazaar” (another Persian word, this one loaned into most of the European languages in the 18th century through their first acquaintance with the oriental tales of the “Thousand and One Nights,” sometimes called the “Arabian Nights”). (2) A workshop where tar or pitch or asphalt were produced. (3) An embankment in the form of a ring or circle created in ancient times, like the more famous burial mounds called “kurhany” or kurgans. These particular maidans are most common, says Onatsky, in Right-Bank Ukraine, in the territory stretching west from Kyiv. But our distinguished encyclopedist does not say how this oriental loan came to have all these different meanings, or, indeed, if it had more than one origin to account for more than one meaning.

Neither do Metropolitan Ilarion (Ohienko) and Yurii Mulyk-Lutsyk, who compiled in Ukrainian a great four-volume “Etymological and Semantic Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language.” They do add, however, that in the 19th century the Austrian-ruled western parts of Ukraine became somewhat acquainted with the word through reading Ukrainian authors living in Russian-ruled Ukraine, such as Hanna Barvinok, Ivan Rudenko and Ivan Nechui-Levytsky, all of whom used one or another form of the word in their various works. In fact, Nechui seemed to like it quite a bit, for he used it quite often.

It also occurred in Ukrainian folklore collections compiled in Russian-ruled Ukraine that were read in western Ukraine. For example, the folklorist and student of historical songs, Amvrosii Metlynsky, cited a famous saying which I believe might be about the laggards who used to hang around the town squares: “Maidanchyky-okaianchyky, da hirka vasha dolia. Ne vmiyeste khliba-soly yisty da iz chuzhoho polia.”

In my not-so literal translation, this reads: “You cursed maidan fellows have a very bitter fate! You’ll never eat bread and salt from your next-door neighbor’s plate!” Of course, this saying might be interpreted, so I am told, in an entirely different though equally poetic way: “O, you accursed pitch makers, what a bitter fate you wield! You do not even know how to eat food from a stranger’s unfamiliar field.” Two quite different and unrelated meanings, but with the same negative inclination.

Although largely unknown to Westerners and missing

from most English, French and German dictionaries, the word “maidan” does occur with that town square meaning in other languages in Eastern Europe in both the Balkans and in the Caucasus. For example, the Bulgarians have “magden,” the Serbians “meiden,” the Armenians “maitan,” and the Georgians “moedani.” Unlike Western Europeans, over the centuries all of those peoples have had close contact with the Turks and, in the case of the Armenians and Georgians, also with the Persians.

Little used in standard literary Polish, historical instances of the term can, however, be found in some Polish documents and historical books. The Polish novelist Henryk Sienkiewicz, in his “Trilogy,” and the Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky, in his “Notes from the House of the Dead,” both probably took it from such sources in their various writings, or, in the case of Dostoevsky, from the colloquialisms current among various Turkic ethnic minorities in the Russian Empire.

The oldest Polish usages indicate a military connection. So a 1624 example says a maidan is a “place or field in a military camp,” and many similar examples occur. Samuel Linde’s great Polish dictionary, which was published at the start of the 19th century, even cites a Latin example with the spelling “majdan,” referring to the field where the king’s soldiers divided their booty. And Wacław Przemysław Turek’s more recent dictionary of Arabisms in Polish says that in the street language of late 19th century Warsaw a “majdaniarz” was a newspaper boy on a bicycle who delivered newspapers to various places.

Finally, the word was also sometimes adopted into a surname, and even today occasionally survives among the children, grandchildren and great grandchildren of early Ukrainian immigrants to North America. One of the best examples of such an ancestor was Yakiv Maidanyk (or Jacob Maydanyk, to use his own spelling), the famous pioneer-era cartoonist in western Canada, whose character “Vuyko Shteeff” was very popular in the 1920s and 1930s. This name may have been derived from that second, alternate, and much less desirable meaning of the word, for Constantine Andrusyshen’s “Ukrainian-English Dictionary” informs us that a “maidanyk” was primarily “a worker in a pitch factory.”

So, from ancient Aramaic, through Persian, Arabic and Turkish, to Kozak Ukraine, to the Canadian Prairies, and then again, over to the Euro-Maidan, this interesting but not so familiar word, with more than a single meaning, and probably origin, has come a very long way.

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**CONCERT REVIEW*****National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine performs in historic concert in Florida***

by Alexander Kuzma

On Wednesday, January 18, the National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine launched its first North American tour with a triumphant concert at the Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Center in Fort Myers, Fla. Under the direction of American-born Theodore Kuchar, the NSOU dazzled the sold-out audience with its performances of Yevhen Stankovych's Violin Concerto No. 2 and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5 in E Minor.

The concert opened with Verdi's Overture to the opera "La Forza del Destino" (The Force of Destiny). From the first downbeat, Maestro Kuchar showed just how exceptional and remarkable this orchestra can be. The string sections attacked the opening strains with blistering speed, evoking all the unbridled Italian passion and drama that Verdi could have hoped for. The laser-like precision of Maestro Kuchar's cues were matched by the orchestra's lush lyricism and a spectacular dynamic range. This is an orchestra that clearly relishes its mission, bringing new vitality to well-known repertoire, while showing just as much fervor and devotion to unfamiliar works.

The Stankovych violin concerto, with soloist Dima Tkachenko, showcased the orchestra's ability to keep an audience spellbound, even as it challenged listeners with sharp and edgy dissonances and bold new musical ideas. As the former chairman of the Ukrainian Composers' League and chairman of the Composition Department at the Kyiv Conservatory, Mr. Stankovych is highly respected in classical music circles in his native Ukraine. His choral works have gained acclaim through performances by the Kyiv



Following the Fort Myers concert at Barbara Mann Performing Arts Center, Maestro Theodore Kuchar (second from left) and soloist Dima Tkachenko (right) meet with concert-goers Peter and Oksana Piaseckyj of Miami.

Chamber Chorus and the Pavana Women's Choir, but his works are rarely performed with non-Ukrainian ensembles, and virtually unknown to international audiences.

The violin concerto began with a jarring splash of percussion followed by many spectacular flourishes on the part of Mr. Tkachenko. The interplay of instruments was deeply evocative and sumptuous. Unlike many works by contemporary composers that seem abstract and contrived, the Stankovych work leaves listeners feeling profoundly engaged. Mr. Tkachenko was able to draw the audience comfortably into Stankovych's contemplative space. Backed by an orchestra riveted to his every phrase, he took listeners on a harrowing journey through new emotional territory

marked by profound grief and human anguish, softened by long passages of compassion and tenderness. Stankovych uses a wide range of tonal color and clever percussion but without gimmickry. One of the most beautiful passages comes toward the end of the work with a very unusual but harmonically rich woodwind chorus that would have made Mendelssohn or Brahms proud. Stankovych has earned his place in the elite of modern composers, along with Shostakovich, Khatchaturian and Britten. With an orchestra as accomplished as the NSOU, perhaps his works will finally get the fair hearing they deserve.

The NSOU has long been considered to be among the finest symphony orchestras in Eastern Europe. It was entrusted with the

premier performances of many world-renowned works by Sergei Prokofiev, Dmitri Shostakovich, Aram Khachaturian and Boris Lyatoshytsky. However, the symphony has suffered from lack of exposure outside the Soviet Union. With the aid of an experienced production company such as Columbia Artists Management Inc., the NSOU may finally have the opportunity to win acclaim among international audiences.

The orchestra is blessed with a brilliantly energetic conductor in Maestro Kuchar, who brings with him deep experience and a solid pedigree, having directed the BBC Symphony, the Berlin Symphony Orchestra, the English Chamber Orchestra, the Munich Philharmonic and the Prague Symphony. The conductor is a joy to watch as he goads his orchestra into drawing out all the subtlety and vibrant color each work has to offer.

By the end of the Tchaikovsky symphony, the orchestra brought the audience to its feet with wild ovations. Maestro Kuchar returned to the stage to thank the audience and to give a remarkably concise, scholarly summary of the important influence of Ukrainian music on the classical composers of Eastern Europe. The audience murmured its sympathy as he commented on the difficult times Ukraine has endured following the Maidan uprising and Russia's aggression in eastern Ukraine and he thanked the sponsors for enabling the NSOU to bring its unique voice to the global community. He then topped off the evening with a breathtaking encore – a splendid rendition of Mussorgsky's "Hopak" from "Sorochyntsi Fair."

The NSOU is continuing its tour through the end of March.

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## NEWSBRIEFS

(Continued from page 2)

### Kyiv: Sheremet's death a contract hit

KYIV – Ukrainian officials say Belarusian journalist Pavel Sheremet was killed because of his professional activities in a contract killing. Ukrainian Internal Affairs Minister Arsen Avakov said in Kyiv on February 8 that the results of a pretrial investigation into Sheremet's death "lead to

the conclusion that this crime was carefully prepared by a group of people." He added, "Investigators do not rule out that the order for the killing came from the Russian Federation." Oleksandr Vakulenko, the deputy chief of Ukraine's National Police and head of its main investigative unit, said Sheremet's journalistic activities in Ukraine, where he lived, and Belarus and Russia "is considered in the first place" as a motive for his killing. Sheremet, 44, was killed when the car he was driving to work

was blown up in central Kyiv on July 20. Jailed in Belarus in 1997 while recording a story on the Russian-Belarusian border, Sheremet was often critical of top political leaders and other government officials in his reporting. He had also warned in the last blog post before his death that Ukrainian politicians who were former members of volunteer battalions that had fought separatists in eastern Ukraine could carry out a coup in Kyiv. Mr. Vakulenko said an antipersonnel mine was used in the blast that killed the journalist. He added that no one had yet been arrested for the killing. Ukrainian Prosecutor-General Yuriy Lutsenko agreed with Mr. Avakov in saying that Sheremet's "killer was not alone. This is a group [of assassins] and we can see part of this group in the video [taken where Sheremet's car was parked before he drove it]." (RFE/RL, based on reporting by Interfax and the Kyiv Post)

Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, said the fighting was reminiscent of "the early days" of the nearly three-year-old conflict. "The sound we hear back is from weapons that should not be here," Mr. Hug said. "They should be long that way and the other way locked up, at least 15 kilometers behind the contact line, where the first withdrawal line stops; for larger caliber weapons, that is even further back." He accused both sides of violating the ceasefire agreements. "We have seen on both sides an incredible amount of ceasefire violations," he said. "Ceasefire violations require guns; guns require personnel." (Christopher Miller of RFE/RL, with contributions from Brussels and Prague)

### Separatist leader killed in car bombing

KYIV – Russia-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine say one of their top commanders was killed when his car exploded early on February 4. The separatists' Luhansk Information Center said Oleg Anashchenko and a second unidentified person were killed in the explosion in the city of Luhansk. It accused Ukrainian special services of causing the explosion, saying "it was a plotted and targeted car bombing." Meanwhile, the Ukrainian military said on February 4 that three of its soldiers were killed and seven others wounded in the past day amid escalating fighting in eastern Ukraine. More than 30 people, including civilians, have been killed and several dozens injured in fighting between Ukrainian forces and Russia-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine this week, with both sides blaming each other for the upsurge of violence. The United Nations, the European Union and other international officials have issued urgent pleas for negotiations to avoid a "catastrophe." According to U.N. figures, more than 9,800 people have been killed in the conflict since it began in April 2014. (RFE/RL, based on reporting by Interfax, AP and unian.net)

### Separatist commander 'Givi' killed

KYIV – A separatist commander in the eastern Ukrainian region of Donetsk has been assassinated, the Russia-backed separatists say. Mikhail Tolstykh, better known by his nom de guerre "Givi," died after a bomb exploded in his office in the separatist stronghold of Donetsk just after 6 a.m. local time on February 8, de facto separatist authorities and a source with ties to its military told RFE/RL by phone. The separatists announced two days of mourning. Donetsk separatist leaders called the killing a "terrorist" attack organized by the Ukrainian intelligence services. "The Ukrainians... cannot defeat us on the battlefield, so they kill us in a malicious way," separatist leader Aleksandr Zakharchenko said. The Ukrainian Security Service (SBU) denied it was responsible, instead suspecting an internal operation to clear the rebel ranks. "People tied to illegal armed groups are purged by special agencies beyond the line of contact," Yuriy Tandit, an adviser of the SBU chief, told the 112 Ukrainian channel. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov called the killing "an attempt to destabilize the situation" in eastern Ukraine. Givi, 36, was leading the Somali battalion and made a name for himself in the brutal battle for Donetsk airport. Video footage from 2015 shows him verbally and physically abusing Ukrainian servicemen captured during the battle. (RFE/RL, with reporting by AFP, RIA Novosti, TASS and Interfax)

### Merkel urges Putin to help end violence

BERLIN – German Chancellor Angela Merkel has urged Russian President Vladimir Putin to use his influence on separatists in eastern Ukraine to stop the vio-

(Continued on page 13)

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## NEWSBRIEFS

(Continued from page 12)

lence there, a German government spokesman says. In a telephone call on February 7, both leaders voiced hope the fighting would soon come to an end, spokesman Steffen Seibert said in a statement. "To this end, the German chancellor appealed to the Russian president to use his influence on the separatists," Mr. Seibert added. "The German chancellor and the Russian president agreed that new efforts must be made to secure a cease-fire and asked foreign ministers and their advisers to remain in close contact," he said. Meanwhile, the Kremlin said Mr. Putin and Ms. Merkel called for an immediate restoration of the ceasefire in eastern Ukraine during the phone call. (RFE/RL, based on reporting by Reuters and AP)

### Referendum on NATO membership planned

KYIV – Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko told German media that he is planning a referendum on whether Ukraine should join NATO now that polls show 54 percent of Ukrainians favor such a move. "Four years ago, only 16 percent favored Ukraine's entry into NATO. Now, it's 54 percent," Mr. Poroshenko told Germany's Funke Mediengruppe newspaper chain in an interview published on February 2. "As president, I am guided by the views of my people, and I will hold a referendum on the issue of NATO membership." He vowed to "do all I can to achieve membership in the trans-Atlantic alliance" if people vote for that. He said Ukraine's military will be up to NATO standards by 2020. NATO and Ukraine have had a close relationship since the early 1990s, and the alliance's website says their ties are one of the "most substantial" of NATO's partnerships. However, any move by NATO to admit Ukraine would spark tensions with Russia. Mr. Poroshenko also told the newspaper that Ukraine is making progress on joining the European Union by reducing its budget deficit and curbing corruption. "Europe should realize that it would be more secure, reliable, and happier with Ukraine," he said. (RFE/RL, based on reporting by Reuters and TASS)

### Tusk points to 'Russia's aggression'

PRAGUE – European Council President Donald Tusk is calling on Russia to use its influence with separatists in eastern Ukraine to end an upsurge of fighting that has caused many casualties and aggravated the humanitarian situation. "We are reminded again of the continued challenge posed by Russia's aggression in eastern Ukraine," Mr. Tusk said on February 2. "The

fighting must stop immediately. The cease-fire must be honored." A deal signed in Minsk in February 2015 called for a cease-fire and steps to end the conflict that has killed more than 9,750 people in eastern Ukraine since April 2014. Meeting in the Belarusian capital on February 1, the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG), which is attempting to regulate the conflict, urged both sides to adhere scrupulously to the Minsk agreements and to withdraw heavy weaponry away from the contact line as previously agreed. The TCG, which includes Ukraine, Russia and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), also called for "safe and secure access" for OSCE monitors and the "facilitation of humanitarian efforts" aimed at restoring water and electricity supplies. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg called the renewed fighting "the most serious spike in violence in a long time," adding that the humanitarian situation for civilians in Avdiyivka is "dire, with 20,000 people facing freezing temperatures without heat, electricity, and water." Mr. Stoltenberg also called on Russia "to use its considerable influence over the separatists to bring the violence to an end." (RFE/RL, with reporting by AP, Reuters, and UNIAN)

### Pascrell criticizes easing of sanctions

WASHINGTON – U.S. Representative Bill Pascrell Jr. (D-N.J.) on February 2 responded to the news that President Donald Trump had eased sanctions on Russia imposed by President Barack Obama in the wake of cyberattacks during the 2016 election. "After the worst escalation in two years by Russian-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine, the Trump administration has inexplicably decided to reward this behavior by easing sanctions imposed on Russia for their cyberattacks here in the United States," said Rep. Pascrell. "This move will only strengthen Mr. Putin's grip on Crimea, emboldening his decision to destabilize the region and contribute to the thousands of civilian deaths in Ukraine. The Congress must hold hearings and quickly respond by passing legislation to tighten sanctions on the Russians and prevent any further weakening by this administration. For someone who purports to be the ultimate dealmaker, this sounds like a raw deal to me. President Trump should stand up for American allies like Ukraine, not cozy up to those who have meddled in our elections and continue to cause chaos around the world," Rep. Pascrell said. (Office of Rep. Bill Pascrell)

### Post-Euro-Maidan exhibit vandalized

KYIV – Unknown individuals have vandalized an arts exhibition in Kyiv devoted to

the situation in Ukraine since protests ousted former President Viktor Yanukovich three years ago. Officials at the Center for Visual Arts Culture told RFE/RL that 15 masked men ransacked the arts exhibition "Lost Opportunity" by artist Davyd Chychkan late in the afternoon of February 7. "All the art works were destroyed... They drew some graffiti on the walls, took some works with them, broke a wall and then ran away," the officials said. The graffiti left by the attackers said "Slaves of the Separatists!" and "Moscow's Mouthpiece!" An investigation has been launched. (RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service)

### Date set for Crimean journalist's trial

KYIV – A date has been set for the high-profile trial of journalist Mykola Semena in the Russian-controlled Ukrainian region of Crimea. Mr. Semena's lawyer, Emil Kurbedinov, told RFE/RL on February 8 that preliminary hearings into the case will be held by the Zaliznychnyi District Court in Symferopol on February 17. Mr. Kurbedinov said the actual trial for Mr. Semena, an RFE/RL contributor, will start on February 28. Mr. Semena has been charged with separatism and may be sentenced to five years in prison if convicted for an article he wrote on his blog that was critical of Moscow's seizure of Crimea from Ukraine in 2014. Mr. Semena denies the charges. He is currently under a court order from occupying Russian officials that bars him from leaving Crimea and forces him to seek permission before traveling outside the region's capital, Symferopol. The United States, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and international media watchdogs have expressed concern over

Mr. Semena's case, which activists say is part of a Russian clampdown on independent media and dissent in Crimea. (RFE/RL)

### U.S., Ukraine to share tax information

KYIV – Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch and Ukrainian Finance Minister Oleksandr Danyliuk signed an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) on February 7 to implement provisions of the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) and to promote transparency between the two nations on tax matters. The agreement underscores the two countries' continued cooperation and their strong bilateral relationship with Ukraine, as well as growing international cooperation to curb offshore tax evasion. Ambassador Yovanovitch stated, "The United States and Ukraine have developed a very strong partnership on tax administration issues, and I am pleased that our work on FATCA will further enhance our efforts in this sphere. Today's signing marks a significant step forward in our collaborative efforts to combat tax evasion – an objective that mutually benefits our two countries. We look forward to full implementation of this agreement, which will better enable us to detect, deter, and discourage tax abuses through increased transparency and enhanced reporting." FATCA will enable Ukrainian banks to share reporting on financial accounts maintained by U.S. citizens with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. The United States enacted FATCA in 2010 to combat offshore tax evasion by encouraging transparency and obtaining information on accounts held by U.S. taxpayers in other countries. (U.S. Embassy Kyiv)

## Russia's war...

(Continued from page 3)

President Petro Poroshenko has been able to re-energize his cause. The escalation of fighting in the Donbas forced him to cut short the visit to Germany but reinforced his proposition to hold a referendum on Ukraine's application for joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (Gazeta.ru, February 2). Germany is certainly the main force behind formulating the EU's policy response to each new crisis, and Mr. Putin is keen to add to the visible discord between his resourceful opponent, Chancellor Angela Merkel, and Mr. Trump (Nezavisimaya Gazeta, February 3).

A violent spasm in the unwinnable war could have accentuated Europe's fatigue with the Ukrainian mess and illuminated U.S. indifference to it – but it actually did not. Mr. Putin can shrug off this episode and wait for another opportunity, but his

best chance to influence the mapping of the course in Washington may actually be now, while many choices are still in flux. The seasoned politician President Alyaksandr Lukashenka of Belarus may feel that time is not exactly on Mr. Putin's side. During Mr. Lukashenka's seven-hour-long press conference on February 3, one particular point that stood out was the firm rejection of a proposal for establishing a Russian airbase in Belarus (Newsru.com, February 3).

Today's Russia is not rich or generous enough to buy friends, and neither is it intimidating enough to induce submission. As long as Ukraine is able to withstand the aggression and fight back, other European states can feel relatively safe. But every sign of a crack in trans-Atlantic solidarity is an invitation for Russia to try another test.

The article above is reprinted from Eurasia Daily Monitor with permission from its publisher, the Jamestown Foundation, www.jamestown.org.



It is with deep sorrow we share the news that our beloved Husband, Father, Grandfather, Uncle and Brother in law,

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daughter	Natalia and husband Tomas Kalnoky
son	Michael
son	Alexander
sister in law	Oksana with her husband Boris Stakhiv
nephew	Timothy Stakhiv with his wife Suzanne and children Nicolas and Oliver
niece	Tatiana Stakhiv with her husband Andrew Erdmann and children Andrew and Zoe
extended family and friends in the USA and Ukraine	

Funeral Services were held December 22 from 2-4pm and 7-9pm at the Barrett Funeral Home in Tenafly, and on December 23 at 10am at the Clinton Avenue Reformed Church in Bergenfield, NJ.

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# Ukraine's ambassador calls on Canada to provide strong leadership and support

by Christopher Guly  
Special to *The Ukrainian Weekly*

OTTAWA – With eastern Ukraine experiencing the worst fighting in two years between government troops and Russian-backed separatist rebels, Ukraine's ambassador to Canada is calling on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government to maintain Canada's military presence in Ukraine and extend its support by providing Ukrainian forces with long-requested weapons.

Ambassador Andriy Shevchenko said in an interview that he's hoping for a "quick decision" on Operation UNIFIER through which 200 members of the Canadian Armed Forces have provided training in such areas as combat support, weapons and marksmanship, and explosive threat recognition to more than 2,600 Ukrainian soldiers in western Ukraine since the summer of 2015. But the mission is scheduled to end on March 31, and Ukraine's envoy to Ottawa believes the timing of an announcement on UNIFIER's future is crucial as hostilities escalate around the rebel stronghold of Donetsk.

"One of the reasons for starting this program was to send a very strong message to

Putin and Russia that Canada is serious about supporting Ukraine," said Mr. Shevchenko, a former member of Ukraine's Parliament.

Last week, Canadian National Defense Minister Harjit Sajjan told reporters he was examining options in terms of how Canada could improve its support for Ukraine and make whatever changes are necessary.

"But one thing is for sure," he said, "Canada remains committed to Ukraine... [and] the action that Russia has taken is completely unacceptable."

But Minister Sajjan said the Canadian government would make an announcement regarding military support to Ukraine "at the appropriate time."

Last week, Gen. Jonathan Vance, the chief of the Defense Staff who heads the Canadian Forces, appointed Jill Sinclair, a former assistant deputy minister of the Department of National Defense, as Canada's representative to the Ukrainian Defense Reform Advisory Board, which includes military experts from three other NATO countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom and Lithuania.

But Mr. Shevchenko wants a lot more Canadian involvement in Ukraine, and



Embassy of Ukraine to Canada  
**Ukraine's Ambassador to Canada Andriy Shevchenko.**

seeks it sooner than later.

"There are so many eyes on Canada that we expect Canada to be a strong leader and provide strong support," the 40-year-old ambassador said. "We need weapons to stop Russia."

Ukraine has asked for them since 2014 when Russia annexed Crimea and began supporting separatist forces in Ukraine's Donbas region. But Canada has provided only non-lethal military supplies, such as boots, coats, pants and gloves.

Meanwhile, heavy artillery and rockets bombarded the government-held town of Avdiyivka, north of Donetsk, leaving at least 35 people dead last week.

Ambassador Shevchenko told *The Ukrainian Weekly* that Russian-backed rebels have not pulled their heavy weaponry back from the demarcation line as agreed to under the Minsk II agreement. He said that by providing Ukraine with weapons, Canada could help send a "strong signal" of deterrence to Russia.

Ukraine's senior diplomat in Canada warned that the situation in Avdiyivka has become a humanitarian crisis.

With a population of about 20,000 people, the town has been left without water, electricity and heat as temperatures have plummeted to below zero degrees Fahrenheit.

"It's become more complicated," explained Mr. Shevchenko, "as Russians keep firing at

(Continued on page 15)

## Canadian military...

(Continued from page 1)

part of prudent preparation so that they can meet whatever mandate Canadians give them."

She said that a decision to extend Op UNIFIER has yet to be made.

Mr. Kent said that while the 200 Canadian Army soldiers stationed in Ukraine have had no orders to stand down, the Ukrainian government is "uncertain about Canada's resolve" in assisting Ukraine as its government troops resumed intense fighting with Russian-backed rebels in the eastern part of the country last week.

In a statement last week, he and James Bezan, Canada's Official Opposition defense critic, noted that Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko has called on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to extend Op UNIFIER beyond March 2017. President Poroshenko "deserves a clear answer," they wrote.

"It would be helpful if the federal government formally announced the extension sooner rather than later to reassure the government and people of Ukraine to reinforce Canada's support," said Mr. Kent, who has represented the Toronto riding of Thornhill in the House since 2008.

"Given the surge in hostilities last week, with indiscriminate artillery barrages from rebels, the displacement of the civilian population, and the denial of heat and electricity, we've got a humanitarian disaster in the making. And I think that as Vladimir Putin is testing our resolve and the resolve of Donald Trump, this is the time for the democratic West to step up and stand up to maintain our support of Ukraine and opposition to Russian aggression," Mr. Kent stated.

Minister Sajjan discussed the training mission in Ukraine during his meeting with U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis at the Pentagon on February 6, according to a readout provided by the Canadian National Defense Department. No further details were provided.

Mr. Kent, a former broadcast journalist best known to Americans as an NBC News television reporter in the 1980s, has also called on the Trudeau government to restore the sharing of satellite images with the Ukrainian government.

To help Ukraine bolster its security against Russia in the ongoing conflict with separatist forces, the previous Canadian Conservative government of Stephen Harper announced two years ago that it would give Ukraine imagery from Canada's Radarsat-2 satellite that can generate surveillance data around the clock regardless of cloud cover.

However, the Trudeau government cancelled the satellite-imagery sharing program last May following reported concerns about numerous approval processes in Ottawa and restrictions on the type of information that could be provided to Ukraine, according to documents obtained by the Canadian news agency, Postmedia, last summer.

Mr. Kent, who served as minister of state of foreign affairs responsible for the Americas and later as environment minister in the Harper government, also wants Prime Minister Trudeau's government to ramp up sanctions against Russian and Ukrainian officials that the Conservatives enacted in 2014 under Canada's Special Economic Measures Act in response to Russia's annexation of Crimea.

The House Foreign Affairs Committee is conducting the first statutory parliamentary review of that legislation along with the Freezing Assets of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act since both laws came into effect 25 years ago.

Mr. Kent would like sanctions against Russia extended to "naming and shaming any human rights abusers" in the country who have been associated with the conflict in Ukraine through a Magnitsky-type law, which the Liberals, Conservatives and left-of-center New Democrats supported in the last Canadian general election campaign in 2015.

Last May, Ukrainian Canadian Sen. Raynell Andreychuk introduced a private member's bill in Canada's upper chamber that would freeze assets and impose travel bans on "foreign nationals responsible for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights."

Bill S-226, the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act (Sergei Magnitsky Law), would follow a similar law passed in the United States in 2012.

Mr. Magnitsky was a Moscow lawyer who uncovered the largest tax fraud in

Russian history, and was detained without trial and tortured before dying in a Moscow prison in 2009.

Sen. Andreychuk's bill received a second reading in the Senate last November and it was referred for further study to the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, which the senator chairs.

If the bill passes the Senate, Conservative MP Bezan will sponsor the bill in the House of Commons where, if approved, it would become law.

There's a greater likelihood it will, now that Ukrainian Canadian Chrystia Freeland is Canada's foreign affairs minister.

She is known to support the law, unlike her predecessor, Stéphane Dion, who feared such legislation could damage Ottawa's attempt to improve relations with Moscow.

"Stéphane Dion muted Canada's voice because he thought more could be achieved in dialogue with Vladimir Putin than continuing sanctions, which he was against," said Mr. Kent. "Minister Freeland is certainly an improvement from Mr. Dion in terms of her statements about the situation in Ukraine."

In response to a question Mr. Kent asked her in the House last week about Canada's response to developments in eastern Ukraine, Ms. Freeland said the situation at Avdiyivka is "of utmost concern" and "we condemn the actions of the Russian-backed separatist forces there."

Mr. Kent praised Minister Freeland for being "far more direct" in answering his question than her predecessor had when asked about Canadian reaction to Russian actions in Ukraine.

"It's a great advantage for Canadians to have a Ukrainian Canadian foreign affairs minister at a time when Russia is one of the great threats to peace and stability and you have someone who knows Russia and Russian leadership, and the challenges of post-Soviet Eastern Europe," said Mr. Kent, referring to Ms. Freeland's previous career as a journalist working in Ukraine and Russia.

"She has reassured the government of Ukraine and the people of Ukraine that she knows what needs to be done. But now that she's foreign minister, we expect her to be as consistent as she was in the past when

she wasn't setting government foreign policy," he added.

There are no signs that Ms. Freeland is softening her stance toward Russia.

Last month, she rejected a Russian offer of "reciprocity," which came via the Russian news agency, Sputnik, in which her name could be removed from the list of Canadians banned from entering Russia in exchange for Canada lifting its economic sanctions and travels bans against Russia and Russian officials. "No quid pro quo for aggression and illegal action" by Russia, Ms. Freeland's spokesman told Canada's *Globe and Mail* newspaper.

Mr. Kent hopes the minister can persuade her Cabinet colleagues to "stiffen their resolve in support of Ukraine, and to listen to the government of Ukraine as to what it needs in terms of Canada's humanitarian and military support," while sending "meaningful warnings" to discourage the Russian president's further ambitions regarding Ukraine.

"As Putin ratchets up military aggression, the West has to assist Ukraine in counterbalancing that aggression, which might mean Canada now needs to supply Ukraine with lethal weapons," Mr. Kent said.

His January visit to Ukraine was his first to the country since the late 1980s when he was senior European correspondent for NBC News.

Between then and now, Mr. Kent has seen Ukraine's struggle for sovereignty shift from dwindling Soviet rule to "renewed Russian imperialism," and based on conversations he had in Kyiv last month, the Kremlin's continuing power and influence on Ukrainian soil has taken a toll.

"There was a concern that some elements of Ukrainian society might be willing to trade the Russian occupation of Crimea for a reduction in hostilities in the Donbas," said Mr. Kent, who previously chaired the House Standing Committee on National Defense.

That sentiment surprised him, as did another power imbalance he observed while in Ukraine.

"Civil society is writing almost all of the reform legislation and politicians are passing it, which is not a healthy sign in a parliamentary democracy," said Mr. Kent. "Politicians should listen to civil society, but they should write the laws."

## Ukraine's...

(Continued from page 14)

roads, which connect Avdiyivka that makes it very difficult for people to leave the town."

He said that Ukraine has submitted as many as 200 formal requests to Russia calling for an immediate end to the shelling, but that there has been "no strong sign that they have heard us."

Ambassador Shevchenko believes the renewed and deadly fighting is also meant to be provocative.

"It definitely looks like Russia is testing the West and the new U.S. administration," he said. "There was a clear sign of escalation after the first phone contact [on January 28] between Vladimir Putin and Donald Trump – but I'm not saying Donald Trump encouraged Putin to escalate hostilities."

U.S. Sen. John McCain echoed that belief in a letter he sent President Trump last week.

"That this surge of attacks began the day after he talked with you by phone is a clear indication that Vladimir Putin is moving quickly to test you as a commander-in-chief. America's response will have lasting consequences," wrote the Republican senator from Arizona. "Vladimir Putin's violent campaign to destabilize and dismember the sovereign nation of Ukraine will not stop unless and until he meets a strong and determined response."

Nikki Haley, the new U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, said on February 2, in her maiden speech to the Security Council, that "the dire situation in eastern Ukraine is

one that demands clear and strong condemnation of Russian actions." President Trump phoned Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko two days later to discuss the worsening crisis and reportedly committed the U.S. to working with Ukraine and Russia to help restore peace in the region.

But the U.S. president has not, like Prime Minister Trudeau, openly condemned Russia's actions in Ukraine – and more of that frank talk is needed from Canada, according to Ambassador Shevchenko.

"Words and actions matter, which is why we expect Canada and its Western partners to make decisions and make them quickly, and speak them very loudly and clearly," he said.

And to listen, which has led to a direct benefit for Canada from Operation UNIFIER, according to the ambassador.

He explained that when he accompanied Prime Minister Trudeau on a visit last July to the International Peacekeeping and Security Center in Yavoriv in western Ukraine (Europe's largest military training base, equipped to NATO standards), the Canadian delegation heard from some of the 150 Canadian soldiers stationed there about some of the "lessons learned" from their Ukrainian counterparts. (The remaining 50 Canadian soldiers are based at the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense Demining Center in Kamianets-Podilsky.)

"The Canadians heard about trench warfare, which up until then they might have only read about in books or saw in movies in the context of World War II, but which is an everyday routine in the east of our country," Ambassador Shevchenko said.

"We have this very valuable experience dealing with the second-strongest military on the planet, and we pay a very high price for this experience."

So will the West, if it doesn't recognize that Russia has declared war on the free world, the ambassador warned.

"We see Russia trying to build its military power and thinking about ways to challenge the West as it has done in Syria," and, as he noted, by Russia inserting itself in last year's U.S. presidential election campaign. In a report released last month, American intelligence officials concluded that President Putin personally approved cyberattacks against the Democratic National Committee to undermine Hillary Clinton's candidacy and boost Mr. Trump's.

"It's not just about helping Ukraine, and we're thankful to Canada for providing that," said Mr. Shevchenko. "But we have to make sure we really put Russia back on the right track. All of us should understand that Russia, under Putin, poses an existential threat to peace on the planet, and Russia is a country that displays very terrible and arrogant behavior that does not respect international law and borders."

"The West has to find ways to deal with Russia, and we have this costly experience dealing with the Russians, and can share that knowledge – not only on how they wage conventional war but how they're using information technologies to undermine legitimate Western governments," he added.

Ukraine's membership in NATO would help provide greater security from Russia's ongoing threat to Ukrainian sovereignty,

said the ambassador, who believes his country's inclusion to be inevitable.

Mr. Shevchenko expects Ukrainians will vote in favor of the country entering that strategic alliance in a referendum President Poroshenko promised last week to hold. According to the ambassador, public polling in Ukraine four years ago revealed support for NATO membership was under 20 percent and has since climbed to over 50 percent.

And in terms of the Ukraine-Canada dynamic, having Ukrainian Canadian Member of Parliament Chrystia Freeland as Canada's foreign affairs minister will significantly bolster the bilateral relationship, according to Mr. Shevchenko.

"With Minister Freeland, Canada's voice will be even louder – not just because of her Ukrainian background, but because of her personality and her values as a strong advocate for democracy, international law, free trade and open government," said the ambassador, who was born near Kolomyia in western Ukraine and has known Ms. Freeland since the two were journalists working in Ukraine in the mid-1990s.

"She has a very rare and very special combination of a really great intellect and wonderful communication skills of empathy and compassion, and curiosity that allows her to listen to people. She really knows how to boil down issues to the basics no matter what she talks about," Ambassador Shevchenko said. "And let's mention her very impressive expertise with our part of the world and the way Putin and his people think. She really knows the challenges our region faces."

## Kyiv in...

(Continued from page 1)

Alluding to ex-President Barack Obama's "outsourcing" to then-Vice President Joe Biden, political analyst Volodymyr Fesenko said that the fact that the two presidents spoke indicates a lot.

"It's a positive signal and very important for communication... Trump still doesn't have a clear position on Ukraine and how to resolve the conflict in the Donbas," he said. "So far, the U.S. hasn't drastically made any policy changes towards Ukraine. Trump knows that Russia needs to give concession for an agreement to be made."

Asked whether Mr. Trump would abandon a post-World War II order whereby boundaries are respected instead of shifting to "big-bargain politics," Mr. Fesenko said, "I don't think the U.S. will go back on what was agreed before and make a decision that will go against its own interests."

Still, the readouts of President Trump's phone conversations this week with President Poroshenko and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, were cause for alarm. The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, both times referred to the fighting in eastern Ukraine as taking place not on Ukraine's territory, but "along the border."

European Union leaders on February 6 also voiced uncertainty about where President Trump stands on finding peace in Ukraine, while they reiterated the need to keep sanctions against Russia in force until it fulfills its peace commitments concerning the Donbas war.

"I cannot say where the U.S. administration stands on this, but I can say where the Europeans stand on this," EU foreign affairs and security leader Federica Mogherini told reporters.

Another promising sign is that Mr. Trump reportedly told former Ukrainian Prime Minister and current National Deputy Yulia Tymoshenko that it's too soon to lift sanctions on Russia and that he won't abandon Kyiv. That's according to the Ukrainian politician, who met briefly with

him on February 2 at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington.

While no formal assurances were given, according to a White House statement, "the president and the former PM had a brief, informal photo-op meeting..."

Still of concern is Trump's ongoing admiration and defense of Mr. Putin.

In the same Fox News interview, which was conducted on February 3 and aired on February 5 and 6, the U.S. president defended the former KGB colonel when told he was a "killer," and inferred that America's actions were not worse than Russia's domestically and in the global arena.

U.S.-Ukraine relations remain at the highest levels, according to political experts Serhiy Taran of the International Institute of Democracy.

"What's important is that discussions about Ukraine should take place with Ukraine's participation," Mr. Taran said. "According to Russia's scenario, Ukraine should be discussed without its participation. But if the Ukrainian and American president contact each other, then Ukraine will take part in defining its fate."

Reassurance came on February 2 when the new U.S. ambassador to the United Nations condemned Russia for its invasion of Ukraine during her maiden speech in New York.

"The United States stands with the people of Ukraine who have suffered for nearly three years under Russian occupation and military interventions," Ambassador Nikki Haley said. "Until Russia and the separatists it supports respect Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, this crisis will continue."

She continued: "Crimea is part of Ukraine. Our Crimea-related sanctions will remain in place until Russia returns control over the peninsula to Ukraine." (The text of Ambassador Haley's remarks appears on page 8.)

On the streets of Kyiv amid sub-zero temperatures, passers-by were indecisive in reacting to Mr. Trump's latest comments about Russia and its invasive role in the Donbas.

"I haven't heard much from him [Trump], but he is only president for two

weeks or so. He is probably learning the situation. Ukraine must prepare for the worst anyway, and not rely on others," said logistical manager Liliya Strumenko, 24, in Kyiv's Podil neighborhood.

Lawyer Anatoliy Fatiukh, 28, said he wants to wait until Mr. Poroshenko visits Washington before making an assertion.

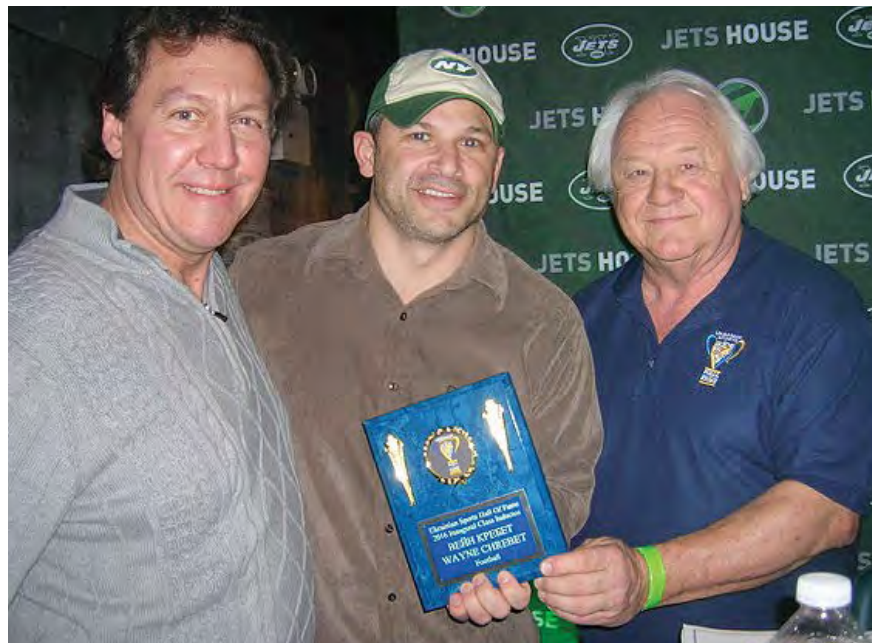
"Let's wait and see. Trump's words are different from his actions. I hear in the U.N. that the American speaker said that Russia is guilty of the Avdiyivka battles. It's too soon what to say. If Trump doesn't know who is behind the separatism in Donbas,

maybe he is giving himself some time or room," he told The Ukrainian Weekly.

Mixed signals predominate, however. Whereas high-level American officials like Vice-President Mike Pence said, "We're watching and very troubled by the increased hostilities" in the Donbas, his superior has stood up for Mr. Putin.

While downplaying the characterization that the Russian president is a "killer," President Trump stated: "We've got a lot of killers. What do you think? Our country's so innocent... I say it's better to get along with Russia than not."

## Ukrainian Sports Hall of Fame presents plaque to Wayne Chrebet



NEW YORK – Wayne Chrebet, the former wide receiver for the New York Jets football team (1995-2005), was presented a plaque by Myron Bytz and Teo Bodnar of the Ukrainian Sports Museum and Hall of Fame on January 28 at a N.Y. Jets meet-and-greet event at Jets House, located at SPIN New York. Mr. Chrebet, who said he is proud of his Ukrainian lineage, in 2014 was inducted by the Jets franchise as a member of its Ring of Honor. The Ukrainian Sports Museum and Hall of Fame is located at the Ukrainian American Cultural Center of New Jersey in Whippany and is open Saturdays and Sundays 12 noon to 6 p.m.



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 The Ukrainian Museum's film program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Dept. of Cultural Affairs, in partnership with the City Council.

## Merkel-Poroshenko...

(Continued from page 2)

those related to Moscow's intervention in the Donbas (Ukrinform, January 30).

Mr. Gabriel has ceded his post as SPD chairman to Martin Schulz, hitherto the president of the European Parliament, now the SPD's candidate for chancellor in Germany's upcoming parliamentary elections in September. Mr. Schulz has maintained a firm position on sanctions (and on other Russia-related issues) all along. In his maiden interview as chancellor-candidate Mr. Schulz declared, "We cannot lift the sanctions as long as the Minsk agreements are not fully implemented" (Deutsche Welle, February 1).

Prior to SPD's leadership reshuffle, the twin issues of sanctions on Russia and the "conflict in Ukraine" were expected to play a divisive role in Germany's parliamentary election campaign. The SPD was ready to call for easing the sanctions, positioning itself as a Russia-friendly party against Ms. Merkel's Christian-Democrats. Following its leadership reshuffle, however, the SPD seems headed for broad consensus with Ms. Merkel's party regarding policy toward

Russia and Ukraine. Some influential Social-Democrats are finally becoming aware of Russia's disinformation campaign targeting German society, including parts of SPD's own electorate.

German-Ukrainian bilateral relations were reviewed by Chancellor Merkel and President Poroshenko in an unusually positive vein on the German side. Ms. Merkel praised Ukraine's recent advances on internal reforms, resumption of economic growth and the rise of German exports to Ukraine by 17 percent in the first three quarters of 2016. Ms. Merkel assessed that Ukraine is qualified to receive the next loan tranches from the International Monetary Fund (Bundeskanzlerin.de, January 30). For his part, Mr. Poroshenko called for jointly resisting "the Kremlin's hybrid propaganda that targets Ukraine, Germany, the European Union as a whole, and the United States" (Ukrinform, January 30).

Ms. Merkel cannot be said to have undergone anything like a full epiphany on Russia. One issue deeply damaging to Ukraine is the Nord Stream II gas pipeline project, which Ms. Merkel supports not only against Ukraine's interests but also against the EU's energy market legislation and supply diversification policy. Even so, Ukraine will remain a net beneficiary of its relationship with Germany, as long as the latter does not return to negotiations with Russia over Ukraine. The now-moribund Normandy format had provided a multilateral cover for what was basically a German-Russian process. Berlin now apparently understands the failure of that attempt.

*The article above is reprinted from Eurasia Daily Monitor with permission from its publisher, the Jamestown Foundation, www.jamestown.org.*

## Holocaust...

(Continued from page 1)

Yad Vashem in Israel, the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, the Shevchenko Scientific Society in Lviv and many more.

AIS personnel are scheduled to come to the UMA to scan its collection this February and March.

As UMA Curator Aniza Kraus indicated in an earlier report, "We are gratified to be working with such prestigious institutions like the Holocaust Museum and Archival Information Systems. Ukraine, we know, is interested in recovering its lost history, which had been forbidden and suppressed during the Soviet era. Digitizing the UMA collections will create a significant scholarly resource to help us better understand a troubled era of European history as well as the present day."

The Ukrainian Museum-Archives was founded in Cleveland in 1952 by post World War II DPs. It is located in the Tremont neighborhood, then the center of the Ukrainian immigrant community.

Its founders were displaced scholars who took on the mission of collecting and preserving items from Ukrainian history and culture during an era when this kind of material was being deliberately destroyed in Soviet Ukraine. Their huge collection now includes many rare and unique items.

A second generation of Ukrainian Americans took over the leadership of the UMA in the late 1980s and has continued to maintain and enhance its collection, developed exhibits and hold regular events. Much of the work is done by volunteers.

In 1991, with the break-up of the Soviet Union and the independence of Ukraine, the UMA's collection began to attract attention from other institutions, including the Library of Congress, the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Ohio State University's Slavic Studies Department and the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine.



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# Manor College launches new brand and hears campus reactions

Manor College

JENKINTOWN, Pa. – On Friday, January 27, Manor College officially launched its new brand to students, faculty, staff, friends and various members of the college community. Included in the rebrand was a polished new institutional logo, athletic logo, tagline and website.

The college auditorium was teeming with school spirit and excitement as Manor College President Jonathan Peri unveiled the new brand, which took many months of preparation. The rebrand launched with a giant banner being unveiled in spotlights on the stage of the Manor College auditorium stage while six students ran out onto the stage armed with 10 T-shirts in hand and started throwing the shirts out to the crowd. The crowd reacted with cheers.

The college's main objective is to portray a welcoming and personalized atmosphere, which students receive during their time at Manor College. The new institutional logo includes a crest and tagline of "You Belong Here" – a sentiment that an overwhelming majority of the students feel during their time at Manor. (The full description of Manor's logos can be found here: <http://manor.edu/about/mision-vision-core-values/brand-promise/>.)



Manor College's new logo and tagline.

The new athletic logo features a stronger and fiercer blue jay, an accurate representation of the Manor College athletic program. In addition to the new logos and tagline, a new [www.manor.edu](http://www.manor.edu) website that is more attractive, user-friendly and mobile responsive was also launched.

Deborah Turner, a business administration major, stated "Manor's rebranding and new logo reflect their quality

education and all the opportunities they have to offer." Ms. Turner added that the site "looks amazing and is much easier to use."

Michael Landis, Liberal Arts Program director, noted: "The new Manor brand and logos bring into superb accent and exquisite communicative, accessible transparency the fact that I have experienced first-hand for almost one quarter of a century now as a Manor full-time faculty member, viz., Manor is a quintessentially excellent institution of higher learning, unswervingly dedicated to the Basilian ideals that include the absolute value of each individual person – absolute student-centeredness – the value of community, the value of lifelong learning and the pursuit of wisdom, and the value of the spirit of inquiry as such."

This is just a sampling of the positive feedback about the rebrand. The Manor College community believes the updated and refreshed brand will allow the college to reach a broader audience and truly lets students know that Manor is where they belong.

Located in suburban Philadelphia, Manor College is a private college offering more than 38 associate's degree programs in allied health, science and math; business, technology and legal studies; and liberal arts to traditional and adult students. Manor College provides its students with excellent academic and transformative opportunities that instill the importance of lifelong learning. More information is available at [www.manor.edu](http://www.manor.edu).



Manor's athletic logo.



Sweets at Manor College's celebration of its rebranding.

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## If Trump...

(Continued from page 4)

wants a de facto recognition of "the new geopolitical reality [the annexation of Crimea]" as well as the recognition of the post-Soviet space (excluding the Baltic states – Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) as Russia's "zone of influence." Moreover, Russia wants NATO to withdraw forces deployed recently on its eastern flank to deter Russia. Finally, Moscow wants an easing of sanctions.

Russia is ready to prepare a massive joint operation with the U.S. against the IS in Syria and possibly other Middle Eastern countries. Presumably, such an operation may placate the U.S. Congress into accepting a Trump-Putin deal. Moscow has also recently had some disagreements with Tehran and could possibly help put some pressure on the Islamic Republic. Moscow will not, under any circumstances, strain its relations with Beijing, however. It, therefore, must cunningly supplement any U.S. attempts to pull it into a confrontation with China with offers of joint (together with Japan and South Korea) economic

cooperation to develop natural resources in Siberia and the Far East, apparently spinning this as competition with Chinese influence. Russia may provide a verbal pledge not to occupy all of Ukraine, but the U.S. must, in turn, withdraw from the Ukrainian problem, thus giving Moscow a free hand to deal with Kyiv, Mr. Solovey wrote (Facebook.com, January 29).

Moscow may agree to substantially increase its military deployment in the Middle East to fight jihadist radicals together with the U.S., according to independent military columnist Aleksandr Golts (Ej2015.ru, January 30). Of course, such a costly deployment would be made in the understanding that Russian forces stay permanently in newly established bases to dramatically enhance Russian influence in the oil-rich region.

Mr. Trump seems to offer a unique opportunity to restore Russia as a great Euro-Asian empire and "make it great again." Mr. Karaganov believes the U.S. liberal elite will fight Mr. Trump and his pro-Russian policies using any means, including a possible assassination. As such, Mr. Karaganov has suggested that the White House should enhance Mr. Trump's personal security detail (Aif.ru, January 18).

In the proposed deal with Mr. Trump, Moscow seems to be offering little of substance in exchange for the U.S. renouncing Ukraine and Crimea, all of the post-Soviet space and more. Still, plenty in Russia apparently believe such a deal is possible because Moscow thinks it is negotiating from a position of substantial strength. President Trump and his team, meanwhile, are seen as weak and under life-threatening internal and external pressure to show at least some foreign policy success. Therefore, Moscow believes Washington may settle to give away Ukraine and Moldova into Russian servitude because the Trump White House does not care much about those far-off, unstable and impoverished places.

The only serious threat, as seen from Moscow, is that President Trump may be so weak politically and his White House team so incompetent that his administration might prematurely collapse or he could even be impeached. Some voices inside Russia are, therefore, advising President Putin to move swiftly and aggressively to secure the country's vital interests before Mr. Trump implodes and to avoid tying himself and Russia too closely to the White House so as not to be engulfed by its potential eventual disgrace (Mk.ru, February 1).

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# OUT & ABOUT

- |                                 |   |                               |  |
|---------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|--|
| Through July 4<br>Chicago       | Art exhibit, "PictureHeads: Selections from the Permanent Collection," Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art, <a href="http://www.uima-chicago.org">www.uima-chicago.org</a>  | February 18<br>Windsor, ON    | Ukrainian Groundhog Day dance, Ukrainian National Federation in Windsor, Ss. Vladimir and Olga Ukrainian Catholic Church, 519-982-3299 or 519-256-2955 ext. 103  |
| Through March 5<br>Chicago      | Art exhibit by Volodymyr Voroniuk, Ukrainian National Museum, 312-421-8090 or <a href="http://www.ukrainiannationalmuseum.org">www.ukrainiannationalmuseum.org</a>  | February 18-19<br>Toronto     | Alexander Cup hockey tournament, Westwood Arena, <a href="http://www.uscak.org">www.uscak.org</a> or 416-726-0803 or <a href="mailto:bjrad@eeph.com">bjrad@eeph.com</a>  |
| February 13<br>Cambridge, MA    | Lecture by Marlene Laruelle, "Fashisty! Russian Nationalists and the War in Ukraine: The Semantics of Fascism and Conservatism in Russia," Harvard University, <a href="http://www.huri.harvard.edu">www.huri.harvard.edu</a> or 617-495-4053   | February 22<br>Washington     | Presentation by Chris Miller, "The Struggle to Save the Soviet Economy: Mikhail Gorbachev and the Collapse of the USSR," Heritage Foundation, <a href="http://www.heritage.org">www.heritage.org</a>   |
| February 15<br>Washington       | Conference, "Securing Ukraine's Sovereignty: The Road Ahead," Center for U.S.-Ukraine Relations, American Foreign Policy Council, Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, U.S. Library of Congress, 212-228-6840 or 212-476-1221   | February 23<br>Morristown, NJ | Concert, National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine, Mayo Performing Arts Center, 973-539-8008 or <a href="http://www.mayoarts.org">www.mayoarts.org</a>   |
| February 16<br>Washington       | Debate, "European Missile Defenses for NATO," Center for Strategic and International Studies, 202-775-3132 or <a href="http://www.csis.org">www.csis.org</a>  | February 23<br>Cambridge, MA  | Lecture by Roksolana Mykhaylyk, "Linguistics and Technology: Teaching Machines to Speak Ukrainian," Harvard University, <a href="http://www.huri.harvard.edu">www.huri.harvard.edu</a> or 617-495-4053   |
| February 16<br>New York         | Panel discussion with artists of the "CIM" exhibit, The Ukrainian Museum, 212-228-0110  | February 24-25<br>New York    | International conference, "Ukrainian Statehood 1917-1921: Institutions and Individuals" Columbia University, 212-854-4697 or <a href="mailto:ma2634@columbia.edu">ma2634@columbia.edu</a>  |
| February 17<br>Kerhonkson, NY   | Winter Weekend Getaway, Soyuzivka Heritage Center, <a href="http://www.soyuzivka.com">www.soyuzivka.com</a> or 845-626-5641   | February 24-26<br>Chicago     | 80th anniversary celebration of St. Nicholas Cathedral School, St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church, Ukrainian Cultural Center, Hyatt Regency O'Hare, <a href="http://www.stnicholaschicago.org">www.stnicholaschicago.org</a> or <a href="http://www.stnicholascathedralschool.org">www.stnicholascathedralschool.org</a> |
| February 17<br>New York         | Colloquium, "Modern Ukrainian Art in a Global Context: New Publications," The Ukrainian Museum, 212-228-0110  | February 25<br>Parsippany, NJ | Presentation of debutantes, Ukrainian American Youth Association, Sheraton Parsippany Hotel, <a href="http://www.cym.org">www.cym.org</a>  |
| February 18<br>Syracuse, NY     | Spaghetti dinner, Ukrainian National Home, <a href="mailto:events@syrucc.org">events@syrucc.org</a> or 315-478-9272   | February 25<br>Ottawa         | Ukrainian Cabaret with Vyshyvanka Vechornytsi, League of Ukrainian Canadians, <a href="http://www.buduchnist.com">www.buduchnist.com</a> or 613-722-7075   |
| February 18<br>Washington       | Ukrainian Winter Ball, Taras Shevchenko School of Ukrainian Studies and The Washington Group, Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, <a href="mailto:zabavadc@gamil.com">zabavadc@gamil.com</a> or <a href="http://www.ukrainianschooldc.org/debutante-ball.html">www.ukrainianschooldc.org/debutante-ball.html</a> | February 25<br>Hunter, NY     | Ski Races, Carpathian Ski Club (KLK), Hunter Mountain, <a href="http://www.klkusa.com">www.klkusa.com</a> or <a href="mailto:hadzewycz@optonline.net">hadzewycz@optonline.net</a>  |
| February 18<br>Independence, OH | Presentation of debutantes, with music by Klopit, Plast Ukrainian Scouting Organization, Holiday Inn - Cleveland South, 440-884-2149 or 440-572-4069  |                               |  |

*Entries in "Out and About" are listed free of charge. Priority is given to events advertised in The Ukrainian Weekly. However, we also welcome submissions from all our readers. Items will be published at the discretion of the editors and as space allows. Please send e-mail to [mdubas@ukrweekly.com](mailto:mdubas@ukrweekly.com).*

## Ambassador...

(Continued from page 8)

First, Russia and its proxies in Donbas continue to block and undermine the peaceful process by pursuing their political objectives through the indiscriminate use of force. There has to be no illusion about the Russian role in the Minsk agreements implementation. Every bit of a progress reached in the TCG or on the contact line is flagrantly destroyed by another assault by Russia-led terrorists.

Second, the existing mechanisms created to avoid further destabilization and to move forward with implementation of Minsk agreements are not as efficient as is necessary to fulfill their mandate. Despite the urgency of the situation, the TCG met only three days after the outbreak of hostilities. The JCCC appeared to be an ineffective tool in the crisis situation. All this due to the Russian non-cooperation. OSCE SMM observers still have serious restrictions to the freedom of movement on the territories temporary controlled by Russia backed militants, they lack 24/7 monitoring capabilities and relevant technical means.

Events around Avdiyivka upset Russia's aspirations to resolve the conflict in Donbas by military means. Yes, the Ukrainian army proved its strength and ability to repeal the Russian offensive.

However, Ukraine pays a dramatically high price, losing its best sons and daughters in this war.

We do care about our people. The death of every single soldier or civilian is yet another scar on the soul of Ukraine. This is the picture of a 23-year-old officer, Andriy Kyzlyo, killed on 29 January near Avdiyivka.

Look in his eyes, Mr. Ambassador. It is your weapons and your compatriots who killed him.

Our people greet their fallen defenders on their knees.

Russian invaders are buried in unmarked graves. We are seeking peace and doing our utmost to take every step to bring it back to Ukraine.

And, therefore, we do not advocate a military solution and believe that available political means should be used.

Armed confrontation could be easily ended. The Russian Federation should stop arming militants and send[ing] its mercenaries and militaries to Ukraine.

Does anybody seriously think that rockets and artillery shells grow on trees in Donbas? We are talking about tens, if not hundreds of thousands of artilleries ammunition! Since November, we and international observers noted increased supply of ammunition and armor to militants from the Russian Federation. Now we see the consequences.

Distinguished colleagues, what is clear is that an international security presence on the ground needs to be enhanced to prevent such provocations in future and thus contribute to implementation of the Minsk agreements and ultimately - to the peaceful resolution.

We once again urge the Russian Federation to exercise its responsibility in following the Minsk commitments, specifically their security and humanitarian provisions. We urge Russia to halt support to terrorists and stop building hybrid terrorist armies in eastern Ukraine as well as its military build-up along Ukraine's eastern borders.

Moreover, we call on the Russian Federation not to expand framework of the

escalation. On 1 February Russian military forces shelled and damaged the Ukrainian aircraft An-26 while it was conducting a flight over the Odesa gas deposit region in the Black Sea in the exclusive maritime zone of Ukraine. This time, only lucky coincidence saved the crew from the Russian shelling. God knows what could happen next time.

The remedy to stop this Russian aggression against my country and to avoid further civilian sufferings is rather simple. What the international community needs to do is to step up pressure on the aggressor and urge the Russian Federation to get out of Ukraine.

I thank you.

\* \* \*

*Further statement by Ambassador Yelchenko.*

Indeed, today is a Groundhog Day. The first statement of the Russian delegation repeats word for word what it said in the consultations two days ago. As far as further statement is concerned, I don't even want to comment on this cocktail of demagoguery. I would like to stress that frivolous interpretations of the OSCE SMM reports are more than ridiculous. There's no reference to Ukrainian forces in OSCE reports. I would rather trust assessments by Ambassador [Ertugrul] Apakan, who is with us today.

By the way, the Russian ambassador asserted that the coal factory in Avdiyivka was shelled by the Ukrainian forces. I have to clarify again that this factory is located on the territory controlled by the Ukrainian government, so the shells that rained down on the factory were propelled by the Russian guns. This was reported by all the briefers.

Russia blames President [Petro]

Poroshenko and other high officials of Ukraine in stirring up violence around Avdiyivka. However, it is not Poroshenko who supplies terrorists with ammunition and armor.

One of them, captured during the recent attack on Avdiyivka, already confessed that the Russian officers in command of his unit gave orders to capture the town before the end of the last week.

The reality is simple. It is Russian weapons that kill Ukrainians. It is Russian soldiers and mercenaries [who] come to Ukraine to earn money for murdering. Recalling my remarks about resumption of shelling in Avdiyivka about an hour ago, I would like to inform the colleagues that as a result, at least two civilians were killed and another civilian injured. The shelling continues to batter residential areas, including a school building used for distribution of humanitarian supplies.

Thus, we do not exclude any escalations or provocations in and around Donetsk in further attempts to discredit the Ukrainian armed forces and the Ukrainian leadership. There is information about evacuation of civilians of Donetsk that we assess as a preparation to a possible provocation; a similar thing happened in August 2008 when Russia prepared to attack Georgia.

As I stated at the beginning of this meeting, we expected a serious professional dialogue. A dialogue that would bring an end to violence and help to avert humanitarian disaster and save lives. A denial of reality is not a way to achieve it.

It looks like Russia lives in a parallel reality created by propagandists from "Russia Today." And this parallel reality is even more twisted when Ambassador [Vitaly] Churkin stands to talk about Crimea.

## Heavenly Hundred Commemoration Charitable Concert for Ukrainian Wounded Soldiers



March 3, 2017 6:00PM

The Embassy of Ukraine  
3350 M Street NW  
Washington, DC 20007

The Embassy of Ukraine in USA and non-profit organization United Help Ukraine invite you to the Annual Charitable Concert by "Gerdan" and Andrew Kraus to commemorate the Heavenly Hundred, who laid down their lives during Ukraine's Revolution of Dignity of 2013-2014.

- ❖ Classical music concert by "Gerdan" <http://www.gerdan.info> and Andrew Kraus <http://www.andrewkraus.com>
- ❖ Solomia Gorokhivska (violin), Andrei Pidkivka (flute), Andrew Kraus (piano)
- ❖ Reception with traditional Ukrainian food and drinks
- ❖ Silent auctions of art
- ❖ Tickets (\$75) @ <https://heavenlyhundred2017.eventbrite.com>

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## PREVIEW OF EVENTS

Saturday, February 25

**NEW YORK:** The Shevchenko Scientific Society invites all to a lecture "When There is Blasphemy against God from All Ends and Parts of Christendom: On the Significance of Scriptural Echoes in the Epistles of Ivan Vyshenskyi" by Dr. Harvey Goldblatt, professor of medieval Slavic literature at Yale University. Prof. Goldblatt is the author of numerous publications on the literary patrimony of the medieval and pre-modern Orthodox Slavic religious and cultural community, the language controversies among the Slavs, aspects of the Cyrillo-Methodian heritage and, most recently, the significance of the "Slovo o Polku Ihorevi." His collection of essays on the 16th century Ukrainian monk and ardent polemicist Ivan Vyshenskyi will be published in Ukrainian by Krytyka in Kyiv in 2018, and his translations of Vyshenskyi's writings into English will appear as part of the Harvard Library of Early Ukrainian Literature. Prof. Goldblatt is a long-time collaborator of the Ukrainian Research Institute at Harvard. The lecture will take place at the society's building, 63 Fourth Ave. (between Ninth and 10th streets) at 5 p.m. For additional information, call 212-254-5130.

Sunday, February 26

**NEW YORK:** The Shevchenko Scientific

Society invites all to a lecture, "Imaginary Galicia: Specific Features of the Literary Landscape," by Dr. Olena Haleta, professor of the Department of Theory and Comparative Literature at National Lviv University. The lecture will take place at the society's building, 63 Fourth Ave. (between Ninth and 10th streets) at 2 p.m. For additional information call 212-254-5130.

Sunday, March 12

**ALEXANDRIA, Va.:** The Washington Group Cultural Fund Sunday Music Series presents violinist Solomia Soroka and pianist Arthur Greene in a recital of the complete violin and piano music of one of the most celebrated Ukrainian modern composers, Yevhen Stankovych. The program will feature the evolution of Stankovych's works for violin, from his early "On Verkhovyna" triptych, to his reflections on events in Ukraine "Fresca of Maydan." The composer will be present to share the stories behind the music. The newly recorded premier CD of his complete violin music for London's record Toccata Classics will be available. The concert will be held at 3 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 South Washington St. A reception to meet the artist will follow the performance. Suggested donation: \$30; free for students; unreserved seating. For more information e-mail: [twg-culturalfund@gmail.com](mailto:twg-culturalfund@gmail.com).

## PREVIEW OF EVENTS GUIDELINES

Preview of Events is a listing of Ukrainian community events open to the public. It is a service provided at minimal cost (\$20 per listing) by The Ukrainian Weekly to the Ukrainian community. Items must be **no more than 100 words** long.

Preview items must be received **no later than one week before the desired date of publication**. Please include payment for each time the item is to appear and indicate date(s) of issue(s) in which the item is to be published.

Information should be sent to [preview@ukrweekly.com](mailto:preview@ukrweekly.com). When e-mailing, please do not send items as attachments – simply type the text into the body of the e-mail message. Preview items and payments may be mailed to: Preview of Events, The Ukrainian Weekly, 2200 Route 10, P.O. Box 280, Parsippany, NJ 07054.

## WOMEN'S BANDURA ENSEMBLE

of North America

presents a concert on

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2017 | 2:00PM

at

MANOR COLLEGE

700 Fox Chase Rd., Jenkintown, PA 19046

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT

Ukrainian Educational & Cultural Center

700 N Cedar Rd

Jenkintown, PA 19046

PHONE

215.663.1166

Adults \$25 | Faculty & Seniors \$15

Students \$10 | Kids 12 & under free

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THURSDAY FEBRUARY 23  
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