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Philippine Gas Prices



AUUC National Treasurer Steve Smoly took this picture, while visiting Batuan City in The Philippines earlier this year. The prices shown above are in Philippine pesos, the local currency, with an exchange rate at the time of 1.43 pesos to Can \$1.00. That puts the price of super unleaded at just under Can \$0.34/litre, at a time when the price for regular unleaded gas in Regina (where Mr. Smoly lives) was about \$1.25/litre. Mr. Smoly thinks that the Canadian consumer is being “shafted”, and suggests a consumer boycott of the major petroleum companies.

Another View of Burma

In the wake of the cyclone that hit Burma in early May, the media were full of stories about the resistance of the ruling military junta to the proposal that the borders of the country be opened to all and sundry, including foreign military units, who proclaimed a desire to provide and distribute aid but were unwilling to turn the aid over to Burmese officials to distribute.

Before very long, there was discussion of ways to circumvent the official Burmese restrictions, including sugges-

tions that air drops violating Burma’s air space be organized or that the doctrine of “responsibility to protect” be invoked by the United Nations which would entail organizing an invasion force to deliver the aid.

It was somewhat refreshing, then, to read Thomas Walkom’s column in the *Toronto Star* on May 10, in which he wrote that the government of Burma, odious though it is, was behaving quite rationally in its own interest. Mr. Walkom suggested that the governments of Australia and Canada, which have been strongly critical of the Burmese government, were playing to their home audiences more than seeking effective ways to provide aid to the Burmese people.

Mr. Walkom wrote that it was not irrational of the Burmese junta to be wary of an influx of foreign troops, given the West’s attitude toward the country. Nor was the Burmese government being unreasonable in requesting proper passports even from UN personnel, given Iraq’s experience of CIA spies

among UN weapons inspectors.

As for concerns that the junta would skim off some of the aid, Mr. Walkom pointed out that always happens — even with aid sent to New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina.

“The West could continue to huff and puff,” Mr. Walkom wrote, or it could, “...just try to get the job done.”

In the article there is a contrast drawn between the Western countries, which had by that time done a lot of criticizing and a minimum of actual relief, and Asian countries which had successfully sent in considerable quantities of relief supplies.

A contrast was also drawn between agencies like the United Nations, which was part of the critical chorus, and the Red Cross and Save the Children, who were doing the job with cooperation from the Burmese government.

While Thomas Walkom was an early voice of reason, he was not alone.

It was interesting, on May 18, to hear Rex Murphy on CBC’s “Cross Country Checkup” repeatedly bemoan that the doctrine of “responsibility to protect” has not been applied while, in stark contrast, his guests and callers who were involved in aid work or diplomacy referred repeatedly to the difficulties and dangers of unconsidered violation of national sovereignty.

— Wilfred Szczesny

Corporate High-Handedness

Nicole Lilliman, a woman in London, Ontario, who had worked at a Tim Hortons outlet for about three years, was fired for theft after giving a Timbit free to a child. She gave the 16-cent goodie away in an effort to soothe the crying 11-month-old whose mother, a regular customer, was having a bad day.

Three managers confronted Ms. Lilliman, a mother of four, on Wednesday, May 7, apparently after reviewing videotapes from the previous Monday, May 5.

A Tim Hortons District Manager, who said that giving food away is against the rules, agreed that Timbits were often given to dogs, but said that those given to pets were usually “day-old and recycled”.

In another case involving Tim Hortons, it was agreed by both sides that Tim Hortons provides free coffee to police officers.

The report of this firing rapidly led to many discussions about giving freebies at restaurants or other retail level outlets. Many companies have policies encouraging the occasional give-away, especially to regular customers, reasoning that the practise built customer satisfaction and loyalty.

From the initial firing, through the entire discussion, Tim Hortons was getting bad publicity. Though a few people who took the position that “policy is policy” or “theft is theft”, most reaction was in support of the fired employee. Increasingly, the reaction was evident that people intended to stop getting their coffee at Tim Hortons.

On May 9, the *Toronto Star* reported that Nicole Lilliman had been rehired — at another store, but with the same franchise owner. Lost wages will be repaid.

The report also said that Tim Hortons spokesperson Rachel Douglas indicated that the chain does not have a policy on giving away doughnuts but allows each franchise owner to set policy.

Ms. Douglas said that the manager’s reaction was an overreaction and inappropriate. At worse, Lilliman should have received a warning.

Ms. Lilliman, in need of income, agreed to go back to work, but was reported to be looking for work elsewhere.

The fate of the District Manager, said by Ms. Douglas to have acted over-zealously and inappropriately, has not been reported.

The other case mentioned above concerns charges of theft brought in 1999 against an employee spotted on camera taking a toonie and some change from the till at a Toronto Tim Hortons franchise. The employee claimed that the money was tips which she put into a tip jar. The charge was dropped but the employee was fired. Since then the employee and Tim Hortons have been entangled in a lawsuit charging the company with wrongful dismissal and malicious prosecution.

Take What You Get

Businesses are not the only high-handed organizations in the work place — sometimes it is unions, at least in one instance with the backing of the Supreme Court of Canada.

After almost 24 years with a local in the Yukon of the Teamsters union, a business agent was fired, in January 2003, with a two-year notice period, by a new President whose election he had opposed. In a suit for wrongful dismissal, Donald Evans won about the same amount he would have had in the two-year severance package.

Five months after firing him, the union told him to come back to work for the balance of the two years, which he refused to do. At trial, a Yukon Supreme Court judge found that Mr. Evans had been wrongfully dismissed and was entitled to 22 months of compensation.

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled 6-1 in May of this year that he should have taken the return-to-work offer, and was, therefore, not entitled to the severance package. The dissenting justice said that the ruling had the bi-

zarre effect of turning a wrongful firing into a lawful dismissal, and called it unpalatable.

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Nine Decades of Struggle

The end of World War II found the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians (then called the Association of Canadian Ukrainians) in rather good circumstances.

In January, 1946, it inherited the assets of the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association which, at its final convention decided to dissolve itself.

The performing arts groups and the level of AUUC organization were such that, by July 27-28, 1946, the organization was able to stage in Edmonton (with great success) the second National Festival of Ukrainian Song, Music and Dance, with guests from Ukraine.

Public support was good, based on the efforts of the organization in the Canadian war effort, and on memories of the USSR as an ally in the war against a common enemy. A campaign in 1947 to raise funds to help war orphans in Ukraine generated almost \$224,000 — medicine and clothing bought with the funds were delivered by a joint delegation with the Ukrainian American League, which had a similar campaign.

However, there were flies in the ointment. The first of these was within the AUUC itself. The membership of the organization was older than the general Ukrainian Canadian population, and contained a far higher proportion of immigrants. If the AUUC was not to lose its relevance as a Canadian institution, if it was to avoid death by attrition, then it would have to become more successful in recruiting among the Canadian-born.

The second problem involved the right wing of the Ukrainian community, organized during the war into the Ukrainian Canadian Committee (now the Ukrainian Canadian Congress). The problem was two-fold: the UCC, hostile to the AUUC, being treated by the Government of Canada as the only true representative of the Ukrainian Canadian community; and the growing numbers of the third-wave, collectively very right-wing, post-war immigration, gaining increasing influence in the UCC and in governmental circles.

The third problem was the looming Cold War, officially declared in 1948, with the concomitant ideological assault against the political left, but more significantly the repres-

sive McCarthyism which spread from the United States into Canada.

Another problem was the changing composition of the Ukrainian Canadian community: the continuing process of urbanization in the years after the war; the shift away from agriculture and labour to the trades, management, professions and small business ownership as sources of livelihood; and such processes of assimilation as ethnic intermarriage, and a population shift from the Prairie Provinces to Ontario and British Columbia. (About 80% of the third wave settled in the Toronto area.

As soon as possible after the war ended, the AUUC set out to change its demographic profile. At its Second Convention, in January, 1945, days after the ULFTA decided to dissolve itself, the AUUC not only reviewed the wartime achievements of the ACU, but also considered the path to follow for success into the future. It was noted that the majority of ACU members were immigrants, while 60%–70% of the community was born in Canada. The need to publish an English-language periodical, establish English-speaking Branches, and rebuild a system of Ukrainian schools were considered. A Canadian-born National President, William Teresio of Alberta, was elected.

The Ukrainian Canadian Publishing Company, formed in October, 1941, started publishing *The Ukrainian Canadian* on September 1, 1947, with John Weir as editor. This was the third publication, with *Ukrainian Life* and *Ukrainian Word*, simultaneously being published by the progressive Ukrainian Canadian community.

In subsequent years, progress was reported in organizing among the younger generations. Membership in English-speaking Branches rose to about 1000. A youth divi-

sion was organized, with clubs in each organizational centre. Junior sections were active and well attended, as were Ukrainian schools.

Leaders and teachers for these activities were trained in a three-month Central Education Course in 1950, and a six-weeks CEC in 1952.

To the political attacks on the AUUC and its community, the right wing of the community, strongly influenced by the new immigrants, now added another charge: assimilationism.

In large measure, the charge was ironic. While reality, on the one hand, required the AUUC (which could not draw on the new immigrants for revitalization in any significant measure) to turn to English, on the other hand the AUUC, drawing on its excellent relations with Ukraine as well as on its own resources, made a tremendous contribution to the development of Ukrainian Canadian culture and the popularization of Ukrainian culture in Canada.

While being accused of being assimilationists for responding to its demographics by resorting to the English language, the AUUC was simultaneously trying strenuously to retain and develop Ukrainian language and culture in its Canadian born generations, sharing the resources being developed with the broader Ukrainian Canadian community and promoting Ukrainian culture in the general Canadian population.

From 1950, the AUUC almost annually sent students to Ukraine to study in a variety of disciplines, particularly in Ukrainian culture and the performing arts. In addition, somewhat later, dance seminars were conducted in Ukraine, and in Canada by instructors from Ukraine. Visits by Ukrainian performing artists grew to several a year, to participate in events such as Folklorama in Winnipeg, Mosaic in Regina, and other

events.

Educational efforts included publication of English-language translations of Ukrainian literature to make it more accessible. Particularly after 1951, the publishing program was very active and varied, going far beyond the “UC”.

Not to be forgotten, of course, were the three national festivals of song, music and dance staged in this period, with a fourth presented in 1961. The first of these, in Edmonton in 1946, has already been mentioned. The second was presented in Toronto in 1951, marking the 60th anniversary of Ukrainian immigration to Canada and tied in with the unveiling of the monument of Taras Shevchenko, the first in the Americas, in Palermo (now part of Oakville), Ontario. The fourth National Festival of Ukrainian Song, Music and Dance, and the third in this time period, was presented in Winnipeg in 1956, marking the Ivan Franko centennial with the unveiling of a bust of the Great Kamenyar. The final National Festival of Ukrainian Song, Music and Dance in this era was the 1958 celebration in Vancouver of the centennial of British Columbia.

July 1, 1961, the 6th national festival marked the centennial of Shevchenko’s death, and the 70th anniversary of Ukrainian immigration to Canada.

As has been noted on other occasions, preparation of each of these festivals was a time of intense education and publicity designed to highlight the significance of the subject of the festival and raise public, as well as organizational, consciousness.

New institutions were established in these years.

These included summer camps, including the AUUC camp at Sylvan Lake in Alberta (still in use), the camp in Oakville, Ontario, and others. The Workers Benevolent Association acquired a camp as well, in Husavick, Manitoba.

The Taras Shevchenko

Museum, now in Toronto, was established at the Oakville location in 1952, operated by the Taras H. Shevchenko Museum and Memorial Park Foundation.

The Ivan Franko Museum was opened in Winnipeg during the festival in 1956.

Ukrainska Knyha, an import-export business which operated successfully for decades, was established in this period.

The AUUC was a founding member of the Canadian Slav Committee, which in 1961 launched a successful citizenship rights campaign to gain citizenship for Canadian residents who were deprived of Canadian citizenship for decades because of political discrimination.

The AUUC, in 1949, was a founding participant in the Canadian Peace Congress, and in that year also participated in the World Congress of Supporters of Peace. The AUUC was part of the October, 1949, start of National Ban the Bomb campaign, the 1950 campaign on the Stockholm Appeal — in fact, the AUUC emerged as one of the strongest supporters of the peace movement.

The 4th AUUC National Convention, in 1950, reflecting the commitment to this activity, was held under the slogan “For peace and democracy: against war”. The slogan also reflected the close relationship as the Cold War intensified, between the struggle for peace and the struggle for democracy.

Not very long after the end of World War II, it became obvious that the third wave of Ukrainian immigration to Canada was about to begin. It was equally obvious that many individuals in that group would be very right wing, including people who had collaborated with the Nazi German occupation of Ukraine.

The AUUC adopted a position opposing the admission into Canada of Nazi sympathizers or collaborators. The UCC, on the other hand, tended to feel that the sympathizers and collaborators were actually Ukrainian patriots who should be admitted to this country. How much influence either group had on the Canadian government, which had its own fish to fry, is moot.

About 40,000 Ukrainians, a small but influential group, were admitted in the third wave of immigrants. Collectively, they brought a new level of violence to the conflict between the right and left wings of the community, including such forms of terrorism as detonation of anti-personnel bombs at well-attended AUUC concerts.

In *Our History*, Peter Krawchuk notes that the 1950 convention was held in a time of heightening Cold War and

(Continued on Page 4.)

Padlock Law

(From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

The Padlock Law (officially called “Act to Protect the Province Against Communist Propaganda”) was an Act of the province of Quebec, passed on March 24, 1937, by the Union Nationale government of Maurice Duplessis, that was intended to prevent the dissemination of communist propaganda.

The Act prohibited the “use [of a house] or allow any person to make use of it to propagate communism or bolshevism by any means whatsoever” as well as the printing, publishing or distributing of

“any newspaper, periodical, pamphlet, circular, document or writing, propagating communism or bolshevism.” A violation of the Act subjected such property to being ordered closed by the Attorney General — “padlocked” — against any use whatsoever for a period of up to one year, and any person found guilty of involvement in prohibited media activities could be incarcerated for three to thirteen months.

The law was ill-defined, denied the presumption of innocence, and clearly denied the right of freedom of speech

to individuals. There were also concerns that the law would be used in order to arrest individual militants from international trade unions. Two union leaders were nearly arrested in that period. While it was applied frequently against a range of radical leftist groups, allegations that Duplessis used it against political opponents and groups considered undesirable, such as the Jehovah’s Witnesses are incorrect. The authorities used a different regulation to attack Jehovah’s Witnesses. In the 1957 decision of *Switzman v. Elbling*, the Supreme Court of Canada struck down the law as unconstitutional.

Correction

We apologize to Lida Braun and George Sitak for getting their names wrong on page 8 in our May, 2008, issue.

UKRAINIAN CANADIAN

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Ukrainian Canadian Herald editorial offices are located
at 1604 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario M6P 1A7
Phone: 416-588-1639; Fax: 416-588-9180
E-mail: kobzar1@on.aibn.com

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Robot Versus Robot

An Editorial by Wilfred Szczesny

Every once in a while, something appears in print which is misleading, at least at first glance. One such item was in the *Toronto Star*, on May 2, 2008.

“War of the future: Robot versus robot”, the headline read, and for those who went just a bit further, the subhead said, “Cutting-edge U.K. military robotics work could make conflict bloodless for many”. For those who stopped there, and even for those who read a fair amount into the story, it sounded like good news — war without human casualties. That idea was reinforced for the reader who skipped to the last paragraph: “Why not just fight it out on a video game instead?”

Just a bit of thought would have revealed those ideas as nonsense. Like Bush’s “shock and awe” attack on Iraq, and the much earlier attacks in Vietnam by high-flying US bombers, the high-tech, no-blood-lost-on-our-side (unless it has killed all living things, which is not bloodless conflict) phase has to be followed by physical occupation of the contested land. Ultimately, the conflict involves people killing each other.

And of course, the article was actually about more effective ways for people to kill each other; or more accurately, more effective ways for countries like Britain, the United States and Israel, with high tech offensive armies, to kill the people whose countries they invade.

As it is put in the article, if you read that far, the search is for “high-tech, remote-controlled solutions to the kind of asymmetrical modern conflicts playing out today in Afghanistan and Iraq”.

In the mix with unmanned ground and aerial vehicles with a variety of imaging technology are sensors to spot “insurgents poised to pounce”, scanners to spot “a suicide bomber from a survivable distance of 20 metres”.

The reality, it turns out, is that war will continue to be hell, soldiers will continue to come home in body bags, and more atrocious atrocities will be done by “our” governments in our name.

The reality is also that “our” governments are already seeking the weapons for their next invasion, for their next attack on people who will face the “high-tech, remote-controlled solutions” carried by “our” armies with their limited weapons: their bodies and whatever arm they can bring close enough to inflict damage.

The morality is that we must try to forestall that confrontation by actively opposing invasions until we can turf the high-tech schemers.

Nine Decades of Struggle

(Continued from Page 3.) a growing danger of nuclear war. He also indicates that the speech by National Secretary Peter Prokop “dealt at length with the terrorist attacks by reactionary elements among the recently arrived ‘displaced persons’ in the Ukrainian community”. (*Our History*, p. 413)

Their effect on the right wing of the community is presented in some detail in the July/August, 1991, issue of *The Ukrainian Canadian*, as part of the series *The Evolution of a Community*. One interesting effect presented is the decline in participation in Ukrainian churches as a result of their politicization, to the benefit (mainly) of the Roman Catholic, United and Anglican churches.

The terrorism by the third wave of immigrants undoubtedly took its toll on the AUUC, but the real harm was done by the attacks on the left by organs of the state: police at various levels, the immigration service, the department of citizenship.

Rather as they are doing in the current war on terrorism, they could, and did, upon the slightest pretext or with none at all, undermine or destroy a person’s career or cause him/her to be fired from a job. By preventing travel into the United States, the authorities could prevent a person accomplishing a work assignment. By arbitrary and apparently random rulings restricting travel, the authorities could cause dissension in families and in groups like symphony orchestras. Reputations could be, and were destroyed on the basis of association with the wrong people or a signature on a peace petition. While extraordinary renditions were not reported, arrest and imprisonment in the United States were known, and in Canada there were repeated efforts to pass legislation allowing revocation of citizenship or deportation of citizens. Many organizations, especially US-related ones, engaged in anti-communism.

The Duplessis Padlock Law in Quebec was in effect from 1937 until 1957, when the Supreme Court finally ruled it invalid.

While many people were able to withstand the pressure against the left, which was not directed only against the Communists (As *Wikipedia* reports, “...it was applied frequently against a range of radical leftist groups...”), many sought protection against attack by disassociating themselves from any contact with groups or individuals promoting causes which could lead to political attack.

Among the interesting phenomena of the period is that

many parents who were active, and had been active all their lives, in the AUUC (or even the WBA) and supported the peace, anti-racism or other progressive causes advised their children, for the sake of their job or career, to steer clear of such involvement.

At the 5th AUUC National Convention, in 1952, it was noted that growth of the organization among the Canadian-born had slowed, and Michael Korol, in his report, indicated that this was in large measure “due to the discrimination practised by the authorities against people with progressive and left-wing views”.

Starting with the 6th National Convention in 1954, there was a decline in the number of delegates at conventions, suggesting a decline in membership. There were now only 16 English-Speaking Branches, a substantial decline from the number reported two years earlier, with about 400 members, also a serious drop. These trends continued into the 8th National Convention, in 1958.

It can reasonably be said that the decline was slow, but it was steady.

An interesting sidelight is that the war in Korea (1950-1953) is not mentioned as affecting the AUUC in any way.

While it would be easy to attribute the decline totally to the repressive political atmosphere, it would probably be only partly true.

As already indicated, there were people who distanced themselves from the AUUC and other progressive, left-wing organizations, and that undoubtedly did slow growth. On the other hand, the AUUC had a strong reputation on the left of Canadian society. In spite of the attacks by the authorities, too, the AUUC had good public support throughout the ’50s, let alone during the period of post-war euphoria, for its performing arts presentations. While the repression had its effect, there were also countervailing factors which would have encouraged growth.

At least some of the AUUC problems of recruitment in the 1950s must be attributed to demographic changes in the Ukrainian Canadian community, within the framework of changes in the general Canadian population.

In the 1950s, the Ukrainian Canadian community went

from about 50% to about 65% urbanized. Many Ukrainian Farmer Temples, as well as many Ukrainian Labour Temples in smaller communities went out of service in that period, as people moved away. Often those left behind were not numerous enough to maintain a functional Branch, and in particular performing arts programs often disappeared.

At the same time, often the moves were not from the farm or small town into the larger cities, but into the suburbs, and not into the older suburbs, which often had Ukrainian Labour Temples, but into newer areas of development. Increasingly, AUUC members were abandoning cities for suburbs as well. Problems of transportation from the suburbs into the cities, combined with changing entertainment options made it more difficult to attract participants to the hall in the big city’s downtown area.

The proportion of ethnically mixed marriages increased. For the AUUC, so did politically or philosophically mixed marriages. While the AUUC, particularly with its English-Speaking Branches, increasingly put stress on its openness to non-Ukrainian participants with different political or philosophical views, nevertheless a mixed marriage often meant that a participant was pulled out, rather than another being brought in. There were a number of factors tending in this direction, including some continuing language barriers, religious and philosophical conflicts in mixed marriages, and competing multicultural demands in a mixed family.

The post-war period to the end of the ’50s, then, was a time of solid achievements for the AUUC — festivals, establishment of two museums, innovative organizational and publishing initiatives, and others — as well as an era of difficult challenges. Forty-five years later, a life-time for many organizations, in 2005, the AUUC was able to stage yet another festival, building on those earlier achievements and reflecting a strong performing arts program, good public support, and considerable organizational resources.

The stresses of that period also had their consequences, both positive and negative, for the AUUC. Some of these will be discussed in the next issue.

— Wilfred Szczesny

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Ukrainian News Briefs Selected by George Borusiewicz

"Beatle" Concert

Paul McCartney is going back to the USSR — to play a huge free outdoor concert in Ukraine.

The former Beatle will perform to over 300,000 in Kyiv's Independence Square on June 14.

McCartney, who is now 65, will use the event to announce a huge world tour later this year and throughout 2009. A source said, "With his divorce behind him he's ready to hit the road again."

Said McCartney, "It's going to be a great evening!"

Great Patriotic War

Celebrations of the victory of the allies (Soviet Union, Britain, France, and the USA) over Nazi Germany in 1945 were held this year in all countries formerly part of the Soviet Union. Observed annually on May 8, the celebrations are a tribute to the determination of people to resist foreign invaders.

Ukraine has traditionally considered Victory Day a major holiday. However the leaders of the 2004 Orange Revolution, in trying to hitch their star to Western Europe and America, have deliberately played down formerly close relations with Russia. This includes the marginalizing of formerly important holidays such as Victory Day.

Unfortunately for the "Orangists", the people of Ukraine are not so easily swayed. In a recent poll taken by Kyiv's Razumkov Centre (a polling organization that has been a strong supporter of the "Orangists"), a solid majority of Ukrainians still attaches great importance to victory over fascism.

According to the poll, 65.3% of Ukrainians believe Victory Day to be a great holiday, while 5.8% do not consider it a holiday at all. Another 26.4% consider May 8 to be an ordinary day. The poll was taken all across Ukraine, and the differences in opinions expressed in eastern and western Ukraine are striking.

In eastern Ukraine, about 76% stated that the holiday is important, while in western Ukraine, only 30% thought it to be important.

Tourism Up

Tourist numbers to Ukraine are up, and the trend for 2008 is showing healthy growth. Panorama Tours, a specialist in travel to Ukraine, attributes this increase to the changing perception of travellers when thinking of Ukraine.

The manager of Panorama

Tours, Adrian Jarockij, points to the continual upgrading of tourist facilities in major cities and resort areas. "We have seen how, after the first international hotel opened its doors in Kyiv, not only has the number of quality hotel beds in the city increased regularly, but the standard of accommodations is improving immensely.

"The Radisson SAS was the first to break ground in Ukraine, but the Hyatt has recently welcomed its first guests, the Intercontinental is due to open in a few months, and now all new hotels in the city have such high benchmarks that the days of Soviet-era lodgings throughout Ukraine will soon be relegated to the past."

Although Mr. Jarockij speaks glowingly about the newly built, luxury 5-star hotels which are beyond the reach of most Ukrainians, he says that Panorama Tours also offers 3-star hotels and youth hostel accommodations.

Racism Increasing

On May 5, a court in Kyiv sentenced four individuals of about 20 years of age to 13 years in prison each for beating a Korean national to death in 2007. The TV station "1+1 TV" stated that this was one of the very few sentences that have been delivered in Ukraine to punish xenophobia.

The four refused to plead guilty, even going so far as to make racist remarks in the courtroom.

Until very recently, Ukraine's current leadership refused to admit the seriousness of the problem with racism and xenophobia. The police manipulated crime statistics, insisting that most of the reported cases of murders of foreigners were acts of hooliganism or robberies.

President (and Orange co-leader) Yushchenko, who is often accused by his political opponents of imposing a policy of "monoculturalism" and "monolingualism", has also denied on several occasions that racism exists in Ukraine.

Deputy Interior Minister Volodymyr Yevdokymov said on February 28 that "racist or xenophobic motives are virtually absent among all the thousands of crimes committed against foreign guests."

Also in February, Justice Minister Mykola Onischuk called "the allegations" that racism exists in Ukraine "irrelevant and untimely".

The office of Ukrainian ombudsman Nina Karpachova registered some 100 cases of hostility based on xenophobia in 2006 and 2007, and 20 of those resulted in the deaths of

people of various ethnic origins.

NTN TV reports more chilling figures, saying that in the first three months of this year, some 100 attacks on foreigners were registered, in which 13 people were killed.

The problem of racism is especially acute in Kyiv, where many skin-head groups are located.

On February 19, foreign students staged a sit-in protest against racial abuse on the campus of the National Technical University.

On March 23, a group of students tried to stop a torchlight parade that was held on the campus by far-right groups using such slogans as "Migrants go home", but riot police protected the xenophobes, pushing the students aside.

Two months ago a group of teenagers stabbed a Nigerian on a bus, reportedly saying, "What are you doing here?"

People's Views

This report is based on interviews of two Ukrainians by American journalist Gabe Pressman, who then posted them on the American website www.wnbc.com. He conducted the interviews in the Ukrainian city of Odessa.

On the question of Ukraine's independence, a petite (unnamed) businesswoman stated, "Our income is low. Many of us have to pay for education, and health care costs us a lot (Both were free before independence, when Ukraine was socialist — GB). I know of people who have died at home because they couldn't afford doctors.

"Mortality is high. The birth rate is low. Life expectancy for men is between 60 and 65. It's good to have freedom of speech — we don't have to worry any more about speaking our mind — but we have these worries. Is that better?"

The second interview was with Nicolai Bodrov, an 83-year-old war veteran now living on a pension. Nicolai had just come from a reunion of soldiers celebrating the victory over the Nazis in 1945.

Sitting on a park bench, he recalled with pride the Red Army's World War II victory over fascism. He was wearing the blue dress uniform of a colonel in the Red Army, and much of his chest was covered with medals and campaign ribbons.

As a tank commander, he fought in four decisive battles (he recalled), including the liberation of Prague.

"Most young people today don't appreciate what we did," he said. "These days it's hard for most retired people to make ends meet."

He had strong feelings about America. "After the war, your country tried to dominate the world," he said. "Lately, you have been wrong in Iraq and Yugoslavia."

Climate Change

This event took place on March 24, 2007, but was published in scientific journals only in May, 2008. The bulk of this report comes from the journal *Science Daily*.

It was a warm, sunny day in spring, and a strong wind was blowing over the parched fields in the lower reaches of Ukraine's Dnipro River. There had been no rain for weeks.

The black soil in the south of Ukraine is one of the most fertile soils in the world, but it is also very fine, and therefore particularly sensitive to erosion.

On this day, March 23, 2007, gusts of wind with speeds up to 90 kilometres per hour were whipping up huge quantities of dust on the steppe. A dust cloud formed that was so big that it was later clearly visible on weather satellite infrared pictures.

At this point, no one living 1500 kilometres to the west suspected what was in store for people in Germany and their eastern neighbours.

Thanks to an area of high pressure over Scandinavia and an area of low pressure moving from the Black Sea to Italy, the air mass swept quickly, at speeds of up to 70 kilometres per hour, across the Czech Republic to Central Europe. Just one day later the air with its cargo of fine dust had arrived in Germany.

People in Germany were quite surprised when the sky took on a slightly yellow sheen. Phones in government offices began to ring, and governmental scientists swung into action. After much detective work, it was determined by the German scientists that Ukraine was the source of the dust and that Ukrainian farmers lost at least 60,000 tons of precious, fertile topsoil in that one windstorm (Czech scientists estimated the loss at 3 million tons).

One of the German scientists involved, Dr. Wolfram Birmili of the Leibniz Institute for Tropospheric Research stated, "But who can say that such weather conditions may not occur more frequently in future, as a result of climate change?"

Hot Docs Festival

Since its modest beginnings 15 years ago, Toronto's Hot Docs documentary film festi-

val has grown to become North America's biggest such event. This year, 172 films from 36 countries were presented.

The winner of the top film award (with \$10,000 in prize money) was a film made for the BBC, titled *The English Surgeon*. It's a story set in present-day Ukraine with, as one reviewer described it, "its sad blocks of grey buildings, poverty and masses of people in dire need of health care".

British brain surgeon Henry Marsh has been going to Ukraine for 15 years (since Ukraine's switch to capitalism) to perform free surgeries.

He is extraordinary, providing hope to the masses with his brilliant skills. His patients are poor and seek specialized help in a country with woeful medical services.

Henry Marsh is their saviour, a burden he carries because "My son had a brain tumour as a baby, and I was desperate for someone to help me. I simply can't walk away from that need in others."

Marsh sees grossly mis-diagnosed patients, but also patients he can't save because Ukraine lacks the proper equipment and trained support staff.

The highlight of the film is a harrowing surgery in which a poor, young Ukrainian man seeks treatment for a brain tumour that will kill him if left untreated. Marsh can remove the tumour, but because he lacks the proper equipment, the patient must stay awake throughout the entire operation, even as Marsh drills a hole into his skull.

In the film, Marsh asks the key question: "What are we if we don't try to help others? We are nothing."

Opposition To NATO Increases

In the latest test of Ukrainian public opinion, more Ukrainian adults believe that their country should not join the American-controlled NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) military alliance. During the last five years, every single poll taken of the Ukrainian people's wishes reported that the Ukrainian people reject NATO.

Unfortunately the leaders of the 2004 Orange Revolution, President Viktor Yushchenko and Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, who stridently campaigned then on an in-your-face "democratic" platform, are now readily prepared to ignore the will of the Ukrainian people in their drive to align themselves with their American friends.

(Continued on Page 12.)

**Ukrainian
Page
Submitted
Separately**

**Ukrainian
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Prairie Tapestry in Winnipeg

"Prairie Tapestry" was the theme of the third annual inter-cultural event at AUUC Winnipeg's Ukrainian Labour Temple on April 13. This time, the focus was on Irish music and dance.

The two prior performances in this series highlighted the Scots and their bard, Robbie Burns, matched with Taras Shevchenko in 2006, and then the Chileans and their beloved poet, Pablo Neruda, matched with Ivan Franko in 2007.

This year AUUC initially thought about following the same pattern and featuring readings from Irish and Ukrainian writers. But then one of the Irish consultants suggested that Ireland had no one really comparable to Burns, Shevchenko and Neruda, but that storytellers in Ireland performed much the same cultural function. Accordingly, an

Irish story teller was put on the program.

Certainly Ukraine also has a rich tradition of folk tales to draw on, but AUUC did not want to lengthen the show which already had an impressive line-up of performers.

Two guest groups formed the core of the Irish part of the program.

The Comhaltas Players were a group of ten instrumentalists who performed in a "front porch" style similar to traditional Appalachian playing before the day of sophisticated leads, breaks, and wired amplification. Sitting in an informal semi-circle on the stage, they did a variety of Irish reels, jigs, and polkas. Comhaltas is an international organization dedicated to the preservation and promotion of Irish music, song and culture.

According to Comhaltas's leader, not one of the ten members in the group has any Irish family connection. Although the point was not made to the audience, that was an important fact about the afternoon's entertainment. We learned that Ukrainian Canadians dance with the Irish group, and we knew that Irish Canadians perform with AUUC groups, and this says nothing about the myriad of other ethnicities and mixed ethnicities represented. The actual "prairie tapestry" is much more richly variegated and complex than the audience could have imagined.

The McConnell School of Irish Dance sent a group of young people, all girls except for a lone boy. They did a tight and fast-moving set which showed discipline and thorough rehearsal.

The Irish style of dancing perhaps lends itself to the al-

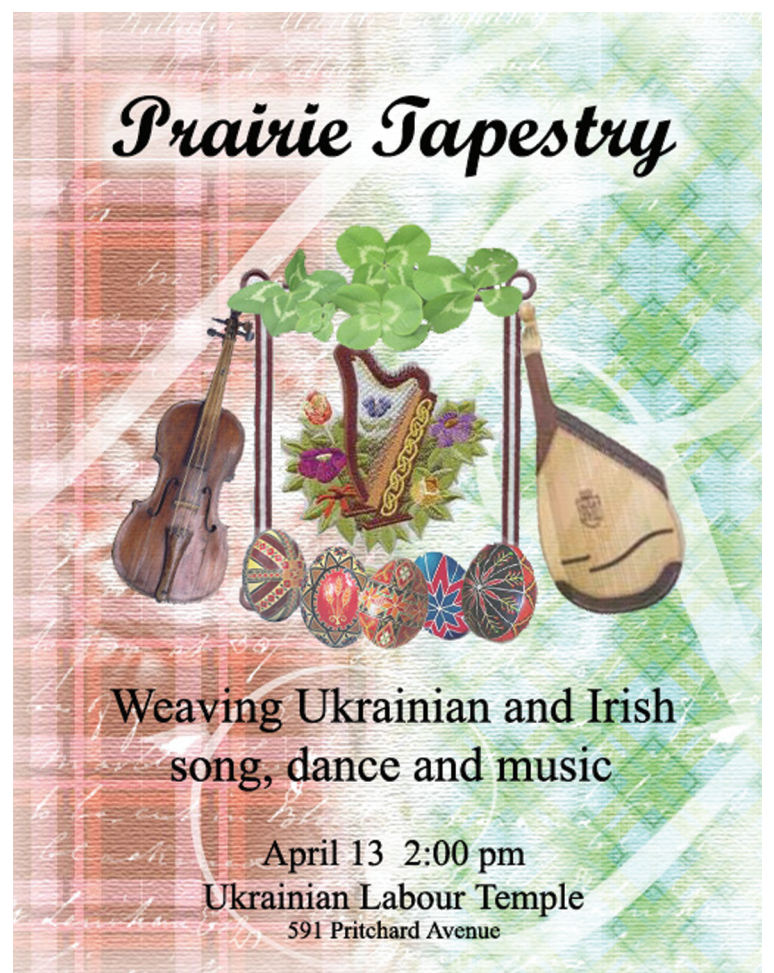
most military precision of the River Dance shows which we see on television. However, the McConnell young people's display of colour in their costumes, as well as their variety in dance styles, made this a quite different experience.

AUUC Winnipeg made significant contributions to the Irish part of the program. Ian and Nancy Walker did three Irish songs, with Nancy accompanying Ian's tenor vocal on mandola. Cheryl-Ann Carr of the Festival Choir sang "The Wind That Shakes the Corn". On top of that, the Winnipeg Mandolin Orchestra played an Irish medley adapted and arranged by Myron Shatulsky.

The orchestra, under the direction of Annis Kozub, was out in strength, with 25 members participating. Their new selection was "Siberian Snowflakes", arranged by Gordon Abel. This was obtained through Mr. Kozub's contacts with the Minneapolis Mandolin Orchestra, and was well



Nancy Walker, playing mandola, accompanied tenor Ian Walker in three Irish songs.



This poster advertising "Prairie Tapestry" was designed by Justin McGillivray.

received by the audience.

The orchestra used the "Kolomeyka" and "Arkan" from "Prairie Dances," arranged by Blyth Nuttall. The "Arkan" worked well as the orchestra's finale.

Yunist Dancers, who did four dances during the afternoon, developed a simple choreography for Blyth Nuttall's "Kolomeyka". This was AUUC Winnipeg's first attempt at adding a stage dance component to this orchestral composition.

The Festival Choir introduced the audience to the choir's newest offering, "Poblyskoyut cheryshenky" (The Glistening Cherries) by Lesya Ukrainka, to music by Verkhoven. The women in the choir revived "Pshenytsya zolota" (Golden Wheat). Myron Shatulsky conducted,

with Nancy Groznik on the accordion and Dale Rogalsky at the piano.

The concert was paced well, with plenty of variety and fast-moving transitions. The Irish groups adapted to the stage and concert conditions quickly and without fuss.

Kim Boss was Master of Ceremonies, while Eugene Semanowich was sound technician.

Justin McGillivray did the design for the colourful poster and printed program.

Refreshments were *pyrozhky* and Irish cake baked and served by Lucy Nykolishyn, Jenny Carter and Marian Kowal.

Lily Stearns coordinated the arrangements in consultation with Carmen Ostermann and the Cultural Committee.

— Brent Stearns



The McConnell School of Irish Dance, all girls except for a lone boy, did a tight, fast-moving, disciplined set which showed thorough rehearsal.

Story photos: Gordon Gilbey

Welland Orchestra at NRCS

On Wednesday, April 16, the Welland Ukrainian Mandolin Orchestra (AUUC) appeared in concert at Club Capri in Thorold, Ontario, entertaining at the volunteer appreciation dinner of Niagara Regional Community Services.

The orchestra's program, at the request of the hosts, minimized Ukrainian music in favour of numbers which would be more recognizable to a general audience.

Therefore, after starting with the medley "Ukrainian Melodies", the sole Ukrainian piece presented, the orchestra continued with "Anniversary Waltz" and the German medley "In Rudesheim".

These were followed by three selections from the movies: "Lara's Theme" from *Dr. Zhivago*; "Speak Softly,

Love" from *The Godfather*; and "Greek Medley", based on music from the film *Never on Sunday*.

Ken Speck sang the vocal solos in "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" and "Just Because".

The instrumental "Centennial Tribute", from the festival in Regina in 2005, was followed by the vocals "Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen", sung by Wilfred Szczesny (who doubled as announcer), and "Beer Barrel Polka", with the duet of Wilfred Szczesny and Rudy Wasylenky (who also served as conductor).

Rounding out the program was Doris Day's 1945 hit "Sentimental Journey", presented on this occasion as an instrumental number.

Every performance can be considered (of course, there are other possible perspec-

tives) as a series of challenges within the framework of a central, or main, challenge. The performers draw on their various resources to cope with the secondary challenges to successfully meet the main challenge.

The main challenge, of course, is to entertain the audience with a performance which earns the listeners' approval. The players meet this challenge by applying the orchestral and musical skills developed over many hours of rehearsal, by drawing on the confidence in those skills generated by previous performances, and by exercising discipline and concentration to avoid being distracted from the task at hand.

The secondary challenges are all the potentially distracting variances from the condi-

tions at rehearsal, ranging from the rather significant fact that there is an active human audience which was not there at the rehearsal to such minor factors as a shift in meal time or the fit of one's costume.

Each performance and each venue has its own challenges, and this appearance at Club Capri was no exception.

One such challenge arose from the contradiction between the requests of the client, NRCS, and the physical space of Club Capri.

Club Capri has few segregated spaces — the main hall, an antechamber, a cloak room a food preparation area, and washrooms. Only the cloak room was available for tuning, dressing (the washrooms did provide a bit of choice) and preparing to go on stage. This was important because the NRCS, seeking maximum impact from their entertainers,

requested that the orchestra keep out of sight until moving on stage, and then enter in an informal march-on.

Though keeping 25 musicians reasonably quiet for about a half hour at close quarters, especially while lining up a march-on, was a challenge, the group coped, and the hosts had their visual impact.

A more significant challenge was the layout of the orchestra seating. The stage at Club Capri is not large enough to accommodate the entire orchestra, and it was not known as the presentation was being planned how much space would be available on the floor. Therefore, it was decided to seat two rows of the orchestra on the stage, about a metre higher than the front row, which was on the floor with the conductor.

The practical effect of the
(Continued on Page 9.)

EDMONTON SENIORS CELEBRATE WITH A BIG BANG!

Birthday celebrants of the Edmonton AUUC Seniors' Easter gathering on April 22 were Ann Husar, Merville Rogers, Cheryl Romach and Leo Tropak. While not all were able to attend, those that did enjoyed the party.

The theme for this month was Ukrainian Easter, and Virginia Witwicki and Irene Kingsmith decorated each of the tables in keeping with the theme.

Paul Greene lead the sing-

ing of "Happy Birthday" and "Mnohaya leeta". Paul and the large audience raised their glasses of wine in a toast of health and happiness, while each celebrant successfully blew out his/her candle.

The noon meal followed. This included traditional dishes from *nachynka* to *studynetz* and poppy seed cakes which met with the approval of all. This food was made and donated by the usual cooks.

During the meal, our resi-

dent orchestra composed of Paul Greene, Bill and Mike Uhryn, and Maurice Warick played many traditional songs familiar to all. Our own Sylvia Lawrence, in her bright golden spring blouse, jigged many a step in time with the orchestra.

Several reports were presented next. Pauline Warick reported, encouraging members and friends to come in May on our bus trip just outside the city of Edmonton to the Kuhlmann Market Gardens and Greenhouses, and then to the Guru Manak Seik Temple for noon luncheon and a tour of this marvel of a structure.

Lucy Antoniow, on behalf of her committee of Rose Kerliuk and Mary Tropak, up-dated the members about the coming Seniors' Rummage and Plant Sale on May 24. This would be held in the basement of the AUUC hall in Edmonton. Many volunteers would be needed. The proceeds were to go towards activities for the seniors — that is, field trips.

Paul Greene briefed us about each of our seniors in care facilities throughout the

city and the urgent need to visit them occasionally.

President William Uhryn informed us that the annual meeting of the seniors is coming. A nominating committee has been struck.

The concluding activity of the afternoon was a big BANG! The centre table featured an embroidered *rushnyk* laden with traditional Easter decorations such as braided *babka*, decorated Easter eggs, beet and horseradish relish, pussy willows and a basket of dyed farm eggs, one for each of those attending.

The close of the afternoon was the annual egg fight! Each person carefully chose a boiled dyed farm egg from the basket. Then he/she turned to his or her neighbour for the fight. The one whose egg did not break went on to challenge the next person.

The winner was Fannie Hrushchak, who received from our president a jar of

beet with horseradish relish. After the fight each person returned to her/his chair to eat the egg with relish and *babka*.

Mrs. Bagan, our young senior, received a gift of a small *babka*, a wee bottle of rum and a jar of beet/horseradish relish from our president, William Uhryn.

"Hup! two, three, four! Hup! two, three, four!" are the resonating sounds which announce, most months, that it is time to begin our popular exercises for about 20 minutes prior to each gathering. These are led by Shirley Uhryn.

The needlework of the late Mary Skoworodko remains intriguing and interesting to many visitors.

Anita Robertson, daughter of Olga and Victor Horon, provides the computer knowledge used in submitting these monthly reports to the "UCH". Thank you, Anita. Your invaluable help is very much appreciated.

— Shirley Uhryn



Pussy willows, eggs and *babka* — the table is set for the Easter celebration.

Welland Orchestra

(Continued from Page 8.) seating arrangement was that the first row on stage was looking down at the conductor, instead of up, so they had a choice between lowering their music far below its usual location or trying to see the conductor over a stand obstructing their view. The back row, in addition to that problem, had to cope with trying to see the baton through whatever gap might be left by the row ahead of them.

Concerns about this seating arrangement persisted well into the concert, and it can not

be denied that it affected both the visual and the auditory aspects of the show.

Nevertheless, the group was able to overcome the challenges, and in particular to meet the main challenge of winning the approval of the audience. This was evident during the performance itself, and in the many positive comments heard at the end of the evening.

The appearance before the volunteers of the Niagara Regional Community Services completed a busy eight weeks in the life of the orchestra.

That included three distinct programs delivered in five concerts, including two performances on one afternoon in Toronto at the end of March, but not counting one cancelled at the last moment because of a snow storm in early March.

The orchestra will continue rehearsals to the end of June, revisiting dormant items in its musical library and testing new arrangements. Then it will take a break in July and August, returning in September to prepare for a major event in Welland — the celebration of the 90th anniversary of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians.

— Orchestra Member

— File Photo: George Borusiewicz



The Welland Ukrainian Mandolin Orchestra (AUUC), shown above in its Toronto appearance on March 29, appeared in Thorold on April 16.



Edmonton seniors square off in the annual egg fight. Fannie Hrushchak eventually emerged as the fighting champion.

— Story photos: Victor Horon



The Edmonton AUUC Seniors thoroughly enjoy their monthly lunches.



Mike Uhryn, left, raises a glass, while Paul Greene helps himself to some of the delicious food, "made and donated by the usual cooks".

In the Branches

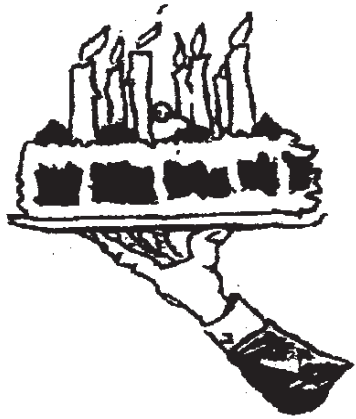
"In the Branches" is a new heading in our publication, a title under which we intend to report information beyond social events and performing arts which may be of interest to members of the Association of

United Ukrainian Canadians and other readers across the country and beyond.

Among the sorts of items suitable for this column are the results of Branch Executive elections, new projects being contemplated by the Branches, and so on.

Hopefully, this first instalment will serve as a model for additional reports.

Happy Birthday, Friends!



The **Edmonton AUUC Senior Citizens Club** wishes a happy birthday to the celebrants of June:

Nester Bagan
Sandy Gordey
Paul Greene
Nick Kereliuk
Ed Makowecki
Sophie Sywolos
Mike Uhryn
Virginia Witwicki
Mary Woyewidka

May you have good health, happiness and a daily sense of accomplishment as you go through life.

The **Toronto AUUC Senior Citizens Club** extends best birthday wishes to June celebrants:

Joe Dzatko
Frank Mihay
Natalie Mochoruk
Anne Omylanowski

May good health and happiness be yours in the coming year!

The **Vancouver Seniors Club** extends June birthday greetings to:

Mary Fedosenko
Carol Snider

We wish you the best of health and happiness in the coming year!

The **Welland Shevchenko Seniors** extend a happy birthday wish to June celebrants:

Alice Beazley
Lida Braun
Ron Hlywka
Mary Skrypnik
Leonard Whatmough

May the coming year bring you all the best in health and happiness!

Edmonton

The AUUC Edmonton Branch held its AGM, which was conducted by the National Executive Committee, on April 27, with 158 members (two thirds of the total membership of the Branch) in attendance. The meeting elected a totally new Branch Executive: Eugene Plawiuk — Branch President; Mike Uhryn — Vice President; Paul Greene — Recording Secretary; Pauline Warick — Vice-Recording Secretary; Blyth Nuttall — Treasurer; Eve Daskoch, Heather Eskow, Victor Horon, Vadim Nykolyshyn, Jay Smith, and Bill Uhryn — Executive Members.

Donalda Cassell, Vincent Frankiw, and Naomi Rankin, were elected Branch Auditors.

Vadim Nykolyshyn, Paul Greene, and Mike Uhryn

— File photo: Wilfred Szczesny



AUUC Edmonton Branch President Eugene Plawiuk.

were elected as representatives to the AUUC Alberta Committee.

It has been reported that the transfer of records and keys, as well as other details of the transition went smoothly.

In the period since the AGM, the new Executive has been reviewing the programs and arrangements existing under the previous administration, planning the way ahead, examining finances with a view to reducing the substantial operating deficit, and considering the possibilities for more effective outreach, particularly to "the progressive community in the city".

A "UCH" Bureau composed of Mike Uhryn, Shirley Uhryn, and photographer Victor Horon has been installed.

Toronto

AUUC Toronto Branch held its AGM on April 20. For the first time in years, there was substantial change in the composition of the Branch Executive.

Standing down from the Executive after many years of service were Bill Harasym, Bill Hrynychak, Anne Magus, and Mike Stefiuk. Their historical contributions are deeply appreciated; they will be missed.

Returned at the AGM were: George Borusiewicz, re-elected Branch President; Nataka Mochoruk, re-elected as Member; Mark Stewart, formerly Treasurer, now Member; Nancy Stewart, formerly Member, now Treasurer; and Wilfred Szczesny, re-elected as Vice-Recording Secretary.

Newly elected were: Connie Prince — Vice-President; Bernardine Dobrowolsky — Recording Secretary; Jerry Dobrowolsky, Joe Dzatko, and Pat Dzatko — Members.

Vera Borusiewicz and Bill

Malnychuk were re-elected to the Audit Committee, with Lyudmyla Pogoryelov elected in place of Otti Nicolai.

At its first regular business meeting, the Executive cancelled the May 25 Branch monthly meeting because of a conflict with the concert of the Shevchenko Musical Ensemble. It also confirmed arrangements for the Mother's/Father's Day celebration on June 15, rescheduled the 90th anniversary celebration from September 7 to September 14, and agreed to organize a barbecue social on July 1.

Of course, the meeting also tended to a number of administrative and other items.

Welland

As the "UCH" goes to press, the AUUC Welland Branch is preparing to receive AUUC National Executive Committee members on Saturday, May 24.

The visit to the Toronto area by National President Gerry Shmyr, Vice-President Bob Seychuk, and National Treasurer Steve Smoly was motivated by business related to Taras H. Shevchenko Museum and Memorial Park Foundation.

Winnipeg

Apart from Folklorama, May is the most active season for Winnipeg Branch.

The cultural season is ending, beginning with the Mostly Mandolins concert on May 10, which closed the year for the Winnipeg Mandolin Orchestra. The Praetorius Mandolin Ensemble and The D-Rangers, also on the program, were well received. The Branch found the audience of almost 200 quite invigorating, as lost friends and acquaintances were found again.

The June 1 Spring Concert continues the wind-down. Participating will be the Yunist

senior dancers, the AUUC School of Folk Dance, and the Praetorius Mandolin Ensemble.

As the "UCH" goes to press, final preparations are under way for the "Labour Songs and May Days" talk by Myron Shatulsky on May 24, with the What's Left folk singers (a Branch project) and the Winnipeg Labour Choir.

In February, the water pipes servicing the Ukrainian Labour Temple burst. Though the water service has been restored, the consequences are that the boiler has to be replaced and minor repairs are needed. Pending negotiations with the insurance company, the hot water heating continues to be supplanted by electrical space heaters.

The Branch Executive was finalized at a meeting on May 15. Elected were: Lily Stearns — Branch President; Carmen Ostermann — Vice-President; Kathy Schubert — Recording Secretary; Susan Szczepanski — Assistant Recording Secretary; Brent Stearns — Treasurer; and Members Myron Shatulsky, Michele Fontaine, Kirsten Schubert, Marissa Boss, Mykola Hedrich, Jeanne Romanoski (Membership Secretary), David Mackling, Kim Boss, and Olga Pawlychyn. Auditors are Mary Semanowich and Gloria Gordienko.

— **Wilfred Szczesny**
(With files from Blyth Nuttall, Eugene Plawiuk, and Brent Stearns.)

— File photo: Wilfred Szczesny



AUUC Winnipeg Branch President Lily Stearns.

Sustaining Fund Donations

Nina Wolovets, Delta BC, <i>In memory of my daughter Gloria Hawrylkew & grandson Chris Boivin</i>	\$200.00
Audrey Moysiuk, Vancouver BC	70.00
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<i>In memory of John Alexiewich</i>	60.00
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WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THESE CONTRIBUTIONS AND THANK THE DONORS FOR THEIR GENEROSITY. IF YOUR DONATION HAS NOT APPEARED ON THE PAGES OF THE "UCH", WATCH FOR IT IN FUTURE ISSUES.



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Alternative Business View

Birth of an Idea

I came across our old friend, the Fellow Traveller, at the mall the other day, and he called me over to ask my advice. "Old Mole," he said, pointing to his Tim Horton's coffee with its Roll Up the Rim contest, "tell me what you think of this."

"Better to put your money in Tim Horton's stock," I tell him, "than to keep spending your money trying to win the car they offer."

FT slapped me on the back and said, "See, that's why I like you. Straight talk from a capitalist."

"FT," I said looking somewhat chagrined, "just because I read the business press does not mean I am a capitalist."

"But you read it like some people read the sports or comic pages," FT said, laughing.

"Or like some people read the classifieds," I said, pointing to the fact that the paper he was reading was opened to the flea market and garage sale pages. "I read the business press because the capitalists always tell the truth when it comes to their self-interest."

FT laughed even harder, and after wiping away a tear, asked me to sit down.

"I have a business proposition for you then," he said. "I want you to advise me and my readers."

I admit that this was good news, a bit of coin to supplement my Engels Steelworks pension. Until I learned he wanted my advice for free. "Harrumph, typical socialist," I muttered.

"Consider the social good you could do, advising my readers about the capitalist market. Where else would they find the truth than in my column?" FT concluded.

"Well, flattery and a cup of coffee will get you my advice," I said, and so here I am, in his column on the pages of the *Ukrainian Canadian Herald*.

This is the first of my misadventures on the financial marketplace for FT and his regular readers.

RRSP as a Pension Plan

And since it is spring and tax time, I would note that RRSP season went by again this year with record numbers of Canadians **NOT** investing in this tax shelter savings scheme.

First created in 1957 — yes, that long ago — it did not become popular until the 1980s, when the federal government increased the tax credit you got for investing in this per-

sonal Retirement Savings Plan.

Working families in Canada have a hard time scraping by on a day to day basis, let alone having enough spare cash to invest in an RRSP. And the amount you would need to invest in an RRSP to actually have a pension equivalent to your CPP and OAS would be around \$500,000 — something they forget to mention in all those glossy ads. Which is why the government has systematically increased the amount that can be put into a RRSP. It's for the rich.

And in order to create a \$500,000 RRSP, which would earn you the same as your CPP and OAS annual payments, you would have to start paying that \$10,000-\$20,000 annually starting when you were 20 years old. Of course, only those who earn salaries in the millions can afford to put aside that much for their retirement.

The average working family in Canada cannot afford to invest \$10,000-\$20,000 annually into a RRSP. They spend that much or more on their mortgage.

Furthermore, with these plans, you do not get a defined pension when you retire, but rather you must hope that your RRSP investments over the years will be wise enough to provide that \$500,000 you will need for an adequate pension when you retire.

(The majority of Canadians are not covered by any kind of pension plan, other than CPP and Old Age Security. At best, working families use the RRSP as a tax break, making \$1000-\$3000 investments annually. But the vast majority don't even do that.)

That's a mistake. While the RRSP is not a realistic pension plan for most working Canadians, it can save you money at tax time, and can make the difference between having to pay Stephen Harper or having him pay you.)

Defined Benefit Plans

RRSP's are for those who do not have a Defined Benefits Pension Plan with their employer, but they are no alternative to a DBPP. Having a Defined Benefits Pension is better than the RRSP alternative that has been promoted by business for the past decade.

A defined pension plan exists in unionized work places in Canada. It is a joint pension paid by the employer and employee. Usually the employer doubles what the worker gets deducted from each pay cheque. It is called defined because, like the CPP,

it tells you how much you will earn monthly when you retire. It "defines" your monthly pension payments.

Most Canadians who are employed in non-union sectors have no company pension plan, which is why CPP was created. The CPP was a social program, like Unemployment Insurance, created to cover workers in Canada who did not have a defined benefits pension plan.

Then the government created RRSPs as a way for the self-employed and management types to save for retirement.

Throughout the eighties and nineties, the RRSP became a new financial instrument. It was tied into mutual fund investments, and it was promoted as an alternative to the Defined Benefits Pension plan. Allowing RRSPs to be part of a mutual fund investment was supposedly going to increase their rates of return, but the reality was that, being now part of the stock market, your RRSP earnings would fluctuate, up or down, with the investment markets. Of course, mutual funds sell well when the market booms, and they and RRSP investments decline when the market goes south.

Pensions as Investment Funds

With the Wall Street crash of 1987, the worst since Black Friday 58 years earlier, the capitalist market searched out new sources of capital. Around the globe, the largest source of new capital was pension funds.

The brilliant strategy of looting pension funds for the market originated in Chile during the Pinochet regime which found itself in a market collapse with inflation in the thousand percentile. In order to balance the market, to lower its debt, the state privatized its social security, the CPP of Chile. It created the Chilean Model, whereby you forced workers now to "buy" into their own plan. Indeed, paying taxes twice. Social security in Chile went from being a form of Defined Pension Plan to becoming a privatized plan.

This is part of the globalization of the market, a process in which production moves to the newly industrializing countries in Asia and Latin America, while the advanced industrial countries now rely on financial instruments — mutual funds, junk bonds, as well as easy credit and consumer debt — to create the modern marketplace known as casino capitalism.

In order to bet in the mar-

ket you need capital, and sitting around earning minimal interest in conservative low risk investments were millions (indeed, billions!) of dollars in workers' pensions.

The Chilean model was promoted globally, including in Canada by no less than Preston Manning and his Reform Party when he was Leader of the Official Opposition. It has met with little success and much opposition, especially in the US, where George W. tried to implement a partial privatization of social security.

What has occurred is the expansion of pension funds (public like the CPP federally and provincial pension funds, labour funds as well as corporate funds, and institutional funds; churches, universities, etc.) becoming major investment players in the global financial markets.

At the same time, the financial regulations of the market were loosened by the neo-conservatives in the nineties. In the debt and deficit hysteria of 1993-1997, both the federal and provincial governments gave their public pension funds greater latitude to invest in risky ventures like the stock market. This was because the government had not invested its share of funds into the pension funds themselves, instead having put pension monies they collected into general revenues. This meant that governments in Canada at all levels, and their counterparts across the globe, now found themselves owing pension funds for past collections.

Governments also opened up the market for RRSP Mutual Fund investments, giving themselves another source of investment capital.

Boom and Bust

These two events coincided with the dot.com bubble, and the later corporate debacles like Enron. The housing bubble itself is another reminder of the old adage; boom and bust. The bubbles, unlike capitalist "busts" of the past, have come perilously close to collapsing the market, but in fact are temporarily appeased by mass consumption of excess capital. Trillions are invested in financial markets daily. Billions are lost in bubbles, while in the past it took only millions to bust the market. If a bubble should blow up the market, then the world economy will go into a tail spin. Which is why the largest economy in the world, the United States, does not dare utter the word "recession".

Pension funds owned publicly either by governments or by public sector workers, survived these bubbles and continue to be used for private investment. Indeed, they are the major source of Public

Private Partnerships.

It is an irony of ideology. The neo-conservative ideology of right-wing governments is to reduce what they pay for costs, saving taxpayers money by inviting private investors to do what the state once did, such as building and maintaining infrastructure. The majority of P3 funds in Canada, and the third largest global investment fund, are public sector worker pension funds and your federal CPP.

Today your federal pension is involved in financing the privatization of public sector jobs here in Canada and in Europe. There is little public oversight, and none that directs that these funds be invested in ethical and socially responsible industries.

The same can be said for your RRSP, which is also invested in mutual funds which may be used for P3s, and investments in companies that are engaged in the super-exploitation of workers and the environment.

Private Sector Pension Plans

Private sector pension plans, however, did not fare very well. Like governments, big corporations delayed putting up their share of capital into their private pension funds, relying instead on the workers' investments and accruing interest to carry them. In the eighties and nineties these funds were often raided by corporate bosses, as Peter Pocklington did with the Gainers workers' pensions fund, or were used as capital investment by workers to bail out their employers, which is what happened at Air Canada.

In the past decade, it has been discovered that Defined Pension Plans in many private sector corporations were underfunded, and that led to a further collapse of those companies when they were sold off. Such was the case with Delco, an arm of GM, that was sold off at a loss because GM still had to bail out their underfunded pension plan.

Finance Capital

Capitalism in the West has changed in the past thirty years, going from the old model of industrial production to becoming reliant instead on consumer credit, debit, financial markets. These markets have created what are called "new" financial instruments, mutual funds in the seventies and eighties, junk bonds and, today, hedge funds. All these were unregulated, or faced outdated regulations, which allowed loopholes to exist for unscrupulous businessmen to

(Continued on Page 12.)

Who, What, When, Where

Regina — Regina's **Mosaic**, with 18 national pavilions, will be held on **June 5-7**. Visit the **AUUC Poltava Ukrainian Pavilion**, located at the Regina Performing Arts Centre, **1077 Angus at 4th Avenue**. The Ukrainian cuisine is tops, bar none, and for your enjoyment there will be 22 half-hour performances by the Poltava Ensemble of Song, Music and Dance and the School of Ukrainian Performing Arts (100 performers). **Passports available at the Performing Arts Centre.**

Sudbury — The **Jubilee Folk Ensemble** will perform at the **Civic Centre** in Sudbury on the **afternoon of June 7**, in celebration of the city's 125th anniversary.

Toronto — On Sunday, **June 15**, starting at **1:30 p.m.**, the AUUC Toronto Branch will host a **Mother's/Father's Day Celebration** at the AUUC Cultural Centre, **1604 Bloor Street West**. The program for the afternoon will include a **concert program** featuring the Hahilka Choir of the AUUC and the Beryozka Dancers of the Federation of Russian Canadians, **light refreshments** and more. Admission: **\$10.00**.

Vancouver — On Sunday, **June 8**, starting at **2:00 p.m.**, at the Ukrainian Cultural Centre, **805 East Pender Street**, the **Vancouver AUUC** will host a **commemorative concert and dinner** celebrating the 80th birthday of our hall and the 90th anniversary of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians. **For tickets, phone (604) 254-3436.**

Winnipeg — The **AUUC Winnipeg Branch** invites you to the **Spring Concert** at **2:00 p.m.** on Sunday, **June 1**, at the Ukrainian Labour Temple, **Pritchard and McGregor**. Featured are the AUUC School of Folk Dance, the Yunist Dancers, and the Praetorius Mandolin Ensemble. Admission: **\$7.00** at the door.

Readers of the Ukrainian Canadian Herald are invited to submit items of interest to the progressive Ukrainian Canadian community for free listing in this column. The deadline for material is the 10th of the month preceding the month of publication.

Alternative View

(Continued from Page 11.) take advantage of. Such was the case with Enron, which was funded by stock brokers, money managers and their own employees' retirement funds, as well as retirement funds of millions of ordinary Americans.

What many private sector corporations offer their employees is not Defined Benefits Pensions but what is called a Defined Investment Pension, simply another name for an RRSP. These have become popular, because they

are based not on a two-to-one investment by the company, but on a one-to-one investment, and because they force the workers to be responsible for their investment decisions.

Conclusion

I know I have rambled on and you had hoped, and Fellow Traveller was hoping, that I would advise you which stocks you should invest your RRSP in. But that is not what this column is about. I am not here to give you investment advice, but to explain how the market works — or doesn't work — in the interests of working people.

— **Carl Marks**
The Old Mole

Have You Claimed this Deduction?

The Old Mole reminds us that the **Federal Tax Deduction for athletics** can be applied to the **cost of dance classes**, providing a **benefit up to \$500.00** for each child.

SEE US ON THE WEB!

Edmonton AUUC, Trembita Ensemble
www.ukrainiancentre-edm.ca

Regina AUUC, Poltava Ensemble
<http://www.poltava.ca/>

Taras Shevchenko Museum:
www.infoukes.com/shevchenkomuseum

JoKe TiMe

In honour of Father's Day, we present:

Top Ten Things You'll Never Hear a Dad Say

10. Well, how about that?... I'm lost! Looks like we'll have to stop and ask for directions.

9. You know, Pumpkin, now that you're thirteen, you'll be ready for unchaperoned car dates. Won't that be fun?

8. I've noticed that all your friends have a certain "up yours" attitude ... I like that.

7. Here's a credit card and the keys to my new car — GO CRAZY.

6. What do you mean you want to play football? Figure skating not good enough for you, Son?

5. Your mother and I are going away for the weekend. You might want to consider throwing a party.

4. Well, I don't know what's wrong with your car. Probably one of those doo-hickey thingies — you know — that makes it run or something. Just have it towed to a mechanic and pay whatever he asks.

3. No son of mine is going to live under this roof without an earring — now quit your belly-aching, and let's go to the mall.

2. Why do you want to get a job? I make plenty of money for you to spend.

1. Father's Day? Aahh, don't worry about that. It's no big deal.

* * *

A child's eagerness to assist in any project varies in inverse proportion to the ability to actually do the work involved.

Ukrainian News Briefs

(Continued from Page 5.)

According to a recent poll by the Democratic Initiatives Foundation, 59% of Ukrainians would vote against NATO membership, up 6 points since last December. In the same poll, 22% of Ukrainians are in favour of joining the NATO military alliance, down 10 points since last December.

Instead of democratically acknowledging the will of the people, the government has launched a pro-NATO propaganda campaign, partially funded by their NATO friends, to show "positive programming" devoted to NATO.

According to another poll, this one by the International Institute of Sociology in Kyiv, only 18% of Ukrainians support membership in NATO while 62% oppose it. This poll shows that NATO has 39% support in western Ukraine and 6% support in eastern Ukraine.



JOIN US!

Join us for a new season of AUUC activities! Each Branch has a unique schedule of events and activities. To discover what we have to offer, contact the AUUC in your area:

AUUC NATIONAL OFFICE

National Executive Committee AUUC
595 Pritchard Avenue
Winnipeg MB R2W 2K4
Phone: 800-856-8242 Fax: (204) 589-3404
E-mail: auuckobzar@mts.net

VANCOUVER BRANCH

Ukrainian Cultural Centre
805 East Pender Street
Vancouver BC V6A 1V9
Phone: (604) 254-3436 Fax: (604) 254-3436
E-mail: auucvancouver@telus.net

CALGARY BRANCH

Ukrainian Cultural Centre
3316-28 Avenue SW
Calgary AB T3E 0R8
Phone: (403) 246-1231

EDMONTON BRANCH

Ukrainian Centre
11018-97 Street
Edmonton AB T5H 2M9
Phone: (780) 424-2037 Fax: (780) 424-2013
E-mail: auucedm@telus.net

INNISFREE BRANCH

c/o Mike Feschuk
Box 216
Innisfree AB T0B 2G0
(780) 592-2127

VEGREVILLE BRANCH

c/o Lil Humeniuk
Box 481
Vegreville AB T9C 1R6
Phone: (780) 632-3021

REGINA BRANCH

Ukrainian Cultural Centre
1809 Toronto Street
Regina SK S4P 1M7
Phone: (306) 522-1188

WINNIPEG BRANCH

Ukrainian Labour Temple
591 Pritchard Avenue
Winnipeg MB R2W 2K4
Phone: (204) 582-9269 Fax: 589-3404

OTTAWA BRANCH

c/o Robert Seychuk
24 Attwood Crescent
Ottawa ON K2E 5A9
Phone: (613) 228-0990

SUDBURY BRANCH

Jubilee Centre
195 Applegrove Street
Sudbury ON P3C 1N4
Phone: (705) 674-5534

TORONTO BRANCH

AUUC Cultural Centre
1604 Bloor Street West
Toronto ON M6P 1A7
Phone: (416) 588-1639 Fax: 588-9180
wilfredszczesny@gmail.com

WELLAND BRANCH

Ukrainian Labour Temple
342 Ontario Road
Welland ON L3B 5C5
Phone: (905) 732-5656