

INSIDE:

- Some 150 Ukrainian runners make their mark on Chicago Marathon – **page 5**
- Ukraine notches win in Nations League soccer action – **page 12**
- Goalie Slukynsky a shot-stopping force between the ice hockey pipes – **page 14**

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Zelenskyy unveils 'victory plan' that includes NATO invite



Office of the President of Ukraine

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy addresses lawmakers as he presents his "victory plan" during a parliament session in Kyiv on October 16.

RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service

KYIV – Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has outlined a set of measures that he says would turn the tide of the war in Kyiv's favor and possibly end the war with Russia no later than next year, even as his embattled country struggles to stave off a slow but relentless advance by Russian forces and the destruction of energy infrastructure ahead of the coming winter.

In his speech to parliament, the Verkhovna Rada, on October 16, Mr. Zelenskyy called for the "lifting by partners of restrictions on the use of long-range weapons on

the entire territory of Ukraine occupied by Russia and on Russian territory and on enemy military infrastructure" and help in "equipping our reserve brigades."

His five-point "victory plan," in which he ruled out ceding Ukrainian territory, also called for an unconditional invitation for Kyiv to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military alliance and the deployment of a strategic nonnuclear deterrent package in Ukraine.

Mykhaylo Podolyak, a senior adviser to Mr. Zelenskyy, told RFE/RL that Russia had

(Continued on page 6)

Zelenskyy claims North Korea sending soldiers, weapons to Russia

Says Ukrainian troops holding on in Kursk after Russian claims of gains



Serhii Nuzhnenko/RadioSvoboda.org via RFE/RL

Artem, a 40-year-old Ukrainian commander, shouts a warning before his artillery team fires toward Russian positions near Pokrovsk in early October.

RFE/RL's Russian Service and RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Ukrainian intelligence services briefed him about what he said is North Korea's effective involvement in Russia's war on his country.

Mr. Zelenskyy said on October 13 that North Korea has sent soldiers and weapons to Russia to support the war in a sign of the

increasing alliance between the Kremlin and Pyongyang. He provided no further details in his nightly address on October 14.

The reports could not be independently verified, but in his regular nightly address on October 13, Mr. Zelenskyy for the first time reiterated the claims.

"This is no longer just about transferring weapons. It is actually about transferring

(Continued on page 9)

Jared Leto sparks outrage with pro-Russian remarks downplaying war as 'problems' during Serbian concert

by Roman Tymotsko

LVIV – American actor and lead singer of the rock band Thirty Seconds to Mars, Jared Leto, sparked outrage among Ukrainians after his recent performance in Serbia.

During that show, Mr. Leto announced his intention to perform in Russia, where he intends to "hang out and have fun" as soon as "problems" for that country are resolved. Videos of the singer making his comments have gone viral on various social media networks, including Instagram and TikTok.

The concert, which took place on October 11 in Belgrade, Serbia, included a large turn-out of Russia supporters who came to see Mr. Leto. The singer asked the audience if many Russians

were present. After a round of applause, he said he "felt a lot of Russian energy around."

Serbia, which has been among the more staunch supporters of Russian President Vladimir Putin and his war on Ukraine, has been a haven for many Russians who fled the country for fear of being mobilized to fight in Ukraine.

Mr. Leto added that he plans to tour Russia with his band Thirty Seconds to Mars when the "problems" he described as a result of the war in Ukraine are resolved. The singer also expressed his desire to perform in Kyiv.

"One day, when all these problems are over, we will meet you in your homeland. We'll go back to Serbia, we'll go to St.

(Continued on page 10)

National Ballet of Ukraine kicks off multi-city US tour with thrilling performance at Washington's Kennedy Center

by Andrew Nynka

WASHINGTON – The National Ballet of Ukraine, together with the Ukrainian Shumka Dancers, opened their 2024 tour of the United States – an emotional, historic and innovative tribute to Ukrainian culture and dance – at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., on October 8.

The tour, which is scheduled to include some 16 shows throughout the United States and includes a floor-to-ceiling, stage-wide three-dimensional video backdrop, was promoted under the banner Nadiya Ukraine, or Hope Ukraine, with proceeds and donations from the tour earmarked to support humanitarian projects in the war-ravaged country.



Andrew Nynka

Daniil Silkin and Kateryna Kurchenko of the Ukrainian National Ballet perform a pas de deux from "Le Talisman"

(Continued on page 4)

NEWS ANALYSIS

Kremlin mobilizes Muslim hierarchies to support war effort

by Paul Goble
Eurasia Daily Monitor

Moscow is once again using the Muslim Spiritual Directorates (MSDs), bodies the Soviet Union set up in World War II to supervise the Islamic community, for the primary purpose for which they were established: to mobilize Muslims to fight against a foreign enemy. If anything, the role of the MSDs is even more important now in Moscow's war against Ukraine than it was against Nazi Germany. The Kremlin has chosen to rely on non-Russian areas and poorer Russian populations for recruitment to maintain the perception of normalcy among residents of major cities (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, July 14, 2022). The MSDs' roles have also expanded to encompass more tasks than during World War II. These roles now include recruiting young Muslims, sending aid and ammunition to the front, limiting internal clashes between Muslim and non-Muslim soldiers in the field and suppressing anger among Muslims concerning the rising number of their combat deaths (12-kanal.ru, August 18, 2023). Opinions on the success of the MSDs in meeting these tasks have been mixed, but Moscow's decision to rely on them both reflects the Russian government's own administrative weakness and the importance of these directorates.

MSDs in the Russian Federation trace their origins to three earlier events. First, the tsarist era saw attempts to create an administrative hierarchy for a faith that lacks such hierarchies canonically. Second, the All-Russian Muslim Congress in 1917

called for the creation of bodies that could represent the faithful in their dealings with the Russian state. Third, having previously suppressed these institutions, former leader of the Soviet Union Joseph Stalin restored them during World War II to help mobilize Muslims to fight against the German invasion (Millard Tatar, November 16, 2023). Since the end of Soviet times, these groups have exploded in number, with nearly 100 regional MSDs and half a dozen "super" MSDs – an MSD that subordinates to itself MSDs in the regions – currently in existence (Window on Eurasia, April 24, 2020). As they have increased in number, however, the MSDs have decreased in importance. This is because the Russian state has been able to dismiss them as irrelevant or play the groups off against one another. At the same time, individual parishes have often chosen to go their own way. Now, due to Russia's war on Ukraine and how Russian President Vladimir Putin has chosen to fight it, the MSDs are recovering the purpose for which Stalin created them and quite possibly gaining the importance that some have hoped for as a Muslim version of the Moscow Patriarchate's hierarchy. If that happens, Putin's use of MSDs could backfire and allow them to emerge as a significant challenge to the Russian state.

Since the start of his expanded war in Ukraine, Putin has chosen to raise an army first and foremost in non-Russian republics and poorer Russian regions (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, March 1, 2020, April 4, 9, 16,

(Continued on page 3)

Moscow's war intensifies practice of corruption in Russia

by Ksenia Kirillova
Eurasia Daily Monitor

Russia's war in Ukraine has put a spotlight on corruption in the Russian Federation, which has existed as long as the country has itself. As Russian President Vladimir Putin continues to try to fight the long war, corruption will increase and continue to be the only way the Kremlin believes it can control its people. A year and a half into the war, Putin declared that the so-called "special operation" would "purify" Russian society from a "fifth column" (BBC – Russian service, November 28, 2023). Putin's words were then repeated by Foreign Affairs Minister Sergei Lavrov, who said that one result of the war is "the cleansing of Russian society of people who feel no connection with Russian culture" (Kommersant.ru, January 18).

Consequently, on September 23, the Russian government prepared a review of a draft law about the criminal liability of "Russophobia" in Russia's criminal code. The bill was prepared by State Duma Vice Speaker Irina Yarova and the head of the State Duma Committee on Security and Anti-Corruption Vasily Piskarev. The law outlines the liability specifically for discriminatory acts committed against citizens and permanent residents of Russia, including against "compatriots" who are not citizens of the Russian Federation "outside the borders of the Russian Federation."

Punishment for "Russophobia" within Russia, however, is not outlined (Interfax; Svoboda.org, September 23).

Based on the Kremlin's asseverations on the purpose of the "special military operation," Orthodox preachers have constructed an entire religious concept according to which being prepared to kill and die on the battlefield in Ukraine is the genuine fate of the "holy" Russian people. Therefore, they must spill blood to renew themselves in the eyes of God (YouTube, October 2, 2022). The priests assert that thanks to the war "we learn to love again, understand one another and help each other" (Mccvu.ru, October 14, 2022).

The war, however, is corrupting Russian society on an unprecedented scale. This corruption refers not only to eliminating punishments for illegal conduct, but also to the creation of a plethora of new corruption schemes. Corruption was already the foundation of the Putin regime (Deutsche Welle – Russian service, March 7, 2023). Now, however, the object of corruption is not money, but human life. The entire system of supplying Putin's war is built on the financial benefit of underprivileged people. The Ministry of Defense offering record-breaking signing bonuses (by Russian standards) is one way the Kremlin is coercing people into serving (The Moscow Times, August 1). Beyond recruitment, every stage

(Continued on page 7)

NEWSBRIEFS

Threatening e-mails sent to state institutions

A large number of state institutions in Ukraine on October 14 were evacuated after hundreds of schools, businesses, embassies and media outlets received e-mails threatening a terrorist attack. Authorities inspected schools, businesses, hotels, embassies and media organizations – including RFE/RL – that received the threatening e-mail looking for explosive devices that the message said had been planted at those locations. Ukraine's Foreign Affairs Ministry said 60 of its missions abroad had received the threatening e-mail, some of them suspending consular services. The threatening e-mail mentions the names of RFE/RL journalists Iryna Sysak and Valeria Yehoshyna, as well as freelancer Yulia Khymeryk, whose activities the senders appear to blame for prompting them to plan the alleged bombings, although they did not mention any specific activity. It follows an investigation published by the three journalists in the Skhemy (Schemes) investigative unit of RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service showing how Russian intelligence services recruit Ukrainians, including minors, to set fire to the cars of Ukrainian military personnel and representatives of conscription centers. Representatives of Ukraine's National Police who checked the locations – including the office of RFE/RL in Kyiv – said late on October 14 that they had not found any explosive device after searching some 60 percent of the threatened locations, but searches continued. The message was sent by a person who identified himself as a representative of a "terrorist group" whose name matches that of an anti-Ukrainian Telegram channel, which has spread calls to burn cars belonging to Ukrainian military personnel and representatives of conscription centers. RFE/RL is not disclosing the name of the sender or the group for security and ethical reasons. After receiving the threatening e-mail, Schemes also found out that a person with the same name as the sender of the threatening e-mail lives in Russian-occupied Crimea and has a Russian passport. RFE/RL President Stephen Capus said the organization was aware that its journalists had been named

in the threatening e-mails. "We will not be intimidated and stand behind our reporters who will continue to bring news to Ukrainian audiences without fear or favor," Mr. Capus said, pledging to fully cooperate with authorities in their investigations. According to Schemes, the group that claimed responsibility for the alleged planting of explosives is actively spreading messages on social media calling for the burning of Ukrainian military vehicles and demonstrating the results of previous arson attacks. The recruiting effort offers \$100 to those who agree to take part. Artem Dekhtyarenko, a spokesman for the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), said Russia was trying to make it look like arson attacks are being carried out by ordinary Ukrainians when in fact the attacks are instigated by Russian security services. The group's Telegram channel also shares videos of officers at conscription centers detaining Ukrainian citizens for mobilization and calls for persecution of these soldiers in exchange for a promised payment of \$1,000. Schemes also reported that in early October representatives of the same group sent messages to several Ukrainian government agencies offering to "kill for a fee" top security officials and public figures. They introduced themselves as an organization that "has long been engaged in the execution of orders for violent actions and the resolution of issues through physical elimination." The group's website says that it provides "services" such as "racketeering, contract killings, car theft, bodily harm, arson." The SBU's press service told Schemes that the mass mailing of threatening e-mails should be viewed as an operation aimed at spreading panic among the Ukrainian public. (RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service)

New killings of Ukrainian POWs

Ukrainian officials have accused Russian forces of executing nine captured troops in the Kursk border region, denouncing Moscow for violating "all the rules and customs of war." Dmytro Lubinets, Ukraine's commissioner for human rights, said he had written to the United Nations and the

(Continued on page 10)

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Zelenskyy presents Ukraine 'victory plan' to EU, NATO leaders

RFE/RL

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on October 17 outlined details of his "victory plan" – a set of measures he says would turn the tide of the war in Kyiv's favor – to Ukraine's European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies as he seeks to convince them to invite Ukraine to join NATO and secure more military aid ahead of a difficult winter on the battlefield and in its battered cities.

"If we start now and follow the victory plan, we can end this war no later than next year," Mr. Zelenskyy told E.U. leaders in Brussels.

He told reporters that the plan aims "to strengthen Ukraine" and pave the way for a diplomatic solution to end the war.

"This plan doesn't depend on Russian will, only on the will of our partners," he said before addressing leaders at an E.U. summit.

Mr. Zelenskyy also warned that his country has intelligence information that 10,000 troops from North Korea are being prepared to join Russian forces fighting against his country, calling any North Korean involvement "the first step to a world war."

Ukraine's Western allies have yet to confirm Kyiv's assertion that Pyongyang is



Office of the President of Ukraine

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and members of the European Council met in Brussels on October 17 to review a victory plan for the war in Ukraine.

sending troops, though they say they are studying it.

NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte said at a joint press conference with Mr. Zelenskyy that NATO had seen no evidence North Korean soldiers are involved in the fight, but added it is known that North Korea is supporting Russia with

weapons and technology and "that is highly worrying."

As Mr. Zelenskyy prepared to pitch his proposed plan in Brussels first to the E.U. summit and then to a meeting of NATO defense ministers, Ukraine was subjected to a fresh wave of drone strikes that targeted Kyiv and critical energy infrastruc-

ture in the south.

The Ukrainian leader partially unveiled his victory plan in a speech to Ukraine's parliament, the Verkhovna Rada, on October 16, after presenting the five-point plan – which he said has three secret appendices – to Ukraine's main Western allies, including U.S. President Joe Biden and the leaders of Britain, France, Germany and Italy.

The plan, which rules out ceding Ukrainian territory, calls for an invitation for Kyiv to join the NATO military alliance and the deployment of a strategic nonnuclear deterrent package in Ukraine.

So far, while declaring that Ukraine will eventually become a member, NATO has not given a clear deadline, and Russian President Vladimir Putin has said Kyiv's intention to join the alliance was one of the reasons for Russia's invasion.

The Kremlin reacted to Mr. Zelenskyy's "victory plan" on October 17 by saying it would lead to further escalation with the risk of direct conflict between Russia and NATO, Russian state news agency TASS reported.

Mr. Rutte, speaking at the joint press conference, said NATO is working to get Ukraine ever closer to the alliance, adding

(Continued on page 8)

Biden announces \$425 million in security aid for Ukraine

RFE/RL

U.S. President Joe Biden announced a \$425 million security assistance package for Ukraine as he updated Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on his efforts to "surge" security assistance to Ukraine over the remainder of his term in office, the White House said on October 16.

The package includes additional air-defense capability, air-to-ground munitions, armored vehicles and critical munitions to meet Ukraine's urgent needs, according to a White House statement that said Mr. Biden spoke by phone with Mr. Zelenskyy about additional U.S. aid to the country as it battles Russia's full-scale invasion.

"In the coming months, the United States will provide Ukraine with a range of additional capabilities, including hundreds

of air-defense interceptors, dozens of tactical air-defense systems, additional artillery systems, significant quantities of ammunition, hundreds of armored personnel carriers and infantry fighting vehicles, and thousands of additional armored vehicles, all of which will help to equip Ukraine's armed forces," the statement said.

During the phone call, Mr. Zelenskyy updated Mr. Biden on his plan to achieve victory over Russia, and the two leaders "tasked their teams to engage in further consultations on next steps," the statement said.

Mr. Biden aims to shore up U.S. military support for Ukraine ahead of the November 5 election, which could return President Donald Trump to the White House in January. Mr. Trump has indicated he would seek to end the war quickly through negotiations, and many Republicans in Congress,

including Mr. Trump's running mate, Sen. J.D. Vance (R-Ohio), have opposed sending more military aid to Ukraine.

Mr. Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris, the Democratic nominee for president, have criticized Mr. Trump for saying he could quickly end the war, saying this would only allow Moscow to hold on to the parts of Ukraine that it currently occupies and seek further gains.

The White House statement said Messrs. Biden and Zelenskyy committed to intensify security-assistance planning alongside Ukraine's international partners in order to ensure that Kyiv has the equipment it needs to prevail.

As part of this effort, Mr. Biden will host a virtual meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group in November to coordinate their additional assistance, the statements said.

White House spokeswoman Karine Jean-Pierre said earlier on October 16 that U.S. support for Ukraine will be a big part of Mr. Biden's trip to Germany later this week.

Mr. Biden will not be able to meet with Mr. Zelenskyy while he is in Europe, but Ms. Jean-Pierre said that the United States wants to "be there for the Ukrainians" as they continue to battle Russian forces.

Mr. Biden rescheduled his visit to Germany after his original travel plan had to be scrapped last week because of Hurricane Milton.

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Kremlin...

(Continued from page 2)

July 16). These regions far from Moscow allow him to maintain the fiction that, for the cities where three-quarters of the population lives, everything remains as it was before the war. The existing MSDs, almost without exception, are similar to the other bodies of the so-called four traditional religions of the Russian Federation – Russian Orthodox Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Buddhism – that have issued statements in support of the war. Russian religious organizations, except for the Russian Orthodox Church, however, have done relatively little in supporting the war effort until recently (Window on Eurasia, June 3, 2022). Russia's Buddhist population, however, is one of the few organizations in Russia that has even condemned the war (see Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, October 3, 2022). This is beginning to change, first of all among the Muslim hierarchies, where recruitment and combat deaths are the

highest per capita, leading to shifts in public opinion.

Tatarstan and the North Caucasus have seen the most important moves in this regard. In Tatarstan, the dominant republic in the Middle Volga, the mufti, who heads the MSD there, has created a new deputy to supervise the institution's multifarious activities related to "the special military operation" (Novyye Izvestiya, October 8). In the North Caucasus, Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov, who has been playing a major military role in Ukraine, has installed his man as head of the region's MSD, the Coordinating Center of Muslims of the North Caucasus. From this position, Supreme Mufti of Chechnya Salah Mezhiev can be expected to push for an expanded role in Ukraine by other parts of that region as well (Window on Eurasia, October 5; Nezavisimaya Gazeta, October 1; Kavkaz-Uzel.eu, October 1).

The new arrangement in Tatarstan is the more critical of the two because the region's actions generally serve as a precedent for MSDs elsewhere. Novyye Izvestiya

points out that "the [MSD] of Tatarstan has been involved with the support of Russian Muslims fighting in Ukraine from the very beginning of the special military operation. Tatarstan Mufti Kamil Samigullin has visited the front seven times. His new deputy ... will assume responsibility for supporting the families and the soldiers themselves, sending supplies to the front and supervising ammunition production" (Novyye Izvestiya, October 8). These are no small steps given Moscow's priorities as Putin's expanded war in Ukraine approaches its third anniversary. This public listing, however, obscures the tasks set before the newly invigorated MSD in Tatarstan.

As with other federal subjects far from Moscow, Tatarstan is under enormous pressure to recruit more men to send to the front. The region's MSD will help, but will also deal with two other problems that may be even more fateful. The deputy head of the MSD will work closely with Tatarstan citizens fighting in Ukraine to limit clashes between them and soldiers of other ethnicities that have undercut unit effectiveness

(Window on Eurasia, July 30, 2022). The new deputy mufti and his staff will also deal with the rising tide of combat deaths among Tatarstan residents in Ukraine. Those deaths, now at unprecedented levels, have sparked growing anger about the war that could eventually trigger anti-war protests (Idelreal.org, September 30, October 3).

Due to Moscow's immediate needs, it clearly hopes that the MSDs will be able to meet all the assigned tasks, but it also has reason to fear any successes on the part of the MSDs that could help power the rise of a new Muslim movement in the country. Moscow would likely then resort to its traditional divide-and-rule strategy. But in doing so, it may find that it will lose more in the short term than it can afford. This is especially likely given the short time horizons Putin and his team have adopted on Ukraine and so many other issues.

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



Members of the Ukrainian National Ballet perform Ukrainian Dance from "Chasing After Two Hares" during the inaugural performance of the Nadiya Ukraine tour of the United States at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., on October 8.



Ivan Avdijevski (right) and Anastasiia Shevchenko (second from the right) of the Ukrainian National Ballet perform the pas de deux from "La Bayadere" at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., on October 8.

National Ballet...

(Continued from page 1)

Ukraine's Ambassador to the United States Oksana Markarova opened the show at the Kennedy Center with introductory remarks.

"Thank you so much for joining us in America's cultural powerhouse to experience the magic and majesty of the National Ballet of Ukraine that embarks today upon the first U.S. tour since Ukraine became independent 33 years ago," said Ms. Markarova, who asked the audience to be mindful of how members of the National Ballet of Ukraine must train and perform amid Russia's war on their homeland.

"But think of dance and ballet under constant fear of air raid sirens going off, warning of a Russian missile attack, sometimes in the midst of a performance. Unfortunately, this is Ukraine's reality these days, and regrettably, tragically, interrupted performances became a routine. Yet we together cannot allow this unjustifiable war to become routine. We cannot allow the protracted battle to dull our senses and let Russia's war crimes turn into the new normal. Ukraine's ballet dancers are here today to remind us all of what is at stake, not just for Ukraine but for all of us," said Ms. Markarova, adding that, since the start of Russia's full-scale war in February 2022, more than 120 Ukrainian cultural figures have died defending Ukraine.

"Among them – I want to recall them today – Oleksander Shapoval and Artem Datsyshyn, the soloist of the National Ballet of Ukraine, who joined Ukraine's territorial defense units as volunteers at the very beginning of this war and they were killed in battle," Ms. Markarova said.

"Today, as we will see the beautiful performance, 26 members of the National Opera House of Ukraine – including ballet dancers, opera singers, technicians and administrative staff – serve in Ukraine's Armed Forces as we speak. They, just as millions of Ukrainians, are holding that thin line between freedom, dignity and human rights on one side – on our side – and authoritarianism, loneliness and hatred on the other side," said Ms. Markarova, adding that each show of the tour "will be in honor of this remarkable example of resilience, valor and resolve."

"Let this tour also be a celebration of all the things that bind our two great nations together – love of freedom, respect for democracy, respect for human dignity and the pursuit of peace and beauty, which we know will win over tyranny and destruction," the Ukrainian ambassador said to applause.

The performance began with a short video of footage from Ukraine set to the



Olga Golytsia and Mykyta Sukhorukov perform a grand pas from "Don Quixote" at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., on October 8.

music "Prayer for Ukraine" (Молитва за Україну) before the National Ballet of Ukraine took the stage to perform highlights from its classical repertoire that were selected to showcase Ukrainian culture and identity.

The program included some of the most beautiful, challenging and emotionally gripping dances from the classical ballet repertoire, including "La Bayadere," "Giselle," "The Dying Swan," "Don Quixote" and "Harlequinade," many of which were adapted for the company by Ukrainian choreographers.

The audience also witnessed the color,

energy and artistry of the Ukrainian Shumka Dancers, Canada's only professional Ukrainian dance company, which dazzled guests here with high-energy performances that included the Ukrainian folk dances "Bukovynian," "Zakarpatsky" and "Verbunk." Shumka capped the entire night with the crowd-favorite "Hopak" that culminated with a thundering standing ovation from the audience.

The entire performance saw 44 elite dancers from the two companies perform before a state-of-the-art, massive 3-D screen, that immersed the audience in various scenes, among them some of the

destruction inflicted upon Ukraine. According to tour producers, it was the first time that any dance company performed using such technology.

Also in attendance for the opening performance were U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo and Secretary of the U.S. Navy Carlos Del Toro and their families.

Funds raised through donations made during the performances will go to support humanitarian projects in Ukraine in partnership with HUMANITE Peace Collective.

Jeremy Courtney, the organization's chief executive officer, also addressed the audience at the Kennedy Center, saying that "the greatest threat to the people of Ukraine may not be what some of us think it is."

The greatest threat, Mr. Courtney said, "is what happens when the world sits by and watches a group of people suffer for too long. To the outsider, war starts to seem normal. Like those people are somehow just used to suffering. Maybe this is why, three years in, we don't hear much anymore about the dire humanitarian needs that are still multiplying across Ukraine. Maybe we've all become just a little too numb to the pain of our neighbors."

"This normalization of Ukrainian suffering is, of course, how it always goes. And this is why HUMANITE, a group founded by refugees and war survivors, approached the National Ballet of Ukraine with a novel idea to move the focus off the ongoing bombings so that we could re-normalize the beauty of the Ukrainian people. So that next time you read a headline about Russia bombing an apartment building or hospital, you think about this talent, these smiles and these love stories being erased. If we succeed tonight at our highest level, it will be because we've all realized that we belong to each other," Mr. Courtney said.

"And this is why Evil always attacks art, music and dance. Evil knows that it can make us numb to the suffering of our neighbors. Evil comes along and strips away history and identity, until the only thing we remember about a people is that they always seem to be at war," he said.

"In this time of extreme division and polarization, we're here, united. So, let's make it count. Let's finish the next bomb shelter. Let's fund another underground classroom. For the children of Ukraine, for the sake of our own peace, and for the more beautiful world our hearts know is possible," Mr. Courtney said.

Tickets for the National Ballet of Ukraine tour, as well as a detailed tour schedule, are available online at www.nationalukraineballet.com. More information about the tour can also be found on social media via @NationalBalletUkraine_ustour. Individuals who would like to make a tax-deductible donation to support the tour's mission can do so online at www.humanite.org/ua.



Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States Oksana Markarova addresses the audience before the Nadiya Ukraine performance at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., on October 8.

Ukrainians run Chicago Marathon as one war veteran looks to complete world's six major distance races

by Mark Raczkiewicz

CHICAGO – Nearly 150 runners of Ukrainian extraction took part in the 2024 Chicago Marathon on October 13. The race, one of the world's six most prestigious 26.2-mile running races, also saw three non-profit groups unite to support Ukrainian competitors and stage a cheering zone for them along the route.

The thrilling experience buoyed both the Ukrainian runners and those who organized a fan cheering zone and helped provide housing, dinners and tours for some of the participants.

Addressing why three major non-profit groups combined to make Ukraine's presence felt at the marathon, Iryna Antokhiv of the Ukrainian Running Club Chicago, said more Ukrainian runners would have participated in the marathon had it not been for circumstances beyond their control.

Some seasoned runners "are serving in the military, some are wounded, others couldn't get a travel permit to leave [due to martial law restrictions]," Ms. Antokhiv said at the Ukrainian cheering zone 13.1 miles into the race. "We are running for the memory of those who couldn't come here to participate."

She told The Ukrainian Weekly that the main goal was to "draw attention to what is happening in Ukraine," regarding Russia's ongoing war that is in its 11th year.

While this correspondent stood in the Ukrainian cheering section, runners from different countries ran by and slapped hands while others gave a thumbs up to show their support for the war-ravaged country. Others yelled "Slava Ukraine [Glory to Ukraine] and even "Slava Ukraini," to the supporters.



Chicago marathon runners, supporters and organizers gather for a group picture near the finish line of the 26.2-mile race on October 13.

Some 50,000 runners registered for the 26.2-mile race. They converged from all 50 U.S. states and more than 100 countries, including Ukraine, according to the marathon's official website.

Among them was 1st Lt. Roman Kashpur whose goal is to become the first individual to complete all six major world marathons with a prosthetic limb.

In Chicago, he finished just under the six-hour time limit of 5.7 hours and only has the oldest U.S. marathon in Boston remaining as he has already completed the races in London, Berlin, New York City and Tokyo.

Speaking of two marathon bracelets on his wrist on October 11 during a separate boat cruise in Chicago, the war veteran said he forgot to remove his Tokyo band "because I finished the Berlin race faster in just under four hours."

Since there were less than three weeks before the Chicago Marathon to train, Mr. Kashpur said he "wouldn't push it," otherwise it would "take three hours just to get out of bed."

He said he typically spends about one to one-and-a-half months training for such grueling races.

He currently serves in the 808th Separate Engineering Brigade based in Odesa, Ukraine.

He lost his right leg in 2019 after he stepped on a mine near Olenivka in the Donetsk region while on an anti-mine reconnaissance mission. He initially served in the Right Sector and, after Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022, he served in the Defense Intelligence's elite Kraken unit before moving on to his current unit.

"I love Chicago, especially the Ukrainian

diaspora," Mr. Kashpur said. "It's one of the world's oldest and most trustworthy [Ukrainian] diasporas."

After completing marathons, he has a tradition of feasting at McDonald's. Since most streets were still cordoned off, however, the Ukrainian cohort settled for Chinese-inspired food at Panda Express.

The husband of two sons said he wants to run in the annual Boston race in April "to motivate myself, support those Ukrainians who are serving in the military and for everyone to live a full life."

Assisting him with airfare and living space in a Chicago suburb during his stay was the Florida-based Revived Soldiers Ukraine. The non-profit group provides rehabilitation and prosthetic services to veterans and also owns a rehabilitation house in Chicago and two centers in Ukraine – in Lviv and Irpin, in the Kyiv region of the country.

Several pre-race events preceded the marathon for runners, approximately 60 of whom were Ukrainians who flew in from different countries.

They, along with the cheering zone and other logistics, were looked after by the Committee of the Chicago Sister City International, which has fostered a relationship with Kyiv for more than two decades.

"Putting this project together showed the importance of teamwork and collaboration," said Vera Eliashevsky, co-chair of the committee. "It was great working with a group of young people who care so much about Ukraine and are passionate about running."

About 60 runners also had dinner with the co-organizers before the Sunday race at

(Continued on page 9)

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THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY

Ukraine's victory plan needs full US, NATO support

Ukraine's "victory plan," presented by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, is a clear path toward ending Russia's aggression and restoring peace and stability in Europe. However, despite Ukraine's persistent calls, its allies, particularly the U.S., have shown reluctance to fully back key elements of the plan. Ukraine's request for North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) membership and permission to use long-range weapons to strike Russian territory have been met with noncommittal responses, leaving Mr. Zelenskyy empty-handed.

This tepid reception is concerning. First, Ukraine's request for an invitation to NATO membership, while controversial, is entirely justifiable. By waiting until the end of the war to formalize its membership, NATO can avoid direct confrontation with Russia while offering Kyiv a clear path toward security. But by withholding this assurance, NATO and its members risk emboldening Russian aggression, delaying peace and undermining Ukraine's morale in a long and grueling war.

Similarly, the West's hesitancy to allow Ukraine to strike military targets inside Russia hampers its ability to fully defend itself. Mr. Zelenskyy has argued that these strikes are essential for undermining Russia's offensive capabilities, but Washington remains cautious about escalating the war. However, Ukraine is not asking for carte blanche to strike indiscriminately; it is seeking to defend its people from an aggressor who shows no signs of slowing down. By denying Ukraine this capability, the U.S. and NATO are keeping the war's momentum firmly in Russia's hands.

The remaining points in the plan – strengthening deterrence on Ukrainian soil, protecting critical natural resources and a shift in military positioning post-war – also highlight Ukraine's desire for a self-sufficient, secure future. These proposals would lessen Ukraine's dependence on foreign troops, fortify its borders and safeguard the resources vital for its recovery and long-term prosperity. But without the first two points being addressed, these broader ambitions remain theoretical, unlikely to materialize unless Kyiv can first secure the fundamental aspects of its security.

Mr. Zelenskyy's plan is not just a list of demands – it represents a critical strategy for victory. The onus now lies with the West, and particularly the U.S., to rise to the occasion. The U.S. has been Ukraine's most crucial ally, providing billions in military aid and sanctions against Russia. However, this support must now evolve from defensive assistance to facilitating Ukraine's ability to win the war. Mr. Zelenskyy's plan provides a roadmap to victory, and it is up to Ukraine's allies to help implement it.

The West's cautiousness – understandable to an extent from a geopolitical perspective – cannot overshadow that a delayed or insufficient response will prolong Ukraine's suffering. The harsh winter ahead will only worsen the humanitarian crisis, as Russia continues to weaponize energy and infrastructure to devastate the civilian population. Kyiv's victory plan offers the clearest path to ending this war before more lives are lost and more damage is done.

It is time for Ukraine's allies, particularly the U.S., to fully commit to supporting Mr. Zelenskyy's vision for victory. NATO membership, permission to strike military targets within Russia and support for Ukraine's strategic post-war planning are not just in Ukraine's interest – they are essential for European and global stability.

The victory plan may not be easy to implement, but the alternative – continued war, destruction and instability in Eastern Europe and beyond – is far worse. Ukraine deserves the tools to secure a lasting peace, and the West must recognize that a comprehensive, courageous approach is the only way to achieve it. Assuming that the U.S. and NATO want Ukraine to win this war, it is time for them to act decisively and implement Ukraine's victory plan.

Oct.
27
2019

Turning the pages back...

Five years ago, on October 27, 2019, The Ukrainian Weekly informed readers of an official change adopted by various agencies to the spelling of Ukraine's capital. The announcement said that the capital would from that point on be spelled Kyiv and would no longer be spelled Kiev.

Among the first signs of the change were international airports that adopted the Kyiv spelling for flight arrivals and departures. By July 1, more than 50 airports had made the change.

Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched a campaign using the hashtag #CorrectUA to promote the change and issued an open letter that said the Kiev spelling was a remnant of the Russian Empire and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, both of which employed a policy of Russification "as a tool to extinguish each constituent country's national identity, culture and language," the letter said. "In light of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, including its illegal occupation of Crimea, we are once again experiencing Russification as a tactic that attempts to destabilize and delegitimize our country [Ukraine]."

The letter added that "the use of Soviet-era place names – rooted in the Russian language – is especially painful and unacceptable to the people of Ukraine."

Ukraine's Committee on Legal Terminology on October 14, 1995, adopted Kyiv as the official spelling used in all legal and official acts of Ukraine, and the committee recommended that foreign-language spellings of place names in Ukraine should be based on the Ukrainian language.

The U.S. Department of State reported that the Board on Geographic Names unanimously voted to adopt the spelling of Ukraine's capital as Kyiv, announced on October 3, 2006. The decision affected all U.S. government usage and was immediately adopted in all written communication, including the name of the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv.

(Continued on page 7)

Zelenskyy unveils...

(Continued from page 1)

built its "entire propaganda campaign" on Ukraine not joining NATO and used that point to justify attacks or provocations against Ukraine.

"The president [Mr. Zelenskyy] says let's send a clear political signal to Russia that it can no longer make an ultimatum ... saying this is my region of influence and Ukraine cannot be a member of NATO," Mr. Podolyak told RFE/RL in Brussels.

Another point of the victory plan addresses Ukraine's competence after the war, which he said would have "great experience" and would be able to replace certain contingents – primarily American – that are in Europe now.

"Our partners are investing in security today. They should understand that there is already a specific competence of Ukraine, which will be realized later in this form," he said.

In his speech to parliament, the Ukrainian leader said he would present the plan on October 17 at a European Union summit in Brussel, adding that the plan had been discussed with leaders from the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Italy and Germany.

European Council President Charles Michel said on X that he had invited Mr. Zelenskyy to the European Council summit on October 17 "to take stock of the latest developments of Russia's war against Ukraine and present his victory plan."

European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell told RFE/RL in Brussels on October 16 that he wanted to hear from Mr. Zelenskyy directly before commenting on the plan, but said Ukraine must receive better and stronger security guarantees because the security of Ukraine is Europe's security.

"People in Europe have to understand, I think, that we have been hesitating too much in the past in order to provide the required military capabilities to Ukraine," Mr. Borrell said. "And now we don't have to hesitate. ... The only way to making [Russian President Vladimir] Putin ... go to a negotiation table is to have victory on the battlefield. Otherwise, it would not happen."

NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte said on October 16 that the victory plan was a "strong signal" from Mr. Zelenskyy but he said he could not say that he supported it.

"That would be a bit difficult because there are many issues that we have to understand better," he said.

In addition to the E.U. Council summit, Mr. Zelenskyy will attend a NATO defense ministers meeting on October 17, also in Brus-

sels, according to NATO's revised agenda.

Mr. Rutte said that there was "no doubt" the victory plan would be discussed during that meeting. Responding to Mr. Zelenskyy's call for an unconditional invitation to join NATO, Mr. Rutte said Ukraine was closer than ever to joining the alliance and that it will happen when the time is right.

The Kremlin immediately dismissed Mr. Zelenskyy's plan, calling it a "diktat" from the United States.

"The only peace plan there can be is for the Kyiv regime to realize the futility of the policy it is pursuing and understand the need to sober up," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

The Foreign Affairs Ministry said the plan meant "trouble for Ukraine and the Ukrainian people." Mr. Zelenskyy "is pushing NATO members toward a direct conflict with our country," spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said.

Mr. Zelenskyy has said he expects a response to the plan before the November 5 presidential election in the United States – Ukraine's main ally and provider of financial and military help – where a victory by Republican candidate and former President Donald Trump could cast doubt about Washington's continued support for Kyiv.

Mr. Zelenskyy's presentation came as Russia continued to keep up the pressure on Ukraine's cities and infrastructure while Russian forces are advancing in the east toward the crucial logistics hub of Pokrovsk.

On October 16, Russia attacked Ukraine with 136 drones and two guided missiles. Most of them were neutralized by Ukraine's air defenses, the air force reported on Telegram.

A total of 51 drones were shot down over the Sumy, Cherkasy, Kirovohrad, Ternopil, Kherson, Kharkiv, Zhytomyr, Donetsk, Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolayiv, Kyiv, Poltava, Chernihiv and Chernivtsi regions, the air force said, adding that another 60 Russian drones were neutralized as a result of electronic-warfare measures.

In the western region of Ternopil, some 50 firefighters worked to extinguish a large fire caused by a falling drone, regional Gov. Vyacheslav Nehoda wrote on Telegram, saying there had been no injuries.

Russia's Defense Ministry, meanwhile, said its air defenses had downed three Ukrainian drones – two over the Belgorod and one over the Voronezh region.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Support Ukraine by opposing Trump

Dear Editor:

As someone whose grandparents came to this country from Ukraine in the 1920s, I urge my fellow Ukrainian Americans to recognize the danger Donald Trump poses to the homeland of our ancestors.

Mr. Trump has repeatedly praised Vladimir Putin, even after Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine, which has left more than 80,000 Ukrainians dead and 400,000 wounded. Mr. Trump said "... that's pretty smart. He's taking over a country – really a vast, vast location, a great piece of land with a lot of people, and just walking right in."

In 2019, Mr. Trump attempted to blackmail Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy by withholding \$400 million in military aid unless Ukraine smeared Joe Biden. Since then, Mr. Trump has repeated-

ly opposed sending Ukraine the weapons it needs to defend itself against Russia.

Mr. Trump's close relationship with Putin is disturbing. A new book by Bob Woodward reports that, during the height of the pandemic, Mr. Trump sent Putin scarce COVID-19 test kits and has contacted Putin privately seven times since leaving office.

During the presidential debate when Mr. Trump was asked directly whether he wants Ukraine to win the war, he twice refused to answer, saying only that he would end the war quickly. He likely would cut off U.S. support to Ukraine, allowing Russia to demolish the country.

As Ukrainian Americans, we have a duty to protect our ancestral homeland from Russian aggression. Mr. Trump has repeatedly shown his allegiance to Putin. We must ensure he never again has the power to give Putin what he wants.

Harry Gural
Lewisburg, Pa.

Moscow's...

(Continued from page 2)

of the Russian military machine's operations, even those not directly connected with the front, creates its own model for enrichment or expands existing ones.

On September 25, Russia's State Duma adopted amendments to the Russian Criminal Code and Criminal Procedure Code. These exempt criminal liability for defendants through serving in the Russian Armed Forces in Ukraine. The law additionally applies to those already convicted of crimes whose convictions have not come into legal force (RIA Novosti, September 25). Now, it is possible for anyone at any stage of the criminal process to go to the front, from the moment of arrest to being sent to a penal colony (Novaya Gazeta-Evropa, September 30).

Independent journalists have already discovered that in several Russian regions, police officers are promised 10,000 rubles (\$100) for each detainee who signs a contract with the Ministry of Defense (T.me/bazabazon, August 21). Even in regions with no such awards, the operational staff benefits directly from recruiting suspects and defendants to the front. As police officers admit, the necessary condition for a detainee to be sent to the front is an admission of guilt. The more people who agree to go to Ukraine, the better crime detection statistics become for these police forces. For certain police officers, this means bonuses and undeserved promotions (Novaya Gazeta, September 30). Now, Russia plans to take 40 percent of defendants directly to war from pre-trial detention centers, impacting about 20,000 people (Istories.media, October 1).

The situation with migrant workers in Russia is similar. Five anti-immigrant bills were introduced recently in the State Duma, according to which immigrants' illegal presence in Russia will become an aggravating factor when they have committed crimes, and punishment for document forgery and assisting illegal immigrants will be toughened (RBC, October 2). These legal innovations – effectively categorizing immigrants as criminals – will make recruiting them for war much easier. Conversely, as noted by Alisher Ilkhamov, director of the analytical center Central Asia Due Diligence, the emergence of new barriers and restrictions against immigrants leads to more underground operations to help labor migrants bypass these obstacles. Human rights activist Valentina Chupik said the bills would “simply increase bribes” (Novaya Gazeta – Evropa, October 2).

A separate powerful money-laundering network connected to the creation of military-patriotic organizations is conducting collections “for the needs of the front.”

Turning...

(Continued from page 6)

The Guardian newspaper changed from Kiev to Kyiv in mid-February 2019, the Associated Press adopted the change in late August (however, the AP noted that the chicken dish will still be spelled Kiev), The Globe and Mail made the change on October 10, The Wall Street Journal on October 9, the BBC on October 14, and The Washington Post on October 16.

In discussing the change, Peter Dickinson of the Atlantic Council wrote: “Ukraine's desire for the outside world to use Ukrainian-language transliterations appear anything but trivial. On the contrary, it is a plea for symbolic support in

Independent journalists discovered that in 2023 more than 1,000 new military-patriotic organizations were registered in Russia – twice the number in 2021. The trend has continued in 2024. Deputies, officials and members of political parties often run the new organizations. Funds associated with the government account for 80 percent of all cash receipts. For example, the collection of donations for residents of Kursk Oblast was conducted by the government through the Kursk Oblast Development Fund to help victims of attacks by the Ukrainian Armed Forces. The fund does not have a website, and Novaya Gazeta-Europe was unable to find any reports on its activities. Data on victims' actual receipt of funds also could not be found (Novaya Gazeta – Evropa, October 3).

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) of this kind collect funds for the army's needs, for aid to military families and returning wounded soldiers, and for the patriotic education of children and youth. At least 499 organizations are headed by government functionaries, which facilitates the use of government resources to collect the funds. Some foundations even mimic government structures, but tracking how the money is spent is impossible. All this creates enormous potential for corruption. For example, the well-known fund “Defenders of the Fatherland” collected 2.6 billion rubles (\$27 million) in 2023. Of this, only 11 percent went to targeted expenses, and 77 percent was spent on maintaining the administrative apparatus (Novaya Gazeta – Evropa, October 3).

There is some evidence that the scale of corruption is backfiring on Russia. As residents of Kursk Oblast discovered recently, the construction of fortifications was meant to begin in the border areas in the Fall of 2022, for which 12 billion rubles (\$120 million) were allocated. According to documentation, many construction contracts were concluded, but residents never saw any real work (Novaya Gazeta – Evropa, September 5). This enabled Ukrainian forces to swiftly capture swathes of territory in the region.

Corruption continues to ensure the functioning of the Russian military machine, creating additional incentives for its participants at every level to get involved in serving in the war. At the same time, it does not allow this machine to become truly effective. Ultimately, it is often ordinary Russians who pay the price of its inefficiency. As the war continues and the Kremlin relies more and more on corruption, discontent will rise among Russian citizens, increasing unrest across the Russian Federation.

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what is one of world history's last great independence struggles. Ukraine's nation-building journey is far from over, but establishing Ukrainian names for Ukrainian places is an essential early step on the long road to recovery. The international media's ongoing adoption of the preferred ‘Kyiv’ spelling may seem inconsequential, but it represents a meaningful contribution to this process.”

Notable news organizations, including The New York Times and Reuters, were late to make the change with The Times adopting the Kyiv spelling in November 2019. Reuters used the Kiev spelling in 2019 but it has since changed to Kyiv.

Source: “It's K-Y-I-V,” *The Ukrainian Weekly*, October 27, 2019.



Harris and Trump: The contrast could not be more clear

Part I

When it comes to supporting Ukraine, the attitudes, words and, above all, the deeds of Donald Trump and J.D. Vance stand in sharp contrast with those of Kamala Harris and Tim Walz.

Vice President Harris stands fast with Ukraine, as Ukrainians defend their own land and the values of freedom and democracy that they and Americans hold dear.

U.S. President Joe Biden and Vice President Harris have made the preservation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity a priority, recognizing that this is in the U.S. national interest and that Russia's unjustified and unprovoked war on Ukraine is a fundamental threat to the international order.

The Biden-Harris administration has provided unparalleled military assistance to Ukraine. It is supplying substantial economic assistance so that the Ukrainian government can provide vital services to its people. It is giving significant amounts of humanitarian and refugee aid. It rallied our North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies and other nations – nearly 60 in total – in a global coalition to support Ukraine. This is not a trivial matter. It requires painstaking diplomacy.

This administration has imposed unprecedented sanctions to raise the economic costs on Russia for waging its unjustified war and hold it accountable for crimes committed in Ukraine. The Biden-Harris Administration has signed a bilateral security agreement with Ukraine to strengthen Kyiv's defense and deterrence capabilities over the long term. The scale and depth of American commitment to Ukraine is enormous.

To be sure, the Biden-Harris administration's record is not perfect. Like many, I share frustrations with the occasional slowness in the delivery of weapons, which is partially due to fears of escalation. I count myself among those who have pushed for a more robust approach, including, most recently, the lifting of restrictions on the use of long-range, U.S.-provided weapons. On the other hand, I do not even want to imagine what Ukraine would look like today if it were not for the leadership and efforts of the Biden-Harris administration. The picture, no doubt, would be an extremely dire one.

Mr. Biden and Ms. Harris are committed to helping Ukraine win. Messrs. Trump and Vance are not.

It's worthwhile to read the October 3 remarks by Ms. Harris at a campaign rally in Ripon, Wis., the birthplace of the Republican Party. This is where one of the most conservative Republican former members of Congress, Liz Cheney, put country above party and endorsed Ms. Harris for president. I believe the following remarks by Ms. Harris at the event encapsulate her attitudes and approach:

“And let me be clear: Democracy and freedom are not only at stake here at home; they are also at stake around the world. As president of the United States, I will strengthen, not abdicate, America's global leadership. [applause]

“Last week, I met with Ukraine's President [Volodymyr] Zelenskyy [applause] and the message I delivered was the same message I've shared with him every time I've seen him: ‘I stand with Ukraine, and I always will.’ [applause]

“And I told him, as I have before, I want Ukraine to prevail. By contrast, in our debate, Donald Trump couldn't even bring himself to say he wanted Ukraine to win the war – couldn't even bring himself to say that,” Ms. Harris said.

Audience: “Booo.”

Ms. Harris: “A war that [Russian President Vladimir] Putin, a brutal dictator, launched against a free and independent people. Trump wants to force Ukraine to give up its sovereign territory, a bedrock principle upon which we stand and fight for. And you know who else wants them to give up their sovereign ...”

Audience member: “Putin!”

Ms. Harris: “Absolutely. ... territory. Putin. Putin. And that's not a plan for peace. It's a plan for surrender,” Ms. Harris said. “Well, I believe that in the global struggle between tyranny and democracy, the president of the United States must always be on the side of freedom.” [applause]

Can you contemplate Donald Trump or J.D. Vance expressing a similar sentiment?

Ms. Harris has said that, if Mr. Trump were president, “Putin would be sitting in Kyiv right now.” I have no doubt that she is right. Unlike Mr. Trump, a President Harris would not abandon Ukraine.

She has insisted that there should be no negotiations with Putin unless Ukrainians are in the room – no “about us without us” for Ms. Harris. I wouldn't hold my breath waiting for Mr. Trump to do that.

In the September 10 debate with Ms. Harris, Mr. Trump – despite being asked repeatedly by the moderator whether he supported Ukraine – refused to say that he wanted Kyiv to win the war.

Mr. Trump has told Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, himself a foe of democracy who kisses up to Putin on every conceivable occasion, that he won't give a penny to Ukraine. He asserted he will end the war in one day, meaning that Mr. Trump will negotiate over the heads of those troublesome Ukrainians who dare to defend their freedom and very existence. In effect, Mr. Trump would force Ukraine to surrender to the biggest war criminal of the 21st century. After all, he said, “Any deal [with Russia], even the worst deal, would have been better than what we have right now.”

Mr. Trump said that “Ukraine is gone, it's not Ukraine anymore.” His plan to stop the war is to get the Ukrainian government to do his – and war criminal Putin's – bidding by threatening to stop any aid to Ukraine and force Ukraine to give up its territories and potential membership in NATO.

Trying to force a peace settlement at this stage of the war would only favor the Kremlin. It would mean Russia cementing control over 20 percent of Ukrainian territory, and it would mean the continued brutal repression of Ukrainians living in Russian-occupied territories. As I wrote in a recent column, it's not just about territory, it's about the millions of Ukrainians living under barbaric Russian rule whose human rights and freedoms are violated

(Continued on page 11)

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Zelenskyy presents...

(Continued from page 3)

it was essential that NATO continues to provide the country with military aid.

"Ukraine will be member of NATO, there is no doubt about it, and until that happens we will make sure that Ukraine has everything it needs to prevail," he said.

Mr. Rutte told journalists earlier that the organization is with Ukraine "for the long haul" and wants Kyiv to be in a strong position before it opens negotiations with Moscow.

U.S. Ambassador to NATO Julianne Smith told reporters on October 16 that while Kyiv's path toward eventual NATO membership was "irreversible," she said "we are not at the point right now where the alliance is talking about issuing an invitation in the short term."

Separately, E.U. Council President Charles Michel told reporters before heading into the summit that the 27-member bloc needs to speed up its support for Ukraine, both militarily and financially.

One of Mr. Zelenskyy's main requests is calling for the "lifting by partners of restrictions on the use of long-range weapons on the entire territory of Ukraine occupied by Russia and on Russian territory and on enemy military infrastructure" and help in "equipping our reserve brigades."

Mr. Zelenskyy said on October 17 that he had discussed the plan again during a phone call with Mr. Biden the previous evening.

"I am grateful to President Biden, both parties in Congress, and the American people for the \$425 million defense package announced today, which includes new air defense systems and long-range weapons," Mr. Zelenskyy wrote on X.

"We also talked about how our teams will work on the points of the victory plan," he added.

However, ahead of the NATO meeting with Mr. Zelenskyy, Ms. Smith told reporters on July 16 that Washington's position on the restrictions to use long-range weapons deeper inside Russia remained unchanged.

"I don't have anything to announce about a change in U.S. policy. I see that we still are at the same place where we've been, and that is that we will get Ukraine all the assistance that it needs to defend its territory," she said.

On October 17, Russia attacked Ukraine with 56 drones and one cruise missile, the Ukrainian Air Force reported. The head of Kyiv's military administration, Serhiy Popko, said the capital was attacked by Russian drones, while Vitaliy Kim, the governor of Mykolayiv, said Russian strikes targeted energy infrastructure in the southern region.

Ukrainian air-defense systems shot down 22 Russian drones over the Sumy, Kyiv, Poltava, Chernihiv, Zhytomyr, Mykolayiv, Cherkasy, Odesa and Ternopil regions, while 27 drones were forced down by electronic jamming, the air force said.

Russia's Defense Ministry, meanwhile, said its air-defense systems shot down 13 Ukrainian drones over three of its regions early on October 17.

(With reporting by Reuters, AP and AFP)

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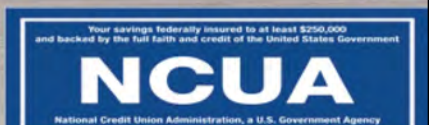
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Zelenskyy claims...

(Continued from page 1)

people from North Korea to the occupying military forces," he said.

Mr. Zelenskyy did not provide evidence to back up his claim, but speculation over North Korea's role in the conflict has grown amid signs of tightening relations between Moscow and countries such as North Korea and Iran almost 32 months after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine was launched.

The Institute for the Study of War (ISW), a Washington-based U.S. military think tank, recently reported that several thousand North Korean troops had arrived in Russia and were being prepared for deployment to Ukraine.

North Korea has reportedly been providing Moscow with weapons and ammunition to support its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, which began in February 2022.

South Korea's intelligence service has claimed that Pyongyang supplies artillery shells and short-range missiles to Moscow. The Kremlin has dismissed those claims, but has not commented on Mr. Zelenskyy's assertions.

Mr. Zelenskyy said the development highlights Ukraine's need for "more support" from its Western partners to "increase the pressure" on Russia and prevent "a bigger war."

"When we talk about more long-range capability for Ukraine and more decisive supplies for our forces, it is not just a list of military equipment. It is about increasing the pressure on the aggressor," Mr. Zelenskyy said.

In his nightly address on October 14, Mr. Zelenskyy said that Ukraine had already procured and supplied 1 million drones to the front. Additional supplies have been sent by volunteers, he added.

Mr. Zelenskyy presented Ukraine's "victory plan" during a speech in the Verkhovna Rada, the country's parliament, on October 16.

Mykhaylo Podolyak, a senior adviser to Mr. Zelenskyy, said on October 12 that the

Ukrainians run...

(Continued from page 5)

Tryzub, a restaurant that serves Ukrainian cuisine in the heart of Chicago's Ukrainian neighborhood.

For many runners, "it was their first time in Chicago and their enthusiasm and excitement was contagious," Ms. Eliashevsky said.

Speaking of Mr. Kashpur's mission to complete all six major marathons and earn the coveted Six Star Medal, she said, "one cannot help but be inspired by his positive energy and inner strength."



Vera Eliashevsky (left), co-chair of the Kyiv Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International, holds Kyiv's municipal flag together with Iryna Antokhiv (center), co-chair of the Ukrainian Running Club of Chicago, and John Oharenko (right) at the half-distance marker of the Chicago Marathon on October 13.



Ukrainian soldiers attach explosives to a Kazhan combat drone near Pokrovsk in the eastern Donetsk region of Ukraine.

plan had already been presented to the United States and several European countries and would be presented to the Ukrainian people "in the coming days."

The situation in Ukraine and the Middle East were expected to be high on the agenda of a meeting between U.S. President Joe Biden and German leaders when Mr. Biden visits Germany.

According to a government source in Berlin, Mr. Biden was set to visit Germany on October 18 after a previously planned trip was canceled due to Hurricane Milton.

Mr. Biden's original visit was to have taken place between October 10-12, during which time he had planned to hold a meeting of more than 50 of Ukraine's allies – known as the Ukraine Defense Contact Group, or the Ramstein group – to discuss further support for Kyiv.

In frontline news, Ukrainian authorities said on October 14 that five people were killed and eight were wounded in Russian attacks during the previous day. The casualties were reported by local officials in the Donetsk, Kharkiv and Kherson regions, which were hit by Russian shelling.

Russia claimed on October 13 that it had captured the town of Mykhaylivka, at the gates of the town of Selydove, and south of Pokrovsk, where its forces have been advancing for weeks.

Russian troops have been trying to capture Pokrovsk, a mining city that was home to around 60,000 people before Moscow launched its full-scale war.

Mr. Zelenkskyy said on October 14 that

fighting was taking place along the entire length of the front but was particularly fierce in the Pokrovsk and Kharkiv areas. He also noted that Russian forces have been trying to break through Ukrainian defenses in the Kursk region for five days and Ukrainian forces "are holding on and counterattacking."

Russia also said it had evacuated some 30,415 people, including nearly 8,000 children, from areas bordering Ukraine due to shelling and attacks.

Tatyana Moskalkova, Russia's human rights commissioner, told Russian media in an interview published on October 14 that the evacuees have been placed in nearly 1,000 temporary accommodations across Russia.

Mr. Zelenskyy said Ukrainian forces were holding off attempts by Russian troops to expel them from the Kursk region, following a 24-hour period in which Russian shelling killed at least five Ukrainian civilians.

"As for the Kursk operation, there were attempts by Russia to push back our positions, but we are holding the defined lines," Mr. Zelenskyy said on October 12 in his nightly video address following Russian claims of advances in the area.

Ukrainian troops made quick and shocking gains after they launched a surprise incursion into Russia's Kursk region in August, but Russia has announced the recapture of several villages, including the latest two on October 11.

Reports on the ground cannot be independently verified.

In other areas, including in the Donetsk and Zaporizhia regions, Mr. Zelenskyy said following a meeting with military commander Gen. Oleksandr Syrskiy, Ukrainian forces were "facing very difficult conditions and fierce enemy actions."

Russian troops also shelled populated areas of the Kherson region, including Kherson city, regional Gov. Oleksandr Prokudin reported, adding that a medical facility, an administrative building, a cellular tower and residential buildings were damaged in the city.

Ukrainian forces liberated Kherson in November 2022, forcing Russian troops to retreat east of the Dnipro River, but Moscow's forces continue to strike the city and its surrounding region from across the river, causing casualties and damage to civilian and energy infrastructure.

Ukraine, whose infrastructure has been battered by incessant Russian drone and missile strikes that also caused numerous victims among civilians, has in turn resorted lately to striking Russian military targets – mainly fuel depots – with its own drones.

Mr. Zelenskyy, who concluded a whirlwind tour of Ukraine's main European allies on October 11, has been pressing for approval to use modern long-range weapons systems donated by the West to strike deeper inside Russia – a request that so far has been declined by most Western leaders.

Mr. Zelenskyy said during his visit to Berlin on October 11 that it was important that Ukraine's allies do not decrease their assistance next year.

In his latest video address, Mr. Zelenskyy said that "there are many partners, who for objective reasons, cannot help with arms supplies. They do not have [enough of] their own weapons."

"But they can us help with financing. And some partners have special technologies that can be used right now in Ukraine – in our defense," he added.

Kyiv faces difficult months ahead in its fight to stop a slow but continuous Russian advance in the east.

(With reporting by AFP, dpa and Reuters)

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NEWSBRIEFS

(Continued from page 2)

Red Cross concerning the allegations, which officials said are the result of Ukrainian battlefield analysis site DeepState, which published drone footage purporting to show the dead troops. Russia has not commented on the reports, which could not immediately be verified. The allegations are the latest in a long list of reports by Kyiv outlining incidents of alleged executions of Ukrainian prisoners by Russian forces. Kyiv said it has documented evidence related to the execution of a total of 93 Ukrainian prisoners of war, according to a law enforcement official tasked with investigating war crimes related to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Yuriy Belousov, who heads the Prosecutor-General's Office department in charge of investigating crimes committed in armed conflict, provided the figure during a live television appearance on October 4. Cases of the alleged execution of Ukrainian prisoners of war fall under the mandate of the International Criminal Court (ICC), and the court is entitled to try such cases, ICC Chief Prosecutor Karim Khan said on October 9, without referring to specific cases. "Each of the provisions of the Rome Statute [the founding treaty of the ICC] ... can be applied. They all matter. Our duty is to apply a methodological approach and put together an investigation strategy," Mr. Khan told a

roundtable at The Hague attended by journalists from Schemes, the investigative unit of RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service. In the latest incident, images published by DeepState showed the apparently dead Ukrainian troops stripped to their underwear and lying face down in the Kursk region following a rapid offensive by Russian forces. "These actions must not go unpunished, and the enemy must bear full responsibility," Mr. Lubinets wrote in a post on Telegram. "Russia is a terrorist country that violates all the rules and customs of war." The accuracy of the videos could not independently be verified. (RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service)

EU approves new sanctions on Iran

Foreign affairs ministers from the European Union have approved new sanctions against seven individuals and seven entities linked to Iran after Kyiv's Western allies accused Tehran of sending ballistic missiles to Russia to aid in its full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The sanctions, reported in an exclusive by Radio Farda last week, target companies and individuals accused of being involved in the transfer of the weapons to Russia, including the country's flagship carrier Iran Air, as well as airlines Saha Airlines and Mahan Air. Individuals sanctioned include the deputy defense minister of Iran, Seyed Hamzeh Ghalandari; prominent officials of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps's Quds Force (IRGC-QF); IRGC Khatam al-Anbiya Central

Headquarters; and IRGC Aerospace Force Space Division, as well as the managing directors of the European Union-listed companies Iran Aircraft Manufacturing Industries (HESA) and Aerospace Industries Organization (AIO). The United States, Britain, France and Germany accused Iran of sending ballistic missiles and related technology to Russia for use against Ukraine more than a month ago, sparking consultations among European allies on the matter. "Today's designation includes individuals and entities responsible for the development and transfer of unmanned aerial vehicles [UAVs], missiles and related technology to Russia in support of its war of aggression against Ukraine, and to armed groups and entities undermining peace and security in the Middle East and the Red Sea region," the council said in a statement on October 14. Those targeted

are subject to an asset freeze and travel ban to the European Union. Additionally, the provision of funds or economic resources, directly or indirectly, with those listed is prohibited. Iran Air has direct flights to several cities in Europe, including Frankfurt, Hamburg, Cologne, Paris and Milan. The new E.U. sanctions come just a few days after Peter Stano, the E.U.'s chief foreign policy spokesman, told RFE/RL that he was "optimistic" about the E.U.'s relationship with Iran. Mr. Stano stressed that E.U. relations with Iran "have been at an all-time low for a long time" and noted that the most recent reason is Iran's support for Russia in its illegal invasion of Ukraine by supplying drones and more recently missiles. Domestic repression in Iran, arbitrary detention of E.U. citizens, and uranium

(Continued on page 11)

Jared Leto...

(Continued from page 1)

Petersburg, Moscow, we'll stop by Kyiv. We will hang out and have fun," Mr. Leto said.

Ukrainians were outraged by Mr. Leto's comments, and they made their anger known with their own comments on the musician's Instagram page, reminding him that Ukraine is not facing "abstract problems" but a full-scale Russian invasion.

Following those comments from Ukrainians and Ukraine supporters, Mr. Leto closed the comments under his last few posts on Instagram. But his detractors still voiced their outrage on older posts of his and on his X account.

"Jared Leto, do you know there is a war in Ukraine, not just some 'problems'? Do you know that the Russians came here voluntarily to commit genocide and war crimes? If what you said suits you, if you sympathize with the supporters of the war, then you are not welcome in the capital of Ukraine, Kyiv," Ihor Lachenkov wrote on X.

"Come to the east of Ukraine to feel some Russian energy. Why Serbia?" wrote one user who goes by the name lytvynovna on Instagram.

Mykhailo Bezpalko, program director of Army FM, said that Thirty Seconds to Mars songs will no longer be played on that radio station.

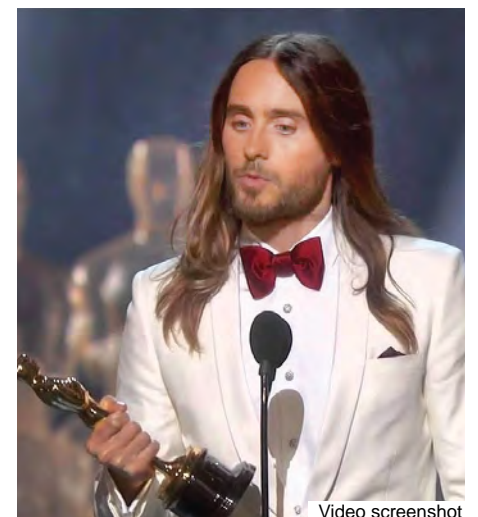
"This situation teaches us that we should not admire stars and mold them into idols just because they went on stage with our flag. Often, they are just superficial and do not understand the situation deeply. Maybe Jared will sing in Russia someday, but for now he stops singing on Army FM; we will no longer have Thirty Seconds to Mars songs on the air," Mr. Bezpalko said.

"Imagine if Sinatra or Crosby had told the Germans at one of their concerts in 1940: 'When these 'problems' are over, we'd love to hang out with you in Berlin and Munich, then we'll go to Kyiv, Warsaw, London, Rotterdam and Stalingrad, and we'll all have a party together. You're lucky they're not you, Leto,'" wrote one Instagram user who goes by the name korotkasolodka.

Ukraine's Foreign Affairs Ministry said Mr. Leto's comments were an insult to people who have given their lives for the sake of freedom.

"Jared Leto's 'feeling of Russian energy' and his desire to perform in Russia is an insult to those who sacrifice their lives to defend freedom. There can be no appeasement of Russia when it continues to try to solve the 'problem' of Ukraine's very existence," the Ukrainian Foreign Affairs Ministry said in a statement on X.

The Russian news agency TASS, which previously said it has no interest in writing about Western celebrities, reached out to Mr. Leto and his agent, Alexandra



Jared Leto is seen accepting his Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor in 2014.

Trustman, for comment.

"I'm sorry, I'm not sure, but we can't help with the correspondence," Ms. Tustman told TASS before hanging up.

The band and Mr. Leto have previously declined to comment on the matter.

The Ukrainian Weekly could not reach Mr. Leto for comment.

At the beginning of Russia's full-scale war on Ukraine, Mr. Leto expressed solidarity with the Ukrainian people, advocating for peace and a non-violent solution to the war. In 2022, he demonstrated his commitment once again by hosting a live broadcast during which he performed an excerpt from a Ukrainian song. The artist also supported Ukraine through charity events, including a gala in Italy that raised more than \$8 million for Ukrainian refugees.

"To my friends and family in Ukraine - my heart breaks that this has escalated in such a devastating way. Please take great care and be as safe as you can. Sending thoughts to you and your loved ones during this chaotic and disruptive time," Mr. Leto wrote on X in early 2022.

Mr. Leto gained fame as a successful singer and actor. He starred in the films "Requiem for a Dream," "American Psycho," "Suicide Squad" and "Dallas Buyers Club," for which he won an Oscar for Best Supporting Actor.

During his Oscar acceptance speech in 2014, he mentioned Ukraine.

"We are here at a time when you are fighting for your dreams to come true, for you to be able to live the life you dream of," Mr. Leto said.

As a result of his comments, Russia's state-run television channel stopped its live broadcast of that year's Oscars ceremony.

His rock band Thirty Seconds to Mars performed in Kyiv a week later. During his visit to the Ukrainian capital, Mr. Leto visited Independence Square, where the Revolution of Dignity culminated only a few weeks earlier.

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NEWSBRIEFS

(Continued from page 10)

enrichment are other factors that have caused the Islamic republic's relations with the E.U. to become "complicated" and "sensitive," according to Mr. Stano. (RFE/RL)

Nobel Peace Prize awarded to anti-nuke group

The Japanese group Nihon Hidankyo, an organization of atomic bomb survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki who advocate for the abolition of nuclear weapons, has been awarded the 2024 Nobel Peace Prize. In making the announcement in Oslo on October 11, Norwegian Nobel Committee chief Joergen Watne Frydnes said it was "alarming" that "new countries appear to be preparing to acquire nuclear weapons, and threats are being made to use nuclear weapons as part of ongoing warfare." "It is very clear that threats of using nuclear weapons are putting pressure on the important international norm: the taboo of using nuclear weapons," Mr. Frydnes said when asked at a news conference if rhetoric from Moscow surrounding nuclear weapons and its invasion of Ukraine had played a part in the committee's decision. Mr. Frydnes did not mention any specific countries, but his comments come at a time when countries such as Iran have raised fears of nuclear proliferation. Tehran says it is developing its nuclear capabilities for civilian purposes, but its foes say it is looking to produce atomic weapons. In addition, Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine has further heightened concerns about the risk of nuclear war given Moscow's announcement that it plans to review its doctrine on the use of nuclear weapons and its deployment of tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus – the first relocation of such warheads outside Russia

since the fall of the Soviet Union. "The committee is drawing attention to a very dangerous situation in the world, with relations between China and the U.S., and between Russia and the U.S., the most toxic since the end of the Cold War," said Dan Smith of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), which noted that at the start of 2024, the nine nuclear-armed states possessed an estimated 12,121 atomic weapons. "If there is a military conflict, there is a risk of it escalating to nuclear weapons," Mr. Smith added. The 2024 Nobel Peace Prize isn't the first time that an anti-nuclear group has been recognized. The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017. Before it, Joseph Rotblat and the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, which work to reduce the role nuclear arms play in international politics, won in 1995. The prize also comes as conflict ravages the Middle East, with fears focused on Iran. More than three dozen Iranian hard-line lawmakers on October 10 demanded that the government revise its nuclear doctrine to pursue atomic weapons. In a letter to the Supreme National Security Council, they said Western powers could not control Israel, thus making nuclear weapons "Iran's option to create deterrence." Nihon Hidankyo was chosen from among 286 nominees – 89 of which were organizations. Last year, the prize, which comes with an 11 million Swedish krona (just over \$1 million) award, went to imprisoned Iranian women's rights activist Narges Mohammadi. (RFE/RL)

Woman killed in Russian strike

Russian forces struck the southern Ukrainian city of Mykolayiv with S-300 missiles early on October 15, killing a woman and wounding 16 other people, regional Gov. Vitaliy Kim reported on

Telegram. Mr. Kim said the attack damaged civilian infrastructure, including a shopping center, residential buildings and cars. Separately, Ukraine's air force said its defenses shot down 12 out of 17 Russian drones over the Mykolayiv, Kyiv, Odesa, Poltava, Chernihiv, Kirovohrad and Cherkasy regions. Meanwhile, heavy fighting was underway in Ukraine's northeast in the direction of Kharkiv, the General Staff of the Ukrainian military reported early on October 15. (RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service)

Russia launches drone attack on Kyiv

Russia launched a drone attack on Kyiv late on October 15, prompting the mayor to

tell people to stay in shelters. Mayor Vitali Klitschko wrote on Telegram that drones were headed toward the large Troieshchy-na neighborhood on the outskirts of Kyiv. Serhiy Popko, head of Kyiv's military administration, said on Telegram that air-defense units were engaged in repelling the attack. There was no immediate information about potential damage or injuries. The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine said earlier that, since the beginning of the day, 164 combat clashes had taken place at the front. The largest number of battles took place in the areas of Pokrovsk and Kharkiv. (RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service and Reuters)

Harris and...

(Continued from page 7)

with impunity. In those territories, Russia's campaign to suppress Ukrainian identity intensifies with each passing day.


Mr. Trump has also signaled that, if the Ukrainians don't cave in, the United States will not provide additional funding for Ukraine. Of course, Mr. Trump is no stranger to being unwilling to assist Ukraine in its hour of need. Remember the recent painful 8-month-long debate in Congress over the \$61 billion Ukraine aid package? This was the very legislation whose lengthy delay – when Ukraine needed it most – had such profoundly negative and deadly consequences for the Ukrainian military's ability to fend off the Muscovite barbarians. Yes, this was the same assistance that Mr. Trump for months urged Republicans to reject. Make no mistake, if Mr. Trump would not have opposed the aid package, it would have passed Congress far earlier than it did.

Lest we forget, at the onset of the full-fledged invasion, Mr. Trump, who has described himself as a "very stable genius,"

characterized Putin's invasion of Ukraine as "genius" and "savvy," claims that are both outrageous and profoundly mistaken. As we have seen, the war has hardly been the work of a genius and has already greatly weakened Russia socially and economically and turned Putin into an international pariah. Even in the event of some kind of peace arrangement, it is hard to see Russia return to being even the medium power it was before the full-fledged invasion – unless, of course, the West completely caves in.

Mr. Trump seems to be devoid of any sense of humanity. Notice that he has never condemned or even criticized Putin for his barbaric invasion, not to speak of the killing of tens of thousands of Ukrainian soldiers and innocent civilians. On the contrary, Mr. Trump has the nerve to blame Mr. Zelenskyy for the war.

Editor's note: The positions expressed in the column above are the author's alone and do not necessarily reflect the editorial positions of this newspaper. The Ukrainian Weekly is committed to publishing a broad range of commentary from various authors and welcomes such submissions.



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Ukrainian pro sports update

by Ihor N. Stelmach

Ukraine finishes first in summer biathlon championships

Ukraine's three gold, two silver and one bronze medal placed them ahead of the Czech Republic's eight total medals and first in the medal standings at the 2024 Summer Biathlon World Championships. The event took place from August 22-25 in Otepaa, Estonia, where 12 European nations won medals.

Ukrainian gold medalists were Dmytro Pidruchnyi (7.5-kilometer super sprint) and Vitali Mandzyn (7.5-kilometer sprint and 10-kilometer pursuit in junior competition). Artem Tyshchenko (7.5-kilometer super sprint) and Viktoriia Khvostenko (6-kilometer sprint in women's junior) won silver medals while Olena Horodna (junior 6-kilometer sprint) won a bronze medal.

Ukrainian youngsters win 28 medals in chess

The European Youth Rapid and Blitz Chess Championships were held on August 16-21 in Prague with 650 play-

ers from 40 European federations participating in three competitions.

The youth rapid competition, which was broken down into six age categories (U8, U10, U12, U14, U16 and U18 with open and girls sections separate), saw Ukrainian chess players win a total of 13 medals, including four gold and six silver medals.

The youth blitz competition, with the same age categories, was played in nine double rounds. Ukraine's youngsters captured a total of 10 medals, including four gold and five bronze medals.

Finally, the youth team rapid chess event was played in three age categories: U10, U14 and U18. Ukraine's Lviv Chess Academy finished first in the final rankings and Ukrainian players won five medals in team play, including a pair of gold and silver medals.

Nemchenko lands EuroHeroes title

The EuroHeroes challenge is a RunCzech project designed to help and promote the biggest endurance runners in Europe. Runners participate in at least two of the four races to be eligible for the championship. The two best times count in the final standings, per the Hungarian scoring system used by World Athletics.

Ukrainian Maryna Nemchenko captured the 2024 women's title, defeating last year's champion Tereza Hrochova in a very close finish. Nemchenko finished first, third and second in her three races, accumulating 2162 points, 14 points ahead of second-place finisher Hrochova.

Nemchenko's Ukrainian partner, Mykola Mevsha, put together second, third and fourth place finishes in three races to total 1953 points, good enough for the bronze medal as third-best in the men's standings.

Ukrainian diver breaks own world record

Ukrainian Kateryna Sadurska set a new world record with a dive to a depth of 80 meters at the freediving com-



Yaroslav Skydan sits with gear collected by Guilford Junior Ice Hockey Club in Guilford, United Kingdom, that will be donated to young athletes from Ukraine.

petition in the "Constant Weight without Fins" (CNF) discipline, breaking her own previous world record of 78 meters. The eighth edition of the CMAS Freediving World Championships took place in Kalamata, Greece, from October 2-13 where Sadurska was Ukraine's lone competitor.

Sadurska also won a gold medal in "Free Immersion" with a dive of 95 meters, and set a new national record in "Constant Weight with Fins" at 103 meters.

Sadurska won three bronze medals at the 2013 World Aquatics Championships and won five medals at the European Aquatics Championships from 2010 to 2014.

(Continued on page 15)



Freediver Kateryna Sadurska celebrates setting a new world record of 80 meters (she held the previous record at 78 meters) in the "Constant Weight without Fins" category at the CMAS Freediving World Championships in Kalamata, Greece, on October 2-13.



Ukrainian pro sports update: soccer

by Ihor N. Stelmach

Ukraine triumphs in Nations League

Ukraine scored three goals in their first two matches of Nations League play although both games in September turned out to be losses. On October 11, in its matchup against Georgia, Ukraine got a much-needed win. The Blue and Yellow looked confident in front of goal as a shot by Heorhiy Sudakov went wide from inside the box. A delay of several minutes caused by a floodlight failure behind one of the goals at Poland's Stadion Poznan did not hamper Ukraine's momentum as they dominated the territory, yet failed to test Georgia's goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili.

That all changed in the 35th minute when Serhiy Rebrov's side took the lead with the first on-target shot of the game. Sudakov sent Mykhailo Mudryk on a dribble to the edge of the box where his low drive beat Mamardashvili. A Mykola Shaparenko header just missed the target before the first half ended.

The second half saw Georgia control possession, but despite pressing well they rarely troubled Anatoliy Trubin in the Ukraine goal. An equalizing tally by Zuriko Davitashvili in the 89th minute was negated by an offside call, giving Ukraine only their third victory in the last nine games.

Ukraine draws 1-1 with Czech Republic

Ukraine's fourth 2024 UEFA Nations League match, played on October 14 at Wroclaw Stadium in Poland, ended in a 1-1 draw. Ukraine has four points from their four matches and sits in last place in League B, Group 1, behind Czechia, Georgia and Albania. However, Ukraine is a mere three points out of the top spot with two games remaining.

Lukas Cerv scored the opening goal in the 18th minute with a right-footed shot into the bottom left-hand corner of goal after Ukraine failed to clear a corner kick. In the 52nd minute striker Artem Dovbyk, not at full speed due to a lingering leg injury, stepped up to equalize with a penalty shot after Ladislav Krejci was called for handling the ball

inside his own penalty area. Anatoliy Trubin made a key save late as both clubs had opportunities in the closing minutes, but neither could find a winner and the match ended in a draw.

Ukraine enjoyed a five-minute advantage in possession time, yet managed only three shots on target from their 16 touches in the box.

Ukraine's next match is scheduled for November 16 against Georgia at Adjarabet Arena in Batumi, Georgia.

Ukraine U21s lose to England 2-1

Ukraine's Under-21 national football team lost in qualifying for the 2025 European Championships, defeated by England on October 11 at Vitality Stadium in Bournemouth, England. Despite their first loss in nine matches, the Ukrainian side has already secured qualification for next year's tournament in Slovakia.

Following a scoreless first half where England was the superior team, Ukraine's Taras Mykhavko opened the scoring in the 70th minute when he outjumped British defenders to complete an Oleh Ocheretko corner kick. England's James McAtee responded for the home side with a pair of goals in the final five minutes, including the winner in extra time. A poor clear by Ukraine's defense led to a shot and a rebound score by McAtee who slotted the ball into the bottom corner of goal. Ukrainian goalkeeper Ruslan Neshcheret made a final save on a Liam Delap one-on-one to avoid losing by a two-goal margin.

Ukraine's final group match is scheduled for October 15, an away game against Serbia in what will be an inconsequential match for the Ukrainians.

Adidas to outfit Ukraine's national football team

Ukraine and Adidas have formed a partnership to have the German sporting goods company once again produce the country's official jerseys (kits) for the national football



Oleksandr Zubkov chases the ball down during Ukraine's UEFA Nations League match against the Czech Republic on October 14 in Wroclaw, Poland.

team. Ukraine is ending its seven-year relationship with Joma after their next two international fixtures. Adidas returns to outfit Ukraine's national team having been their sponsors from 2009-2016.

The new uniform is inspired by the Ukrainian national flag and features the words "Glory to Ukraine" on the back. Adidas will supply uniform jerseys for men's, women's and youth national teams. The Adidas legendary three stripes appear on the shoulders, the Ukrainian tryzub is on the front left chest and the Adidas triangular logo is on the front right chest. The redesigned jersey honors the connection between Ukrainian culture and the sport of football.

(Based on reporting by Flashscore, West Ham United, Daily Echo, U.K. Soccer Shop, UNN.)



Ukrainian pro hockey update

by Ihor N. Stelmach

11 Ukrainians on USHL rosters in 2023-2024 season

The United States Hockey League is the top junior ice hockey league sanctioned by U.S.A. Hockey. The league consists of 16 active teams located in the Midwestern United States and Great Plains for players between the ages of 16 and 21. The USHL is strictly amateur, allowing players to compete in NCAA College Hockey. It is comparable to the Canadian Hockey League's three junior leagues.

An initial foray into the USHL by The Ukrainian Weekly revealed 11 players of Ukrainian background on club rosters in 2023-2024, including one player, Fargo's Cade Kozak, who did not see any action during the season. There were six forwards, three defensemen and a pair of goaltenders. The Chicago Steel led the way with three Ukrainians. Two players, Mykhailo Danylov and Nikita Konevych, are native Ukrainians. One of the 11 is the son of a former National Hockey League player, Colby Saganiuk, son of ex-Toronto Maple Leaf and Pittsburgh Penguin Rocky Saganiuk.

Solovey to play NCAA hockey at Harvard

Muskegon Lumberjacks' Justin Solovey announced he has committed to play National Collegiate Athletic Association Division 1 hockey at Harvard University in

the Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC) for the upcoming 2024-2025 season. The power forward, 6-foot-3, 208 pounds, developed some skill to go along with his imposing size over his two seasons of play in the USHL. In 2023-2024, he scored 25 goals and 47 points with 92 penalty minutes in 55 games with Muskegon. The New Jersey native looks forward to having his family come out to watch him play in Boston.

Danylov enjoying hockey away from war at home

Thanks to his sister, Mykhailo Danylov fell in love with the sport of hockey. When his father took her to gymnastics classes, Danylov tagged along and noticed a hockey rink across the way. After going inside and seeing a bunch of boys playing hockey, Danylov got excited and decided he wanted to play the sport.

The ice became his home and he fell in love with hockey. The skating and competition somehow allowed him to forget about everything going on outside. These days, he misses his homeland Ukraine, where everything was close by and he could go anywhere he wanted to by himself. The game of hockey eventually took Danylov away from his hometown of Kyiv to the United States. His first organized stop was



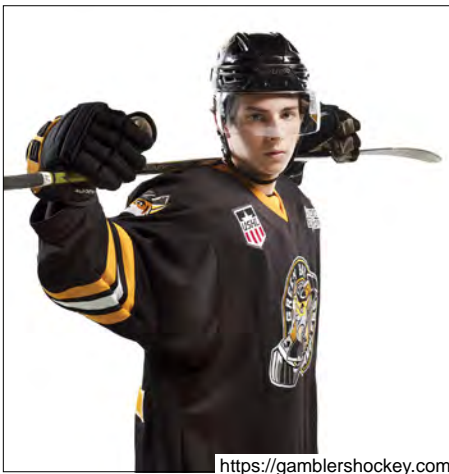
Justin Solovey, a top-scoring forward in the USHL with the Muskegon Lumberjacks (2023-2024), will play the 2024-2025 season with Harvard University.

with the Phoenix Junior Coyotes in 2018-2019 at the age of 14, then the United States Hockey League and the Green Bay Gamblers. He went to the Fargo Force's camp before he arrived in Green Bay. After playing some 20 games over two weeks of tryout camp hockey, Gamblers coach Mike Leone decided to take a chance on the young Ukrainian.

Danylov was amazed at the difference in levels when compared to youth hockey in Ukraine – a different building, with a high level of organization, led to a completely different experience.

It has been quite challenging for him being so far away from home, but Russia's invasion of Ukraine brought a whole new perspective to his personal situation. Originally almost impossible to comprehend, two-plus years later he's gotten somewhat used to it, but still worries about family members back home.

In the meantime, the ice is where he gets away from it all. He's been playing hockey for about 15 years now and the sport allows him to relax and focus on the game. During a busy USHL season, home and fam-



Mykhailo Danylov, 19, a forward with the Green Bay Gamblers in the USHL for two seasons, will play hockey with Michigan State University for the 2024-2025 season.

ily were still very much on Danylov's mind. Keeping in touch daily is not easy, especially with ongoing power outages and loss of electricity as a result of Russia's incessant bombings. His support system in Green Bay includes his teammates and coaches who help him manage the stress of the hockey season and the turmoil back home.

His coach is amazed at how the player practices, the type of person he is and is grateful to have him on his club. Danylov is in turn grateful for the opportunity to play on a strong team where he's comfortable, fits right in and is respected for his contributions.

In his two seasons with Green Bay, the forward has totaled 15 goals and 34 points in 117 games with 68 minutes in penalties. The 19-year-old has committed to play for Michigan State University for the 2024-2025 season.

(Based on reporting by Muskegon Lumberjacks and WBay.com.)

Ihor Stelmach may be reached at ihorge-nia@sbcbglobal.net.

2023-2024 USHL Ukrainian stats						
Pos	Player	Team	GP	G	A	PTS
F	Justin Solovey	Muskegon	55	25	22	47
F	Ben Yurchuk	Chicago	62	10	21	31
F	Colby Saganiuk	Sioux City	43	10	12	22
F	Mykhailo Danylov	Green Bay	58	8	11	19
F	Lukas Sawchyn	Chicago	60	4	11	15
D	Cade Kozak	Fargo	did not play			
D	Nikita Konevych	Tri-City	1	0	0	0
F	William Tomko	Chicago	2	0	0	0
D	Sawyer Prokopetz	Omaha	4	0	0	0
GT	Hampton Slukynsky	Fargo	33GP	1938 MINS	28-3-0WLT	1.86 GAA .923PCT
GT	Lucas Szyszka	Omaha	20GP	807 MINS	4-10-0 WLT	4.83 GAA .845PCT

Goalie Slukynsky a shot-stopping force between the pipes

Goaltender Hampton Slukynsky exploded onto the scene in 2023-2024 with the United States Hockey League's (USHL) Fargo Force. It should come as no surprise given the Warroad, Minn., native hails from a city of winners. Every Team U.S.A. that won a gold medal at the Olympics has featured a Warroad native on it. Slukynsky is a proven winner: as a senior in high school, the young Ukrainian won the 2023 Frank Brimsek Award, given to the state of Minnesota's top senior high-school goaltender. He posted a 1.47 goals-against-average, 0.941 save percentage and lost only one game that season.

In 2023-2024, he led all USHL goaltenders in wins, compiling a 28-3-0-0 record with Fargo. His 1.86 goals-against-average and 0.923 save percentage led the league along with his five shutouts. After being named USHL Goaltender of the Week three times in 2023-2024, Slukynsky was named Goaltender of the Year in addition to earning a position on this year's All-USHL First Team. He was drafted in the fourth round (No. 118) by the Los Angeles Kings in 2023 and has committed to play National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division 1 hockey at Northern Michigan in 2024-2025.



Hampton Slukynsky, seen in net with the Western Michigan University Broncos, won the game against Ferris State 5-1 on October 12.

A major reason for his success with Fargo was goalie coach Carter Krier, a fellow northern Minnesotan who was a standout high school goalie before turning to coaching. Only 24 years old, Krier has built a strong resume of success everywhere he has worked. Slukynsky has benefited from having a full-time goalie coach to

help him daily.

Krier built a relationship with his goalie through Hampton's older brother, Grant, who also played in Fargo. The two had a head start in talking to each other and the coach helped the player enjoy a smooth transition into juniors based on their comfort communicating with each other.

Slukynsky is described as wise beyond his 18 years. His demeanor and approach to the game are very business-like. He possesses a maturation and awareness of his opportunity that most players his age don't realize. His will and desire to be the best as a person and a hockey player do not allow Slukynsky to take his opportunity to have a hockey career lightly. With no school for the time being, Slukynsky could focus solely on coming to the rink every day and improving, learning how to be a professional.

His focus and self-belief pushed his game to a level few rookie goaltenders in the USHL have achieved as witnessed by his incredible statistics.

For a goaltender, the biggest key to success is consistency – to play well every night to give his team a chance to win. Consistency is arguably the hardest objective to achieve in hockey, no matter one's age or position. For Slukynsky, consistency

is integral in his approach to the game as a whole. Through training on or off the ice, physical and mental preparation and a need to prove his value, Slukynsky stays focused on improving himself in all aspects of the game.

Mentally, he has shown he is strong and unfazed. Technically, he is athletic, mobile and possesses a high goaltender IQ. His athleticism allows him to make saves some goalies can't. He makes timely saves and has the ability to understand the game and read plays. His somewhat unique approach is a result of his detailed preparation.

Slukynsky was selected to represent Team U.S.A. at the 2023 World Junior A Challenge last December, a tournament of the top U-20 amateur junior leagues across the world. He helped Team U.S.A. win a bronze medal and led all goalies in goals-against (2.99).

For Slukynsky, the sky is the limit. Everywhere he's played he has been a winner. His next stop will be tending goal in the NCAA for Northern Michigan University. As his development continues, fans of the Los Angeles Kings and their management should be excited about this future goaltender.

(Based on reporting by L.A. Kings Insider.)

OUT & ABOUT

October 21 Jacksonville, FL	Performance, "Hope of Ukraine," National Ballet of Ukraine, with Ukrainian Shumka Dancers, Jacksonville Center for the Performing Arts - Moran Theater, www.ticketmaster.com	October 24 Cambridge, MA	Book talk with Ostap Slyvynsky, "The Winter King," Harvard University, https://huri.harvard.edu
October 21 New York	Discussion, "An Evening with Gen. David Petraeus," Ukrainian Institute of America, www.ukrainianinstitute.org	October 25 Passaic, NJ	Oktoberfest, Ukrainian Center Passaic, www.facebook.com/ukecenter
October 22 New York	Concert, "A Musical Celebration of Lithuanian-Ukrainian Unity," featuring Musica Humana, Ukrainian Institute of America, www.ukrainianinstitute.org	October 25-26 Miami	Performance, "Hope of Ukraine," National Ballet of Ukraine, with Ukrainian Shumka Dancers, Adrienne Arsht Center, www.arshtcenter.org
October 22 New York	Presentation by Yuliia Iliukha, "My Women," Columbia University, https://harriman.columbia.edu	October 26 Philadelphia	Rally, "Vote for Ukraine," Stop Trump Save Ukraine, Philadelphia Museum of Art, www.StopTrumpSaveUkraine.org
October 22 Stanford, CA	Presentation by Ambassador Audra Plepyte, "Whatever Victory Takes: Lithuanian Perspective on Russia's War Against Ukraine and Transatlantic Security," Stanford University, https://events.stanford.edu/event/whatever-victory-takes	October 26 Jenkintown, PA	Art exhibit, featuring works by Jurij Hura (1930-2021), Ukrainian National Women's League of America, Ukrainian Educational and Cultural Center, www.ueccphila.org
October 23 New York	Benefit concert, "Concert for the Children and Youth of Ukraine," featuring the Orchestra for Ukraine and the Ukrainian Chorus Dumka of New York, Carnegie Hall, www.carnegiehall.org	October 27 Chicago	Benefit banquet, Ukrainian Catholic University Foundation, St. Ignatius College Preparatory School, 773-235-8462 or hello@ucufoundation.org
October 23 Cambridge, MA	Presentation by Nataliya Shpylova-Saeed, "Russia's Denial of Ukraine: Letters and Contested Memory," Harvard University, https://huri.harvard.edu	October 27 Villages, FL	Performance, "Hope of Ukraine," National Ballet of Ukraine, with Ukrainian Shumka Dancers, Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center, www.thevillagesentertainment.com
October 23 Stanford, CA	Presentation by David Sanger, "New Cold Wars: China's Rise, Russia's Invasion and America's Struggle to Defend the West," Stanford University, 650-723-9625	October 27 Boston, MA	Ukrainian Food Fest, St. Andrew Ukrainian Orthodox Church, www.ukrainianorthodox.org (eat-in or take-out)
October 24 New York	Literary event, "European Literature Night 2024," Ukrainian Institute of America, www.ukrainianinstitute.org	October 27 Fox Chase, PA	Discussion, "What Does the 2024 Election Mean for Ukraine?" St. Michael the Archangel Ukrainian Catholic Church, 215-776-1004
October 24 Tampa, FL	Performance, "Hope of Ukraine," National Ballet of Ukraine, with Ukrainian Shumka Dancers, Straz Center, www.strazcenter.org	October 28 Fort Meyers, FL	Performance, "Hope of Ukraine," National Ballet of Ukraine, with Ukrainian Shumka Dancers, Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall, https://bbmann.venue.net

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.

Ukrainian pro...

(Continued from page 13)

10-year-old starts hockey gear initiative

Young Ukrainian Yaroslav Skydan has launched a youth hockey gear initiative, collecting old and unused equipment for under-10/12 players that will be donated to his first club in Ukraine. The 10-year-old, who currently plays for Guildford's Junior Ice Hockey club in Guildford, England, began his hockey journey at age five, playing for hockey club Patriot in his native Ukraine.

The Ukrainian club faces continuous challenges because of the ongoing war with Russia, including a shortage of players and a lack of beginner hockey equipment, which often discourages parents from enrolling their children in ice hockey.

Thanks to Skydan's initiative, donated gear will allow many young Ukrainian players to begin playing the sport, even in the middle of a war.

The initiative was made possible thanks to support from Guildford's club management, parents and players. The initial shipment of equipment was being prepared for delivery in mid-October.

Ukraine launches sports competitions for veterans

Ukraine's Ministry of Veterans Affairs has launched sports competitions in CrossFit and esports entitled the Veterans Games that will take place in four regions of Ukraine, culminating with a national competition in Kyiv.

Invited to participate in regional competitions are military personnel, war veterans, citizens who have been discharged from military service or law enforcement, and those who have sustained injuries, wounds or illnesses resulting from fulfilling their duties in combat zones.

CrossFit regional qualifying rounds are scheduled for November in Kryvyi Rih,

Odesa, Ivano-Frankivsk and Zhytomyr. The final competition is scheduled for Kyiv on December 8.

Regional qualifying rounds for esports will be held online for Counter-strike 2, FIFA and DOTA2 in November with national competitions on December 6-7 in Kyiv.

The above events will be conducted as part of the Development of Sports for Veterans, a flagship project within the framework of implementing the National Strategy for Creating a Barrier-Free Space in Ukraine, an initiative proposed by First Lady Olena Zelenska.

The project's goal is to develop veterans sports based on health and rehabilitation principles, popularizing a healthy and active lifestyle by engaging war veterans in adaptive (Para) sports.

Oregon basketball adds Ukrainian to roster

Oleksandr Kobzystyi, a 6-foot-7 forward from Poltava, Ukraine, who has played for the Ukrainian U-16 and U-20 national teams and most recently played professional basketball in Serbia for KK Mega Basket of the Adriatic Basketball Association and OKK Beograd in the Basketball League of Serbia, has landed on the 2024-2025 roster of the University of Oregon Ducks.

Coach Dana Altman brought the wing player in on a visit with his mother and decided to give him a spot on this year's squad. The 21-year-old has one year of college eligibility left and will be counted on to add some depth to a Ducks team that experienced a high rate of injuries the past three seasons.

Kobzystyi had some serious catching up to do, being eight weeks behind the rest of the team's players in conditioning and practices.

(Based on reporting by European Athletics, United 24 Media, England Ice Hockey, Ukrinform and The Oregonian.)

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