AUTONOMY—THE PEOPLE HAVE SPOKEN

In the political world, autonomy means that a given territory has a wide degree of decision-making power over its own political, economic, and sociocultural affairs, even though it is part of another state. Rusyns, most especially those living south of the Carpathian Mountains, have had extensive experience with actual or promised autonomy for their homeland.

In the course of the twentieth century, the autonomy question for the Rusyns of Subcarpathian Rus', today Transcarpathia, was seriously considered as many as five times. First raised during the summer of 1918 among Rusyn immigrants in the United States, the autonomy idea soon struck roots in the European homeland.

The first experience began in December 1918, when the new post-World War I democratic Hungarian government created an autonomous province called the Rusyn Land (Rus'ka Kraina) with its own governor and elected assembly. Hungary’s Rusyn Land functioned for nearly four months until April 1919.

It ended because Czechoslovak troops occupied most of Subcarpathian Rus', which in May 1919 voluntarily joined the new state of Czechoslovakia. The decision by Rusyns to join the Czechs and Slovaks was premised on the understanding that their homeland would have wide-ranging autonomy. That understanding was inscribed in international law, according to the Paris Peace Conference’s Treaty of St. Germain in September 1919, and in the Czechoslovak constitution of February 1920. This second attempt at autonomy was to last for nearly twenty years. During that time, Subcarpathian Rus’ had its own governor and partially elected provincial assembly, although it had very limited authority over its own political and economic affairs. Nevertheless, Rusyns and other nationalities living in Subcarpathian Rus’ did learn what autonomy could be if it were fully implemented.

That chance came in October 1938, when the first Czechoslovak republic under pressure from Hitler’s Germany was replaced by a federal state in which Subcarpathian Rus’ became one of its three self-governing parts. Within a month the province was re-named Carpatho-Ukraine and was governed by its own cabinet headed by a prime minister. Although still part of federated Czecho-Slovakia, Carpatho-Ukraine determined its own internal affairs and organized elections to a local parliament. When the parliament finally met on March 15, 1939, it declared independence for Carpatho-Ukraine. But that very same day Hungarian troops invaded the province and forcibly incorporated it into Hungary.

Initially, the Hungarian government promised to implement autonomy sometime in 1940 for the region they called Carpathia (Kárpátalja), but such promises were never fulfilled. Hungary was by then engaged in World War II on the side of Hitler, and when the Hungarians were defeated by the Soviet Union, historic Subcarpathian Rus’ suddenly found itself in September 1944 in the hands of the Red Army and local Communists. With approval from Stalin and the eventual acquiescence of the provisional parliament of a restored Czechoslovakia, Subcarpathian Rus’—by then renamed Transcarpathia—was ‘voluntarily re-united’ to the Soviet Ukraine. Under highly centralized Soviet Communist rule, there was no possibility for any kind of autonomy, although in actual practice Transcarpathia did have its own regional national assembly (Narodna Rada) made up exclusively of Communist party deputies who did have a limited number of responsibilities for local administration.

With the Revolution of 1989, the eventual fall of Communism, and the demise of the Soviet Union, demands for the restoration of autonomy were once again heard from several segments of the Transcarpathian population. In 1991, Transcarpathia’s regional national assembly (Narodna Rada) appointed a commission to study and make concrete proposals for autonomy. All this was happening at the very same time that nationalist leaders throughout Ukraine were demanding sovereignty and eventually independence from the Soviet Union. These same Ukrainian activists, both within and beyond Transcarpathia, campaigned strongly against any kind of autonomy for the region.

December 1, 1991, became a historic day for Transcarpathia as well as for Ukraine as a whole. On that day, in one and the same referendum, over 90 percent of Ukraine’s citizens voted in favor of independence for Ukraine; and over 78 percent of Transcarpathia’s citizens voted in favor of autonomy for their region. Never before had the voice of the people been solicited. In the past, autonomy was decided upon by governments or by a small number of political leaders. For the first time, in December 1991, there was a vote on the issue in a referendum recognized as legally and morally binding by the citizens and authorities of Ukraine as well as by international observers.

And now, over two years later, what is the situation? Ukraine has its independence, but Transcarpathia is denied autonomy. Local pro-Ukrainian leaders in Transcarpathia as well as Ukrainian nationalists elsewhere in Ukraine and in North America have devised all kinds of excuses to argue against autonomy. At first they said the ‘Transcarpathians’ do not understand what autonomy is. This seemed particularly ironic since of all parts of present-day Ukraine in the twentieth century, only Transcarpathia experienced (when part of Czechoslovakia) some form of autonomy and democratic self-rule.

But the real reason for opposition on the part of Ukrainians is that many—although not all—of the Transcarpathians who favor autonomy also believe that the indigenous East Slavic population of the province comprises a Rusyn nationality distinct from Ukrainians. While the new democratic state of Ukraine has granted liberal rights to all minorities—Russians, Jews, Poles, Tatars, and others—living on its territory, it has denied corporate status to Rusyns. Rusynism is equated with autonomy which, in turn, is equated with political separatism and anti-Ukrainianism.

Such equations are little more than fabrications by anti-Rusyn Ukrainian nationalists. It is true that Transcarpathia’s national assembly has formally petitioned the central government to implement autonomy, but autonomy within Ukraine. Even the Society of Carpatho-Rusyns, whose leaders created in May 1993 a Provisional Government for Subcarpathian Rus’, are not opposed to Ukraine. That society considers the 1944-1945 Soviet annexation of Transcarpathia invalid according to international law. Consequently, the autonomous status of Subcarpathian Rus’ inscribed in the 1919 Paris Peace Conference is still binding. The goal of the recently-created Provisional Government, therefore, is “to unite Subcarpathian Rus’ with Ukraine,” but this time on a voluntary basis.

Whether or not one agrees with such legalistic arguments based on a specific, perhaps even valid, interpretation of past historical events, the fact remains that on December 1, 1991, in the all-Ukrainian referendum, 78 percent of Transcarpathia’s inhabitants voted for autonomy. The voice of the people has finally been heard. Threats by extremist Ukrainian nationalists and even paramilitary forces will not silence the just demands for regional autonomy. The question is whether the government and parliament of a democratic Ukraine will listen and act accordingly.

Paul Robert Magocsi
Toronto, Ontario
Maksym Sandovycz was born on February 1, 1886, in the heart of the Lemko Region of what was then the Austrian province of Galicia in the Rusyn village of Ždynia, Gorlice county, in present-day Poland. His father, Tymofej, was the cantor at Ždynia’s Greek Catholic church. Maksym received his primary education in Gorlice and finished high school in the nearby towns of Jaslo and Nowy Sacz. After a short stay at the Greek Catholic Basilian monastery in Cracow, where he grew dissatisfied with what he perceived as attempts to latinize the Eastern Rite and denationalize the Rusyns, he crossed the border into the Russian Empire and entered the Orthodox monastery at Počajiv, which was also the seat of the eparchy of Volhynia. Sandovycz’s outstanding potential attracted the attention of Bishop Antonij Chrapovickij of Volhynia, who enrolled him in the Orthodox Theological Seminary in Zytomir.

After completing his seminary education in 1911, that same year he married Pelagija Grigorjuk and was ordained to the priesthood. At that time a movement to return to Orthodoxy was becoming widespread in the Lemko Region, and Sandovycz returned home to serve an Orthodox parish in the village of Hrab, as well as in the neighboring villages of Wyszowadka (Rusyn: Vysovatka) and Długie (Rusyn: Dowhe). On December 2, 1911, he served his first Divine Liturgy in Hrab, but soon after the Austrian authorities, suspicious of the Orthodox movement for its alleged “pro-Russian” sympathies, issued the parish an order prohibiting any further activity. Sandovycz refused to comply, and continued to conduct services in village homes. As a result, he and his parishioners were frequently fined, and he was often held under temporary arrest.

Just before Easter in the spring of 1912, Sandovycz visited his friend and confessor, Father Ihnatij Hudyma, who was pastor in a village near Galicia’s administrative center of L’viv. Suspected of espionage activities on behalf of tsarist Russia, both priests were arrested by the Austrian authorities. They spent over two years in a L’viv prison until their trial began on March 9, 1914. Both were acquitted and freed on June 7. Sandovycz immediately returned to his native village of Ždynia where he continued worshipping with his Orthodox parishioners.

On August 4, 1914, just after the outbreak of World War I, Sandovycz’s priestly activities led to the arrest and imprisonment of his entire family. This time, however, he received no court trial. On the morning of September 6, Sandovycz awoke in his cell and read his morning prayers. Austrian soldiers and gendarmes led him to the wall of the prison courtyard. Before a group of local officials and his imprisoned father, Timofej, his hands were bound and he was blindfolded. Two gendarmes were arranged on each side of him only four paces away. The death sentence was read, the rifles went off, and he slumped against the wall, reportedly uttering the words, “Long live the Rus’ people, long live Orthodoxy.” To assure that he was dead, a gendarmerie approached and fired three revolver blasts into Father Maksym’s head while Pelagija wept in her cell.

On September 12, 1914, Sandovycz’s father, his pregnant wife, and brother were sent to the concentration camp at Talerhof near Graz in the far western part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It was at Talerhof that Pelagija gave birth to a son, named Maksym in honor of his father. Like his father, the younger Maksym also entered the priesthood. Upon ordination, he accepted the pastorate of the Orthodox church in the Lemko Rusyn village of Banica. When after World War II, the Lemko Rusyns were deported from their homeland, the younger Father Sandovycz served a parish in Białystok in northeastern Poland, where he remained until his death in 1991.

Meanwhile, in 1920 the Rusyn-American community leader, Viktor Hladyk, also a native of the Lemko Region, travelled to the Paris Peace Conference where he raised the issue of independence for the Lemko Region. Meeting there with Tymofej Sandovycz, he helped to transfer Father Maksym’s remains from the Roman Catholic cemetery in Gorlice to the village cemetery in Ždynia. After returning to the United States, Hladyk raised enough money to pay for a gravestone and the reburial. Tymofej accompanied the body of his priest-son back to Ždynia, where he was finally reburied in 1922. Father Maksym Sandovycz’s life, death, and deeds were remembered in song and poetry by local Lemko Rusyns, and requiem services at his grave drew hundreds of pilgrims from Poland and abroad.

In 1986, Bishop Adam (Dubec) of the Orthodox Eparchy of Przemysł/Nový Sacz blessed the site in Gorlice where the Orthodox Church of the Holy Trinity was to be constructed in honor of Sandovycz. It was completed and consecrated on September 8, 1991. The choir of the Orthodox church in Krynica, directed by the well-known Lemko-Rusyn poet, Petro Muranka-Trochanovskij, sang the responses and later a hymn for Father Maksym written specially for the occasion. In his sermon, Poland’s Orthodox Metropolitan Vasilij from Warsaw spoke of the tragic fate of the Lemko Rusyns and of the martyrdom of Sandovycz. Two American Orthodox priests of Lemko-Rusyn background, Father Daniel Ressester of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, who is a relative of Sandovycz, and Father John Nehrebecki of Paramus, New Jersey, read an appeal by Lemko-Rusyn Americans for the canonization of Father Maksym. At the end of the rite of consecration, a memorial service was held and a marble monument donated by the Sandovycz family was blessed.

In recognition of Father Maksym Sandovycz’s martyrdom, the Orthodox Church of Poland will canonize him as its first Rusyn saint in September 1994. The canonization will take place at Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in Gorlice, a town near the Lemko Region in the southeast corner of Poland (see in this issue, UPCOMING EVENTS).

Richard D. Custer
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
SOME REFLECTIONS
ON PAUL R. MAGOCSI’S STATUS REPORT

The following is the last of three commentaries and a response by the author of the status report by Paul R. Magocsi, “Carpatho-Rusyns: Their Current Status and Future Perspectives,” which appeared in the Carpatho-Rusyn American, Vol. XVI, No. 2, Summer 1993, pp. 4-9. This concludes the English-language translation of the entire discussion that originally took place on the pages of Slovenský národopis, nos. 2 and 3 (Bratislava, 1992), the scholarly journal of the Ethnographic Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. — Editor

It is quite fortunate that the editors of the journal, Slovenský národopis, decided to publish this discussion about Carpatho-Rusyns. Events of the past few years demonstrate that this small ethnic community has long awaited its revival. At the present time research on the Rusyn question has already undergone significant changes. The new political atmosphere in our part of Europe now allows for a bolder and broader study of the Rusyn question. The time has come for a confrontation between often contradictory, mutually exclusive, and otherwise differing views on this question. I stress this point for a reason. In the past, politically motivated restrictions concerning scholarly research were accompanied by the viewpoint that it was not necessary to do research on the Rusyn problem. Still today, some say—and here I have in mind several representatives of Ukrainian studies—that history and scholarship have already solved the Rusyn problem without regard for what the Rusyns themselves may think. Such a view is a phenomenon of the mental legacy created by a vulgarized version of Marxism. Instead of arriving at scholarly conclusions by observing and analyzing an existing and changing reality, some propose to take a step backward: to popularize a “truth” constructed of general theoretical postulates to which reality must be adapted.

I consider Magocsi’s text valuable because it offers a description of the ethnic reality in the Carpathian region and provides an accurate analysis of it. Thanks to the fact that he employs the term Rusyn, the territory and inhabitants who reside in it, often handled until now in scholarly works with a dose of impatient protectionism, are described here more thoroughly and correctly than in the works of those who demand a “reformation” of our understanding of Rusyns that coincides with the preconceived notions of a particular circle of researchers. Unlike his predecessors, Magocsi has moved research on the national consciousness of the East Slavic inhabitants of the Carpathians forward in the proper direction.

There is one aspect of Magocsi’s report which I regard as especially interesting: his reference to East and West Slavic elements in Carpatho-Rusyn culture. This issue has a fundamental significance, for precisely in such cultural dualism—together with the isolation of Rusyns in their mountain homeland—is found the essence of their national differences from Ukrainians, their brothers in terms of language and religion, as well as from their neighbors to the west, the Slovaks and Poles. This fundamental cultural dualism, which could not be expunged by lengthy programs of de-nationalization or re-nationalization, such as the Polish plan for the polonization of the Lemkos in the 1930s, or Ukrainianization in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and in the Soviet Union after World War II, is proof of the “distinctness” of Rusyns and brings into question that which some have considered to be little more than “separatism.” In his opening remarks, Magocsi states that “the Rusyns are not a peripheral group, but rather one whose homeland, Carpathian Rus’, is located literally in the heart of Europe.” I think that this assertion must be supplemented by the words of Chris Hann, a social anthropologist at Cambridge University in Great Britain, who insists that “on the map this may be the center of Europe, but economically and intellectually it is a backward region.” This otherwise minor corrective is very important. It allows for a better understanding of the dimensions and essence of the real issue. Although Rusyns for centuries inhabited the very center of our continent, only to a small extent did they participate in the events which took place there. And when they did participate, it was more as an object rather than an actor in the events. Especially significant was their limited participation in the process of the formation of new national ideologies in the nineteenth century, which became the basis for the building of national independence for many peoples in this part of Europe.

It is most certainly not the author’s fault that facts about the size of the Carpatho-Rusyn population are lacking. Only the [1991] census of the population in Czecho-Slovakia has provided some concrete data. But here I would also like to pose the question of the fate of the approximately 50,000 Rusyns resettled after 1945 from the Zemplin and Saris regions to the Czech Sudetenland [northern Moravia and western Bohemia]. We do not know if they remained in their new settlements or how they identify themselves ethnically. Concrete figures that have to do with similar situations in Poland and Ukraine also continue to elude us.

I would like to take a stand regarding the Polish aspect of the Rusyn question. Recently, published figures of the Organization for Minority Affairs in the Polish Ministry of Culture and Art in Warsaw have not contained specific information about Lemkos. Rather, data on which the administration of that organization depends presents the number of Lemkos together in one group with Ukrainians at somewhere between 300,000 and 350,000. The informants for these figures were representatives of the Ukrainian minority. The figures which they offered are exaggerated, and this is attested by the conclusions of Poland’s parliamentary elections in December 1991. The Ukrainians were included together with the Lithuanians, Czechs, and Slovaks in the Minority Electoral Bloc. Yet together the Bloc was barely able to receive 27,000 votes. Still, the most generous estimate of the Ukrainian population in Poland places it at 150,000. In this figure are included Lemkos with a Ukrainian national consciousness. For instance, a Lemko from Gorlice, Vasyl’ Slijanta, came in second on the ballot. On the other hand, a certain part of the Lemko population definitely did not vote for candidates of the Minority Electoral Bloc. Lemkos with a Rusyn national consciousness did not even submit their own slate of candidates, and several activists supported candidates from the German minority.

I mention all this in order to focus on the fact that certain specially interested individuals almost double the estimates of the size of minority groups. We must, therefore, approach these numbers with caution. It can be shown, in fact, that there are far fewer Lemkos with Rusyn national consciousness in Poland than Magocsi supposes.

Magocsi also refers to the official prohibition of the use of the term Rusyn in Poland after 1945. I would like to correct this impression. An agreement concluded on September 5, 1944, by the Polish Committee for National Liberation
referring to movements of peoples who were to be resettled from Poland to the Soviet Union listed the following groups: Belorusian, Russian, Ukrainian, and Rusyn. Local authorities in Poland were at the time quite conscious of the differences between Ukrainians and Lemkos (Rusyns). A further official document issued by the Polish government whose actions affected Lemkos (the decision to inaugurate the Vistula Action [forced eviction] on April 24, 1947) named two categories of the population—"Ukrainian" and "mixed." There is no doubt that the Lemkos were at that time included with the Ukrainians, but this decision emerged from practical considerations, since there was also an order to evacuate Poles from mixed families. This was an attempt to eliminate completely all potential support for the activity of the [anti-communist] Ukrainian Insurgent Army—UPA. Lemkos, whether they admitted it today or not, cooperated with the UPA. And thus the identification of Lemkos with Ukrainians had at that time an exclusively practical basis.

During the second half of the 1950s, the political dynamic in Poland began to change. The new government, led by Władysław Gomułka, who during Hitler's occupation hid among the Lemkos, differed with many past political positions. The Lemkos felt they finally had a chance to improve their situation. But it was then, and only then, that a definitive verdict was reached in their situation. It was provoked by the unfortunate actions of Peter Hardy [during the visit to Poland in 1957 by the Lemko-American activist from Connecticut]. In 1958, the Polish Communist Party specialist on nationality affairs, Aleksandr Slaw, announced on the pages of the ideological publication of the party, Nowe Drogi, that Lemkos are only an ethnographic group of the Ukrainian people. And it could not be otherwise. Persistent pressure on the part of the Lemkos themselves [to be able to return to their Carpathian homeland] was strong at this time and the government’s response was initially conciliatory. The Hardy affair, however, seemed because of its treatment in American publications to become too conspicuous. It is possible that it aroused the concern of Moscow. Yet even without the Hardy affair, Warsaw’s nationality politics would likely have developed in the same way. At the time it was being influenced by the old leaders of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine. We still do not have any simple answer to the question of how possible it ever was for the Lemkos to obtain official recognition [as a nationality] from the Communist government in Poland in 1956.

At this point, it is necessary to elaborate on one further detail. This does not pertain specifically to Magocsi’s report, although it does concern directly the Polish reaction to the identification of Rusyns (Lemkos) as Ukrainians. The view is rather widespread that Polish society supported the repressive steps of the Communist government against national minorities. This is completely untrue. Nationalistic oriented Polish circles protested in various ways the forced population from the Przemysl, Sanok, Chelm, and Lemko regions. The recklessness with which this resettlement is being carried out, particularly with regard to the Lemkos among whom an Old Ruthenian and not Ukrainian orientation prevails, is from the Polish point of view a crime. It is especially sad that this resettlement, pursued according to the will of Moscow, is taking place in conditions when any effective protest on the part of Polish society is impossible.'" Giertych’s position was obviously motivated by his anti-Ukrainian phobia. He was clearly of the opinion that from the Polish point of view it was more advantageous to support the notion of the national distinctness of Rusyns.

With regard to Polish initiatives towards Rusyns, I would stress even more than Magocsi one aspect: dependence on external factors. The political context of the Carpatho-Rusyns was an indisputable fact. By this I do not mean that from the national point of view they began to exist solely as a product of outside forces. It is more likely that because of their economic weakness and underdeveloped culture the political ideologies which arose in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Carpathian Rus’ were forced to seek outside supporters. In the interwar period, these supporters were Poland, Hungary, the Soviet Union, and Czechoslovakia. Even the establishment and short existence of the Carpatho-Ukraine [1938-1939] was related to the behind-the-scenes actions of the Galician and émigré-based Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists.

Turning to the present-day problem, Magocsi also discusses the situation of Rusyns in the new political circumstances which arose after 1989. The fall of the Communist regimes was unquestionably advantageous to Rusyns. Almost immediately there was a resurgence of nationalism in East Central Europe. Without this situation a Rusyn renaissance would have been impossible. Nevertheless this same process will also have unpleasant effects on their position. New states have already arisen and others may still arise. Rusyns no longer live in the Soviet Union or in Yugoslavia. The status of Slovakia has also changed. These new or renewed states are still building their own systems and are creating their political doctrines. A fear has arisen that several political forces, just as before 1939, could raise the Rusyn question as a subject of international conflict. Magocsi recalls this reality in connection with Czechoslovakia and Hungary, and such discussions have taken place rather extensively in the international, including Polish, press. Less well known is the fact that also in Poland certain political forces have expressed an interest in the "Lemko factor."

Here I am referring in particular to the various segments of society which created the new Polish government after the elections of 1991. It seems that the above-mentioned view of Giertych still has a following. Hence, already in June 1989, the monthly Glos (whose chief editor was the former minister of the interior Antoni Maciarewicz), published an article by Ryszard Czarnecki, today a representative of the Christian National Party in the Polish parliament. Czarnecki analyzed the possibilities of the political development of the Polish state, including the question of cooperation with Lemkos and Slovaks. Here he did not hide the fact that he understands cooperation as ‘widening the sphere of Polish influence,’ and in that context he believes Lemkos can form ‘a kind of buffer between Warsaw and Kiev.’ Somewhat later, in 1990, the [Warsaw weekly] Tygodnik Solidarność published a commentary on an article about Rusyns that appeared in the British newspaper, The Independent, under the especially provocative title: ‘They Await Their Hour.’ Thus, Polish nationalists have great interest in the Rusyns/Lemkos. In that context, events in Slovakia and Ukraine are continuously monitored and discussed.

What, then, emerges from all this? If, as Magocsi states, the Rusyns themselves have not declared any desire to destabilize existing international borders, one can nonetheless
find among Ukraine's neighbors those who might use the Rusyn issue to achieve border changes. In the words of the above-mentioned article by Ryszard Czarnecki, "Let us not be afraid of the phantom of the borders, because borders will not be preserved just because the Poles pretend that they do not have their own interests and aspirations. It is power politics that decides and will decide." Such a view is echoed by the Czech-based Republican party. While it is still possible to state that today these are peripheral views, they are nonetheless disturbing. Ukraine is the other crucial factor in the evolution of such dissension that is occurring before our very eyes. While, as Magocsi suggests, Ukraine's relationship to Rusyns is in accord with the provisions of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), any resolution of the Rusyn question beyond the borders of Subcarpathian Rus' is not acceptable. And if the situation in Subcarpathian Rus' begins to develop with concerns beyond its borders—and there are several indications this is happening—nationalist circles in countries surrounding Ukraine will have an easy pretext to act in the role of a protector on behalf of the downtrodden Rusyns.

And finally a few words about that section of Magocsi's report that deals with the status of Lemkos (Rusyns) in Poland. Unquestionably Magocsi is right when he says that the financial situation of Lemko organizations in Poland is bad. But there is nothing special about the fact that Lemkos receive almost no support from the state, since they have not fought energetically for this support. With regard to these matters, in Poland today there is still no official codified procedure to follow. The amount of support a national group receives does not depend on the size of the group. Those who receive the most are quite simply those who know best how to compete. In 1991, the Ukrainians acquired from the government almost 1.5 billion złotys.

The problem, however, is not receiving money. The Lemkos are a group with a high percentage of village inhabitants. This group concerns itself less with ethnic status and more with the basic problems of life. Thus, there is wide support for the efforts to acquire forest lands in the Lemko Region and much activism in the struggle between Orthodox and Greek Catholics concerning churches on one hand and weak participation of ethnic organizations on the other hand. The Lemko Association (Stovaryšyna Lemkiv) is a young organization which still has much to learn about lobbying before the central government for support. A positive step would be for Lemko organizations to become members of the Council of National Minorities created on the initiative of president Lech Walesa. In this regard, it is worth noting that the Union of Ukrainians refused to approach the council. The Lemko presence in political circles is especially important now, at a time when the fate of national minorities and their status is being considered in the preparation of a new constitution. The Ukrainian minority has already for a long time been quite active in this regard. The Lemkos, on the other hand, are never present whenever the key decisions which will influence their fate for many years are being made.

In an almost homogeneous national state—and such is Poland—national minorities must strive cleverly for the support of influential social and political forces. In this area, the Lemkos have real possibilities, although they have not always known how to make use of them. Thus, for example, one of the leaders of the Democratic Union, presently the largest political party in Poland, Senator Zofia Kuratowska, has shown a great interest in the Lemko question. Moreover, almost all political parties have written about Lemkos, and various aspects of the Lemko problem have occupied present members of the parliament and government. And while there remains for Lemko leaders only one intelligent option—to use this interest for the benefit of the group—it must be said that they do not always know how to take advantage of the situation. In matters of cultural activity, if we compare the Lemkos with the Kashubes—a group which has a similar ambivalent attitude toward their national consciousness (whether German, Polish, or local)—the Lemkos once again fall short. The Kashubes have been able to compile a dictionary of Kashubian, codify their language, and use it in official situations regardless of the fact that, similarly to Lemko Rusyn, it has not been officially sanctioned by academic linguistic authorities.

One important task still confronts the Lemkos: to convince others of their national distinctness from Ukrainians. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian point of view is continually heard. Therefore, public opinion often considers Lemkos as Ukrainians, regardless of what they feel they are. Writing about this phenomenon, Tadeusz Szafar aptly recalls the well-known epigram of Jean-Paul Sartre about Jews as people whom others consider Jews without regard for what they really are. Are Lemkos destined to have a similar fate? I once wrote the following about Rusyns on the pages of [the New York Polish-language newspaper] Nowy Dziennik: "Their national distinctiveness may exist, but today it is still not a phenomenon which could be compared in the same way with the indisputable existence of the Ukrainian, Polish, or Slovak national idea." I must simply reiterate this dictum here.

The Carpatho-Rusyn homeland is behind the times, ecologically endangered, and political unstable. But this is also the fate of the entire post-Communist Eastern and Central Europe. And like the region's other inhabitants, Rusyns also demand something more than prosperity and stability. They demand European standards for the preservation of national minorities. As far as this is concerned, I am in perfect agreement with Magocsi's view. The fate of Rusyns, dependent on as many as three other peoples in this region, will evolve their own specific criteria for their own variant of European-ness. In that sense we must agree with the view that Rusyns, this people of the "heart of Europe," will begin to live a normal life only when Europe becomes a common home for all its peoples.

Andrzej A. Zięba
Cracow, Poland

(Translated by Patricia A. Krafcik)

A REPLY

I would like to begin by expressing appreciation to the editors of Slovenský narodopis for their decision to publish my report on the current status of Carpatho-Rusyns and to include commentaries by respected scholars in the countries where Rusyns live. Such an approach is in marked contrast to the emotion-laden polemics, whether from journalists or academics, that until now have dominated most discussions about the "Rusyn question." Serious issues deserve serious analysis and criticism, and in that regard I thank as well Dr. L'udovít Haraksim, Dr. Mykola Mušynka, and Dr. Andrzej Zięba for taking the time to share their opinions of my report on Carpatho-Rusyns. Again, the editors of Slovenský
národopis are to be commended for their decision to extend the debate by allowing me this reply.

It may be useful to begin by explaining why my essay on the current status and future perspectives of the Carpatho-Rusyns was written. It was in response to an invitation by the New York-based Institute for East-West Security Studies to attend their conference on “European Institutions and the Protection of National Minorities in East Central Europe and the Balkans” that was held at the Štríň castle near Prague in October 1991. The Carpatho-Rusyns were chosen as one of the six national minorities to be analyzed. I, like other participants, was asked to describe the current status of Rusyns and how they can be considered as a subject of concern to “international institutions (United Nations, Council of Europe, European Parliament, CSCE) with regard to the protection of national minorities and ethnic groups.” The report presented at Štríň was subsequently revised and delivered one month later in Častá, Slovakia at the Conference on Minorities and Politics, sponsored by the Czech-Slovak branch of the European Cultural Foundation. It is the latter, revised version of the essay that appears in this issue of Slovenský národopis.

I mention this background to underline the fact that my thoughts on the Rusyn question were formulated as a response to a concrete request for information and suggestions put forth by an American research center. It is this reactive form that reminds me of an initial statement in the commentary of Dr. Haraksim, in which he suggests that “Magocsi unambiguously considers Rusyns as a small people,” or, I assume, a distinct nationality. In actual fact, I am not unambiguously regarding this matter. In a well publicized address delivered one month later in Častá, Slovakia at the Conference on Minorities and Politics, sponsored by the Czech-Slovak branch of the European Cultural Foundation. It is the latter, revised version of the essay that appears in this issue of Slovenský národopis.

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Nationalities are, after all, not absolute social categories. At some point in history they came into being and, as we know, some have even disappeared. Or, to put it another way: “Nations and national cultures are artifacts—continually imagined, invented, contested, and transformed by the agencies of individual persons, the state, and global flows of commodities.” Observation of such social phenomena, in the present as well as the past, is precisely the task of the scholar. In the case of Carpatho-Rusyns, it is not I who “unambiguously” state that a Rusyn people exists. It is rather Rusyn spokespersons themselves—whether from Transcarpathia, northeastern Slovakia, the Lemko Region in Poland, or the Vojvodina in Yugoslavia—who proclaim that together they comprise a distinct Rusyn nationality. In short, as a historian I am simply describing what actually exists or is in the process of formation; I am not prescribing what might or what ought to be.

Hence, in response to Dr. Haraksim’s statement that Rusyn “unity is rather illusory,” I would say that while this may be true, it is no more illusory than the idea of a single Slovak or Ukrainian people at the outset of the twentieth century, or a Macedonian people on the eve of World War II. Historians, perhaps more than anyone, should know how “illusions” have a way of becoming realities.

I am particularly grateful to Dr. Haraksim for raising the problem of statistics. This is because the statement in my report on this matter should preferably have read: “In theory, the number of Rusyns could be as high as 1.2 million people.” Within this figure there are an estimated 130,000 Rusyns in northeastern Slovakia. This figure is, of course, only hypothetical; that is, it describes a situation that might be, not what actually is. All we really know is that in the March 1991 census, 16,937 persons in Slovakia responded that they were of Rusyn nationality, and that another 13,847 responded Ukrainian nationality and 1,624 Russian nationality. (I include the category Russian as well, since it is likely that most, if not all, such respondents originally came from Rusyn villages.)

But how did I arrive at the estimate of 130,000? The answer is rather simple. There are about 300 villages in northeastern Slovakia that ethnographers and linguists have categorized as being inhabited by East Slavic Rusyns. Moreover, more than 80 percent of the inhabitants in each of those villages responded in the 1900 Hungarian census that Rusyn (ruten nyelv) was their mother tongue. If we correlate the 1900 Hungarian census with the total population in each of these villages according to the 1970 Czechoslovak census, there hypothetically could have been 129,398 Rusyns in 1970. Of course, not every single person in the 300 villages claimed Rusyn as their mother tongue even in 1900. On the other hand, we have not taken into account the large number of Rusyns who in the last three decades have emigrated to nearby cities, such as Stará Lubovňa, Bardejov, Humenné, Prešov, Vranov, and Michalovce. It is also interesting to note that the 129,000 hypothetical figure for 1970 represents 3 percent of the total population in Slovakia, a percentage that coincides with the percentage of Rusyns in Slovakia in 1921 (3 percent) and again in 1930 (2.9 percent). In actual fact, however, not every inhabitant wanted to identify him/herself as a Rusyn, even though in 1991—for the first time since World War II—an individual did have a right to declare and be counted as a Rusyn. At most, only 25 percent of the potential 130,000 opted for some East Slavic national identity, whether Rusyn, Ukrainian, or Russian.

Aside from the personal reluctance of individuals to identify as Rusyns, the census procedure itself is problematic. It may seem blasphemous for a Slavist like myself to admit, but the pre-1918 Hungarian statistics—even during the height of magyarization—were more reliable than the Czechoslovak statistics which followed. This is because the Hungarian census takers asked a question about mother tongue, not nationality. Such an approach was a much better way to gauge the “national” identity of respondents.

In contrast, the Czechoslovak governments, whether during the first republic or after 1945, asked—or at least published—only a question on nationality. Everyone knows how easy it is for individuals, even educated ones, to confuse national identity with the state in which they reside. Thus, if a respondent were to equate nationality with citizenship and not with ethnolinguistic origin, then in theory everyone in pre-1918 Hungary was Hungarian and everyone in post-1919 Czechoslovakia was Czechoslovak. Statistically, during the first Czechoslovak republic there were no Slovaks, since in the published census report there were no rubrics for Czechs and Slovaks, only one for “Czechoslovaks” (národnost: československá).

It is also curious to note that in the March 1991 Czechoslovak census, separate questions were asked about language and nationality. Thus, in theory—and perhaps in practice—a person could respond Slovak for his/her nationality, but Rusyn for language or mother tongue. I say perhaps, because while the Czechoslovak Statistical Bureau rushed to publish the preliminary results of the 1991 census already in June of that year, for some reason the bureau did not include the number of responses to the language question. Hopefully,
such information will soon become available, and whether or not it changes the number of Rusyns in Slovakia, a question about mother tongue or language still seems the fairest way to measure the size of minorities who live in multinational states like Czecho-Slovakia. [Recently, the Slovak government did release the 1991 census data on language: 49,099 persons responded their native language is Rusyn; only 9,480 responded Ukrainian.—Editor] The question of statistics inevitably leads one to the issue of assimilation. Dr. Haraksim seems particularly concerned about my statement that “the most rapid degree of slovakization and national assimilation that Rusyns ever experienced” took place in the 1950s and 1960s. This is simply a statement derived from the only existing statistics we have, in particular comparing the 1921 and 1930 censuses with those of 1950, 1961, and 1970. Nor can the decrease be explained simply because, as Dr. Haraksim writes, of deaths during World War II (for which he gives no figures), of emigration to the Soviet Union (most of whom returned in the 1960s), or of migration to Moravia and Bohemia. Alongside these losses must be calculated natural demographic increases. Dr. Haraksim also argues that this assimilation was “not planned.” I never said it was planned, and stated instead that it was likely forced ukrainianization, collectivization, and liquidation of the Greek Catholic church that contributed most to the process of slovakization. One might add here as well the natural assimilatory process among children of mixed Rusyn-Slovak parentage whose offspring would most likely adopt the state nationality—Slovak—as their own.

But arguing against planned assimilation and slovakization, as Dr. Haraksim and I do, is on both our parts more of an interpretive conclusion than one based on concrete proof. I would hope that now, in the more democratic atmosphere of post-1989 Czecho-Slovakia, scholars will research and publish documents to provide the real background to the June 25, 1952 decision of the Communist party of Slovakia that led to the adoption and implementation of ukrainianization by administrative decree. Only then will our interpretive conclusions be reaffirmed or by necessity altered. As it stands, Dr. Haraksim’s statement that no one “ever forced” national assimilation upon Rusyns after 1945, remains somewhat problematic, unless one considers forbidding the use of a people’s ethnonym (as was the case for Rusyns from 1952 through 1989) not an example of direct state intervention in the question of national self-identity.

In contrast to Dr. Haraksim, whose critical remarks do contribute to a rethinking and refinement of my own views on the subject, there is the commentary by Dr. Mykola Mušynka. His commentary does little to advance our understanding of the Rusyn question beyond the already well-known Ukrainian interpretation as formulated by scholars in the former Soviet Ukraine and by Ukrainianists beyond the borders of Ukraine. Most disturbing, however, is the tendency of Dr. Mušynka to exaggerate, to misread, or even worse, to imply some things other than what I have written.

The first instance of this approach is related to my comments about Rusyn dialects and their relationship to East Slavic and to West Slavic languages. In fairness to Dr. Mušynka, there was a problem in the Slovak translation of my English original; namely, in my statement about West Slavic influences on Rusyn vocabulary, pronunciational stress, and syntax, the English term “much” (znácná časť) was incorrectly rendered as “the majority of” (väčšina). This rather slight unintended mistranslation was transformed by Dr. Mušynka into a major intellectual faux pas that he felt obliged to describe with exaggerated terms like “illogical,” “absurd,” and “unsubstantiated.” We all know—whether from common sense or from what linguists have told us—that Rusyn dialects, especially those in southeastern Poland and northeastern Slovakia, are heavily influenced by Polish and Slovak.

As for misreading or distorting my text, Dr. Mušynka states that I supposedly linked the First World Congress of Rusyns with the census that took place one week later. What I actually said was that the Congress did have a great influence on the 300 or so participants as well as on many other Rusyns in Ukraine, Poland, Yugoslavia, and Czecho-Slovakia who read about it in the generally widespread press coverage. We also know that the press reports only occurred after the census. No linkage between the two events was either stated or implied by me.

As for an example of outright distortion, Dr. Mušynka refers to an essay of mine, originally entitled in English, “The End of the Nation-State?: The Revolution of 1989 and the Future of Europe,” that was published in Slovak, Hungarian, and Romanian translations. It is certainly true that in that essay I ask the serious question posed by the leaders in all East Central European countries: how can they, while trying to undertake difficult economic transformations, still afford liberal subsidies to a wide variety of cultural activity, including assistance to the cultural institutions of national minorities? To pose such a rhetorical question was not to suggest that in the best of all worlds support for cultural activity should cease. Rather, it was posed in order to face up to the fact that despite the revolutionary changes of 1989 we still do not live in the best of all worlds, and that minority group activists will have to find other sources of funding. In the future—which is now!—national minorities cannot expect to maintain the same level of activity that they enjoyed during the Communist era. In the short term, minority organizations will have to find ways other than, or along with, government funding to assure that their activity can pay for itself, if not, perhaps, even turn a profit. Some organizations have, in fact, already set out to make themselves fiscally responsible. Ultimately, the status of national minorities will improve when all countries enter the European Community, that is, into a new order in which self-governing regions will be able to determine their own expenditures on cultural, educational, and other activities.

Dr. Mušynka’s argumentation is flawed as well by some rather dubious assertions. Does he really believe that “P. R. Magocsi is the first scholar who has tried to convince Rusyns (as well as the broader public) that they are a distinct people”? What about Hijador Stryps’kyj and Aleksander Bonkaló during the first half of the twentieth century? And if Dr. Mušynka would dismiss these two scholars as unacceptable magyarones, then what about the Rusyn historian, Irynej Kondratovyc, or the Moravian Czech specialist on borderland cultures, Jan Hůsek, who wrote in 1936 that “the Carpatho-Rusyns are developing into an independent branch and national unit,” and that after two or three decades Subcarpathian Rus’ “will surely overcome the chaos of the diverse cultural, linguistic, and political orientations and crystallize into an independent distinct nationality—into a Carpatho-Rusyn people.”

In his eagerness to dismiss the Rusyn orientation, Dr. Mušynka states that a distinct “Rusyn” orientation did not exist in northeastern Slovakia until 1989 (!), and that before
then the only orientation that existed (and to which he himself belonged) was the "Great Russian" orientation. Such an assertion contradicts what most of the existing literature says about the interwar period.

Even the Marxist ideologist, Ivan Bajcura (no friend of the Rusyn orientation), concluded that during the interwar period "the Rusyn orientation was in the strongest position in eastern Slovakia." Such a conclusion was based on concrete evidence. For instance, the influential Greek Catholic bishop of Prešov, Pavel Gojdič, proclaimed in 1927 at the opening of a folk culture exhibit: "I am neither a Great Russian nor a Ukrainian. I am a Rusyn, and wish to live and die as one." About the same time the popular newspaper published in Prešov, Ruskoe slovo, pointed out in an editorial statement the distinction between loyalties to Russian and the local Rusyn cultures: "A Subcarpathian Rusyn with a secondary education must more than anyone know the common Russian language." His "first duty," however, "is to love and support our local Subcarpathian Rusyn language. . . . Our national local culture, schools, and literature must follow the way of our ancestors, i.e. po-našeemu!"

Finally, Dr. Mušynka argues that the Czecho-Slovak government cannot finance Rusyn schools, a Rusyn radio station, or Rusyn publications because there is no Rusyn literary language. The logic here is that if there were a Rusyn literary language, then such government support should be forthcoming. This allegedly could never occur, however, since as Dr. Mušynka authoritatively claims, all efforts until now to create a Rusyn literary language have failed. Indeed, Dr. Mušynka has dismissed the efforts in this direction undertaken by a retired gymnasium teacher, Stepan Bunganyć, and by the editors of the current Rusyn-language weekly newspaper, Narodný noviny, and bi-monthly magazine, Rusyn, as little more than amateur experiments. But does he also dismiss the first step in codification carried out recently by his own Šafárik University colleague, Dr. Jurij Pan'ko, who has recently published Normy rusyn'sko pravopisu (Prešov, 1992)?

It would not be surprising if Dr. Mušynka dismissed Dr. Pan'ko's efforts as he has dismissed the efforts by anyone who might even suggest that Rusyns might evolve into a distinct nationality with their own literary language. After all, Dr. Mušynka, like other pro-Ukrainian activists, believes in the Marxist "iron-clad laws" of history. Everywhere else in Ukraine, Rusyns developed into Ukrainians; hence, this will—or must—happen in the Carpathian region as well. It makes no difference what Rusyns themselves believe. For Dr. Mušynka and others like him, the term Rusyn is considered simply an older form of Ukrainian; therefore, the people should be called Rusyn-Ukrainians.

This new hyphenated designation, Rusyn-Ukrainian, supported so vigorously by Dr. Mušynka since the revolution of 1989, has about as much logic as the terms Czecho-Slovak, or Macedono-Bulgarian, or Luxembourger-German. Did such hyphenated peoples ever exist except in the minds of Czech, Bulgarian, or German xenophobic nationalists? And should not we all be concerned when a writer, like Dr. Mušynka, tells us he knows what people are "really" thinking? How else can one interpret his remarkable statement that "the majority of those people who declared themselves Rusyns [in the 1991 census] subconsciously favor Ukrainian culture."

No amount of counterargumentation can ever convince true believers like Dr. Mušynka that history, like life, offers many different possibilities. To dismiss the possibility of a Rusyn nationality as simply the political machinations of misguided enthusiasts or national traitors is not terribly dissimilar from what pre-revolutionary Russian imperialists said (and, if one were to believe Solzhenitsyn, still say) about the idea of a Ukrainian nationality. It, too, was considered a political provocation against "our own" loyal Little Russians.

In the end, to dismiss the legitimate desires of those who wish to be considered as belonging to a distinct Rusyn nationality is to disregard, so to speak, the voice of the people. Whereas in the past that voice could be and was disregarded by the governments and ideologists of "workers'" states, it can no longer be dismissed today. If people are convinced and willing to work on behalf of a Rusyn literary language and Rusyn nationality, then it will come into being regardless of what critics like Dr. Mušynka may say.

Perhaps it is because we are of the same generation that the commentary of Andrzej Zieba is based on two basic principles with which I agree. The first of these is that history must be viewed as a dynamic process. Which, in the context of the subject at hand, could envision the creation of "new" nationalities. The second is that Rusyns, as Dr. Zieba says, "will begin to live a normal life only when Europe becomes the common home for all of its peoples." A common European home based on regions, not nation-states, is as I stated above, the best guarantee for the survival of all national minorities. Why? Because in the new Europe, when present-day national boundaries will decline in importance (as those of the European Community will already decline beginning in 1993), there effectively will be no national minorities, only equal nationalities living in various parts of the continent.

To be sure, that stage of political evolution is only now beginning in "western" Europe, and it may take several more decades before it comes to East Central Europe. Meanwhile, there will be an interim period during which the warning of Dr. Zieba about new state structures must be taken seriously. For instance, Rusyns will have to adapt during this interim period as the old nation-states in which they had lived—the Soviet Union, Czecho-Slovakia, Yugoslavia—are replaced by smaller nation-states—Ukraine, Slovakia, Serbia. Hopefully, these new states will live up to the standards they agreed to in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), and therefore guarantee the rights and protection for the national and cultural minorities living within their respective borders.

If one reads carefully the statements by Rusyn activists, including those in Ukraine's Transcarpathia who have a political as well as cultural agenda, it becomes clear that they are not calling for unification with a neighboring country (Czecho-Slovakia or Hungary), nor are they calling for the creation of an independent Rusyn state. They know that ultimately neither option would really change their status. What they are calling for is recognition of Rusyns as a nationality equal to all other nationalities in Europe, and for an increase in autonomy or self-government in order that the local population and its elected representatives can decide themselves about their region's economic, ecological, and cultural fate. This, they argue, can only be achieved in a Europe that "becomes a common home for all its peoples." Perhaps, to follow on Dr. Zieba's suggestion, the Rusyn homeland will no longer be the object but subject in the determination of its future. And perhaps the inhabitants living in this geographic center of the continent will no longer be on the periphery but rather in complete step with the rest of the new Europe.

—Paul Robert Magocsi
**RECENT EVENTS**

**New York, New York.** On June 23, 1993, the Institute for East-West Studies hosted a discussion group on "The Carpathian Euroregion: Challenges and Opportunities." Following in the footsteps of similar regional initiatives elsewhere in Europe, the foreign ministers of Poland, Ukraine, Slovakia, and Hungary signed in February 1992 a declaration "to establish a Carpathian Euroregion as a framework for the maintenance of lasting cooperative relations among its various participants."

The Carpathian Euroregion Project has since its inception been overseen by the Institute for East-West Studies, an American-European-Japanese non-governmental, non-profit educational and research organization. The underlying assumption of the project is that close, cross-border economic cooperation helps to minimize the potential for political conflict in ethnically, religiously, and historically complex areas.

The purpose of the June 23 round-table discussion was to exchange ideas regarding on-going implementation of the Carpathian Euroregion Project. Participating in the discussion were American businessmen of Carpatho-Rusyn background, academics, and the Hungarian, Ukrainian, and Polish representatives to the United Nations. Rusyn matters received much attention during the discussions. Edward Kasinec, Chief of the Slavic and Baltic Division of the New York Public Library, chaired the meeting. He began by suggesting that "western" organizations and fraternal ethnic communities should cooperate to help rebuild the Carpathian region and to promote trade and tourism. He emphasized that Rusyn religious and fraternal organizations should use their considerable financial and intellectual resources in closer cooperation with mainstream American organizations and with one another in order to better aid their brothers in Europe. Such cooperation would eliminate the present duplication of time and money. Further discussion focused on the obstacles to cooperation created by differing levels of economic development within the Carpathian Euroregion. It was suggested that a development or a merchant bank might be established to facilitate regional trade and development.

The Institute for East-West Studies welcomes inquiries about the Carpathian Euroregion Project. Comments or proposals for establishing cooperative ventures in business, education, or other fields, as well as receipt of the Carpathian Euroregion Newsletter may be obtained from: Dr. Vasil Hudak, Director, IEWS European Center, Park Place South, Suite 1001, Atlanta, Georgia 30302.

—Susyn Mihalasky

**Corvallis, Oregon.** In July and August 1993, five students from Užhorod visited Corvallis, Oregon which in turn sent five students to Užhorod. The student exchange was part of the sister-city relationship established between the two cities in 1992. Corvallis is located about 75 miles south of Portland in Oregon's Willamette River valley. This fall eleven business interns from Užhorod visited Corvallis to observe food processing and business management, and in February 1994 the American city's Aid to Užhorod Program will send a large shipment of medical aid. Coincidentally, Corvallis is the home of Connie Ash, the youngest daughter of Gregory Zatkovich, the first governor of Subcarpathian Rus' and long-time Rusyn-American activist. Zatkovich's granddaughter, Connie Ash Tully is a teacher-mentor in the Užhorod-Corvallis exchange program.

**Budapest, Hungary.** On October 18, 1993, the Organization of Rusyns in Hungary held the first public Evening of Rusyn Culture in that country. The program was held in the Kossuth Club, one of the more prestigious cultural settings in Budapest, just opposite the Hungarian National Museum.

The program began with lectures on Rusyn history and their present status by Professor István Udvari (Chair of Ukrainian and Rusyn Philology, Nyíregyháza Pedagogical Institute) and by Professor Tibor Popovics (Economic University, Budapest). The rest of the evening included performances by the leading Rusyn ensembles from neighboring countries: the Greek Catholic Cathedral Choir from Užhorod, Ukraine; the Duchnovyc Theater and PULS folk ensemble from Prešov, Slovakia; and the popular Rusyn singer from Prešov, Anna Servická.

The cultural evening in Budapest was also an occasion that brought together the Interregional Committee of the World Congress of Rusyns for its bi-annual meeting.

**Prešov, Slovakia.** On November 26-27, 1993, the Aleksander Duchnovyc Society, in cooperation with the Rusyn Club, the Greek Catholic Eparchy of Prešov, the Union of Rusyn-Ukrainians of Slovakia, and the Museum of Ukrainian-Rusyn Culture in Svidník, held a scholarly conference on the life and times of Josyf Gaganec' (1793-1875), the second Greek Catholic bishop of Prešov. Consecrated in 1842, Gaganec' was bishop for over three decades, a period that coincided with the Rusyn national revival and the cultural activity of another Greek Catholic priest, Aleksander Duchnovyc. Twenty scholars, mostly from Slovakia, spoke on various aspects of Gaganec's career as a church leader and pedagogue. Several of the lectures dealt with other topics from his era, including religious painting, cultural organizations, and relations between Rusyns and other Slavic peoples.

**SINCE THE REVOLUTION OF 1989**

**Budapest, Hungary.** On July 7, 1993, the Hungarian parliament passed Law LXXVII concerning the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities. Its object is to allow for the expression and preservation of the language, culture, and traditions of all citizens of Hungary who belong to a national or ethnic minority. The law specifically mentions 13 such minorities as well as the amount of funding to be allotted annually to each group. Rusyns are one of the groups and they, like eight others, are each to be allotted 15 million forints annually for cultural activity. The recipient of these funds is expected to be the Organization of Rusyns in Hungary (Magyarországi Ruszinok Szervezete), based in Budapest.

The new law on national and ethnic minorities reveals the degree to which the present post-Communist government of Hungary has been successful in creating a democratic environment for all citizens living in the country.

**Užhorod, Ukraine.** On July 11, 1993, thirty-seven delegates representing various organizations formed the National Council for Civic Understanding (Narodna Rada Hromads'koji Zlahody). They met in Užhorod, the ad-
ministrative center of Transcarpathia, to demand the implementation of the December 1, 1991 referendum, whereby 78 percent of the province's inhabitants voted for autonomy. Headed by I. Ju. Kryvs'kyj, a professor of physics and mathematics at Uzhhorod State University, the Council for Civic Understanding proposed: (1) that the regional parliament proclaim Transcarpathia to be an autonomous republic within Ukraine; (2) that a constitution for autonomous Transcarpathia be prepared; (3) that an agreement be drawn up between autonomous Transcarpathia and Ukraine setting out their respective jurisdictions; and (4) that a moratorium be placed on the privatization of land and state enterprises until newly-elected organs of an autonomous Transcarpathia are in office.

Mukacevo, Ukraine. On September 29, 1993, the Transcarpathian National Association (Zakarpats'ke Narodne Ob'ed-nannya) was established. This is a group of 142 civic leaders primarily active in the region's political, business, and intellectual (primarily university professors) affairs whose goals were outlined by V. V. Chymynec', a deputy to the regional parliament (Narodna Rada) and professor at the Institute of Pedagogy in Uzhhorod. The association's goals are to implement autonomy for Transcarpathia within Ukraine; to extricate the province from its present economic and social crisis; and to guarantee economic, political, and spiritual freedom for its all inhabitants. These goals are to be carried out exclusively through legal political activity, in particular through support for candidates in local and regional elections. The Transcarpathian National Association derives its moral mandate from the December 1, 1991 referendum, in which 78 percent of Transcarpathia's inhabitants voted for autonomy (self-rule) for their province within Ukraine.

L'viv, Ukraine. On October 8-10, 1993, the First World Congress of the World Federation of Lemkos took place not in the Lemko homeland, but rather in the western Ukrainian city of L'viv. The federation is comprised primarily of Lemko organizations in North America who argue that Lemkos are an integral part of the Ukrainian nationality. Aside from speeches and a cultural program, the congress issued a resolution condemning the 1947 deportation of Lemkos to the western regions of Poland, but not the larger "voluntarily resettlement" of Lemkos to Ukraine in 1945-1946. The resolution also condemned "everyone who considers people from the Lemko Region to be part of an artificial Lemko or Carpatho-Rusyn nation."

YUGOSLAV RUSYN YOUTH FUND

Appreciation is extended to the following individuals or organizations who, as of December 31, 1993, donated generously to the Yugoslav Rusyn Youth Fund.

Kiril Papuga, Edmonton, Alberta—$50
Rusin Association, Minneapolis, Minnesota—$200
Robert Uram, East Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania—$50
Patrick White, Shaker Heights, Ohio—$100

Further tax-deductible donations of $50 or more may be sent to:

Yugoslav Rusyn Youth Fund
Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, Inc.
Box 131-B
Orwell, VT 05670

UPCOMING EVENT

Sanok, Poland. The Right Reverend Adam, Bishop of the Southeastern Diocese of the Orthodox Church in Poland, has announced that His Beatitude, Vasilij, Metropolitan of Warsaw and All Poland, with the Holy Synod, is planning "to place into the ranks of the saints," the Carpatho-Rusyn martyred priest, Father Maksym Sandovyc', in early September 1994. A pilgrimage will be led by the Very Reverend Daniel D. Rersetar of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, for the canonization ceremony at the newly constructed and recently consecrated Church of the Holy Trinity in Gorlice, Poland. After the canonization ceremony and liturgical services, the pilgrimage will continue with visits to cultural and historical sights in the Lemko Region of southeastern Poland and the Prešov Region of neighboring Slovakia. For further details, contact Father Dan Rersetar, 5501 Locust Lane, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17109. Telephone: (717) 652-1825.

OUR FRONT COVER

Orthodox Christian Church of the Holy Trinity in Gorlice, Poland, consecrated September 8, 1991.

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
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Phone: 412-371-3823
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