Until recently we were still Ukrainian workers... And now what are we [since the 1989 revolution]? Unemployed Rusnaks!
Recently I made the acquaintance of a remarkable woman, Dr. Amalija Novak Fairbanks, honorary chairperson of the Yugoslav Rusyn Youth Fund. Dr. Fairbanks graciously shared with me her own history which helps elucidate her dedication to this position. She was born in Kocur (Serbian: Kucura), a Rusyn town in the heart of the Vojvodina (Bačka) Region of Yugoslavia. It was there that she grew up steeped in Rusyn culture and speaking Rusyn. Unlike other countries in which Rusyns reside, Yugoslavia's Rusyns had the opportunity to receive schooling in Rusyn, and Dr. Fairbanks recalls with fondness the eight years during which she attended Rusyn elementary school. All subjects were taught in Rusyn. Poetry was read and memorized in Rusyn—poetry which touched her heart and which she still holds dear today. Her early education was demanding, and for this she is grateful because it prepared her well for her future career.

Dr. Fairbanks came to the United States when she was twenty four years old. She married an American who worked for the United Nations. When he was on assignment in the Far East, she returned home for a time to her family in Yugoslavia and spent five years in medical school in Belgrade. Today she is engaged in family practice in Birmingham, Alabama and is also studying toward a specialty in geriatric medicine.

Dr. Fairbanks stressed to me that striving for accomplishment and fulfillment was always important in her experience—but not just as an end in itself. Caring for people is the special task for which she prepared herself, a theme which runs strongly through her life and career. All down the line, from her work in family practice to her present studies in geriatrics and now to her activity in the Yugoslav Rusyn Youth Fund, Dr. Fairbanks manifests the call to caring. Education, she insisted to me, is the key to growth, to broadening one’s horizons, to raising oneself up, to contributing to one’s own people and to the world. If we care about others, we must concern ourselves with providing opportunities for their education. The recent establishment of the Yugoslav Rusyn Youth Fund is a way for all of us to participate in showing our care.

That anyone might have thought Rusyns do not exist or are not a distinct people amuses Dr. Fairbanks. “But of course, Rusyns were always there and they maintained their language,” she asserts. “Only now they have the opportunity to blossom, to exhibit openly their renewed determination to be recognized.” In connection with this, the teaching of Rusyn language and general academic instruction in Rusyn is essential. “We are the ones with the means, however great or humble, to contribute to this endeavor so that Rusyn children can have the same access as others to modern equipment—computers, photocoppy machines, VCRs—to enhance their educational experience,” she added. Rusyn young people must also study other languages, especially English, she believes, so that they can communicate freely with others, travel abroad, continue to grow and to be able, in turn, to help their brothers and sisters.

Excerpts from the following letter outline further Dr. Fairbanks’ motivation for accepting the position of honorary chairperson of the Yugoslav Rusyn Youth Fund.

Dear Rusyns and all Americans and Canadians of Rusyn Heritage!

For 250 years the Vojvodinian Rusyns of Yugoslavia have preserved their distinct national culture. We are thankful that our forebears knew how to preserve the Rusyn culture. Our parents taught us how to respect the name Rusyn and to maintain a deep faith in our ancestors. From grandparents to parents and from parents to children we have learned that it is our duty to look after our own kind.

It is in young people, the descendants of Rusyns, that our future lies. That is why we must care for our young people. We Americans and Canadians could really help our homeland if we gave young Rusyns better opportunities for education. In cooperation with the Ruska Matka Society in Ruski Kerestur, the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center in the United States has begun a significant undertaking with the creation of a Yugoslav Rusyn Youth Fund. With the income from this fund the Ruska Matka Society will be able to purchase modern equipment for the production of Rusyn schoolbooks and similar equipment for Rusyn cultural organizations. We would also like to award two scholarships each year. One scholarship would be for a young Rusyn student to study wherever he or she pleases. The other would be for the best student to study at the Department of Rusyn Language and Literature at the University of Novi Sad. The fund could also cover the costs of an instructor from the United States or Canada to teach Rusyn children English at a summer program in Ruski Kerestur.

At the request of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center I have accepted the responsibility of becoming the honorary chairperson of the Yugoslav Rusyn Youth Fund. I am proud to be an American of Rusyn origin. Each year I will donate $1000 to the fund, so that these monies can be used for Rusyn young people and, therefore, for the future of all our people. I call on you, Americans and Canadians, to help our Rusyn young people. With a donation of at least $50 to the Yugoslav Rusyn Youth Fund, each of us will be paying back in part what our Rusyn ancestors and parents have given us. We must realize that the future of Rusyns depends to a large degree on us.

Amalija Novak Fairbanks, M.D.

YUGOSLAV RUSYN YOUTH FUND

Appreciation is extended to the following individuals who as of October 1, 1993 donated generously to the Yugoslav Rusyn Youth Fund. Aside from those below we received four anonymous donations of $60.00 each, all from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Thomas J. Draus, Hazel Green, Wisconsin—$50
Dr. Amalija N. Fairbanks, Birmingham, Alabama—$1,000
Mr. and Mrs. John M. Gvozdjak, Sterling, Illinois—$50
Stephen S. Stack, Chicago, Illinois—$100
Anonymous in honor of Father Vladimir Vancik—$100

Further donations of $50 or more may be sent to:
Yugoslav Rusyn Youth Fund
Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, Inc.
Box 131-B
Orwell, VT 05670

OUR FRONT COVER

Cartoon by Fedor Vico from the Rusyn-language newspaper, Narodny novyny, (Prešov), September 29, 1993.
SYL’VESTER SEMBRATOVYČ (1836-1898)

In 1893, when he succeeded his uncle Josyf as metropolitan, Syl’vester Sembratovyč became the second priest in his family who within one generation reached the highest position in the Greek Catholic Church of Galicia. Syl’vester was born in 1836, in the Lemko Region Carpatho-Rusyn village of Desznica (Rusyn: Došnyćja), at the time part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and today within the borders of far southeastern Poland. His father was the local Greek Catholic priest, and because of the position of his distinguished uncle, Syl’vester was able to receive an excellent education at seminaries in Przemysł, Vienna, and Rome.

His uncle also helped the young priest Syl’vester after his consecration. Beginning in 1864, he lectured at the University of L’viv, where within five years he was appointed professor of dogmatics and theology. His career as a professor was to last only a decade, however, because in 1878 he was nominated auxiliary bishop in the eparchy of L’viv. This new closeness to his uncle led to friction because Syl’vester, as a sympathizer of the populist Ukrainian national movement, opposed Metropolitan Josyf Sembratovyč’s support for the Old Ruthenian national orientation. It was those sympathies which, in fact, led to Metropolitan Josyf’s forced resignation in 1880. Three years later, his nephew Syl’vester Sembratovyč was appointed the new Greek Catholic metropolitan of Galicia.

As metropolitan, Syl’vester Sembratovyč turned to the reform of his church’s internal structure as well as its relations with secular authorities at the Galician provincial and Austrian imperial levels. He also was responsible for organizing the provincial synod (bishop’s council) of 1888, which was the most important event in the history of Galicia’s Greek Catholic Church. The synod succeeded in codifying the liturgical and organizational life of the Galician metropolitanate. Despite these achievements, Sembratovyč was unable to have his proposals for required celibacy of priests approved.

As for relations with secular society, Syl’vester Sembratovyč was best known for his efforts to implement a program of political cooperation with Poles which was known in Galicia during the 1890s as the New Era. The basic idea of the program was acceptance of the Ukrainian national orientation by both the state’s administration and the Greek Catholic Church. The goal was to counteract Russophile and Orthodox influences coming from the other side of Galicia’s border with the Russian Empire. To achieve his goals, Sembratovyč removed several priests of Russophile and Old Ruthenian national orientation from their posts in the church administration, and he introduced the Ukrainian language together with its modern (etymological) alphabet into the church’s official publications and schools. The metropolitan’s actions were opposed by both leftist radicals and Russophiles. A student demonstration in 1893 at the Vienna railway station—during which the metropolitan was pelted with eggs—was among the more extreme forms of protest taken by the opposition. On the other hand, his policies were welcomed by Galicia’s Ukrainophiles, the Austrian imperial government, and the Vatican.

Although the New Era of Polish-Ukrainian cooperation in Galicia soon came to an end, Sembratovyč’s policies did help the Ukrainian national program gain popularity among Galician’s Greek Catholic priests and peasants. It seems that Sembratovyč was obligated to support such an approach in order to defend his church from the influences of Russian Orthodoxy which continued to increase during the last decades of the nineteenth century. The metropolitan was also responsible for helping to protect the religious interests of Galician Rusyn and Ukrainian immigrants in the New World, for promoting Catholic missions in Galicia among believers of Mosaic law (Jews), for supporting the creation of the first Russian insurance company in Galicia (Dnister), for the foundation of an educational institution for girls in L’viv (Ruskij Divocyj Instytut), and for the reorganization of seminary education, including support for the establishment in 1897 of a Greek Catholic seminary (Collegia Rutheno) in Rome. In recognition of his work in stabilizing church conditions in Galicia, in 1895 Pope Leo XIII appointed Sembratovyč to the post of cardinal, which second to the Pope is the highest office in the Catholic Church.

Although Syl’vester Cardinal Sembratovyč lived for most of his life far from his birthplace, he nonetheless retained a sentimental attachment to the Lemko Region. He provided financial assistance for the reconstruction of the church in his native village and, until his death from cancer in 1898, he never lost his Lemko-Rusyn accent. Nonetheless, because of his sympathies toward the Ukrainian national orientation and his opposition to the Old Ruthenians and Russophiles, he never reached the level of popularity among Lemkos that his uncle and hierarchal predecessor enjoyed.

Andrzej Zięba
Cracow, Poland
The following are two of three commentaries to be published about Paul R. Magocsi's report, “Carpatho-Rusyns: Their Current Status and Future Perspectives,” which appeared in the last issue of the Carpatho-Rusyn American, Vol. XVI, No. 2, Summer 1993, pp. 4-9. The commentaries in this issue are by Dr. Ladovit Haraksim, member of the Historical Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences and advisor to the government of Slovakia on nationality issues; and by Dr. Mykola Musynka, professor of ethnography at Safarik University in Presov, Slovakia, and Ukrainian activist. The next issue of the Carpatho-Rusyn American will include a commentary by Dr. Andrzej Zieba of Jagiellonian University in Poland and a response to all three by Professor Magocsi. — Editor

**OBSERVATIONS ON PAUL R. MAGOCSI’S STATUS REPORT**

I would like to begin my remarks on Dr. Magocsi’s status report with a caveat. The residents of the small Slovak village of Krahule, not far from Kremnica, would strongly object to the statement that Magocsi does not consider their village, or more precisely the spot where their church has stood from time immemorial, as the geographical center of old Europe. Rather, he identifies Europe’s center at a point several hundred kilometers to the east, not far from the village of Dilove on the territory of Subcarpathian Rus’, today’s Transcarpathian oblast of Ukraine. Nor would residents of Krahule be convinced by his argument that nineteenth-century Hungarian scholars determined the center to be near Dilove and that about one hundred years later Soviet scholars reconfirmed this. Against his argument Krahule’s residents would state that in their case it was also scholars who determined that their village was the center of Europe. To the Hungarian and Soviet scholars they would address several irreverent remarks. In such a vigorous manner they would end the discussion and would continue to recognize their native Krahule as Europe’s center.

Obviously, the point of Magocsi’s report is not to inform the world that the geographical center of Europe is located on Rusyn territory. It is rather to provide basic information about Rusyns, particularly about the present Rusyn movement and to call attention to the fact that in the very center of Europe there is a small nation—and Magocsi considers the Rusyns clearly a small nation—which is striving for emancipation and whose efforts toward this end must be supported.

The Rusyns have not had a say even in defining their own nationality. Much that happened to Rusyns over the centuries happened by the will of more powerful forces outside of their homeland. The Zemplin dialect which they speak to this day is obvious, and Magocsi perceives the Rusyn people as a rather heterogeneous group, whose unity is based only on an awareness of a common origin and an affinity of dialects. The unity of a national group, however, and the cohesion of its members is created by their living together in a single political body which is not the case for Rusyns. The strongest bonds arose only among the Subcarpathian Rusyns in the Prešov Region of Eastern Slovakia and in the former Subcarpathian Rus’, whose territory until 1918 was located within Hungary and then for two decades within the Czechoslovak state. Such bonds did not exist between the Subcarpathian Rusyns and neighboring Lemkos north of the mountains, let alone with the distant enclave of Rusyns in the Vojvodina. We also need to recall that the bonds between Rusyns living south of the Carpathians in the Prešov Region and those farther east in Subcarpathian Rus’ have weakened during the last half century of separation, and much will depend on whether these bonds can be strengthened.

In connection with his emancipation efforts for Rusyns, Magocsi asserts that the countries within which Rusyns have lived granted them in various periods “the right to a territorial entity,” that is to a definite degree of autonomy and self-rule. He draws the conclusion that the states within which Rusyns live at present ought to recognize the same right. This includes Ukraine, which in addition should recognize Rusyns as a distinct people. Not all of Magocsi’s examples are convincing. The conclusion he reaches, however, is important, in that he does not propose that an independent Rusyn state be created from “Rusyn lands,” which would change the map of central Europe. It should be mentioned, however, that his information about the circumstances surrounding the annexation of Subcarpathian Rus’ to Czechoslovakia in 1919 is treated with such brevity that its accuracy suffers.

Magocsi’s observation about the dichotomy of the Rusyn mentality is interesting, but it seems to me that this psychological disposition is not limited to Rusyns and one ought not use it to explain either their groping about for a national orientation or the many inconsistencies in their political activity. Rather, one ought to take into account concrete social and political conditions within which Rusyn society developed. Much that happened to Rusyns over the centuries happened by the will of more powerful forces outside of Rusyn control. As Magocsi demonstrates in his report, Rusyns have not had a say even in defining their own national identity. It is also interesting that in this article Magocsi does not explain why he considers Rusyns distinct from Ukrainians, that is, why the Rusyns did not evolve naturally into a unified body with Ukrainians.

In the first part of the report (the second part concerns...
itself with the present situation of Rusyns and their preservation in the future), Magocsi introduces information which relates to Slovakia and which needs to be supplemented and rendered more precisely. One example is his information about the number of Rusyns living in Eastern Slovakia. Magocsi declares that there are 130,000 Rusyns living in Eastern Slovakia. This is more than four times the number which was recorded in the census in Slovakia in 1991, which concluded that there are 16,937 Rusyns and 13,847 Ukrainians. He reaches his number of Rusyns in Eastern Slovakia by estimation, in a way similar to how he determined the total number of Rusyns, and without taking into account "how they are recorded in official documents, whether in individual identity cards or census statistics." His information is not accurate and portrays Slovaks as brutal assimilators. The fact is that such a number did not even exist in the 1930 census, that is, before the period when Slovakia's Rusyn population was afflicted with such disasters as: World War II casualties; the voluntary resettlement of a segment of the Rusyn population to the Soviet Ukraine (around 12,000); emigration to the Czech lands for work (around 20,000); denationalization provoked by the destruction of the Greek Catholic church and the introduction of Orthodoxy; and especially before the so-called ukranizaciana, when 118,400 individuals in Eastern Slovakia identified as Rusyn (Russian and Little Russian). It is true that the latter number also included a portion of Greek Catholic Slovaks who identified as Rusyns simply because they were members of the so-called "Rusyn faith," which the Greek Catholic church was considered to be. After becoming aware of their true nationality, these Slovaks began to identify themselves as Slovaks, which is what they in fact were by origin, even though they remained Greek Catholic. The forced conversion of Greek Catholics to Orthodoxy and later the ukranizaciana of the Rusyn population prompted Rusyns to denounce their nationality and identify with Slovaks. They did not want suddenly to become Orthodox and Ukrainian like [Czechoslovakia's] totalitarian regime demanded.

They reached such a decision out of fear that as Ukrainians they could be sent to the Soviet Union, or that their village could be annexed to the Soviet Union, something they absolutely did not desire. By the beginning of the 1950s, most of the Rusyns of Eastern Slovakia had lost whatever illusions they may have had about living conditions in the Soviet Union and were rather well informed also about the difficult fate of their fellow countrymen who had voluntarily opted for resettlement in the Soviet Union. Propaganda which may have affirmed a positive experience on the part of those who had gone East no longer confused those Rusyns who remained in Slovakia.

All the above-mentioned circumstances contributed to a process whereby many Rusyns changed their national identity to Slovak, which became evident from a decrease in their population in Eastern Slovakia. But this "most intense slovakization and national assimilation which the Rusyns experienced" was, according to Magocsi, not premeditated. No one tried to assimilate Rusyns in Slovakia after 1945. In any case, this would not have been possible in view of the positions which Rusyns, as is well known, held at that time whether in the East Slovak regional administration, in the central party and state organs of Slovakia, or after 1968 in the federal government. The assimilation of Rusyns, moreover, took place not only in Slovakia, but also in the Czech lands. From about 20,000 Ukrainians in 1961 (Rusyns at that time did not exist legally), there were in 1991 only 8,500 (1711 Rusyns and 6807 Ukrainians)—that is, fewer than half the original number. Their national assimilation is also attributed to Slovaks, although in the Czech lands one can hardly speak of slovakization even if the majority of them came from Eastern Slovakia.

Assimilation, that is, the slovakization of Rusyns in Eastern Slovakia, is a favorite and frequent topic among Ukrainians. It is discussed and written about in Ukraine and in the Ukrainian community in the West, but without any consideration of the circumstances which provoked this process. Beyond the borders of Slovakia nothing is known about these circumstances, and as a rule explanations of the so-called slovakization of Rusyns which "experts" of Rusyn origin from Eastern Slovakia present are accepted at face value. Quite often these "experts" have neither a sense of responsibility for the facts and information they distribute, nor even a basic accuracy. For instance, not long ago a certain associate professor of Ukrainian literature [at Safarik University] in Presov announced that in Eastern Slovakia during the interwar period there were about 250,000 "Rusyn-Ukrainians." Actually, this was approximately the number of all the Greek Catholics living in Slovakia, both Greek Catholic Rusyns and Slovaks. When this figure is compared with the number of Rusyns in 1961, which according to the population census included 35,000 Ukrainians (Rusyn nationality was not registered at that time), one gets the impression from the "experts" that Slovaks committed the greatest genocide anywhere in Europe since World War II. The fact that a small nation such as the Slovaks could hardly have swallowed up such an enormous number of people in a period of some twenty years occurred to very few.

A number of Ukrainians abroad customarily accept similar kinds of information without question. They refuse, however, to accept the fact that during the twentieth century in Eastern Slovakia a process of ethnic differentiation took place whereby ethnic Slovaks left what had been considered a single Rusyn population. It is also difficult for many Ukrainians to accept the fact that ukranizaciana is responsible for the greatest decrease in the number of ethnic Rusyns. Even Magocsi underestimates this process of ethnic differentiation and views the identification of Greek Catholic Slovaks with their Slovak nationality as an indication of assimilation among Greek Catholic Rusyns.

The reason for this misunderstanding is that the Ukrainian public is unable to accept the well-known fact that in the Carpathian Basin Rusyns were not the only Greek Catholics (previously Orthodox), and that one cannot automatically consider every Slovak or Hungarian Greek Catholic to be a denationalized Rusyn, even when he designates himself as a "Rusnak" or an adherent to the "Rusyn faith." In Eastern Slovakia residents of some Slovak villages call themselves Rusnaks, yet we know that their ancestors were Lutherans who accepted the Greek Catholic faith under the pressure of recatholicization. The "Rusyn faith," which many adopted "under pressure," used Church Slavonic in the liturgy and in particular allowed for a married priesthood, factors which made Greek Catholicism more attractive than Roman Catholicism. Many preferred the Greek Catholic faith over Roman Catholicism. In this sense, then, the Presov Greek Catholic eparchy and a majority of its clergy considered themselves "Rusyn." Publicly the eparchy conducted itself as if it were Rusyn, although among the faithful there were not only Rusyns. The Greek Catholic clergy also seemed largely Rusyn and inculcated a Rusyn consciousness in its faithful, even in those who were not ethnic Rusyns.
Magocsi does not examine these facts sufficiently, and in his status report insists that the Greek Catholic church be characterized as the “bastion of Rusynism.” At the present time the Greek Catholic church does not fulfill such a function and attempts to serve equally its Rusyn and Slovak faithful. The Ukrainians now criticize the church, saying that in Eastern Slovakia it aids in the national assimilation of Rusyns, that is Ukrainians.

Particularly interesting is the last part of Magocsi’s status report in which he speaks about the preservation of Rusyns and about what needs to be done in order to ensure the survival of this small, central European people in the future. In that regard, he considers that world opinion ought to develop an interest in the Rusyn situation. World opinion could then ensure that the Rusyns’ national rights are protected and, if necessary, could exert pressure on the governments in those countries where Rusyns live. In this part of his report, Magocsi refers to the Copenhagen document of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in which he finds arguments supporting the Rusyns’ emancipation efforts. He also refers to the document from the Moscow Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in connection with the notion that minority affairs are the concern not only of a particular state, but that other participants in the Helsinki process have the right to intervene in minority questions in any state. According to Magocsi, these principles must also be accepted by Ukraine if it wants to be part of the Helsinki process.

In this part of his report, Magocsi deals with the situation of Rusyns in the various countries in which they live and argues that at present their situation is best in Slovakia. This is not the only conclusion in the report which sounds a positive note in Slovakia’s favor. Earlier, in connection with Ukrainianization in Eastern Slovakia, he stated that at the time when such developments began, Rusyns (then designated as Ukrainians) were given various kinds of support for their culture and cultural institutions, and that a “‘well-paid Ukrainian intelligentsia’” attained at that time several significant scholarly and literary achievements. True, Magocsi adds that the mass of Rusyns derived no great benefit from this. We need to appreciate his conclusion, however, that conditions for the cultural development of Rusyns (Ukrainians) in Slovakia even before 1989 were not the worst, even if today those very same ranks of the “‘well-paid Ukrainian intelligentsia’” are providing unreliable information about the real opportunities that they had and still have.

There are other places in Magocsi’s report which relate to Slovakia or Czechoslovakia and which could be addressed, although this is not crucial here. The report concerns the Rusyn question with which Magocsi has been occupied for decades and which he has frequently presented publicly. We might consider this report as offering the definitive statement of his views which must be noted because the Rusyn question relates to us also. Magocsi’s opinions on a number of questions are different than ours, but this is understandable because his views developed in a world and in circumstances that are different from ours. We do agree on the fundamental issue, however, that everyone has the right to define his own national identity. This means that Rusyns also must have this right, including those Rusyns who have come to the conclusion that they are Ukrainians.

Magocsi’s plans on how to aid in the emancipation of Rusyns and his recommendations to the leaders of those countries in which Rusyns live about how to proceed in the process of ensuring equal rights for Rusyns indicate that he has both a professional and emotional commitment toward the “Rusyn question.” We can understand this better if we take into consideration that this American-Canadian professor does not shy away from speaking openly about his own Rusyn roots and his identification with Rusyns. This is not meant as a reproach, but as praise.

L’udovít Haraksim
Bratislava, Slovakia

PAUL R. MAGOCSI’S REPORT FROM ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW

Magocsi’s report is flawed from the outset. He attempts to convince his audience that the Carpatho-Rusyns are a fourth distinct East Slavic people, that they allegedly considered themselves distinct from time immemorial, and that they were considered as such by the international community. Also, the Communists ceased to recognize Rusyns as a distinct people after their takeover, and against both their will and desire began to consider them Ukrainians. It is entirely natural, then, that after the fall of Communism Rusyns should experience a reawakening.

The reality is different. The ethnonym Rusyn is derived from a territorial body called Rus’ (Kievan Rus’, Galician Rus’, Subcarpathian Rus’), which for centuries referred to the entire territory of today’s Ukraine. The term Rus’ is found in written monuments from the tenth century, for instance seven times in the treaties between Prince Igor and Byzantium from 911 A.D. Later, in the twelfth-fourteenth centuries, the term’s usage widened to include also Muscovite Rus’, that is today’s Russia. Thus, Carpatho-Rusyns have always felt themselves to be a component part of a larger Rus’ nation. Carpatho-Rusyns were recognized as such not only by neighboring tribes and peoples, but also by all scholars up until the present, beginning with Šafarík, Kollár, and Súr.

Magocsi is the first scholar who is attempting to convince Rusyns, and the greater public, that they are a distinct people separate from Ukrainians by virtue of their language, religious faith, psychology, and their whole being. According to his view, Rusyns “constitute a great divide between the Catholic west and the Orthodox east. . . . While their speech clearly belongs to the realm of East Slavic languages, the majority of their vocabulary, pronunciational stress, and even syntax, is West Slavic,” this last assertion is illogical. How can an East Slavic language have a West Slavic vocabulary, stress, and syntax, which are after all the basic components of every language? This absurd and unsubstantiated assertion understates all dialectological research in the region up to the present. All researchers up to now (Broch, Hnatjuk, Verchats’kyj, Czambel, Pan kevych, Gerovskij, Latta, and the authors of the post-war Atlas of the Slovak Language) classify the vocabulary and the syntax of Carpathian dialects as belonging to the Ukrainian language. Only one dialect in the Carpathian region, the Lemko dialect, has fixed stress. All other dialects have the same movable stress as Ukrainian. It is typical that Magocsi derived his thesis about the West Slavic character of Rusyn vocabulary, syntax, and stress not from professional linguists, but from amateurs: V. Petrovaj, author of a thus far unpublished Rusyn dictionary who was born in Medzilaborce and has lived since the age of seven in the Don oblast of Ukraine,
and S. Bunganić, a retired high school teacher of physics and chemistry and author of a thus far unpublished Rusyn grammar. Only they, and no one else, assert that West Slavic elements predominate in the Rusyn language.

Similarly, Magocsi tries to demonstrate an antithesis between the Greek Catholic and Orthodox faiths. According to him, the “confessional differences [between these denominations] reflect a whole mind-set that is either western- or eastern-oriented.” The Orthodox allegedly deny the self and place their fate in God’s hands, while the Greek Catholics take fate into their own hands. In reality there was and is almost no difference between the believers in these two denominations. Both denominations maintain the same eastern rite, use the same religious books, and employ the same Church Slavic language. Another question altogether is the fact that the Greek Catholic church, which for centuries preserved a Rusyn national consciousness among the faithful, is at the present time engaging in the slovakization of Rusyns.

As proof of the distinctness of the Rusyns, Magocsi appends to most of his works a map of their territorial location. This map, which for the past fifteen years has adorned the outside back cover of the quarterly publication of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, the Carpatho-Rusyn American, is a graphic example of Magocsi’s unscholarly approach to his subject. Magocsi considers the eastern border of the Rusyn population to coincide with the administrative boundary between the Transcarpathian oblast of Ukraine on one side and the L’viv and Ivano-Frankivs’k oblasts on the other side. Yet on both sides of these borders live the same Bojkos and Huculs, that is members of the very same ethnic group. How can one classify Transcarpathian Bojkos and Lemkos as Rusyns and Galician Bojkos and Huculs as Ukrainians?

The substance of Magocsi’s report emerges from the revivified status of Rusyns in Transcarpathian Ukraine, Slovakia, Poland, and Yugoslavia after the revolution of 1989. Magocsi wholeheartedly welcomes the Rusyn separatist organizations which have arisen in all of these countries. He considers the First World Congress of Rusyns, which took place in Medzilaborce, Slovakia in 1991, as a landmark in the development of Rusyn national consciousness. The congress supposedly had an “enormous impact on instilling Rusyn national pride in the over 300 persons who attended.” As proof of this influence, he presents the results of a population census which was held a week after the congress: 17,000 Rusyns and 14,000 Ukrainians, together 31,000—the lowest number recorded on this territory in all its history. And, according to Magocsi, this is only 23% of the real number which means that 77% of Rusyns apparently claimed Slovak identity. So then what kind of “enormous impact” is this, when four-fifths of the population identifies with another people?

The last part of Magocsi’s report is devoted to his perspective on the future development of the Rusyn question in the various countries in which Rusyns live. According to Magocsi, if Ukraine, the Czech and Slovak Republics, Poland, and Yugoslavia want to become members of the “new Europe,” they must recognize Rusyns as a distinct people “regardless of how scholars or governments might define Rusyns.” In his report Magocsi gives every government a lecture on how it is to proceed in order to fulfill international agreements relating to minorities, including Rusyns. In his views we might discern a particular development.

In his lecture at the Slovak Academy of Sciences Institute of History in Bratislava in the summer of 1991, which was published in several periodicals, Magocsi stated: “Czecho-Slovakia is struggling to rebuild its obsolete industrial infrastructure.... If it wants to compete with its products on the world market, can it still invest hundreds and thousands of crowns a year in support of personnel in theaters, museums, publishing houses, radio and television, and finally in schools simply because these are institutions of national minorities?” (Kultúrný život, June 30, 1991, p. 8). Magocsi repeated this formulation again in his report which I am addressing here. His “advice” to the governments of the Czech and Slovak Republics was presented in the form of a question, although the question is not only rhetorical in nature. His unspoken answer is completely obvious: if the government will continue to support cultural institutions of national minorities, it will not extricate itself from its economic crisis. Hence, according to Magocsi, bread, milk, and cheese are more important than the culture of national minorities.

In the report under consideration here, Magocsi changed his view and admitted that the government could provide financial support to national minorities, but only under the following condition: It must divide financial resources not according to work produced, but according to the “real” number of members of both national minorities: 55% to Rusyn organizations, 45% to Ukrainian organizations. It is not hard to see what the fulfillment of this principle would mean. Every institution would have to divide into two parts, so that there would have to be two museums—Rusyn and Ukrainian—two radio and television stations, two university departments, and even two sets of schools. There is no doubt that such a division would lead to a considerable weakening of these institutions and to their demise.

At first glance, Magocsi’s approach seems logical, but there is one problem over which he has passed in silence. Up to now there has not been (and never was) a Rusyn literary language. The literary language of Yugoslav Rusyns is not useful for the Carpathian region. And if there is no literary language, how can the government financially support Rusyn schools, Rusyn radio, Rusyn literature, and so on? Magocsi’s demand is uncompromising: “The Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic must provide teachers and textbooks in Rusyn.” But how can this be done if there is no Rusyn literary language? And in spite of all the propaganda, there has not been recorded a single instance of the people themselves demanding Rusyn schools or even the study of Rusyn language. All attempts up to now to create an independent Rusyn language have failed.

The evolution of language in Ukraine and in other countries has been from dialects to a standard literary language. Before the implementation of the so-called “ukrainianization” at the beginning of the 1950s, there was no Rusyn nationality in Slovakia, nor Rusyn schools, nor Rusyn newspapers. There was, however, a Russian (that is, Great Russian) nationality, Russian schools, and Russian newspapers. Even the Ukrainian national theater presented most of its plays in literary Russian. My generation and the generation of my parents erroneously considered themselves Russian. There was no independent “Rusyn” orientation in Slovakia at all. That orientation was created only in 1989. In other words, the Communist regime liquidated not the Rusyn, but the Great Russian orientation—and this is something very different.

Magocsi’s sympathies are clearly on the side of the Rusyn orientation, particularly the Rusyn Renaissance Society
(Rusyns'ka Obroda), an organization without a membership base that unites several individuals of an anti-Ukrainian orientation. Magocsi unconditionally supports the efforts of that society to “protect” Rusyn identity in Eastern Slovakia and to “de-Ukrainianize” Rusyn cultural life.

Magocsi considers another organization, the Union of Rusyn-Ukrainians, which boasts 10,000 members of both Rusyn and Ukrainian orientations, a “direct descendant ... of the formerly Communist-dominated Cultural Union of Ukrainian Workers,” “still with largely the same leadership.” Magocsi is not at all disturbed by the contradiction between his assertion and reality. Both the president and vice-president of the Union of Rusyn-Ukrainians were persecuted by the Communist regime for twenty years and among the thirteen members of the executive branch of the union only one was a member of the former Cultural Union of Ukrainian Workers. Magocsi’s unsubstantiated assertion about the new union creates the impression that everything that is Rusyn is progressive.

Magocsi’s report suggests that the government supports only Ukrainian-oriented organizations and institutions (with the exception of the Ukrainian National Theater which has changed its orientation and has become the Rusyn Aleksander Dychnovyč Theater). In reality the whole operation of the anti-Ukrainian Rusyn Renaissance Society—its congresses, assemblies, festivals, news and publications—is financed by the state from the budget of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic.

Magocsi considers his thesis that Rusyns and Ukrainians are two distinct peoples self-evident, and thus he sees no need to justify it. For him sufficient proof lies in the fact that in the last census in Slovakia, almost 17,000 people identified as Rusyns and only 14,000 as Ukrainians. In reality, we are talking here about members of one and the same nationality. I do not have at my disposal the results of sociological research, but as an ethnographer who knows this region well, I believe that most of those who declare themselves to be Rusyns subconsciously incline toward Ukrainian culture. I consider myself Rusyn, but I know that I belong to the Ukrainian people. I consider the Ukrainian language and culture my own, just like a Sarišan (resident of the former Sariš county) considers himself a Slovak, a Moravian considers himself a Czech, and a Bavarian considers himself a German—even if each one of them speaks his native dialect all his life and if most of them never master the literary language.

I consider contemporary efforts to create a distinct Rusyn people a question of politics rather than nationality, and all the more so not a scholar’s responsibility. In all parts of Ukraine there has occurred an evolution from an initial Rusyn nationality to Ukrainian nationality. This trend cannot be different either in the Transcarpathian oblast of Ukraine, Slovakia, or Poland. The ethnonyms Rusyn and Ukrainian are synonymous—the first older, the second more recent. Any effort to drive a wedge between a Rusyn and a Ukrainian orientation will lead to the weakening and eventual assimilation of both, such as has occurred in northern Hungary where all the former Rusyns were magyarized simply because they insisted on the idea of a distinct Rusyn (Ruthene) nationality.

I cannot dispute the right of every citizen to identify with a nationality according to his own convictions. But scholarship cannot adapt the results of research to a temporary fashionable trend. Results must have permanent value. From this point of view, Magocsi’s report reminds me more of a political tract than a scholarly study.

Mykola Mušynka
Prešov, Slovakia
(Translated by Patricia A. Krafcik)

RECENT EVENTS

Komlóska, Hungary. On February 6, 1993, the Organization of Rusyns in Hungary (see Carpatho-Rusyn American, Vol. XV, No. 3, 1992, p. 2) held its first plenary meeting in the village of Komlóska in northeastern Hungary. In the presence of numerous residents in one of the last Rusyn-speaking villages in Hungary, the chairman of the organization, Gábor Hattinger, greeted a delegation of the Rusyn Renaissance Society in Slovakia headed by Jaroslav Sisak, Professor István Udvari of the Department and Rusyn Philology at the University of Nyíregyháza, and Professor Miklós Popovics of the University of Budapest. Of particular interest were words of greeting from Dr. Serhij Pan’ko of Kiev State University who stated: “Many people in Ukraine know what Rusyns want. ... It is untrue that Ukraine does not recognize Rusyns. Whether in Kiev, Uzhhorod, or Nyíregyháza, we will make every effort so that Rusyns will never be repressed and that they will live better than they have until now.”

Following talks (in Hungarian) on the historic background of Rusyns by Professors Udvari and Popovics, the organization’s vice-chairman, Ladislav Popovyč, spoke of plans to establish a Rusyn choral group and to obtain a building that will serve the needs of Rusyn cultural activity not only in Komlóska but also in several neighboring villages like Mogyoróssza, Regecz, Rudabányaacsa, and others where there are still people who remember their Rusyn roots.

Svidník, Slovakia. On February 6, 1993, the Rusyn Renaissance Society (Rusyns’ka Obroda) held its third annual meeting (sejm) to assess its past achievements and outline its goals for 1993. Among the goals are: to create a conceptual framework for the recently founded Rusyn Language Institute in Prešov; to publish a Rusyn grammar, primer, and rule book; to work with Slovakia’s Ministry of Education to assure the study of Rusyn culture two hours weekly in elementary schools beginning in the 1993/1994 school year; to assure the creation of an independent editorial staff for Rusyn-language radio and television programs; to create a department of Rusyn language and culture at Safárik University in Prešov; and to urge the Slovak government to have on its Council for National Minority Affairs separate representatives for Rusyns and for Ukrainians, and not for “Rusyn-Ukrainians” together.

The third annual meeting also created commissions for schools and for the media and it elected for a three-year term Vasyl’ Turok as chairman and Jan Kalynjak as vice-chairman.
Kent, Ohio. On March 27, 1993, Robert C. Metil, a doctoral candidate at the Department of Music at the University of Pittsburgh, delivered a paper entitled, “The Slavjane Folk Ensemble and the Preservation of Rusyn Ethnicity.” He read the paper at the 18th annual meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology held this year at Kent State University’s Center for the Study of World Music. In his illustrated lecture, Mr. Metil stressed how the growth of ethnic awareness in the United States and the political changes in the homeland have transformed Slavjane into a leading Rusyn cultural group in North America.

Monroe, New York. On August 29, 1993, the shady woods and grassy lawns of the 105 acre Lemko Resort played host to the 25th Annual Lemko Festival. An estimated 500 people participated, mostly from New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut and Massachusetts, but also from far away as Florida.

Performers familiar from previous years included the Glinka Russian Folk Dancers, the Karpaty Women’s Chorus, and the Limbora Slovak Folk Ensemble. Highlights of the three-hour program included the elegant, powerful professional voice of Misha Slivots’kyj, soloist of the USMioka Ensemble from Ivano-Frankiv’sk, Ukraine, and the first-time appearance of the St. Nicholas Orthodox Greek Catholic Church’s Vychodna Dolina Singers from New York City. This choir is made up of two generations of women originally from the towns of Jarabina, Kamienka, and Litmanova in the Rusyn-inhabited Prešov Region of northeastern Slovakia.

Participants were also able to enjoy home-made pirohy and borsch as well as a fascinating little one-room museum crammed with interesting artifacts and exhibits, including a list by province (województwo) and village of Lemkos martyred in the World War I Austrian concentration camp at Talerhof, Austria. (by Susyn Mihalasky)

L’viv, Ukraine. The Second International Congress of Ukrainianists (MAU) took place from August 22 to 27, 1993, in the western Ukrainian city of L’viv. Over 200 specialists on Ukrainian language, literature, history, folklore, religion, and politics from Europe, North America, the Far East, and Australia took part in the congress. Several presentations dealt with Carpatho-Rusyns. Considering the context, most—although not all—of the speakers dealt with the problem from a Ukrainian perspective.

Among the presentations dealing with language were: “Church Slavonic and Local Hungarian Words in the Carpatho-Rusyn Language,” by Maria Pavlovskva (West Lafayette, Indiana); Hungarian Loan-Words in the Language of the Bačka Rusyns,” by István Udvari (Nyíregyháza, Hungary); “Theoretical and Methodological Problems in the Study of Dialects Based on Ukraine’s Carpathian Dialects,” by Janusz Rieger (Warsaw, Poland); “Transcarpathian Ukrainian Place Names from the 19th Century and the Problem of Autochtony,” by Světlana Dubina (L’viv, Ukraine); “The Ukrainian Vocabulary in Transcarpathia in the Context of Ukraine,” by Ivan Sabados (Uzhhorod, Ukraine); “Carpatho-Ukrainian Dialects and the History of the Ukrainian Language,” by Halyta Klepioka (Moscow, Russia); “The Structure of Anthroponym in the Former Lemko Region,” by Stefaniya Panc’o (Ternopil’, Ukraine); “The Past and Present Status of the Ukrainian Language in Eastern Slovakia,” by Zuzana Hanudel’ (Prešov, Slovakia); and “The Language Situation Among the Rusyn-Ukrainians of Slovakia Since 1989,” by Mykola Štec’ (Prešov, Slovakia).

A few papers dealt with ethnographic and historical topics: “The Contemporary Status of Folk Songs in Ukraine’s Carpathian Region,” by Mykola Zinčuk (Dovhopil’ja, Ukraine); “The Transcarpathian Village During the Interwar Years, 1919-1939,” by Vasyl’ Il’ko (Užhorod, Ukraine); “Political Relations Between the Ukrainians of Transcarpathia and Galicia in 1938-1939,” by Mykola Veheš and Volodymyr Zadorožnyj (Užhorod, Ukraine); and “On the Question of Periodization in the National and Cultural Life of the Ukrainians of Czecho-Slovakia Since 1945,” by Jurij Bača (Prešov, Slovakia).

Finally, there were four papers that dealt with the present-day Rusyn national revival, the last three of which were particularly critical of any ideas that Rusyns may be distinct from Ukrainians—“The Lemkos in Poland,” by Paul Best (New Haven, Connecticut); “The Nationality Policy of the Polish Commonwealth Toward the Lemko Region,” by Jaroslav Mokryj (Cracow, Poland); “Carpatho-Rusynism: Its Past and Present,” by Oleksa Myśanyć (Kiev, Ukraine); and “Political Rusynism in Its Present-Day Form,” by Mykola Muśynka (Prešov, Slovakia).

Bratislava, Slovakia. From August 30 through September 8, 1993, the Eleventh International Congress of Slavists took place in the capital of Slovakia. Held every five years in a different Slavic country, this largest of all scholarly conferences dealing with Slavic cultures attracted over 1,200 scholars from 36 countries worldwide.

Seven of the presentations dealt specifically with Carpatho-Rusyns, most of which focused on linguistic issues. These included: “From the Ruthenian Dialect to Literary Language,” by Zoltán Medve (Hungary); “Notes on Research Concerning the Interrelations Between East Slovak and Rusyn (Ukrainian) Dialects,” by L. Bartko (Slovakia); “A Phonetic and Phonological Description of the Rusyn Language,” by O. Timko (Croatia); and “Ukrainian-Slovak Linguistic Relations in East Slovakia—the Prešov Region,” by Oleksa Horbatsch (Germany).

Presentations in other disciplines included: “The Difference Between the Rus’ and Rusyns in the Settlement of Slovakia During the Middle Ages,” by Ferdinand Uličný (Slovakia); “The Evolution of Carpatho-Rusynism in the 20th Century,” by Oleksa Myśanyć (Ukraine); “National-Building Since the Revolution of 1989: the Case of the Rusyns,” by Paul Robert Magocsi (Canada); and “Old Slavonic Traditions in Rural Buildings Among the Rusyn-Ukrainians of Eastern Slovakia,” by Myroslav Sopoliga (Slovakia).

Svidnik, Slovakia. On September 17, 1993, the Prešov branch of the Rusyn Renaissance Society in cooperation with the Svidnik Municipal and Region Cultural Center sponsored the First Rusyn Rock Festival. More than a dozen local rock singing groups performed before hundreds of young fans at the Svidnik House of Culture. The program was conducted in Rusyn with the requirement that each group and soloist had to have at least one Rusyn rock song in its repertoire. This first Rusyn Rock Festival helped reveal to young people that Rusyn culture is a living organism with a language that can and should be used in all walks of life: at home, in schools, and for the expression of all forms of culture.
SECOND WORLD CONGRESS OF RUSYNs

The following are the official documents issued by the Second World Congress of Rusyns, held in Krynica, Poland, May 22-23, 1993. For details see the Carpatho-Rusyn American, Vol. XVI, No. 2, Summer 1993, p. 11.

PROGRAMMATIC STATEMENT

The Second World Congress of Rusyns in Krynica

A. Approves:

1. The reports read by the heads of the delegations of each country where Rusyns lives.

B. Accepts:

1. As its new member the Organization of Rusyns in Hungary and its chairperson, Gabriel Hattinger, as a member of the Interregional Council of the World Congress of Rusyns.

C. Proposes:

1. That as of September 1, 1993, all Rusyn organizations work to introduce in schools located in villages and towns where Rusyns live the voluntary study of Rusyn language, culture, and history two hours weekly.


3. To enhance the Rusyn Renaissance Society’s Research Center for Rusyn Language and Culture, which should be transformed into a Department [Katedra] of Rusyn Studies at the Pedagogical Faculty of Safarik University in Prešov.

4. To publish before the end of 1994 anthologies of Rusyn poetry and prose that will include works by authors in all countries where Rusyns live.

5. To discuss at the first meeting of the newly-elected Interregional Council of the World Congress of Rusyns the creation of an interregional organization of Rusyns called the Rusyn Matka.

6. To create scholarly, economic, and cultural-educational commissions of the World Congress of Rusyns.

7. To create in Prešov a common fund to support the development of Rusyn culture.

8. That in 1995 the Rusyn Matka organize in Ruski Kerestur (Yugoslavia) the Third World Congress of Rusyns.

PROCLAMATION

1. We urge the governments of the countries where Rusyns live to assist them in their cultural and national development.

2. We urge the parliament and president of Ukraine to recognize Rusyns as an independent and distinct nationality. The present situation of the Rusyns in Subcarpathian Rus’ (Transcarpathian oblast of Ukraine) is in violation of the international charter on human rights. In December 1991, the government of Ukraine made it possible for Rusyns to decide by democratic means their nationality question. We believe this development which has begun should continue so that such democratic processes are able to fulfill the interests of both the state and the Rusyn people.

3. We request that Lemko Rusyns who do not consider themselves Ukrainian be recognized as part of the Rusyn nationality and be treated as a distinct national minority in Poland. We request that the Vistual Action [forced deportation in 1947] be declared illegal and that the moral and material damages inflicted be rectified.

SINCE THE REVOLUTION OF 1989

Prague, Czech Republic. Despite the division of Czechoslovakia into two independent states, interest in Carpatho-Rusyns has not decreased in the far western regions of the former federal republic. In late January 1993, a new organization was established known as the Society of Rusyns in the Czech Republic (Obščestvo Rusyniv Českoj Republiky). This is actually the second Rusyn organization on Czech lands to be founded since the Revolution of 1989.

In contrast to the older Society of Friends of Subcarpathian Rus’ founded in 1990 (see the Carpatho-Rusyn American, XV, 3, 1992, p. 9), which caters primarily to Czechs that have personal ties with the pre-World War II province of Subcarpathian Rus’, the new society wishes to focus primarily on persons of Rusyn background in Bohemia and Moravia and it hopes to promote a sense of Rusynness among their descendants who live in a Czech environment. Among the activists who established the Society of Rusyns are the last governor of Subcarpathian Rus’, Dr. Ivan Parkanyi; the resident Greek Catholic priest in Prague, the Reverend Ivan Ljavyneč; the first chairman of the Society of Friends of Subcarpathian Rus’, Aleksander Velyčko; and Rudolf Matola. Among the society’s goals are to assist newcomers and students from Subcarpathian Rus’ to find jobs or scholarships, and to publish books about Subcarpathian Rus’.

Kiev, Ukraine. On February 7, 1993, the Papal Nuncio to Ukraine, Archbishop Antonio Franko, issued a statement clarifying the status of the Greek Catholic Eparchy of Mukachevo. Ever since the re-legalization of the Greek Catholic Church in the former Soviet Union in the late 1980s and the independence of Ukraine in 1991, a controversy has erupted over the issue of whether the Eparchy of Mukachevo, with its seat in Užhorod, should remain under the jurisdiction of the Vatican (as it has since 1937) or become part of the jurisdiction of the Archeparchy (Metropolitanate) of L’viv for all Greek (Ukrainian) Catholics in Ukraine (see the discussion in the Carpatho-Rusyn American, Vol. XIV, No. 2, 1991; Vol. XV, Nos. 1 and 4, 1992). The bishop of Mukachevo, Ivan Semedij, together with his auxiliary bishop Josyf Holovač and three-quarters of the eparchy’s priests wished to remain under the Vatican. Local Ukrainian activists (many former Communists) supported by the Ukrainian
Jurij Dumnyc travelled to Bratislava, Slovakia where they Archeparchy or under any other metropolitan see outside of his decision was announced by the Papal Nuncio to Ukraine. "For the time being, the Mukačevo Eparchy will retain its present status and not be under the jurisdiction of the L'viv Archeparchy or under any other metropolitan see outside of Ukraine, but rather under the jurisdiction of the Apostolic See [the Vatican]."

The statement stressed that the Eparchy of Mukačevo must remain unified and under the authority of its ordinary, Bishop Semedij. The Vatican also recognizes that among the East Slavic inhabitants of Transcarpathia "a portion are of Ukrainian nationality but another portion do not have a Ukrainian identity." Therefore, it recommends: (1) that the two auxiliary bishops become vicars to serve the specific needs of Ukrainians (Margityč) and "those who do not consider themselves Ukrainian" (Holovac); and (2) that the eparchial administration include both Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian clergy.

Mukačevo, Ukraine. On May 15, 1993, delegates at a meeting of the Society of Carpatho-Rusyns decided to create a provisional government for Subcarpathian Rus'. Four days later, on May 19, Subcarpathian minister of foreign affairs, Tibor Ondyk, and minister for culture and economics, Dr. Jurij Dumnyc, travelled to Bratislava, Slovakia where they announced their government's intentions. Ondyk spoke of "genocide toward the Rusyn people" on the part of Ukraine, whose government refuses to recognize Rusyns as a distinct nationality. Dumnyc reported on economic discrimination against the Transcarpathian oblast (Subcarpathian Rus') where prices are fifty percent higher and salaries one-fifth lower than in other parts of Ukraine.

The provisional government of Subcarpathian Rus' intends to ask the United Nations and parliaments worldwide for assistance in obtaining state sovereignty (independence) for their homeland. In particular, they are calling for a referendum under international auspices in order to determine the local population's views on state sovereignty. The provisional government claims as its territory only the Transcarpathian oblast of Ukraine, not Rusyn-inhabited lands in neighboring countries. Initially, the new government did not for security reasons announce the name of its prime minister, although subsequently his name was released. It is Dr. Ivan Turjanycz, professor of biochemistry at Uzhhorod State University and chairman of the Society of Carpatho-Rusyns.

Despite speculation by the media in East Central Europe, which has taken a great interest in this matter, Subcarpathia's provisional government has no formal or informal relationship to the World Congress of Rusyns. The goals of Subcarpathia's provisional government will appear in the next issue of the Carpatho-Rusyn American.

Prešov, Slovakia. On August 4, 1993, the weekly newspaper of the Rusyn Renaissance Society, Narodný novinyk, announced that it received from the Slovak Bureau of Statistics in Bratislava new results of the 1991 Czech-Slovak census, in particular information regarding languages spoken by the inhabitants of Slovakia. The results are quite revealing: 49,099 persons responded their native language is Rusyn; only 9,480 said it was Ukrainian. The same census source had previously announced the following answers to the question of national identity in Slovakia: 16,937 Rusyns; 13,847 Ukrainians; and 1,624 Russians.

Ever since the late nineteenth century, when statistics began to be collected with any consistency in East Central Europe, informed government and scholarly circles have considered the answer to native language (mother tongue) to be the most reliable source in determining the ethnocultural identity of people living in multi-national states. This is because individuals often confuse the concept of nationality with state citizenship. Therefore, people have claimed themselves to be Austrians, Hungarians, Poles, or Slovaks because they lived in Austria, Hungary, Poland, or Slovakia, not because they were of Austrian, Hungarian, Polish, or Slovak ethnic or cultural origin.

This new information leads to the following conclusions: (1) that today there are officially over 49,000 Rusyns in Slovakia; and (2) that among the East Slavs in Slovakia five times more identify themselves as Rusyns than as Ukrainians.

Bratislava, Slovakia. On September 2, 1993, representatives of Slovakia's national minorities met for the second time with the republic's president, Michal Kováč, and government officials. The session focused on the written submissions each group submitted to the president following the first meeting on May 20. At that time, each of Slovakia's minorities made requests concerning an improvement of their own status. The Rusyns, for instance, called for the creation of a Rusyn radio program and university department for Rusyn studies in Prešov and for a resolution of the problem regarding the Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidnik.

Only the Ukrainians put forth demands that concerned other groups. In particular, they demanded that the "Rusyn Renaissance Society (Rusyn'ska Obroda) be abolished, that recognition of the Rusyn nationality be abolished, and that institutions that had and still belong to Ukrainians belong in the future only to Ukrainians." Slovakia's president and several ministers rejected these demands, stating that protection for a Rusyn nationality is inscribed in the Slovak constitution and that the Rusyn Renaissance Society is a legal organization doing positive cultural work.

---

A Forum on Carpatho-Rusyn Heritage

THE CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN

The Carpatho-Rusyn American (ISSN 0749-9213) is a quarterly publication of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center Inc., a non-profit cultural organization whose purpose is to promote knowledge about all aspects of Carpatho-Rusyn culture through the publication and distribution of scholarly and educational material about the Carpatho-Rusyn heritage in Europe and America. General inquiries concerning the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, and all communications concerning this publication, should be directed to:

Carpatho-Rusyn American
132 Hawthorne Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15218
Phone: 412-371-3823

Patricia A. Krafcik, Editor
Annual Subscription is $12.00