



## WASHINGTON UPDATE

from the UNA Washington Office

"Washington Update" is compiled and published to provide the readers of *The Ukrainian Weekly* with a summary of government actions of interest to Ukrainian Americans. Readers are encouraged to contact their elected representatives to express their opinions — either positive or negative — on issues, since members of Congress formulate their positions on issues with the views of constituents in mind. Readers are also free to contact the UNA Washington Office for more details on any items reported.

### STATEMENT UPDATE

#### Ukrainian Independence Day

On January 23, **Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R-N.Y.)** submitted to the Record the Ukrainian Independence Day proclamation issued by Mayor James Griffin of Buffalo, N.Y. That same day **Rep. Benjamin Gilman (R-N.Y.)** provided his colleagues with the history of the struggle for Ukrainian independence including the role of Shevchenko, Drahomanov and Petliura. He concluded by inviting his colleagues "to salute a proud people on a proud occasion, and to join with us in praying for the day that Ukrainian independence will be revived, total and permanent."

On January 24, **Rep. Frank Annunzio (D-Ill.)** spoke of the events currently taking place in Ukraine including the organization of Rukh and the "human chain." He renewed his commitment to "devote my efforts tirelessly until Ukraine is a democratic nation, free from the tyranny, and domination of the Communists." Also that day, **Rep. William Broomfield (R-Mich.)** called for the Soviet government to "finally accept that the status quo is no longer acceptable and shape its policy toward Ukraine accordingly."

On January 30, **Sen. Paul Simon (D-Ill.)** stated that "there is a troubling discrepancy between the rhetoric and reality of Mr. Gorbachev's policies regarding Ukraine," outlining the continued persecution of the Churches and the harassment of Ukrainian activists. **Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-Md.)** stated that "we are witnessing the beginnings of the reversal of the stifling effects of Russification, and a rapidly growing pride in Ukrainian culture." He went on to discuss the re-emergence of the Ukrainian Catholic and Orthodox Churches and the upcoming elections. **Rep. Benjamin Cardin (D-Md.)** used the occasion to extend "best wishes and thanks to Ukraine for its important contributions to the world in the visual arts, folk music, religion, world view, literature, physical sciences, architecture — but above all Ukraine's greatest contribution: her people."

On January 31, **Sen. Carl Levin (D-Mich.)** stated that "the resilience and unending determination of the Ukrainian people to achieve freedom will not die. The flame has never been extinguished, and burns with increasing intensity."

On February 1, **Sen. Donald Riegle (D-Mich.)** talked about the 72nd anniversary pointing out that "linked arm-in-arm from Kiev to Lviv, Ukrainians delivered a message of hope and solidarity that their vanquished nation would once again thrive." **Rep. Robert Michel (R-Ill.)** used the opportunity to insert an article titled "In Ukraine, Faith in God — Not in Gorbachev" by Edward

McFadden which appeared in the February 1 issue of *The Wall Street Journal*.

Also on February 1, **Rep. Constance Morella (R-Md.)** spoke of Ukraine's forcible incorporation into the USSR and the destruction of all rights for Ukrainians. She went on to state: "However, remaining unextinguished were the smoldering flames of Ukrainian nationalism, which today are growing stronger as they are fanned by the winds of freedom blowing across Eastern Europe." **Rep. Bernard Dwyer (D-N.J.)** spoke of the positive steps being taken with the Ukrainian Catholic Church but cautioned that "the strides made in the past year should not blind us to the human rights abuses which continue in Ukraine."

#### Ukrainian Catholic Church

On February 7, **Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.)** inserted the McFadden article from *The Wall Street Journal* with an introduction of the efforts in the U.S. Senate prior to Mikhail Gorbachev's visit with the pope. While acknowledging that Ukrainian Catholics are now allowed to register, he pointed out the continuing struggle of the Church to "achieve status as a full legal entity, particularly regarding the question of return of confiscated Church property." That same day, **Rep. William Lipinski (D-Ill.)** also submitted the article to the Record, pointing out that "in October and November, over 170 members of Congress joined me in urging Mikhail Gorbachev to legalize the Ukrainian Catholic Church."

#### Foreign aid

A debate is emerging in the Congress on U.S. aid to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. On January 16 in an op-ed in *The New York Times*, **Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kan.)** called for a 5 percent across-the-board cut in all the large foreign aid accounts to provide funds for aid to emerging democracies including Eastern Europe and Panama, Israel, Egypt, the Philippines, Turkey and Pakistan — which receive over two-thirds of U.S. foreign aid — would be most affected. On January 24, **Sen. Dole** inserted the article with a further outline of the need for foreign aid to Eastern Europe into the Record.

Joining the debate on foreign aid to Eastern Europe were **Sens. Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.)**, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, **Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.)**, and **Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.)**. While everyone seems to support efforts to rebuild Eastern Europe, there seem to be problems finding the funding.

On January 23, **Sen. Simon** placed in the Record an editorial from the *Financial Times* of London titled "The Polish Challenge" and an article by Ira Straus, executive director of the Association to Unite the Democracies, titled "How Much Is Poland Worth?" Both argue for increased aid to Poland.

On January 25, **Rep. Frank Wolf (R-Va.)** spoke at length on the developments in Romania and the need for U.S. foreign aid to that nation. Taking part in the discussion was **Rep. Donald Lukens (R-Ohio)**.

#### Miscellaneous

On January 30, **Sen. DeConcini** informed his colleagues that **Rep. Hoyer** and he, as co-chairman and chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Com-

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## Faces and Places

by Myron B. Kuropas



### Houston happening

Like many smaller Ukrainian communities in the United States, Houston is rarely mentioned by the Ukrainian press.

This is a shame because Houston has something many larger Ukrainian communities covet: active young professionals.

And practically all of them are Ukrainians born elsewhere — Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Illinois, New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Ohio, Ontario, Manitoba, Quebec, Alberta. Everywhere, it seems, except Texas.

Many moved to Houston during the late 1970s, when, thanks to the oil boom, job opportunities for young professionals were at an all-time high. By the time the Houston economy began to decline, most of these same professionals were well-established and could remain in the area.

I had the good fortune to meet some Ukrainian Houstonians on January 19 when I presented a paper at Rice University titled: "The Ukrainian Church Under Gorbachev."

My wife, Lesia, and I met many more Texas Ukrainians at the annual Houston "malanka" the following evening when we partied with some 150 people from Houston, Austin, Dallas, San Antonio, Nacogdoches and other Texas cities. It was all great fun with malanka-goers of all ages, including babies in their mother's arms, the pre-teen group and teen-agers. The menu highlight was Texas-style bar-b-que beef.

On Sunday, we attended divine liturgy at the Protection of the Mother of God (Pokrova) Ukrainian Catholic Church. The **Rev. Richard Kirouac**, the newly assigned pastor, greeted us warmly and permitted us to speak to the married couples about Ukrainian marriage encounter. We knew **Father Kirouac** from Chicago's St. Nicholas Cathedral and were delighted to renew our friendship the evening before. **Father Kirouac** was not only present at the malanka, but participated in all of the rivalry side-by-side with his parishioners. A pastor who both prays and plays with his flock, I thought at the time. What a unique concept!

Also unique is the fact that **Pokrova**, a Ukrainian Catholic church completed in 1960, has both Catholic and Orthodox members. According to **Wasył Dajak**, a Ukrainian Orthodox born and raised in Boston, and a church council member and an activist of the Ukrainian Cultural Club of Houston, there are no conflicts: "We have one Ukrainian church in Houston and we support it," he told me.

Most active young Ukrainians belong to UACCH, now headed by **Ihor Kosz-man**. According to **Eugene A. Kuchta**, UACCH president from 1985 to

1988, the strength of the organization lies in the youthful enthusiasm of its members. Founded in 1975, UACCH began publishing *The Texas Trident*, a monthly newsletter in 1985. During my brief stay I was impressed with both the caliber and dedication of UACCH members such as **Messrs. Koszman Kuchta** and **Dijak** as well as **Irene Kuchta**, **Olia Holowka**, **Mike** and **Lydia Balahutrak**, **Lubomyr Popowskyj**, **Alex Felenko**, **Marianne Lawryk** and **Ok-sana** and **Olya Gensior**. All would be an asset in any Ukrainian community.

As many young Ukrainian Houstonians are quick to point out, however, the present success of their community is also the result of much hard work by those who came before them. They acknowledge the contributions of **Victor Balaban**, a resident of Houston since 1948. It was **Mr. Balaban** who organized the first Ukrainian church committee, supported the **Rev. (now Metropolitan) Stephen Sulyk's** church mission in Houston, and donated the land upon which the church and the church hall presently stand. It was also **Mr. Balaban** who helped organize **UNA Branch 28** in 1968, serving as secretary until the present.

In his book "Ukrainian in Texas," (co-authored by **Bohdan Hirka**) **Mr. Balaban** acknowledges the fact that much of his success was due to the support he received from his uncle **Michael**, who immigrated from Galicia to Houston in 1907.

**Michael Balaban** was part of a Ukrainian immigration to Texas that began in 1896 when a large group of Ukrainians on their way to Canada in search of homestead land were persuaded by steamship agents to head for Texas instead. Most of them settled on farms near the towns of **Bremond**, **Anderson**, **Marlin**, **New Waverly**, **Schulenberg**, and **Dundee**, where they raised tobacco, cotton and grain. Attending Polish churches in the area, most eventually lost their identity. The 1936 Jubilee Book of the Ukrainian National Association listed **Bremond** as having 150 Ukrainian families (mostly Polonized), **Fort Worth** with 60 families, "only one of which is interested in life in the native land and provides financial support," and **Houston** with 20 families, "some of which subscribe to *Svoboda*."

In addition to Houston, today there are visible Ukrainian communities in **San Antonio**, **Austin**, and **Dallas**. Noteworthy Ukrainian Texans, past and present include **Prof. Leon Dmochowski**, head of the Department of Virology and Cancer Research at University of Texas Medical School, **Houston**; **Dr. Wolodymyr Zyla**, professor of comparative literature, **Texas State University, Lubbock**; **Dr. Jerry Hordinsky**, **NASA** surgeon, **Houston**; **Prof. Victor M. Bilan**, department of agronomy and forestry, **Stephen F. Austin University, Nacogdoches**; **Omelan Tyshovnytskyj**, civil engineer, **Texas State Highway Department, Beaumont**; and **Michael** and **Oksana Danyluk**, **Marika Macko-Keith** **William Polewchak**, and **Anne Petras-Wasylyko**, all of whom have made outstanding contributions to the cultural and political life of Ukrainian Houston.

A major event for all Ukrainian Texans is the annual **Texas Folklife Festival** in **San Antonio**. Beginning in 1982, the UACCH, assisted by the Ukrainian Dancers of **Dallas** as well as Ukrainians in **San Antonio**, organized cultural and food booths as well as Ukrainian entertainment during the three-day event.

According to the 1980 census, there are 8,636 Americans of Ukrainian ancestry in Texas, giving the state only 1.2 percent of America's total Ukrainian population. Given these statistics, it's obviously quality not quantity that has made Ukrainian Texas what it is.