

# CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN<sup>®</sup>

A Forum on Carpatho-Rusyn Ethnic Heritage



## FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE C-RRC

At least one year has gone by since the Revolution of 1989 began the process of political change throughout East Central Europe and accelerated it further in the Soviet Union. It is no surprise that Carpathian Rus', located in the heart of the European continent, has been deeply affected by these revolutionary changes. Wherever Rusyns live—whether in the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Poland, or Yugoslavia—they have from the outset taken advantage of their newly-found democratic freedoms. As we have seen from the pages of the *Carpatho-Rusyn American*, Rusyns have since 1989 created no less than five new organizations in each of the countries where they live. They have also started four new publications (*Besida*, *Holos rusyniv*, *Otčyj chram*, *Rusyn*) written in various Rusyn dialects, which are designed to present a pro-Rusyn understanding of their past and present.

In the course of this multifarious activity, two age-old problems have been revived once again: (1) the question of national identity (are Rusyns a separate nationality or are they a branch of Ukrainians?); and (2) the struggle between the two traditional churches—Greek Catholic and Orthodox—for the allegiance of the people. At least since World War II, political repression made it dangerously impossible to discuss these problems openly. But in the freer atmosphere since 1989, both the nationality and religious problems have once again been passionately debated, and some have even suggested that they cannot be resolved unless there occurs first economic and, most especially, political change. Political change for certain Rusyn spokespersons means not only individual democratic rights but also some form of economic autonomy or even self-rule for Rusyn-inhabited lands.

During the debates, Rusyns in the European homeland have also revived another tradition. They have turned to their Rusyn-American brethren in the United States with requests for information about their own and our historical past, for financial assistance and advice in religious, cultural, technical matters, and in general for moral support in their efforts to reestablish a clearly-defined Rusyn national identity.

The Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center has been one of the primary places to which Rusyns throughout the European homeland have turned. Considering our own limited means, we have done whatever possible in areas that are related to our own cultural-educational mandate. This has included sending our publications gratis to individuals and organizations in the European homeland and providing modest financial support for scholars to do research or participate in conferences dealing with Rusyn subjects. Added to such activities is the new post of C-RRC Communications Desk, which has since early 1990 provided on a somewhat systematic basis information about Rusyn developments in Europe to mainline media in the United States as well as to key figures in the American government and Congress.

Nonetheless, some of you have expressed the concern that the C-RRC is not doing enough. That in this time of rapid revolutionary change in Europe, the survival of the "Rusyn cause" depends on the realization of some form of political autonomy, even independence, and that the C-RRC should be taking an active role to help make this possible. I will not comment here whether such goals are or are not desirable. What I will comment on is the role of the C-RRC.

The C-RRC was established in 1978 as a non-profit

cultural-educational organization. Our primary goal was and remains to promote research and disseminate intelligent and informed publications about Carpatho-Rusyns in Europe and America. Our primary audience for such materials has been and still is Americans of Rusyn background. Our secondary audience includes American scholarly and governmental circles interested in the Carpathian Rus' homeland just as they are interested in any other part of the world, especially as it may be of strategic interest to the United States. Carpathian Rus' falls into the category of such interest since it is found within the borders of the Soviet Union and several East Central European countries.

While, undoubtedly, the C-RRC is sympathetic to the cultural specificity of Carpatho-Rusyns, we have always striven to remain neutral on religious and nationality problems. We have always tried to provide balanced coverage of Greek (Byzantine) Catholic and Orthodox developments as well as information on all national orientations, even those which argue against Rusyn specificity. Moreover, we have tried to do this in a manner that avoid conflict and promotes understanding.

There are circles in both Europe and America that are not sympathetic to the idea of Carpatho-Rusyn specificity and that have misread our work as being political in nature. The C-RRC is not a political organization. While we must continue to report on political developments in the homeland, and while our staff, advisors, and supporters may have their own particular political or religious preferences, we as an organization cannot become involved or promote through lobbying or other means political demands such as recently have been heard that call, for instance, for a free economic zone or self-rule for Soviet Transcarpathia, or even a change in international boundaries. As an organization, the C-RRC should neither condone nor condemn such developments; it should, however, do its best to understand them and report them to our readers and to the American public at large.

Some of you may conclude that the above position seems to be a cop-out or that it reflects the kind of lack of commitment often associated with scholarly-type organizations. It is neither. We are simply a cultural-educational organization doing what we know best and what, moreover, we are legally mandated to do. This may not seem to be the most exciting kind of activity, especially when Americans of other East European backgrounds are marching in the streets, picketing embassies, or politicking in the European homeland in response to the serious and often dramatic events unfolding before our eyes on nightly television reports.

Yes, all of that does seem so exciting, so real. But someone also has to do the more tedious jobs: to record what is happening in the world of Carpatho-Rusyns; and, even more important, to provide for the group a firm source of knowledge about itself. The C-RRC is the only organization outside the European homeland that does this. And because of our very limited personnel, financial, and linguistic resources, we can at best achieve our limited goals after great effort and self-sacrifice on the part of the few individuals who work to produce and distribute our publications.

This does not mean that political action and nation-building are not worthy activities. These, however, are for others to contemplate doing, whether through existing organizations or through new ones. This is not and cannot be the function of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center.

Paul Robert Magocsi  
January 1, 1991

## NICK HOLONYAK, JR.

On November 13, 1990, United States President George Bush awarded the National Medal of Science and the National Medal of Technology to 30 scientists, engineers, and mathematicians, including a son of Carpatho-Rusyn immigrants, Nick Holonyak, Jr. Mr. Bush described the laureates as "real life pioneers who press the limits of their field." Dr. Holonyak, who was honored for his research on semi-conductor lasers, has been Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at University of Illinois, Urbana, since 1963. He is considered the inventor of the first light-emitting diode (LED) and also the control element used in many household light dimmers. (A *diode* is an electronic device through which current can pass freely in only one direction.)

Nick Holonyak, Jr. was born on November 3, 1928, in Zeigler, Illinois, a small town in the south-central part of the state which at the time had a population of about 3500. The town was (and still is to some extent) a producer of bituminous coal which in that region is mined underground rather than strip-mined. In fact, Zeigler lies in the same seam of coal deposit that other Rusyn immigrants mined in western Pennsylvania. Illinois was then America's third largest coal-producing state, and many immigrants from the Carpatho-Rusyn villages of pre-World War I Austria-Hungary made their way there including Holonyak's parents.

Holonyak's father, Mykola, was born in Nové Selo, a village near the Tisa River in what was then Bereg County. Attracted by the economic lure of the coal fields, Mykola Holonyak arrived in Baltimore in 1909 and proceeded to western Pennsylvania. He became an itinerant bituminous miner, working variously in western Pennsylvania, southern Illinois, Montana, and again in western Pennsylvania near the borough of Export. Holonyak's mother was born near Chust in the historic Hungarian county of Máramaros and arrived in America in 1921. Like many of our people, Mrs.

Holonyak was fluent in the Hungarian as well as Rusyn language. The couple lived in Zeigler until the late 1920s, and then moved to Glen Carbon, Illinois (near St. Louis) during the next decade.

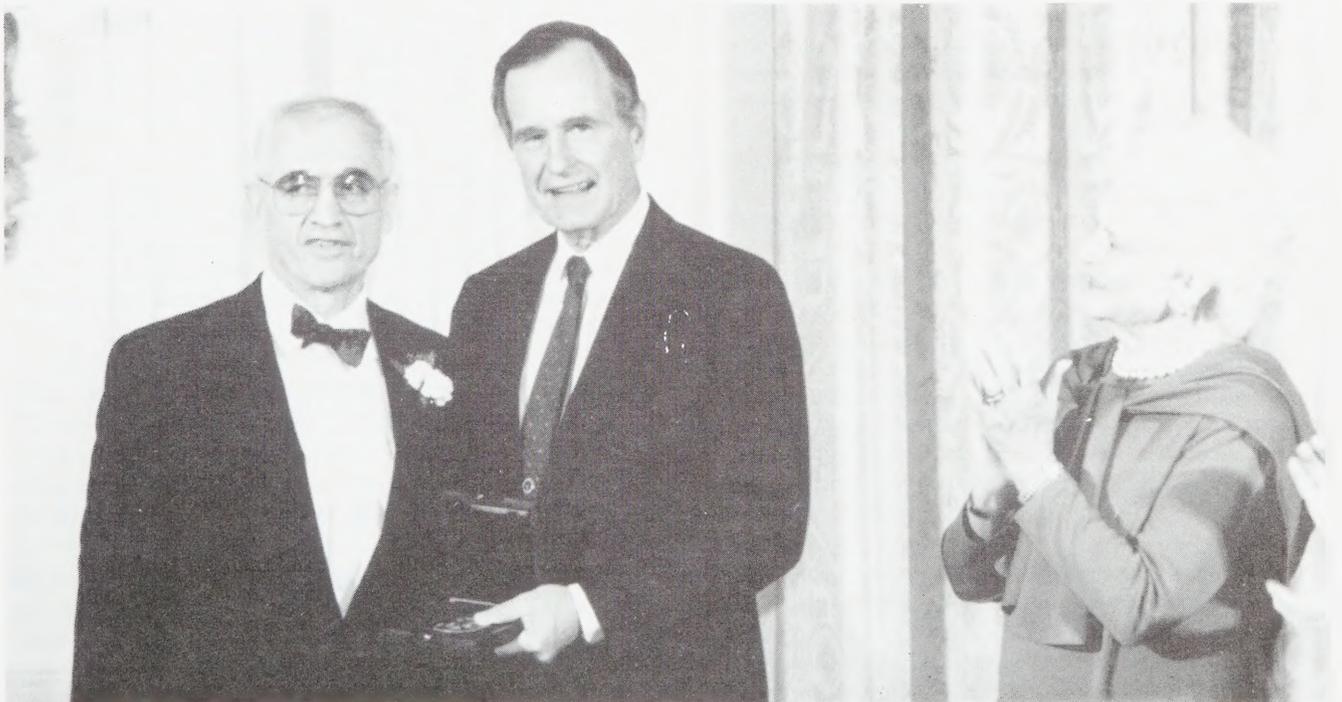
In his pioneering book, *Ukrainians in the United States*, Dr. Wasyl Halich commented on the mining community of Zeigler with its two Eastern-rite churches and about 500 miners: "Some of these miners are still backward and call themselves 'Russians' or 'Rusniaks', while all of them are *Ukrainians* from the provinces of East Galicia and Ruthenia and speak Ukrainian." Holonyak's father certainly would have disagreed with this interpretation.

Reached by telephone at his Urbana home, Professor Holonyak recalled how his father had emphasized to him that "we are part of the main body of Slavs but of a different group than the Ukrainians yet similar to them." "We are Transcarpathian Rusyns," said his father, "and we are Orthodox not Uniate." Holonyak also related that his parents took him to services at a Russian church in Royalton, Illinois, probably the Church of the Protection of the Holy Virgin under the jurisdiction of what was then called the Russian Orthodox Metropolis.

Professor Holonyak earned his B.S., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees in electrical engineering at the University of Illinois in 1950, 1951, and 1954. His graduate work was done under the direction of Nobel laureate, John Bardeen. As his career progressed, Holonyak published several works in his research specialty. In 1989, he was awarded the Edison Medal of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers.

According to a biography he submitted to *Carpatho-Rusyn American*, Holonyak "enjoys reading and some running and weight-lifting." He is fluent in a second language, the Carpatho-Rusyn spoken by his immigrant parents. Nick Holonyak, Jr. is another example of an American who has reached the top of his profession while remaining proud of his Carpatho-Rusyn heritage.

Richard Renoff  
Garden City, Long Island



## DECLARATION OF THE CARPATHO-RUSYNS CONCERNING RESTORATION OF THE TRANSCARPATHIAN OBLAST TO THE STATUS OF AN AUTONOMOUS REPUBLIC

Not all the ancient Slavic principalities were united under Kievan Rus', which according to the *Ukrainian Soviet Encyclopedia* extended from the region between the Volga and Oka rivers to Transcarpathia, i.e., to the peaks of the Carpathian mountains. Russia, the Ukraine, and Belorussia evolved from the principalities which had been united in Kievan Rus'. The West Slavic principalities of the Croats, ancestors of Subcarpathian Rusyns, found themselves after 896 under the rule of Hungary and eventually the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

World War I contributed to the collapse of the monarchy and to the formation on its territory of numerous sovereign Slavic countries. In the process of settling these problems, certain interested powers, together with the international community represented by forty-eight countries, officially recognized the Subcarpathian Rusyns as a nation that had the right to self-determination. At the Paris Peace Conference, the treaties of St. Germain (1919) and Trianon (1920) recognized "an autonomous Rusyn territory south of the Carpathian mountains within the Czechoslovak state with the fullest degree of self-government compatible with the unity of Czechoslovakia." The League of Nations was to regulate compliance with the terms of these treaties.

However, the government of Czechoslovakia was in no hurry to grant the "fullest degree of self government" either to the Subcarpathian Rusyns or to the Slovaks, who also were incorporated into Czechoslovakia by the St. Germain and Trianon peace treaties. The pretext was that the Territorial Commission of the Paris Peace Conference, acting on a Czechoslovak government appeal, established only a temporary demarcation line between Slovakia and Subcarpathian Rus', extending from Čop to Užhorod following the railway line and along the Už River to the summit of the Carpathians. After only one meeting, the government commission unanimously decreed as indisputable the border between Subcarpathian Rus' and Slovakia along a line passing by [the towns and villages] of Regetovka, Giraltove, Snina, Sobrance, and Čop. In 1921, the Czechoslovak government assured the League of Nations that, in that same year, it would legitimize the border between Subcarpathian Rus' and Slovakia. However, intending to delay granting these peoples "the fullest degree of self-government," it did not honor its commitment.

At the beginning of October 1938, Slovakia and Subcarpathian Rus' both finally attained the status of autonomous republics. The present-day territory of Subcarpathian Rus' was occupied on March 14-18, 1939. In a protest note to the German ambassador, dated March 18, 1939, the People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, M.M. Litvinov, stated that the actions of the German government "were a signal to the Hungarian army to invade brutally the republic of Subcarpathian Rus' and to violate its basic human rights."

Subcarpathian Rus' was liberated on November 4, 1944. On November 13, members of the Communist party of Czechoslovakia residing in Transcarpathia held their first party conference, and on November 19, 1944, they founded the Communist party of the Transcarpathian Ukraine, elec-

ting as its most powerful body a Central Committee and adopting a program of action. The first Transcarpathian Communist party congress also decided to hold the First Congress of National Committees that were being formed everywhere throughout the countryside. The Congress of National Committees took place on November 26, 1944, and passed a resolution transforming Subcarpathian Rus' into the Transcarpathian Ukraine. The highest body for the Transcarpathian Ukraine, a National Council (Narodna Rada) headed by Ivan Turjanycja, first secretary of the Central Committee of the Transcarpathian Communist party, was elected. A manifesto was also adopted proclaiming the unification of the Transcarpathian Ukraine with the Soviet Ukraine and thereby its secession from the republic of Czechoslovakia. During the aforementioned First Congress of National Committees, Petro Sova, the chairman of the Užhorod municipal national council stated: "In addition to liberating us, the Red Army restored our right to self-determination. We want to make wise use of this right."

On the occasion of the conclusion of the unification of the Transcarpathian Ukraine with the Soviet Ukraine, the prime minister of Czechoslovakia, Zdeněk Fierlinger, in an address given on June 29, 1945, called Transcarpathian Ukraine a small Slavic country. In his reply, Soviet foreign minister Vjačeslav Molotov stated: "the people of Transcarpathian Ukraine have inherited the possibility of deciding their own fate."

The following are facts, which reveal that the Communists and national committees established the Transcarpathian Ukraine as a sovereign state:

the formation by the Communists of an independent party of the Transcarpathian Ukraine and the election by these Communists of the most powerful party organ—the Central Committee of the Transcarpathian Communist party and its secretariat;

the election of the most powerful state and legislative body—the National Council of the Transcarpathian Ukraine—by the Congress of National Committees;

the recognition by international treaties of a historical Rusyn national territory (albeit divided) as the territory of a sovereign Transcarpathian Ukraine;

the existence of its own state flag, national anthem, jurisprudence, supreme court, attorney general, national guard, and various other state institutions;

the inalienable right of the Transcarpathian Ukraine challenged by neither Czechoslovakia nor Soviet military authorities, to self-determination, to choose its administration and government, as well as to select and develop its own political, socioeconomic, and cultural systems and to implement actively these rights;

the recognition on the territory of the Transcarpathian Ukraine by the Soviet military authorities of the legal system and governmental organs of the Transcarpathian Ukraine and not those of Czechoslovakia;

the absence of opposition by other states to the actual transformation of Subcarpathian Rus' into the sovereign state of the Transcarpathian Ukraine.

Obviously, the annexation to the Ukraine of a sovereign state with rights of an autonomous republic did not suit Stalin's policy of the partial dissolution of national-territorial formations which already existed in the Soviet Union. Already on January 1, 1946, when the Transcar-

pathian Ukraine became part of Soviet Ukraine, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR sent to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR a groundless petition appealing for the dissolution of the Transcarpathian Ukraine's sovereign status and its replacement as the Transcarpathian Oblast. On January 22, 1946, in contravention of international and state law, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR issued a decree dissolving the sovereign state of the Transcarpathian Ukraine and creating in its place the Transcarpathian Oblast. The result of this was to liquidate automatically—although only *de jure*—the Slavic nation of Rusyns.

Taking into consideration that the actions of Stalin and his supporters concerning the dissolution of a Central European sovereign state were illegal, and considering the aspirations of the indigenous population of present-day Transcarpathia for the restoration of its nationhood and its status as an autonomous republic, the Society of Carpatho-Rusyns (Tovarystvo Karpats'kych Rusyniv):

(1) Appeals to the president of USSR, M.S. Gorbachev, to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR to revoke the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, dated January 22, 1946, transforming the Transcarpathian Ukraine into the Transcarpathian Oblast, on the grounds that it contravenes international law and the Constitution of the USSR, and to issue in its place a new decree transforming the former Transcarpathian Ukraine into the autonomous republic of Subcarpathian Rus';

(2) Proposes that the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR reexamine its petition to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR that dissolved the Transcarpathian Ukraine and replaced it with the Transcarpathian Oblast;

(3) Requests that the United Nations, whose predecessor was the League of Nations, assume responsibility for overturning Stalin's arbitrary dissolution of the Rusyn autonomous territory and Rusyn nationhood, both of which had been settled by the peace treaties of St. Germain and Trianon.

*This declaration was debated and ratified on September 29, 1990, at a session of the executive committee of the Society of Carpatho-Rusyns in the city of Užhorod.*

The foregoing declaration was first published in *Otčyj chram* (September-October 1990), the publication of the Society of Carpatho-Rusyns in Užhorod, and subsequently in the oblast-wide Transcarpathian newspaper, *Molod' Zakarpattja* (November 3, 1990). Prepared by Petro Hodmaš, the declaration reveals the political goals of some members of the Society of Carpatho-Rusyns. Such an approach to the Rusyn revival has elicited a strong critical response from Ukrainian-oriented leaders in Transcarpathia and in the neighboring Prešov Region of Czechoslovakia.

For instance, thirteen Ukrainian-oriented organizations in Transcarpathian issued a counter-declaration that was published in the newspaper of the Transcarpathian Communist party (*Zakarpats'ka pravda*, November 21, 1990). In part, the counter-declaration read:

"We call on the leadership of the Society of Carpatho-Rusyns to cease propaganda, which reflects the ideas of Muscovite chauvinists, Budapest Uhro-Rusyns, Prague Carpatho-Russians, and politicized American Rusyns, for

whom cultural Rusynism is alien. We ask that [Ukrainian] Kiev and L'viv, Kharkiv and Odessa not be held guilty for the hardships brought to Transcarpathia by Stalin and Brezhnev.

"Transcarpathians! Don't be fooled. Our forefathers fought for autonomy in Hungary, Austria-Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. However, now that we live in our own state, the Ukrainian SSR, whose Supreme Soviet has proclaimed a 'Declaration of Sovereignty for the Ukraine' which guarantees the right of free national development for all national minorities and ethnic groups living on its territory, to call for autonomy of Transcarpathia in this context must be considered nothing less than national treachery!"

The counter-declaration was published in several Ukrainian-language newspapers in the Soviet Ukraine, Czechoslovakia, and Poland, as well as in Canada and in the United States. Frequently, those same newspapers have included commentary that considers the idea of Carpatho-Rusyn autonomy as a threat to the "inalienable unity" of a future free Ukrainian state.

A more serious response has been the creation of a working group convened by the Transcarpathian Council of National Deputies (oblast parliament) to study the socio-economic, historical, legal, and linguistic-ethnographic issues raised by the Carpatho-Rusyn autonomy declaration. One goal of the parliamentary working group is to analyze how the declaration reflects the historical evolution of Subcarpathian Rus' (Transcarpathia) and the territory's relation to a future decentralized Ukrainian state made up of several distinct regions. The working group is under the chairmanship of the Užhorod State University historian, Professor Ivan Hrančák, and it includes pro-Ukrainian as well as pro-Rusyn activists, among them the chairman of the Society of Carpatho-Rusyns, Mychajlo Tomčanič. The group held its first meeting in February 1991 at the parliament building in Užhorod. The discussion was concerned with uncovering the "blank spots" of Rusyn history which have been glossed over during the past four decades by Marxist scholars and propagandists.

The working group also criticized the recent spate of newspaper articles by scholars on the Rusyn problem. In the concluding words of Professor Hrančák:

"The problem of Rusynism has always existed and cannot be removed from history. Unfortunately, each of the authors has chosen only those facts which reflect a Ukrainophile viewpoint. They have even called Aleksander Duchnovyč a Ukrainian, even though he never once used in all his writings the word Ukraine. . . . The other shortcoming of the recent publications is that the Ukrainophiles have in a simplified manner described their Rusyn opponents with epithets such as enemies, traitors, destroyers, spies, etc. One must ask the question, why do we need such labels? Would it not be better to conduct the discussion in a scholarly spirit?"

"Our Ukrainophiles have been retaliated against a professor from American scholarly circles, Paul Robert Magocsi, depicting him as an agent and servant of American imperialism. Although I do not share Magocsi's views, I nonetheless respect him as a scholar who has research publications that are known world-wide. His critics, on the other hand, either do not have any scholarly credentials in this field or no serious works whatsoever, or they simply continue to express themselves on the level of yellow journalism." (*Novyny Zakarpattja*, February 6, 1991, p. 5)

## REVOLUTION OF 1989 UPDATE

**Medzilaborce, Czechoslovakia.** On November 17, 1990, the Rusyn Renaissance Society (Rusyns'ka Obroda) held its first plenary session after which it issued a declaration of principles which read, in part:

"Although for a whole century we have been repressed and each regime has done everything to assimilate us, we Rusyns have survived our unfortunate fate and pressure from other peoples, and we have not succumbed to the efforts made to Magyarize, Slovakize, Russify, or Ukrainianize us. We have preserved a consciousness of belonging to a Rusyn people, and we want to develop further our traditions, heritage, culture, and preserve our language.

"The present democratic changes in Czecho-Slovakia and throughout all of Eastern Europe have produced good possibilities to overcome the mistakes and damage done to the Rusyn people, who wish to be a fully equal component of the Czecho-Slovak Federative Republic.

"For this reason, we unanimously demand:

the recognition of Rusyns as a distinct nationality in Czecho-Slovakia with all rights which, according to the constitution, other nationalities have;

equality of the Rusyn language with the languages of other national minorities in Czecho-Slovakia; the possibility for the Rusyn language to be taught in schools where Rusyn children study; and the use of Rusyn in newspapers and journals destined for people of Rusyn background as well as on the radio and at other events that take place in those areas where Rusyns live;

the implementation of possibilities for contacts with Rusyns who live abroad, whether with individuals or

organizations. Such contacts are necessary if we want to publish books for Rusyn schools."

(Cited from the text of the Declaration of the Rusyn Renaissance Society, in "Holos rusyniv," *Nove žyttja*, December 7, 1990, p. 4).

**Legnica, Poland.** On December 8, 1990, the first congress of the Lemko Association (Stovaryšynja Lemkiv) was held in Legnica, a town in western Poland (historic Silesia) where many Lemkos were forcibly deported after World War II. Among the participants were 40 delegates representing 10 branches. The Lemko Association of Poland was founded in April 1989, and at present has 270 members organized in 14 branches. Its primary goal is to raise the national consciousness of Lemkos in Poland through publications, theatrical performances, and other cultural events.

At the first congress, eleven members of an executive board were chosen including the following officers: Andrij Kopča (chairman); Petro Trochanovskij (vice-chairman); Jaroslav Horoščak (second vice-chairman); Adam Barna (secretary); and Stefan Kosovskij (treasurer). It is interesting to note that according to biographies in the latest issue of *Besida*, the association's journal, all but three members of the executive board were born after World War II. Thus, the Lemko Association represents primarily Lemkos who are of the younger generation. Among the topics discussed at the first congress was the possibility of cooperation with the recently-founded Union of Lemkos (Ob'jednannja Lemkiv), represented by its chairman, Fedir Goč. The Union of Lemkos comprises primarily Lemkos of the older generation born before World War II (Fedir Goč, Pavel Stefanovskij, Michal Donskyj), who were active already in the 1950s and 1960s, but who recently have adopted a Ukrainian orientation that is not accepted by the Lemko Association.



Andrij Kopča, chairman, addressing the First Congress of the Lemko Association.

**Prešov, Czechoslovakia.** On December 20, 1990, the Aleksander Duchnovyč Society (Obščestvo Aleksandra Duchnovyča) was restored. The society came into being in Užhorod in 1923, and quickly had branches throughout Subcarpathian Rus' and among Carpatho-Rusyns living in the Prešov Region of Slovakia. In 1933, the Prešov branch became a self-governing institution with responsibility for all affiliates in Slovakia. Its main activity was to establish reading rooms in local Rusyn villages (37 by the end of the 1930s), to sponsor annual Rusyn days (*rus'ki dni*), and to erect in Prešov the monumental statue (still standing) of the nineteenth-century "national awakener," Aleksander Duchnovyč. The Duchnovyč Society promoted the use of the Rusyn language in the lower grades of schools, but favored literary Russian for higher grades and for use in publications. In short, the society felt that Carpatho-Rusyns were part of a single "common Russian people" (*obščerusskij narod*). After the Communists came to power in 1948, all prewar organizations were liquidated, including the Duchnovyč Society.

Those who have resurrected the Duchnovyč Society in late 1990 consider themselves to be culturally "Russian." They hope to unite "Rusyns, Ukrainians, and Russians" in reading rooms and to work with other peoples throughout Czechoslovakia in order to build a democratic and socially just society. The basic goal is to "protect the national interests of the Rusyns and to raise their level of national consciousness."

**Prešov, Czechoslovakia.** On December 21, 1990, members of the "Rusyn-Ukrainian Intelligentsia in Czecho-Slovakia," representing eleven pro-Ukrainian organizations, issued a fifteen-point statement concerning "present developments in our cultural-national life." Among the points raised were the following:

"1. We support the unity and inviolability of the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic, in which we wish to live as a fully equal nationality with the possibility to develop our national and cultural life.

2. We consider that the Rusyn-Ukrainians comprise not two but one nationality.

3. We consider the creation of a distinct 'Rusyn' nationality, separate from the Ukrainian people, to be a temporary step leading to the ultimate Slovakization of our people. Therefore, we do not agree with the anti-Ukrainian orientation of the Rusyn Renaissance Society (Rusyns'ka Obroda) and other organizations of a similar separatist character.

5. We criticize the administrative bureaucratic methods used in the 1950s during the introduction of the Ukrainian national orientation, although we consider the idea of our people accepting a Ukrainian national orientation and the Ukrainian literary language and culture a positive step on the road to consolidating our people's national identity.

7. The efforts to create a separate 'Rusyn' language are not new. . . . Such past efforts proved to be unrealistic and unrealizable.

11. We consider all efforts that question the present-day boundaries in Europe, including the boundary between Czecho-Slovakia and the Soviet Union, to be a political provocation that is opposed to the Helsinki agreement and other international treaties.

12. We support the activity of the Union of Rusyn-Ukrainians of Czecho-Slovakia (SRUC), which we consider

the representative of all our people.

15. We support without reservation the Declaration of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, dated July 16, 1990, regarding the sovereignty of the Ukraine, since we see in a free, independent Ukrainian state a guarantee for our own future development within Czecho-Slovakia."

**Košice, Czechoslovakia.** On January 15, 1991, the Košice studio of the Slovak state television network inaugurated a weekly half-hour program for the national minorities in Slovakia. About five to ten minutes are devoted to the Rusyns, who for the first time have their own television program in Czechoslovakia. The television program has opted to broadcast in Rusyn, not Ukrainian.

**Vatican City.** On January 16, 1991, Pope John Paul II confirmed the positions of three Greek Catholic bishops in Subcarpathian Rus' (Soviet Transcarpathia). After the Greek Catholic eparchy of Mukačevo was liquidated by the Soviet authorities in 1949 and the church forbidden to function, the faithful, clergy, and hierarchy were forced to function underground for nearly four decades as a "clandestine church." It was not until 1988, during the era of change under Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, that the Greek Catholic bishops who had functioned secretly for years felt secure enough to make themselves known publicly. The three prelates who have now been confirmed in their positions by the Pope are: Ivan Semedij, bishop of the Greek Catholic eparchy of Mukačevo-Užhorod, and his two auxiliaries: Bishop Josyf Holovač and Bishop Ivan Margityč.

The Pope made the announcement at the same time that he confirmed the positions of seven bishops in the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Archdiocese of L'viv and that he nominated five Latin-rite bishops for dioceses in the Soviet Ukraine. What remains unclear is the jurisdictional status of the Eparchy of Mukačevo-Užhorod. The eparchy had historically never been part of the Ukrainian archdiocese of L'viv, and it remains to be seen whether the Vatican will change its status or allow it to continue (like the neighboring Eparchies of Prešov and Hajdudorog) directly under the authority of the Holy See. The next issue of the *Carpatho-Rusyn American* will include the text of a letter on this matter from Bishops Semedij and Holovač to the Pope.

**Bratislava, Czechoslovakia.** On January 24, 1991, the Slovak government's advisory council on nationalities and ethnic groups met to discuss three issues: (1) the status of minority schools; (2) the March 1991 census of the country's population; and (3) the budget for financing minority cultural institutions. All four Rusyn-Ukrainian members of the government's advisory council (Ivan Bicko, Vasyl' Dacaj, Mykola Mušynka, Vasyl' Turok) as well as the acting head of the Union of Rusyn-Ukrainians of Czechoslovakia (Viktor Koval') took part in the discussions.

No decision on the schools was taken, other than to reiterate that there are only 17 Ukrainian-language elementary schools and 1 high school (*gymnasium*) left in the Prešov Region. The reason for this "catastrophic situation" is primarily because Rusyn parents do not want their children to study Ukrainian. As for the census, the government accepted the proposal that there will be separate columns—one for Rusyn and one for Ukrainian—for citizens to respond regarding their nationality and native language. The most controversial issue concerned finances in the 1991 state budget. The professional Aleksander Duchnovyč Theater in

Prešov (formerly the Ukrainian National Theater), which includes both the Duklja Folk Ensemble and a theatrical ensemble whose performances have since last year been given primarily in Rusyn, has received the same budget as last year.

### Transcarpathian Response to Solzhenitsyn's Comments On Nationalities

Alexander Solzhenitsyn's brochure, *How Shall We Rebuild Russia? (Kak nam obustroit' Rossiju?)*, was published in mid-September 1990, in two of Moscow's leading newspapers. Although the essay also deals with economic and political questions, the five sections devoted to the nationalities issue have attracted the most attention. In a section addressed to Ukrainians and Belorussians, Solzhenitsyn touches on the historical attitude of Carpatho-Rusyns to Russia.

Solzhenitsyn's proposed solution to the current turmoil in the republics is to dissolve the Soviet empire, to allow the non-Slavic republics to secede, and to create a new state structure called the "Pan-Russian Union" (*Rossijskij sojuz*), consisting of the three Slavic republics—Russia, the Ukraine, and Belorussia. The author's stated intention was to provoke discussion, and response was not long in coming from the nationalities affected, including a letter from an Užhorod scholar who takes issue with Solzhenitsyn's comments on Carpatho-Rusyns—Valerij Padjak, "What Then Shall We Rebuild?" (*Tak čto že budem obstrajvat'?*) in *Molod' Zakarpattja*, 27 October, 1990, p. 5.

Addressing Ukrainians and Belorussians, Solzhenitsyn appeals to their common historical roots in Kievan Rus' and advances the traditional Slavophile vision of a single nation, split into three branches as a result of the Mongol invasion and Polish colonization. He strongly disapproves of Ukrainian separatist sentiments, and although he states categorically that Ukrainians should not be held in union with Russia by force, he hopes that they will choose "reunification" with Russia in a Slavic union. As evidence for his argument that the East Slavic peoples are in fact one people, he cites the following example. In nineteenth-century Galicia, the national council founded in 1848 bore the name *Holovna Russka Rada* and, he argues, it was only by Austrian coercion that the Carpatho-Rusyn people (*karpatorossy*) were torn away from the Russian nationality and language and subjected to Ukrainianization. With his emphasis on the "Russianness" of the Rusyn people, Solzhenitsyn endorses the Russophile orientation to Rusyn national identity.

Solzhenitsyn's proposal for a Pan-Russian Union drew immediate criticism from Ukrainian spokespersons, who accused him of adhering to ideas of Russian great-power chauvinism and insulting Ukrainian national dignity. Valerij Padjak repeats these objections, focusing on Solzhenitsyn's identification of Rusyns with Russians. He is not convinced by the argument that the East Slavic nations share a common culture and historical roots, which, he says, completely ignores the contemporary centrifugal forces in the Ukraine and its July 1990 declaration of sovereignty. And he resents Solzhenitsyn's "skipping over Zaporoz'ja, the birthplace of the Ukrainian Cossack movement" and "the ancient city of L'viv, now the center of the rebirth of Ukrainian national

The Union of Rusyn-Ukrainians, which continues to maintain a pro-Ukrainian national orientation, has had its budget cut in half, from eight to four million crowns.

consciousness" to single out the case of the western Ukraine, which Padjak considers a faulty basis for generalization. He then proceeds to lecture Solzhenitsyn on Carpatho-Rusyn history.

Padjak asserts that even before the coming of the Magyars the Carpathians were populated by Rusyns, although he doubts that they ever formed a part of Kievan Rus'. He goes on to address the ever present problem of nomenclature. The term *rusyn* and its adjective *rus'kij*, he says, were generic terms that took on a political coloration only in the mid-nineteenth century, when they were interpreted as synonyms for "Russian." Originally, says Padjak, "the term *rusyny* (*rus'kie, russkie*) was a collective form; that is, it united the following concepts: Great Russians + Belorussians + Ukrainians + Galician Rus' + Uhro-Rus'." Therefore, he implies, it is an error for Solzhenitsyn to infer affinity to Russia on the part of Rusyns simply from the name *Rus'ka* (or *Russka Rada*, since the terms were used interchangeably and, in any case, referred to the East Slavs in general, not to Russia. In fact, because of the similarity of language, ethnos, and tradition that existed between Rusyns and the developing Ukrainian nationality, the growth of Ukrainian identity was "completely logical." To credit Austria for this development, says Padjak, is a distortion of the truth. On the other hand, Padjak credits the Habsburg empire for tearing the Rusyn population away from East Slavic cultural processes and propagating "Ruthenianism."

Given the "logical" evolution toward Ukrainian national identity ("dynamic" in Galicia and "slower" in Subcarpathian Rus'), Padjak goes on to offer an explanation for the persistence of the Russophile orientation, especially its predominance in the Rusyn national awakening of the mid-nineteenth century. The attraction to Russia, he says, was due to the authority of the Russian empire in Europe at that time and the "hope it engendered in Slavic hearts for liberation from the Habsburg yoke." He concedes: "There was much that was positive in this union of Russians (*russkie*) with Rusyns (*rus'kie*)," though he mentions only the main drawback, that is, the linguistic arguments that resulted from the Russophile promotion of the Russian language. He concludes that the Rusyns' "rejection" of Russian in the twentieth century and their "growing interest in Ukrainian" was on the whole a natural and positive phenomenon, not a result of the intrigues of pan-Ukrainian separatists, as Solzhenitsyn would have it.

Finally, Padjak repeats his skepticism of Slavic unity, or as he calls it, Solzhenitsyn's "pretty theory of a unified Rus'." While he concedes its naive appeal, he warns: "Just do not forget the history of the Russian empire, where ideas of centralization and unification, in themselves innocent and humane, which arose in the hearts of the Russian intelligentsia, believers in all-conquering good, have been suddenly transformed by military and imperialist means into grounds for expansionist schemes." Padjak acknowledges that Solzhenitsyn does not pretend to be a professional politician,

and he likens the author's spiritual concerns about Russia to those of earlier Russian writers, where the well-intentioned goal of "calling forth the spirit of Kievan Rus'" led to negative consequences for national minorities. He recalls the poet Fedor Tjutčev's approval of Russian interference in the Hungarian revolution of 1848 "under the pretext of defending Austrian Slavs," and, without naming him, Padjak reproves the Russian national poet Alexander Pushkin. In his poem, "To the Slanderers of Russia," written in response to European criticism of Russia's suppression of the 1831 Polish uprising, Pushkin had asked: "Should not the Slavic streams flow together in the Russian sea?" But why, asks Padjak, must it be the *Russian sea*?

To be sure, Solzhenitsyn might have been more circumspect in his use of words, though it is doubtful that Ukrainian nationalists would be more receptive to any sort of Slavic union. From the Rusyn point of view, Solzhenitsyn's concept and the hostile response it has received are interesting in that they echo the historical debates between Russophiles and Ukrainophiles over national identity. While Padjak is correct in criticizing Solzhenitsyn's comments on Carpatho-Rusyns as over-simplified, his own analysis of Rusyn national identity is no less schematic, and plainly one-

sided. He does not distinguish Rusyns from Ukrainians, but does insist on the distinction between Ukrainians and Russians. Extremely sensitive to the threat of Russification wherever the Ukrainian culture and language are concerned, he expressed disbelief at Solzhenitsyn's caution that forcible Ukrainianization can also be a significant concern.

In the wake of the recent revival of Rusyn organization in Czechoslovakia and Soviet Transcarpathia, Solzhenitsyn's comments and the response to them draw attention to some unresolved issues in Carpatho-Rusyn history, issues that are no more easily resolved today than in the past. Padjak's conclusion is to rebuild Russia based on the equal cooperation of three sovereign republics. Solzhenitsyn, an artist rather than a politician, distrusts legalities and appeals to morality, especially in reference to the smaller national groups. "Every nation, great and small, is an inimitable effect of the Divine Plan. Rephrasing the Christian commandment, Vladimir Solov'ev wrote: 'Love every nation as thine own.'" The debate stimulated by Solzhenitsyn's brochure will surely continue.

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## RECENT PUBLICATIONS 1986

*With this issue we begin a new year in our on-going survey of recent publications. These are from 1986 and are listed alphabetically. Many are published in eastern Europe and are difficult to obtain, but most can be found in research libraries of major universities (California at Berkeley, Harvard, Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, Indiana, Toronto, Yale) or in institutions like the Library of Congress, New York Public Library, and Cleveland Public Library. Although these places allow limited access, do note that many local libraries can obtain these works upon request through Interlibrary Loan. Titles which can be purchased will be designated as such. —Editor*

Bajrak, Ja. M. "Sučasne hončarstvo Zakarpattja" (Contemporary Pottery in Transcarpathia), *Narodna tvorčist' ta etnografija*, XXX, 5 (Kiev, 1986), pp. 78-80.

Bajrak, Ja. M. and Fedaka, P.M. *Zakarpats'kyj muzej narodnoji architektury ta pobutu: putivnyk* (The Transcarpathian Museum of Traditional Architecture and Folk Life). Užhorod: Karpaty, 1986, 128 p.

Brykowski, Ryszard. *Łemkowska drewniana architektura cerkiewna w Polsce, na Słowacji i Rusi Zakarpaciej* (Lemko Wooden Church Architecture in Poland, Slovakia, and Transcarpathian Rus'). Wrocław, Warsaw, Cracow, Gdańsk, and Łódź: Zakład Narodowy imienia Ossolińskich, 1986, 336 p.

Dankanyč, Volodymyr et al., eds. *Viter z polonyn: zbirnyk tvoriv čes'kych pys'mennykiv* (Wind From the Mountain Meadows: A Collection of Works of Czech Writers). Užhorod: Karpaty, 1986, 344 p.

Duda, Tadeusz. "Stosunki wyznaniowe wśród Łemków greckokatolickich zamieszkałych na terenie obecnej diecezji

tarnowskiej w XIX i XX wieku" (Denominational Relations Among Greek Catholic Lemkos Living on the Territory of the Tarnów Diocese in the 19th and 20th Centuries), *Tarnowskie Studia Teologiczne*, X, 1 (Tarnów, 1986), pp. 237-247.

Foltyn, Vyktoryja T. and Manajlo, Ivan F. *Memorial'nyj muzej narodnoho chudoznyka URSS F.F. Manajlo: putivnyk* (The Memorial Museum of the National Artist of the Ukrainian SSR F. F. Manajlo: A Guidebook). Užhorod: Karpaty, 1986, 64 p.

Goč, Fedir. "Perši lemkiw'ski hurtky chudožn'oji samodjal'nosti v PNR" (The First Amateur Lemko Artistic Ensembles in the Polish People's Republic), in *Ukrajins'kyj kalendar 1986*. Warsaw: Ukrajins'ke suspil'no-kulturne tovarystvo, 1986, pp. 56-62.

Grendža-Dons'kyj, Vasyl'. *Tvory* (Works), Vol. VI. Washington, D.C.: Karpaty'kyj sojuz, 1986, viii, 392 p.

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Gustavsson, Sven. "Ruski Kerestur—den rusinska byn" (Ruski Krstur—A Rusyn Village), in Sven Gustavsson and Ingvar Svanberg. *Jugoslavien i April 1984: rapport från en multiethnisk resa till Jugoslavien*. Uppsala Multiethnic Papers, Vol. VI. Uppsala: Uppsala University Faculty of Arts Centre for Multiethnic Research, 1986, pp. 155-167.

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## OUR FRONT COVER

"Invitation to a Wedding," graphic print by Mykola Shelest.

## THE BETHLEHEM PLAY: USHERING IN A SEASON OF HOPE

In December 1990, both Orthodox and Byzantine Rite Catholic Christians in the Greater Pittsburgh area shared together their common Carpatho-Rusyn cultural heritage by attending the third annual series of performances of the Bethlehem Play (*Viflejemska ihra*) offered by the students of St. Nicholas Byzantine Rite Catholic School in McKeesport, Pennsylvania. The play was presented in the spirit of peace and hope, in accord with the opening of the Office of Great Complines for Christmas which reads: "Offer a sacrifice of righteousness, and hope in the Lord. . . . In peace I will lay me down to sleep, for You, O Lord, have made me dwell in hope." (Psalm 4, v.6, 9)

The Bethlehem Play is sometimes called the *Jasličkari* Play. The *jasličkari* are the shepherds who visited Christ's manger or *jasli*, and are the major participants in the play. For the past three years, the play has been performed as a part of the St. Nicholas Parish Day Dinner. The performance of the play revives a Carpatho-Rusyn tradition last seen regularly about fifty years ago at the parish. At this year's first performance, on December 8, over three hundred people were in attendance. Included among them was the Reverend John Bilock, Auxiliary Bishop of the Byzantine Rite Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh. The following Wednesday, 200 students from St. John's Byzantine Catholic Cathedral School in Munhall, Pennsylvania, and St. Mary's Polish Roman Catholic School in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, saw the performance. Finally, on December 15, the students performed the play at the St. Nicholas Day Banquet held at St. Nicholas Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church in Homestead, Pennsylvania. The audience of over 250 people included the Reverend Nicholas Smisko, Bishop of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church, Johnstown Diocese.

In past years this medieval morality play was taught by the cantors of many Byzantine Rite and Orthodox churches. A handful of parishioners, as the *jasličkari*, would go from house to house, performing the play. They re-enacted how a group of Carpatho-Rusyn shepherds, visiting the manger of the Christ child, came to grips both with the mystery of

Christ's birth and their own human failings. Clearly, the play was an integral part of parish education. Somehow, for the last fifty years, this valuable cultural tradition known in so many Orthodox and Byzantine Rite Catholic parishes, was lost.

Now, after ten years of research, a cantor and musician from Pittsburgh, Jerry Jumba, has revived the play and for the past three years has directed its performances. Tapping archival sources, as well as the living memory of master cantors and others who recall the play, Mr. Jumba has reconstructed the songs and script both in Rusyn and in English, as well as the costumes and actions of the participants. The play recognizes no barriers between Byzantine Rite and Orthodox Christians, and this year was welcomed equally as warmly by audiences representing the clergy and faithful from both denominations of Carpatho-Rusyns.

It is difficult to describe the emotions felt at these performances. The older parishioners in the audiences sang along with the children, first softly, and then with confidence, love, and devotion to their cultural heritage. There were tears, including my own, as I recalled seeing pictures of my father in a Bethlehem Play from fifty years ago. Bishop Bilock, himself a veteran *jasličkari* performer who played many of the characters in the play, saw the performance this year for the second time. He rose and stated his desire to speak to the audience briefly before the play began because last year, he said, he was so overcome by the end of the play that he could not find the words to express the gratitude to the performers. The Reverend Stephen Veselenak, O.S.B., pastor of St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic parish, attended the performance at St. Nicholas Orthodox Church. Commenting afterwards, he said that he was impressed when the people started to sing along with the children "Nebo i zemlja" (Heaven and earth) and the beloved hymn to St. Nicholas, "O kto, kto Nikolaja ljubit" (Oh, who loves Nicholas). "This unprecedented sharing of our common Carpatho-Rusyn heritage," Father Stephen added, "truly gave the saint's day a new and special meaning."

Bishop Nicholas Smisko summed up the experience in his remarks to the children in the play after the performance in Homestead. "You sang with such fervor, and so beautifully. . . and with so much energy that you certainly did not exhaust us old people, but in fact, you just made us feel a part



Students of St. Nicholas Byzantine Rite Catholic School in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, performing the Bethlehem Play.

of you. This is a very fine presentation, reminding us all of our common roots, of that which was once a part of us a long time ago—and somehow brought back to life again—reminding us to recall what was, and what is, and perhaps what could be. We got your message that Christ is born. We got your message of how our ancestors and grandparents knew how to welcome the season of Christmas. The whole Gospel evolved from this humble birth which gave us the meaning of Christmas. It was certainly brought to us in a real drama by you this evening. The angels and shepherds went about in the villages—as you have done here—bringing the message that Christ was born.”

The students who saw the play were also highly impressed, stating that they had never seen a better play about

Christmas. Their comments especially should convince us that this long-lost tradition needs to be revived and promoted. Individuals and parishes interested in preparing the play for this year's St. Nicholas Day are invited to order a videotape of the performance from St. Nicholas School. The cost of the video is \$35.00, which includes postage and handling. The complete Bethlehem Play script and carol text rehearsal sheets are available for \$5.00. A set of carol music with the text is also available for an additional \$5.00. For further information or to request an order, send a check payable to: “St. Nicholas School,” 407 Shaw Avenue, McKeesport, Pennsylvania 15132. Attn: Bethlehem Play.

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## RECENT EVENTS

**Toronto, Ontario.** On October 19-21, 1990, the Third Congress of Carpatho-Ukrainians in the Diaspora took place in Toronto. The congress grew out of the meeting of post-World War II Ukrainian-oriented émigrés held in McKean, Pennsylvania, on July 13-15 (see the *C-RA*, Vol. XIII, No. 3, 1990, p. 6). The Toronto congress was under the chairmanship of Professor Vasyl Markus (Loyola University, Chicago). Its participants included as many, if not more, Ukrainian Americans and Canadians from Galicia than from the Carpatho-Ukraine (Subcarpathian Rus’).

The congress criticized the Rusyn national revival in the homeland, which was described as little more than the “Rusyn Affair,” and it considered all efforts to create a Rusyn nationality and to create a Rusyn literary language as “artificial and unscholarly.” The congress was particularly critical of the Society of Carpatho-Rusyns in Užhorod, the Rusyn Renaissance Society (Rusyns’ka Obroda) in Medzilaborce, and their “supporters” in the West, all of whom were described as acting against the “natural unity” of the Ukrainian homeland, of which Transcarpathia must remain an integral part. (Cited from the Congress resolutions published in *Novyj šljach* [Toronto], December 22-29, 1990, pp. 10-15.)

Among the honored guests at the Third Congress of Carpatho-Ukrainians in the Diaspora was Dr. Pavlo Kampov, who until his release last year from a concentration camp had the dubious distinction of being the longest held (eighteen years) political prisoner from the Soviet Ukraine. Kampov’s views of the Toronto congress were sent to the Ukrainian press in North America and Europe. All, however, refused to publish his “alternative” description of the Toronto congress.

According to Kampov, “only those persons who emigrated in the 1940s from Subcarpathian Rus’, from Carpatho-Ukraine . . . and who consider themselves Ukrainians gathered in Toronto.” “In his lecture, ‘Rusynism: Reality and Fiction’, Professor Markus began by saying that he did not pretend that his remarks were to be completely objective.” According to Markus, “the fact that the indigenous population of Transcarpathia has returned to calling itself Rusyn is an indication of a lack of awareness of history and universal developments.” Markus also stated that “the

Rusyn movement is inspired from Moscow, the United States, and Canada, and he, in particular . . . attacked Professor Paul Magocsi of the University of Toronto.” In contrast, Kampov described Magocsi as the same person who has “studied intensively the Rusyn question in the United States, Poland, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and, of course, Transcarpathia, the central homeland of the Rusyns. One should not accuse, but thank Magocsi for his efforts.” “The Congress judged positively the fact that Rusyns in Yugoslavia are a distinct nationality. . . . but it did not want even to hear about the idea that Rusyns might exist in the Transcarpathian homeland or in the United States. The national revival of Rusyns in America was considered to be hostile and it would be better if they simply became completely Americanized.” “The Congress even judged in a negative manner the Byzantine Catholic Ruthenian Church in the United States under Archbishop Kocisko, because that church supposedly is a source of Rusynism.” (Cited from *Novyny Zakarpattja* [Užhorod], January 22, 1991, p. 5).

### A Forum on Carpatho-Rusyn Heritage

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