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002. report	Government Structure (1 page)	nd	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
Speechwriting (Noa Meyer Subject Files)
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FOLDER TITLE:

The Trip of the First Lady to Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Uzbekistan, Russia, and Ukraine,
November 9-18, 1997 (Laura) [Binder] [6]

2012-0869-S

kc965

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
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b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

U.S. Department of State
Background Notes: Ukraine, June 1997
Bureau of Public Affairs

Official Name: Ukraine

PROFILE

Geography

Area: 233,000 sq. mi..

Capital: Kiev (pop. 2.6 million); other cities: Kharkiv, Donetsk, Dnipropetrovsk, Odesa, Lviv.

Terrain: A vast plain bounded by the Carpathian mountains in the southwest and by the Black Sea and the Sea of Oziv in the South.

Climate: Continental temperate.

People

Population (est.): 51 million..

Nationality: Noun--Ukrainian(s); adjective--Ukrainian.

Ethnic groups: Ukrainians, Russians, Jews, Belarusians, Moldovans, Bulgarians, Poles, Hungarians, Romanians, Crimean Tatars.

Religions: Ukrainian Orthodoxy, Ukrainian Greek Catholicism, Judaism, Roman Catholicism, Islam

Languages: Ukrainian, Russian, others.

Education: Literacy--100%.

Health: Infant mortality rate--21/1,000. Life expectancy--65 yrs. males, 75 yrs. females.

Work force: 24 million. Industry and construction--33%. Agriculture and forestry--21%. Health, education, and culture--16%. Transport and communication--7%.

Government

Type: presidential-parliamentary.

Independence: August 24, 1991.

Constitution: First post-Soviet constitution adopted June 28, 1996.

Branches: Executive--president, prime minister, cabinet. Legislative--450-member parliament, the Supreme Rada (members elected to four-year terms). Judicial--people's courts, regional courts, Supreme Court, and Constitutional Court.

Political parties: wide range of active political parties, from leftist (communist and socialist) to center and center-right (Liberal, Democratic, Rukh, and Republican) to ultra-nationalist (UNA and OUN).

Suffrage: Universal at 18.

Administrative subdivisions: 24 provinces and 1 autonomous republic.

Economy

GDP (est): \$204 billion.

Annual growth rate: -14.2%.

Per capita income: \$3,900.

Natural resources: Vast fertile lands, coal, natural gas, various large mineral deposits, timber.

Agriculture: Products--Grain, sugar.

Industry: Types--Ferrous metals and products, coke, fertilizer, metallurgical equipment, diesel locomotives, tractors.

Trade: Exports--\$12.7 billion: coal, electric power, ferrous and non-ferrous metals, chemicals, machinery, and transport equipment. Imports--\$15.3 billion: Machinery and parts, transportation equipment, chemicals, textiles.

PEOPLE

The population of Ukraine is about 52 million, which represents about 18% of the population of the former Soviet Union. Ukrainians make up about 73% of the total; ethnic Russians number about 20%. The industrial regions in the east and southeast are the most heavily populated, and the urban population makes up about 70% of the population. Ukrainian and Russian are the principal languages, but about 88% of the population consider Ukrainian their native language. The dominant religions are the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, much of which retains its links to the Russian Orthodox Church, and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Kiev Patriarchate) is independent of Moscow.

The birth rate of Ukraine is diminishing. About 70% of adult Ukrainians have a secondary or higher education. Ukraine has about 150 colleges and universities, of which the most important are at Kiev, Lviv, and Kharkiv. About 70,000 scholars in 80 research institutes make Ukraine a leader in science and technology.

HISTORY

The first identifiable groups to populate what is now Ukraine were Cimmerians, Scythians, Sarmatians, and Goths, among other nomadic peoples who arrived throughout the first millennium B.C. These people were well known to colonists and traders in the ancient world, including Greeks and Romans, who established trading outposts which eventually became city states. Slavic tribes occupied central and eastern Ukraine in the sixth century A.D. and played an important role in the establishment of Kiev. Situated on lucrative trade routes, Kiev quickly prospered as the center of a powerful state of Kievan Rus. In the 11th century, Kievan Rus was, geographically, the largest state in Europe.

A Christian missionary, Cyril, converted the Kievan nobility and most of the population in 988. Conflict among the feudal lords led to decline in the 12th century. Kiev was razed by Mongol raiders in the 12th century.

Most of the territory was annexed by Poland and Lithuania in the 14th century, but during that time, the Ukrainian people began to conceive of themselves as a distinct people, a feeling which survived subsequent partitioning by greater powers over the next centuries. In addition, Ukrainian peasants who fled the Polish effort to force them into servitude came to be known as Cossacks and earned a reputation for their fierce martial spirit.

In 1667, Ukraine was partitioned between Poland and Russia. In 1793, it was reunited as part of the Russian Empire.

The 19th century found the region largely agricultural, with a few cities and centers of trade and learning. The region was under the control of the Austrians in the extreme west and of the Russians elsewhere. Ukrainian writers and intellectuals were inspired by the nationalistic spirit stirring other European peoples existing under other imperial governments and were determined to revive Ukrainian linguistic and cultural traditions and re-establish a Ukrainian nation-state. The Russians in particular imposed strict limits on attempts to elevate Ukrainian language and culture, even banning its use and study.

When World War I and the Bolshevik revolution in Russia shattered the Hapsburg and Russian empires, Ukrainians declared independent statehood. In 1917 and 1918, three separate Ukrainian republics declared independence. However, by 1921, the western part of the traditional territory had been incorporated into Poland, and the larger, central and eastern part became part of the Soviet Union.

The Ukrainian national idea persevered during the interwar years, and Soviet reaction was severe, particularly under Stalin, who imposed terror campaigns, which ravaged the intellectual class. He also created artificial famines as part of his forced collectivization policies, which killed millions of previously independent peasants and others throughout the country. Estimates of deaths from the 1932-33 famine alone range from 3 million to 7 million.

After the German and Soviet invasions of Poland in 1939, the western Ukrainian regions were incorporated into the Soviet Union. When the Germans invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, many Ukrainians, particularly in the west, welcomed them, but this did not last. German brutality was directed principally against Ukraine's Jews (of whom 1 million were killed) but also against many other Ukrainians. Kiev and other parts of the country were heavily damaged. Some Ukrainians began to resist the Germans as well as the Soviets. Resistance against Soviet Government forces continued as late as the 1950s.

Little changed for Ukraine over the next decades. During periods of relative liberalization--as under Nikita Khrushchev from 1955 to 1964-- Ukrainian communists pursued national objectives. In the years of perestroika, under U.S.S.R. President Mikhail Gorbachev, national goals were again advanced by Ukrainian officials.

Ukraine became an independent state on August 24, 1991, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and was a founding member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Ukraine is a parliamentary democracy with separate executive, judicial, and legislative branches. The president nominates the prime minister, who must be confirmed by the parliament. The 450-member parliament (Supreme Rada) initiates legislation, ratifies international agreements, and approves the budget. Its members were elected to four-year terms in 1994. Following free elections held on December 1, 1991, Leonid M. Kravchuk, former Chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, was elected president for a five-year term. At the same time, a referendum on independence was approved by more than 90% of the voters.

Political groupings in Ukraine include former communists, socialists, agrarians, nationalists and various centrist and independent forces.

Shortly after becoming independent, Ukraine named a parliamentary commission to prepare a new constitution, adopted a multi-party system, and adopted legislative guarantees of civil and political rights for national minorities. A new, democratic constitution was adopted on June 28, 1996, which mandates a pluralistic political system with protection of basic human rights and liberties.

Freedom of religion is guaranteed by law, although religious organizations are required to register with local authorities and with the central government. Minority rights are respected in accordance with a 1991 law guaranteeing ethnic minorities the right to schools and cultural facilities and the use of national languages in conducting personal business. In Crimea and eastern Ukraine--areas with significant Russian minorities--Russian is permitted as a language of official correspondence. It is also recognized as an official language in Crimea.

Ethnic tensions in Crimea during 1992 prompted a number of pro-Russian political organizations to advocate secession of Crimea and annexation to Russia. (Crimea was ceded to Ukraine in 1954, as a gift from Khrushchev to mark the 300th anniversary of Ukrainian union with Russia.) In July 1992, the Crimean and Ukrainian parliaments determined that Crimea would remain under Ukrainian jurisdiction while retaining significant cultural and economic autonomy.

Crimea held its first presidential elections in January 1994, electing Yuriy Meshkov, a Republican Party of Crimea member advocating closer ties to Russia. The results of a non-binding poll on March 27, 1994, demonstrated voters' overwhelming support for greater powers for Meshkov, dual Russian-Ukrainian citizenship for Crimeans, and a treaty to govern relations between Crimea and Ukraine on a more equal basis. However, on March 17, 1995, the Rada abolished the 1992 Crimean constitution and dissolved the local presidency.

Official trade unions have been grouped under the Federation of Trade Unions. A number of independent unions, which emerged during 1992, have formed the Consultative Council of Free Trade Unions. While the right to strike is legally guaranteed, strikes based solely on political demands are prohibited. A National Mediation and Reconciliation Service exists to regulate disputes between management and labor which cannot be resolved at the enterprise level. A new law on trade unions is under consideration.

In July 1994, Leonid Kuchma was elected as Ukraine's second president in free and fair elections. Earlier, in March 1994, Ukraine elected its first post-independence parliament. The next elections are scheduled for March 1998 (parliamentary) and October 1999 (presidential).

Security forces are controlled by the president, although they are subject to investigation by a permanent parliamentary commission. Surveillance is permitted for reasons of national security.

Ukraine has established its own military forces of about 500,000 from the troops and equipment inherited from the former Soviet Union. It aims to reduce the force to between 250,000-300,000 by the end of the decade; considerable downsizing already has taken place.

Principal Government Officials

President--Leonid Kuchma

Acting Prime Minister--Vasyl Durdynets

Foreign Minister--Hennadiy Udovenko

Ukraine maintains an embassy at 3350 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20007 (tel. 202-333-0606)

ECONOMY

Ukraine has many of the components of a major European economy--rich farmlands, a well-developed industrial base, highly trained labor, and a good education system. Significant difficulties lie ahead, however. At present, the economy is in poor condition. While hyperinflation has been tamed, production continues to drop, and the standard of living for most citizens has declined more than 50% since the early 1990's. The new Ukrainian currency, the Hryvnia, was introduced in September 1996, and remained fairly stable.

Most Ukrainian trade is still with countries of the former Soviet Union, principally Russia. Demand for Ukraine's non-agricultural exports-- ferrous metals, steel pipe, machinery, and transport equipment-- continues to fall. Forced to pay high prices for fuel, Ukraine continues to run large trade deficits.

Ukraine imports 90% of its oil and most of its natural gas from Russia, though it is trying to find alternative sources. The Ukrainian authorities have been introducing market-price payment requirements for energy supplies to industry and homes in an effort to establish a "real cost" system of energy supply and payment.

In early 1995, the government began to implement an ambitious privatization program which should transfer ownership of 8,000 medium and large-scale enterprises to private hands. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved a \$1.5-billion stand-by arrangement with the Government of Ukraine which should serve as the basis for continuing comprehensive economic reform.

Ukraine encourages foreign trade and investment. The parliament has approved a foreign investment law allowing Westerners to purchase businesses and property, to repatriate revenue and profits, and to receive compensation in the event that property is nationalized by a future government.

Ukraine is rich in natural resources. It has a major ferrous metal industry, producing cast iron, steel, and steel pipe, and its chemical industry produces coke, mineral fertilizers, and sulfuric acid. Manufactured goods include metallurgical equipment, diesel locomotives, and tractors.

It also is a major producer of grain and sugar and possesses a broad industrial base, including much of the former U.S.S.R.'s space industry. Although oil reserves are largely exhausted, it has important energy sources, such as coal and natural gas, and large mineral deposits.

In 1992, Ukraine became a member of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. It is a member of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development but not a member of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade/World Trade Organization.

Environmental Issues

Ukraine is interested in cooperating on regional environmental issues. Conservation of natural resources is a high priority. It established its first nature preserve, Askaniya-Nova, in 1921 and has a program to breed endangered species.

However, the country has significant environmental problems resulting from the Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster in 1986 and from industrial pollution. Ukraine has announced that the Chernobyl Atomic Energy Station will be phased out and shut down by the year 2000; it has asked for financial help to achieve this goal and to provide alternative sources of energy for its population.

Ukraine also has established a Ministry of Environment and has introduced a pollution fee system that levies taxes on air and water emissions and solid waste disposal. The resulting revenues are channeled to environmental protection activities, but enforcement of this pollution fee system is lax.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Through contacts with the countries of the West, Ukraine seeks to increase consultation and cooperation in areas such as defense planning; the conversion of defense production to civilian purposes; and scientific, economic, and environmental issues.

Despite a November 1990 agreement to respect one another's sovereignty and territorial integrity, Ukraine's relations with Russia have been strained due to its concern over Russia's intentions. Although Ukraine became a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) on December 8, 1991, it refused in January 1993 to endorse a draft charter strengthening political, economic, and defense ties among CIS members. Relations with Russia have improved somewhat with the late May signing of the bilateral Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. Also, the two sides have signed a series of agreements on the final division and disposition of the former Soviet Black Sea Fleet.

On January 31, 1992, Ukraine joined the then-Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (now the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe--OSCE), and on March 10, 1992, it became a member of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. Ukraine also is an active member of Partnership for Peace. A document on "distinct relations" between NATO and Ukraine is to be signed this July in Madrid.

Soviet Ukraine joined the United Nations in 1945 as one of the original members following a Western compromise with the former Soviet Union, which had asked for seats for all 15 of its union republics. Ukraine consistently has supported peaceful, negotiated settlements to disputes. It has participated in the quadripartite talks on the conflict in Moldova and has sent a battalion to serve with UN peace-keeping forces in the former Yugoslavia.

U.S.-UKRAINE RELATIONS

The dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991 brought an end to the Cold War and created the opportunity to build bilateral relations with the New Independent States (NIS) as they began a political and economic transformation. On December 25, 1991, the United States officially recognized the independence of Ukraine. It upgraded its consulate in the capital, Kiev, to embassy status on January 21, 1992. The U.S. ambassador to Ukraine is William Green Miller, sworn in on October 13, 1993.

The United States attaches great importance to the success of Ukraine's transition to a democratic state with a flourishing market economy. Following a period of economic decline characterized by high inflation and a continued reliance on state controls, the Ukrainian Government under the leadership of then newly elected President Leonid Kuchma began taking steps in the fall of 1994 to reinvigorate economic reform and achieve macro-economic stabilization. The Ukrainian Government's new determination to implement comprehensive economic reform is a welcome development, and the U.S. is committed to strengthening its support for Ukraine as it embarks on this difficult path.

In January 1992, the U.S. initiated the Coordinating Conference on Assistance to the New Independent States in response to the humanitarian emergencies facing these states. The resulting Operation Provide Hope supplied desperately needed food, fuel, medicine, and shelter.

A cornerstone for the continuing U.S. partnership with Ukraine and the other NIS has been the Freedom for Russia and Emerging Eurasian Democracies and Open Markets (FREEDOM) Support Act, enacted in October 1992. In September 1993, a new \$2.45-billion assistance package for the NIS, funded with a combination of fiscal year (FY) 1993 and 1994 supplemental appropriations, was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Clinton. The legislation continues to address political and economic transformation and humanitarian needs.

The U.S. has consistently encouraged Ukraine's transition to a free, democratic society with a prosperous market economy. The U.S. and Ukraine have signed a series of bilateral agreements designed to enhance economic, technical, environmental, and cultural cooperation. During the visit of former Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk to Washington on March 3-5, 1994, he and President Clinton reached agreement on an expanded economic assistance package that will provide up to \$700 million to Ukraine: \$350 million in technical and humanitarian assistance in FY 1994 funds; and \$350 million in Nunn-Lugar funds (FY 1992-95 funds) to assist with nuclear dismantlement, non-proliferation programs, and industrial partnerships. Since 1994, Ukraine has become one of the largest recipients in the world of U.S. assistance.

Assistance To Support the Transition to a Market Economy. U.S. technical assistance to support the transition to a market economy has focused primarily on economic restructuring, development of the private sector, and energy sector reform. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) printed millions of certificates to support Ukraine's plan for the mass privatization of state enterprises. U.S. advisers have provided technical assistance in financial sector reform, tax policy and administration, bankers' training, land legislation, small-scale and municipal services privatization, agricultural development and agribusiness, corporatization of the electric power sector, energy pricing and efficiency, and public education concerning the environment. The Western NIS Enterprise Fund, announced by President Clinton in January 1994 to promote private sector business development in Ukraine, Moldova, and Belarus, has begun operations in Kiev.

The U.S. also has played a leading role in mobilizing international support to help Ukraine cover its external financing gaps as it implements rigorous reform under IMF programs. The U.S. contribution of \$100 million in late 1994 and pledge of \$250 million in March 1995 helped leverage nearly \$5 billion in IMF and other bilateral financing and debt relief.

U.S. exchanges and training programs have enabled Ukrainians to participate in a broad range of programs in the U.S. These include coal mine safety, nuclear reactor safety, private land ownership and real estate markets, local government finance, banking, tax accounting, labor statistics, telecommunications, labor-management relations, promotion of agricultural development, security and defense conversion, international trade and investment, entrepreneurship and small business development, and public health and hospital management and finance. Three medical partnerships have been established between U.S. and Ukrainian medical institutions. Peace Corps volunteers are working in Ukraine with a focus on small business development and English teaching.

Funding also has been provided for studies in air traffic control and airport construction, establishment of an agricultural center to provide training on U.S. agricultural equipment, and the conversion of a coal-fired power plant to gas. The U.S. has also provided grain storage facilities.

Assistance To Support the Transition to Democracy. The U.S. is promoting Ukraine's democratic transition by supporting programs on participatory political systems, independent media, rule of law, local governance, and civil society, as well as a wide range of exchanges and training.

USAID has provided Ukraine with technical assistance related to elections, the development of political parties and grass-roots civic organizations, and the development of independent media. A USAID-funded rule-of-law consortium has been working with Ukrainian officials and non-profit organizations to create a legal system supportive of a democratic government and a market-based economy. The rule-of-law project has been further expanded to promote cooperation between U.S. law enforcement agencies and their Ukrainian counterparts to reform the criminal justice system.

As of April 1995, the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) has brought nearly 800 Ukrainians to the U.S. on academic exchanges. About 90 Ukrainian business people, journalists, local government officials, and other professionals have participated in other exchanges. USIA visitor program participants included then-presidential candidate Leonid Kuchma in April 1994. USIA visitor programs have highlighted such subjects as economic and education reform, rule of law, and public administration.

The Department of Commerce's Special American Business Internship Training (SABIT) program and the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Cochran Fellowship Program have brought nearly 100 business executives, scientists, and agriculturists to the U.S. for internships and training programs.

Support for the Social Sector. The U.S. is assisting Ukraine's efforts to maximize equity in reform and to sustain social welfare and stability during and beyond the transition. Toward this end, USAID is providing assistance to local governments in redefining the roles of the public and private sectors in providing social services to allow government to focus limited resources on key social sectors. Training and technical assistance is being provided to Ukrainian institutions and government agencies on reforms of health care financing and delivery of medical services. A number of medical partnerships between U.S. and Ukrainian health care institutions have been established to improve both patient care and institutional management. Also, USAID is providing training and technical assistance on ways to improve reproductive health, focusing on providing family planning services and reducing the use of abortion.

Humanitarian Assistance. Through the first half of FY 1995, the U.S. has coordinated and funded the delivery of \$33 million in food, medical supplies, and clothing to Ukraine. This includes a \$16-million surplus Department of Defense hospital recently delivered to Donetsk. Previously, the U.S. provided \$25,000 in response to the January 1994 flood disaster in Ukraine's Zakarpatska oblast. In October 1993, \$25,000 was provided in international disaster funding for the drilling of water wells in the flood-stricken area of Rivne.

Operation Provide Hope has delivered food worth about \$46,000 and medicines and medical supplies worth \$16 million. A large portion of these supplies were designated for hospitals treating victims of the Chernobyl nuclear accident. Under the Medical Assistance Initiative, Project HOPE, a private voluntary organization, has shipped more than \$26 million worth of pharmaceutical and medical supplies to Ukraine.

In response to an epidemic of diphtheria, the U.S. sent two assessment advisers from the Centers for Disease Control and vaccines, syringes, and needles with a value of \$1.3 million under the Emergency Medicines Initiative. Under the Emergency Immunization Program, through Project HOPE, measles vaccine was provided, allowing for the vaccination of all Ukrainian children up to two years of age during 1993. In response to a 1994 request from the Ukrainian Government, the U.S. provided diphtheria vaccines for adults and children to help Ukraine eradicate this deadly disease. In FY 1994, USDA provided Ukraine with more than 70,000 metric tons of food aid--valued at about \$24 million--and, in FY 1995, it will provide \$25 million in PL 480 assistance.

Bilateral Trade Issues

The U.S.-Ukraine Trade Agreement, effective June 22, 1992, provides reciprocal most-favored-nation tariff treatment to the products of each country. Since January 1994, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) has approved investment insurance totaling more than \$23 million for three projects in Ukraine. OPIC also has sponsored conferences and exchanges to encourage joint ventures between U.S. and Ukrainian companies. U.S. Export-Import Bank programs are currently closed in Ukraine, but the bank is continuing to reassess Ukraine's creditworthiness in light of recent government economic reforms with a view to reopening lending activities as soon as possible. In March 1994, Presidents Clinton and Kravchuk signed treaties on bilateral investment and double taxation.

Security Issues

In Lisbon on May 23, 1992, the United States signed a protocol to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) with Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, and Kazakstan (those states on whose territory strategic nuclear weapons of the former Soviet Union are located). The protocol makes each state a party to the START Treaty and commits all signatories to reductions in strategic nuclear weapons within the seven-year period provided for in the treaty. Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakstan also agreed to join the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as non-nuclear weapons states. The treaty entered into force on December 5, 1994, the same day Ukraine acceded to the NPT.

The U.S. has pledged to provide about \$300 million to Ukraine under the Nunn-Lugar program to assist in the dismantlement of strategic offensive arms (\$205 million), defense conversion (\$40 million), and nuclear material protection (\$12.5 million). The U.S. also has pledged \$10 million to assist in the establishment of a Science and Technology Center designed to provide peaceful employment opportunities to scientists and engineers formerly involved with weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

Principal U.S. Embassy Officials

Ambassador--William Green Miller
Deputy Chief of Mission--James Schumaker
Political Counselor--Vacant
Economic Counselor--Robert Boehme
Commercial Officer--Andriy Bihun
Consular Officer--Walter Davenport
Administrative Officer--Gary Bagley
Public Affairs Officer--Robert Heath
USAID--Gregory Huger

The U.S. embassy in Kiev is at 10 Yuriya Kotsyubinskoho, 25203 (tel. [380] (044) 244-7345).

UKRAINE: MAIN ISSUES IN BILATERAL RELATIONS

Democratic and economic transition. The U.S. relationship with Ukraine has been built on the premise that a stable, democratic, market-oriented and independent Ukraine will be a significant force for peace, stability and democratization in Central and Eastern Europe. By contrast, a Ukraine in turmoil would negatively affect prospects for democratization and stability in its neighbors, east and west. The U.S. has worked to help Ukraine make the transformation from a Soviet-type economy and political system to a modern, market economy and political system based on democratic rule of law and respect for fundamental human rights. U.S. assistance programs and support for Ukrainian independence and sovereignty have stimulated political and economic change in Ukraine and fostered the government's pro-Western foreign policy orientation.

The Trilateral Statement. A key achievement of our relationship with Ukraine, to date, was Ukraine's agreement to the 1994 Trilateral Statement that provided for the transfer to Russia for dismantlement of the strategic nuclear warheads left on Ukraine's territory when the Soviet Union collapsed. In December 1994 Ukraine adhered to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear weapons state. On May 31, 1996 Ukraine completed the transfer of all nuclear warheads to Russia for dismantlement. Another notable achievement has been Ukraine's integration into the Euro-Atlantic community, symbolized by the NATO-Ukraine Charter.

Slow economic reform. Our bilateral relationship is not, however, trouble-free. The slowing of economic reform in Ukraine during 1996-97 and growing problems faced by U.S. companies seeking to invest there have raised concern as to the Ukrainian leadership's commitment to economic reform. Ukraine's macroeconomic situation -- particularly its growing budget deficit and reliance on short-term loans to finance it -- is particularly precarious in light of financial instabilities in Southeast Asia. Questions have also arisen with respect to Ukraine's arms and technology transfer policies. The Ukrainians have been expressed concern as to whether the U.S. fully understands the difficult social and economic circumstances now faced by the Ukrainian population and the consequent political implications.

Strategic partnership. Recognizing the importance of long-term engagement, we have characterized our relationship a "strategic partnership," and we have demonstrated our commitment in an impressive number of contacts at the most senior levels of government. The September 1996 establishment of the U.S.-Ukraine

Binational Commission (Gore-Kuchma) has provided an increasingly useful forum for focusing our dialogue on the full range of issues.

UKRAINE: POLITICAL AND SOCIAL OVERVIEW

Mixed progress. Ukraine has achieved some notable successes in transforming itself from a Soviet political, economic and social system. It has also suffered a severe economic crisis and a decline in living standards for most of the population. The quality and availability of health care, the educational system, the pension system and care for invalids have all suffered major blows. Unemployment has risen dramatically, as have crime and corruption at all levels of society.

Stability so far. Despite such difficulties, Ukraine has witnessed relatively little visible social unrest. Political demonstrations, strikes and other expressions of popular discontent have been sporadic and limited. Observers tend to describe the Ukrainian public as politically apathetic and stoic. Nonetheless, the government fears that frustration over the social-economic situation will translate into votes for the opposition in upcoming parliamentary ("Rada") elections in March 1998, and a variety of political groupings opposed to the government, from right to left, are explicitly trying to take advantage of the social-economic situation to discredit the government.

Democratic progress. Although Ukraine has struggled with its economic transformation and has yet to complete some key elements of its political restructuring, it has overall a creditable record in its move towards democracy. Free and fair parliamentary elections were conducted in the spring and summer of 1994, and the presidential election that year produced the first peaceful handover of executive power in the former Soviet Union when incumbent President Kravchuk was defeated by Leonid Kuchma and quietly left office in accordance with the law.

Constitutional structure. The new constitution, adopted in 1996, provides for a pluralistic political system based on rule of law and guarantees basic freedoms. The country's political structure is based on a balance of power between the legislative, executive and judicial branches. The exact parameters of presidential authority have yet to be fully worked out. The judiciary is the weakest branch of government, although efforts are underway to build up that branch in accord with the new constitution.

Political parties. Political parties in Ukraine since independence have tended to be small and weak. There are approximately fifty registered parties in the country, ranging from extreme right to orthodox communist left, though less than half are represented in the Rada. The best organized and largest to date are the Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU), the Socialist

Party of Ukraine (SPU), and the Popular Movement for Ukraine (Rukh) on the nationalist center-right, but they too have organizational and leadership problems.

Parliamentary factionalism. The lack of strong parties is reflected in the fragmentation in the parliament, where a dozen factions - composed of coalitions of small parties and individual deputies - constantly reshuffle themselves. No grouping is dominant, and the current parliament has been characterized by frequent gridlock. The role of parties may change with the next parliament, following adoption in September of a new election law which establishes a mixed 50/50 majoritarian/proportional electoral system and a four percent threshold requirement for parties to win seats on the proportional lists.

LEVEL 2 - 306 OF 311 STORIES

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ANALYSIS: A look at **Ukraine** in its fifth year of independence.

Ukraine marked its fifth year of independence in 1996. In many respects the year can be perceived as one of consolidation of the **Ukrainian** state within the international community. Compared to its former Soviet neighbors, **Ukraine** can be termed an oasis of stability amid a bleak desert of conflict and change. At the same time in specific spheres - particularly the coal and nuclear energy industries - there remains cause for concern. In addition, the Russian Duma's claim to the city of Sevastopol is an indicator that relations with the giant neighbor state remain uncertain, particularly in view of the likely long convalescence of President Boris Yeltsin. Let us examine some of these issues in turn. Internal politics

The most notable changes in personnel occurred at the level of prime minister, with the replacement of Yevhen Marchuk on May 27 and the appointment a day later of Dnipropetrovsk native Pavlo Lazarenko, 43, in his place. Mr. Lazarenko's mission is evidently to accelerate the privatization process and attract foreign investment into **Ukraine**. Less than two months later, Mr. Lazarenko narrowly avoided an assassination attempt while being driven to the airport, as a powerful explosive ripped apart the roadside verge. In May, President Kuchma added Volodymyr Lanovoy to his team as his main economic advisor. On September 23, Viktor Pynzenyk, another well-known reformer, was appointed vice prime minister for the economy, with Anatolii Minchenko being inserted as the minister responsible for industrial policy and the energy complex.

The year saw increasingly bitter conflict between the reformers and the Leftists, particularly within the Verkhovna Rada during an extensive debate on the ratification of a new Constitution for **Ukraine**. In late March, Leftist deputies even submitted an alternative draft to declare **Ukraine** a socialist state, eliminate the office of president, and raise Russian to the status of a state language.

On June 28, however, the Parliament voted in support of a new constitution by 315 votes to 36, and the accepted version clearly established the president as the most powerful figure in the government, along with a single-chamber Verkhovna Rada. The Constitution also confirms **Ukrainian** as the state language,



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with specified local rights for the use of languages in areas inhabited largely by minorities. The new Constitution overrides the agreement reached in 1995 between the president and the legislature and formally replaces the old Soviet Constitution introduced in the late Brezhnev period in 1978. The event was perceived as a triumph for President Leonid Kuchma over significant opposition. The economy

The key problem in the economy has been a failure to meet regular wages, with the result that **Ukraine** now faces the prospect of an enormous wage backlog. In the agricultural sector alone, the backlog was reported to be the equivalent of \$200 million, and that figure does not take into account inflation. By late June, Mr. Lazarenko noted that the government was using 80 percent of its internal and external revenues to clear the wage arrears. Inflation also began to rise during the latter part of the year after falling to 0.1 percent in the months of June and July.

In early September, the long awaited **Ukrainian** currency - the hryvnia - was introduced, replacing the much maligned karbovanets, which had been in use for the past four years. Contrary to some expectations, the hryvnia held steady against the dollar on the international exchange (at 1.76 to \$1), though by the year's end it had begun to decline.

The coal sector remains **Ukraine's** biggest single problem within the industrialized spectrum. The early part of the year saw a coal strike that affected 177 of **Ukraine's** 227 coal mines, while in this same month, then Prime Minister Marchuk declared his plans to close down some 70 mines that were operating at a loss, his remarks were supported by a conference of World Bank officials, which concluded that 114 **Ukrainian** coal mines must be shut down if the industry is to restore profitability.

By the spring there were further strikes of miners seeking wages, some of whom had not been paid since September 1995. Coal miners were also concerned about layoffs as a result of the scheduled mine closures. By June a further strike had erupted, with the involvement of over 2,700 miners in the Donbas and Lviv-Volyn coalfields. It was ended only in mid-July when the government reached an agreement with the Workers' Union of the Coal Industry and the Independent Donbas Miners' Union.

In addition to the unrest among the coal miners, who have traditionally been the most militant among the **Ukrainian** workforce, the dangerous geological state of the coal mines themselves has continued to result in a very high accident rate and casualty list. By March, 61 **Ukrainian** miners had reportedly died in various accidents, while by September the figure had risen to 224. The anticipated yearly total was about 340. To put that figure into perspective, in the Soviet period, approximately double that number of miners died annually in **Ukraine**, yet coal output in **Ukraine** has dropped dramatically since that time to about 25 percent of the peak output figure. Clearly the shutdown of some of **Ukraine's** deeper mines is warranted on the grounds of safety alone. The energy sphere

Turning to the energy sphere, the Chornobyl nuclear power plant has remained a focus of world attention. One reason for this focus was the commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the tragic accident on April 26. However, though the anniversary attracted publicity, the key issue has been the future of the plant.



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Momentum has grown for a campaign to keep the station in operation beyond the scheduled shutdown time of the year 2000.

Early in February, 58 parliamentary deputies pleaded with President Kuchma on behalf of the station, arguing that it was the safest and best run of all **Ukraine's** nuclear power stations.

Shortly afterward Environmental Minister Yurii Kostenko demanded that if **Ukraine** was to meet its deadline for the closure of Chornobyl, then the promised international loans and credits must be received quickly. Throughout the year these two issues were tied together by the **Ukrainian** authorities.

On April 19-20, the leaders of the G-7 countries and Russia met in Moscow and announced the commitment of about \$3.2 billion worth of aid to **Ukraine** so that the station could be safely decommissioned by the end of the century. Further talks took place in Kyiv in June, when it was announced that the promised funds would begin to arrive in **Ukraine** in the summer or fall of 1997, or in 1998. Mr. Kostenko reacted angrily to such protraction, again maintaining that **Ukraine** would likely reconsider the shutdown if the funds were not forthcoming in timely fashion.

In September, Kostenko went even further, prophesying that a major explosion could occur at the sarcophagus covering the destroyed fourth reactor unit. Plant director Serhii Parashyn attributed several reported releases of neutron emissions to the malfunction of measuring equipment as a result of heavy rainfall in the area.

On November 30, Chornobyl reactor No. 1 was removed from the grid, though it was specified that the closure would not necessarily be permanent and that the reactor could be "restructured." At the same time, the **Ukrainian** nuclear authorities announced plant to restart the second unit, which has been shut down since a fire in 1991. Economically it would be inexpedient to restart the No. 2 unit if it is intended to close the Chornobyl plant by the year 2000. Though **Ukraine** is suffering acutely from energy shortages, it appeared to some observers that the future of the Chornobyl station was being used as a bargaining chip to expedite the arrival of the international credits. President Kuchma himself has acknowledged that the Chornobyl reactors constitute a safety hazard.

The current costs of \$800 million annually to meet the ramifications of the Chornobyl disaster remain an acute burden on the economy, and **Ukraine** is irritated by what it perceives as a sluggish reaction on the part of the G-7 countries to meet their agreed obligations. Moreover, a significant section of **Ukraine's** nuclear energy community has maintained consistently that Chornobyl is a much safer station than generally perceived; and conversely that international attention has focused only on the **Ukrainian** RBMK station while ignoring similar stations operating in Russia and Lithuania. The crime wave

The year 1996 may be remembered as one of escalating crime in **Ukraine**. In this respect, the country has begun to emulate its eastern neighbor, Russia. A wave of assassinations and attempted murders has plagued **Ukraine** particularly, though not exclusively, on the Crimean peninsula. The crimes in the latter region have been attributed to a dramatic rise in organized gang violence.

Among those attacked and beaten were the journalist Svitlana Riaboshapka and



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Rukh National Deputy Myroslav Horbatiuk, while those who were killed during such attacks included nine people in a Kerch bar in June, the Crimean broadcaster Oleksander Metrenko, and powerful Donetsk government boss Volodymyr Scherban.

In September, President Kuchma announced a four-year intensive program to combat crime, following the establishment in August (after the attempted assassination of Prime Minister Lazarenko a month earlier) of an anti-terrorist center. By year's end there appeared to be little decline in the high rates of crime. **Health concerns**

Ukraine's health concerns were highlighted by a report of the **Ukrainian Health Ministry** on February 22 which noted that the decline in population growth has continued and was at that time 9.6 births per 1,000 people. The death rate, correspondingly, rose in 1995 from 5.5 to 12.1. The major cause of death in **Ukraine** is heart disease, at 50 percent, with cancer at 14 percent. However, the country also suffers from other **health** problems that can be related mainly to industrial pollution.

At the beginning of the year there was an outbreak of hepatitis in Konstantynivka (Donetsk region) as a result of a mishap in the city's sewage system. A similar accident occurred in April in Sevastopol when raw sewage was spilled into the Black Sea and a further outbreak of hepatitis occurred. Another major concern was diphtheria, which was broken out principally in the large cities of Kyiv and Donetsk and has affected hundreds of people; while cholera outbreaks have been frequent in the summer as a result of contamination of the water supply. **Foreign relations**

Ukraine has become the third largest recipient of U.S. assistance after Israel and Egypt, thus overtaking Russia in this regard. When Secretary of State Warren Christopher visited **Ukraine** in March, he promised aid worth over \$1 billion. **Ukraine** has become a key strategic partner for the United States given the apparent unreliability and relative instability of Russia. On June 1, **Ukraine** solidified its international standing with the announcement that it had moved all of the strategic warheads from its territory to Russia.

President Kuchma has also been fairly consistent on the question of the expansion of NATO to the East European countries - particularly Hungary and Poland - noting that while **Ukraine** is not against such an expansion in principle, it would be opposed to the deployment of nuclear weapons in new member-states. At the Salzburg meeting of presidents of Central and Eastern Europe in July, President Kuchma mentioned a possible special partnership between **Ukraine** and NATO; and also suggested that **Ukraine** should maintain some association with the Western European Union military partnership.

Relations with Russia are relatively cordial at the presidential level, less so at the level of the Duma. President Yeltsin decided not to visit Kyiv to sign the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation during the run up to the Russian presidential elections. There have been two related issues of contention between the two countries: the status of the Black Sea Fleet; and the future of the port of Sevastopol, the home port of the fleet. Neither had been resolved by the year's end.

One of the major supporters of Sevastopol's status as a Russian city is Moscow mayor Yurii Luzhkov, who made several outspoken statements during the course of the year. In mid-January, for example, while visiting the port, he



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declared that "Moscow will never abandon Sevastopol." On September 10, he went further, declaring that the city was Russian, a comment subsequently supported overwhelmingly by the Russian Duma. In the meantime, **Ukraine's** Verkhovna Rada voted in June to prohibit foreign military installations on the territory of **Ukraine**, though it was prepared to grant some time for Russia to remove its fleet.

The future of Sevastopol is linked to the future of Crimea generally. The peninsula, which retains its autonomous status, has remained politically subdued since **Ukraine** enforced its authority quite dramatically in 1995. Russia has refused to step aside, and has resolved not to reduce in any way its commitment to, or the size of its share of the Black Sea Fleet. With the ostensible ending of the war in Chechnya, Russia has more time to devote to other issues pertaining to the so-called "near abroad," and it has the support of the Crimean authorities, who attempted - unsuccessfully - to have the status of Sevastopol as a Russian city inserted into the Crimean Constitution.

Though the two issues have not reached a boiling point and to not as yet constitute a serious issue of international conflict, they remain on the table each time **Ukrainian** and Russian leaders meet. Conclusions

Ukraine enters the new year in an environment of political stability and economic uncertainty. Structurally it continues to develop as a reformist presidential republic, backed by a Parliament that is riven with dissent, but at the same time has a tradition of reaching compromises with coaxing from the executive. In contrast to some of the other post-Soviet countries, **Ukraine** has remained free of ethnic tension and civil conflict. The Constitution's adoption was symbolic of this gradual but very definite progress toward the consolidation of the statehood declared in 1991.

The economy and demographic picture remain major concerns, however. Very few of **Ukraine's** industries are performing at a satisfactory level, and the government must also be concerned with the alarming **health** and demographic statistics. The reluctance of the government to apply "shock measures" is comprehensible, but the economic results are hardly encouraging.

Ukraine's economy today is a melange of the old and new: the declining traditional industries and the emergent or rejuvenated spheres that continue to attract foreign businesses (the share of private output rose to almost 50 percent in 1996).

For the majority of the population, the outlook for the late 1990s does not offer much solace: their concern is daily subsistence and survival. Wages remain unpaid, and factories are not paying for their energy requirements.

On the other hand, such comments are relative because they apply to most of the newly independent states. It could equally well as argued that the past five years of concentration on survival and maintenance of statehood have been strikingly successful, and that the next five years will surely see the government turn with vigor to the question of economic renewal. It is one that has become imperative, and will likely outweigh in importance the political maneuvering with Russia, the United States and the countries of Europe that has characterized the 30 months of the Kuchma presidency to date.



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UKRAINE: ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL OVERVIEW

Decline and depression. Since independence in 1991, Ukraine has suffered through a sharp, sustained economic depression that dwarfs our "Great Depression." Since 1991, GDP has contracted by more than 50 percent. The decline is continuing, although at a slower rate, in 1997. The Soviet-era Ukrainian economy, dominated by military industries, has become largely obsolete. The economic decline and hyperinflation (10,000 percent in 1993) caused a drastic drop in living standards and threw more than a quarter of the population into poverty. Many Ukrainians have effectively softened the blow by working in the shadow economy, which some observers estimate to be as large as the official economy. By most accounts, Ukraine's unofficial economy produces 50 percent of GDP.

Reforms. Serious efforts at economic reform were introduced in 1994, upon the election of President Kuchma. Inflation was under 20% this year and a stable currency, the Hryvna, was introduced. However, the macroeconomic situation is fragile and held together with short-term money that has become increasingly flighty since the Southeast Asia crisis. We are very worried that Ukraine could face a financial crisis just before the March 1998 parliamentary elections if it does not curb pre-election spending. Privatization and restructuring of the major industrial sectors and agriculture have made little progress. Kuchma's reforms suffered a major setback when the parliament ("Rada"), early in 1997, refused to endorse critical portions of his reform program; on the other hand, Kuchma did not actively press his reform package with the Rada.

International support. Ukraine in August signed a \$540 million Standby agreement with the IMF, its fourth IMF program since independence. However, the IMF held up two \$50 million disbursements after Ukraine missed monthly performance targets. Several of the World Bank's large portfolio of investment and adjustment loans have been suspended due to Ukrainian policy shortcomings that violated conditions set for the loans.

Private sector. Private businesses, foreign and Ukrainian, operate in a difficult environment. Underdeveloped legal and financial institutions, excessive regulation and licensing requirements, intrusive bureaucrats and tax inspectors, corruption and organized crime have discouraged the growth of the private sector. As a result, foreign investment has trickled in - by the end of 1996, total foreign investment in Ukraine was barely over \$1 billion, a paltry sum for a country its size. U.S. companies accounted for the largest percentage of foreign direct investment.

UKRAINE: HUMAN RIGHTS OVERVIEW

Ukraine continues to make progress toward building a law-based civil society. Traditional human rights problems, or violations by the government, are rare.

Constitution. In June 1996, Ukraine adopted a new constitution which provided for shared power between the president and parliament (the "Rada"), an independent judiciary, and a Constitutional Court charged with judicial review of the acts and decisions of the other branches of government. The new constitution also provides for a human rights ombudsman, to be appointed by the Rada, responsible for assisting citizens in defending their rights. The efficacy of the new constitution, however, depends on enabling legislation, most of which has not yet been passed. The power of the Constitutional Court remains untested.

European standards. In 1997, the Rada ratified Ukraine's signing of the European Human Rights Convention, enabling citizens who have exhausted their judicial remedies to appeal to the European Commission on Human Rights. Also in 1997, Ukraine adopted a citizenship law which will enhance the ability of deported peoples, notably Crimean Tatars, to gain or regain Ukrainian citizenship. The OSCE Mission in Ukraine has continued its useful work in Crimea, where the possibility of human rights problems and inter-ethnic tension among the ethnic Russian majority, the Ukrainian minority, and the returning Tatars lingers. Conditions there have improved to the point, however, that there is active discussion about closing the OSCE Mission.

Issues. Despite an overall good human rights record, Ukraine faces some lingering problems:

- Legal and prison systems remain largely unreformed, often marked by brutality to prisoners, long trial delays, almost universal pretrial confinement, and poor prison conditions.
- Corruption in government remains endemic, harming public respect for officials and institutions.
- The activities of foreign missionaries are limited by law and practice.
- Anti-Semitism, violence against women, and discrimination against women, ethnic, and religious minorities, also persist, although they are societal and not government-sanctioned.

UKRAINE: ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS ISSUES

Legal basis. With some important exceptions, there are only isolated cases of ethnic discrimination in Ukraine. The 1996 constitution provides for "the free development, use and protection of the Russian language and other minority languages in Ukraine." This compromise builds on a 1991 Law on National Minorities, which allows individual citizens to use their respective languages in conducting personal business and allows minority groups to establish their own schools.

Language issues. Russian speakers, who predominate in eastern Ukraine, have complained about the increased use of Ukrainian in schools and in the media. They claim that their children are disadvantaged when taking academic entrance examinations, since all applicants are required to take a Ukrainian language test.

Ethnic tension. In some parts of western Ukraine, the surviving small Jewish communities credibly accuse local Ukrainian ultra-nationalists of fostering ethnic hatred and printing anti-Semitic tracts. Similar charges have been lodged by the Russian minority. They also charge that local authorities have not taken action against those who foment ethnic hatred.

Jewish community. The American and Ukrainian Jewish communities continue to encourage the Ukrainian government to speak out more forcefully against anti-Semitic statements that appear in the nationalist press. The National Conference on Soviet Jewry raised the issue in a September meeting between American Jewish leaders and President Kuchma in New York, a meeting Kuchma himself sought during his visit to New York for the opening of the United Nations General Assembly. (The Ukrainian president also met with President Clinton and Secretary Albright.) Kuchma replied that his government was concerned about this, but he seemed somewhat surprised that the issue had been raised.

[NOTE: Vadim Rabinowitch has often been portrayed as a leader of the Ukrainian Jewish community. Mr. Rabinowitch's visa to the United States has been withdrawn and any requests to include him in meetings should not be accepted.]

Discrimination in Crimea. In Crimea, Ukrainian and Tatar minorities credibly complain of discrimination by the Russian majority and demand that Ukrainian and Tatar languages be given equal status alongside Russian. The Ukrainian community in Crimea has criticized the national government for tolerating

radical anti-Ukrainian, anti-Tatar and Russian chauvinistic groups on the peninsula.

Crimean Tatars. The Crimean Tatars were savagely suppressed under Stalin, and most Tatars were expelled from Crimea to Kazakstan and Siberia. They were invited to return to Crimea six years ago by the newly formed Ukrainian government. While the Crimean government, pleading insufficient funds, has not provided assistance to the Tatar community for reestablishing its cultural heritage through Tatar language publications and educational institutions, the central government is working with the UNHCR, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the International Organization for Migration to address some of the community's most urgent needs.

Religious freedom. So far, Ukraine has not passed a law on religion as restrictive as Russia's and missionaries are still very active in Ukraine. This is rapidly becoming a political issue, however. In August, local authorities curtailed the length of stay of two U.S. Mormon missionaries working in Odesa on the grounds that they were not registered to operate outside Kiev. The American missionaries went to Odesa after the local Mormon congregation there tried for months without success to gain approval of their invitation by the Odesa committee on religious affairs. Following curtailment of their visa, the two missionaries left Ukraine as requested. However, the Mormon mission in Ukraine plans to mount a legal challenge to the actions of the Odesa religious affairs committee.

UKRAINE: EDUCATION

Overview. Education is mandatory for both sexes in Ukraine through the ninth grade, with a full education consisting of eleven years. A literacy rate of 99 per cent is claimed. State-supported universities continue to operate despite extreme shortages of resources, inadequate and sporadic payment of salaries and research grants, and a rapidly-deteriorating infrastructure. The collapse of Communism created the need for wholesale revision of primary textbooks and more advanced works to reflect a more accurate picture of Ukrainian history and culture, and to address the neglected subjects of business and non-Marxist economics. That process has barely begun.

Economy's effect on education. Education has been severely affected by Ukraine's economic problems. While state-supported universities continue to waive tuition fees for most students, they have ceased awarding stipends for living expenses. As a result higher education has become less affordable to many gifted students, who instead opt for more immediate ways to make money. Private universities are opening for those few children of the elite who can afford to pay.

Higher education. Undergraduate degree programs normally take five years to complete, although some schools are now introducing American-style, four-year baccalaureate programs. Major universities include the Taras Shevchenko National University in Kiev, the largest and most prestigious in Ukraine, and the National Technical University of Ukraine. Some of Ukraine's finest students are also selected for study in the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. Among the most significant new institutions is Kiev's Mohyla Academy University, which re-opened in 1992, reviving a program of liberal education modeled after that of its namesake - Ukraine's first institution of higher learning, which opened in 1615.

Education and workforce. Technical education, especially engineering, mathematics and the sciences, were emphasized in Ukraine in the Soviet era. Today, there is an overabundance of such specialists, most of whom are not trained in modern technological methods. They are largely under-employed, underpaid and dissatisfied. The most highly educated Ukrainians have sought to emigrate in the hopes of finding better salaries and working conditions abroad. Today's students are emphasizing business, law, Western economics and foreign languages. A growing number of Ukrainian students are finding opportunities to study abroad, including hundreds who have come to the United States under "Freedom Support Act" programs.

UKRAINE: WOMEN'S ISSUES

Overview. Women in countries of the former Soviet Union were expected to carry out traditional female roles of child rearing, shopping and home care, while also working full time. The Soviet system supported workplace day care, as well as liberal family leave policies. Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, as in other countries, Ukrainian women have been subjected to increasingly difficult circumstances. Salaries have not kept pace with inflation and are paid irregularly. Day care and the quality of schools have deteriorated.

Domestic violence. Domestic violence seems to have dramatically increased. The number of reported rapes and attempted rapes has increased by 80 percent in recent years, yet surveys indicate that most women who have been subjected to physical abuse or rape never report it. Hot lines, shelters, and other practical support for victims of domestic violence do not exist. When violence occurs, the authorities often exert pressure on women to drop charges. The lack of media attention to the subject reflects the society's bias against exposing such issues to public scrutiny. Although many Ukrainian women are aware of feminist trends in other countries, their views on women's rights are still overwhelmingly conservative.

Trafficking. Trafficking in women and girls for sexual exploitation to Western Europe, Turkey, and the Middle East is growing. The problem has hardly been acknowledged by the government; most officials assert that this is a problem for Russian women, not Ukrainian. (Apprehensions of prostitutes in western Europe suggest otherwise). Recently, the Ukrainian government agreed to permit U.S.-funded NGOs to study the problem. Ukrainian authorities generally do not prosecute these crimes.

Employment and education. Labor law provides for equal rights for men and women, including equal pay for equal work, a principle that is generally observed. However, women are much more likely to be laid off than men. Government statistics report that over seventy percent of the unemployed are women. Educational opportunities for women have generally been equal to those enjoyed by men, and they remain so.

Politics. Though no legal barriers restrict the participation of women in politics and government, social barriers do exist. Women are largely absent from the highest levels of government, from senior management positions in the economy and from legislative bodies. Currently 13 out of 450 members of parliament are female. Out of 32 ministerial positions, two, the Ministers of Justice and Family and Youth Affairs, are women.

Business. Women are making progress in entrepreneurial undertakings, particularly in larger cities. Often borne of necessity, many women took to working as street vendors when normal Soviet-era supply arrangements began to break down and previous restrictions to private trade began to be ignored. A significant number of these women have expanded their activities to include certain industries that were traditionally relegated to female managers - including textile production, clothing manufacture and retail food marketing. Small women's business groups have formed in the largest cities.

A civil and moral society. The collapse of Communism took with it the Communist social system. The moral and ethical code taught under the Communist system has been rejected, but has yet to be replaced by anything else. Parents, most of whom were raised as atheists, are unequipped to deal with the moral vacuum created. Summertime "Pioneer" camps, where most children received indoctrination in Communist values, have largely disappeared. Ukrainian churches, which are deeply divided, have sought to step into this void by attracting new members, but the gap of two generations or more is making this difficult.

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HEADLINE: New publication examines lives of **women** in Russia and **Ukraine**

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New publication examines lives of **women** in Russia and **Ukraine**

Is Western feminism being accepted by **Ukrainian** and Russian **women**?

Are women taking an active role in determining their future in the new democracies?

How had colonialization affected **Ukrainian women**?

How has the Soviet system of "equality of the sexes" affected the lives of men and **women**, and their roles in society?

These and many other questions are discussed by leading Western specialists, and Russian and **Ukrainian** feminists, in the recently published book. "**Women in Russia and Ukraine**" edited by Rosalind March. Most of the essays deal with Russian **women**, but many of the topics are relevant throughout the ex-Soviet republics.

Two chapters are devoted exclusively to **Ukrainian women**: "Feminism in Post-Communist **Ukrainian Society**" by Solomea Pavlychko, and "Christian Virgin or Pagan Goddess: Feminism Versus the Eternally Feminine in **Ukraine**" by Marian J. Rubchak.

There is a comparison between the historic roles of Russian and **Ukrainian women** and how they differed from the 12th century until the present. Historically, **Ukrainian women** were held in high esteem and had equal and complementary roles in a matriarchal society. On the other hand, Russian **women** had a subservient role in a patriarchal society where they were expected to be obedient and docile. In Russia wife-beating was condoned and accepted both by the Church and state, while in **Ukraine** beating a wife or a husband was against the law.

When Russia colonized **Ukraine** in the 18th century, these patriarchal traditions began to have a negative impact on **Ukrainian women** and changed their status in society. This patriarchal system continued under Soviet rule throughout the republics, even through Marxist ideology and socialism believed in equality of the sexes. This "equality" held true on paper, but not while



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making decisions or policies in real life.

With perestroika and ultimate unraveling of the Soviet system, women suffered an even further blow. They were the first to lose their jobs and were further burdened by the stress of being responsible for providing the necessities of life for the family with ever-diminishing resources. They suffered additional indignities when the system blamed them for the disintegration of the family, delinquency of the children, and alcoholic and abusive husbands.

Ms. Pavlychko writes: "While a new (now-Soviet) attitude towards **women** is being formed in **Ukraine**, patriarchal mythology of all kinds is being revitalized in the course of the so-called national revival. At the same time, there is an invasion of mass culture from the West: Barbie dolls, mediocre, video films..."

In this time of cultural instability, a mixed and confusing message is being sent to the **Ukrainian women**. On the one hand she is expected to be the traditional mother and keeper of the family, and on the other she is portrayed as a sex symbol to be enjoyed by men, notes Ms. Pavlychko.

She also writes "The official celebration of International Women's Day on March 8 has turned into an annual antifeminist ritual. In actual fact this is a most important male holiday, when **women** annually reassert themselves as passive, submissive creatures eager to accept male domination and power."

She continues by observing that feminism in **Ukraine** is suffering a backlash: "**Women's** views are not represented, their needs are not met, their problems are not addressed, their rights are not implemented ... it is imperative that **women** should voice their opposition to a society ruled by old men...otherwise a democratic civil society in **Ukraine** will remain an impossible dream."

The Soviet "equality" of the sexes actually destroyed the feminist cultural traditions and the organized **women's** movement that existed in **Ukraine** from the turn of the century. Today's **women's** organizations are emphasizing the role of a woman as, first and foremost, a builder of a strong, independent **Ukraine**. The emphasis is on tradition, language, customs and nurturing. This will ultimately benefit the whole **Ukrainian** society.

This link between nationalism and feminism was discussed a decade ago by Marta Bohachevsky-Chomiak in her book, "Feminists Despite Themselves: **Women** in **Ukrainian** Community Life 1884-1939." It seems that **women** once again, just as in the 19th century, are assuming this "traditional" role.

In another chapter, Prof. Rubchak discusses this issue, as well as the impact of the Soviet mentality with respect to feminism upon **Ukrainian women** and the use of ancient symbolism, the "Berehynia," in present-day **Ukraine**.

She quotes Oksana Sepeliak, president of the **Ukrainian Association of Women** in Lviv, "before she and her sisters start liberating **women**, they must first liberate the nation."

Prof. Rubchak states "the very fact that **women** are as likely as men to reject the need for any change in prevailing attitudes toward **women** in **Ukraine** illustrates the widespread hostility to the very concept of an authentic feminist consciousness in **Ukraine**." She goes on to say that **women** "perpetuate their own inferior status ... the **Ukrainian** woman's God-given mission ... giving



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birth to saviors ... no thought of such outstanding individuals being female."

This book has answered some of the questions regarding the present situation in Russia and **Ukraine**. It will be interesting to follow additional studies to see how **women** formulate their roles within their society and what kind of feminism will emerge.

"**Women** in Russia and **Ukraine**" is available in paperback from Cambridge University Press for \$24.95. To order call 1-800-872-7423.

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UKRAINE: POPULATION AND FAMILY PLANNING ISSUES

Overview. Ukraine's population peaked in 1992 at 51.7 million. It has been falling 0.4 percent a year since then and now stands at 50.9 million. This decline, unlike that of Russia, is not expected to reverse. A sub-replacement fertility level of 1.6 births per woman, one of the oldest populations in the former USSR (only 20% below the age of 15), and currently declining life expectancy are at the root of this scenario.

Family health. Ukraine appears to meet all the family health and female education targets set by the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo. However, health and environmental conditions and the social infrastructure, including equipment and supplies needed for reproductive health, have deteriorated since independence. Infant and maternal mortality are slightly better than in Russia but still several times higher than in the U.S. or EU. High rates of maternal morbidity and mortality among Ukrainian women are linked to a lack of access to quality maternal and prenatal care, and to historic reliance on abortion as the primary means of controlling fertility. In 1992 there were 156 abortions for every 100 live births. Multiple abortions are also linked with infertility, premature births, and infant morbidity and mortality. Contraceptive usage was estimated at just 23% in 1990; given the general pattern in the former Soviet states, it is likely that the IUD is the most commonly used method.

Reproductive health. In 1994 USAID initiated a Women's Reproductive Health Initiative in the Ukraine to improve women's reproductive health, increase voluntary contraceptive use, and decrease abortion as a means of controlling fertility. To upgrade access to and the quality of Ukrainian reproductive health services, the initiative is introducing modern contraceptives to medical providers and clients as safer, more effective alternatives to abortion. It has established three model family planning centers and training sites in Donetsk, Odessa and L'viv oblasts, and plans others as well. Activities focus on the training of trainers, curriculum development, clinical training, service delivery management, and increased public awareness to assist the oblasts to expand and institutionalize reproductive health services beyond the cities and into other oblasts.

Family planning. USAID is providing technical assistance to update family planning, breast-feeding and maternity care practices, and incorporate sustainable training into the medical education system to ensure a constant flow of highly qualified reproductive health care providers. It also supports a public education program to inform Ukrainians of alternatives to

abortion as a means of controlling fertility, and provides contraceptives and some equipment to support the model centers. The Ministry of Health reported an 8.6% reduction in induced abortions in the first six months of 1996, and attributed the decrease directly to USAID assistance. Oral contraceptive use has already increased from 3% to 10% in Donetsk.

UKRAINE: CHILDREN'S ISSUES

Deteriorating conditions. Children in Ukraine, along with the elderly, are bearing the brunt of the country's economic and social decline. Many families are no longer able to afford a balanced diet for a child's physical development. Since 1996, the production of baby food and juices, vitamins, and vitamin-fortified milk has decreased significantly. Social stresses within families caused by un- and underemployment, non-payment of wages, alcoholism and disease, have led to sharp increases in spousal and child abuse - this combined with an already high divorce rate.

Adoption. Public concern over the fate of children adopted by foreigners triggered a new adoption law providing for thorough court examination of each case and follow-up monitoring of the children's well-being. In general, the adoption process appears to be going smoothly in most of Ukraine. In the last year, 46 Ukrainian children have been adopted by American families.

Children of Chornobyl. Eleven years after Chornobyl reactor number nine exploded, the effects of this tragedy can be seen in numerous children who suffer from radiation sickness manifested by a drastic rise in the occurrence of thyroid cancer. Congenital birth defects in the Chornobyl area are also abnormally high. (The radiation levels in Kiev today are normal.) A major portion of Ukraine's budget is devoted to dealing with the consequences of Chornobyl through various clean-up, social and healthcare programs. The U.S. and the G-7 are sponsoring major programs to stabilize the damaged reactor and its surrounding "sarcophagus," and to deactivate the Chornobyl complex by the year 2000.

Children's rights. The Ukrainian government is publicly committed to the defense of children's rights, but it has struggled to implement its agenda. Guaranteed public education and free health care for children, with special benefits for children affected by Chornobyl, are the stated goals. There is no societal pattern of abuse of children, but trafficking of children for sexual exploitation is on the rise.

Pediatric Health. Approximately one-fifth of the Ukrainian population is under 18 years of age. The Ministry of Health estimates that forty percent of all children are experiencing "abnormal physical development" - demonstrating growth patterns and organ functions that are outside the normal range. Respiratory disease accounts for more than half of childhood morbidity, followed by skin disease, and diseases of the nervous system. Children still suffer from vaccine-preventable diseases.

Government reports indicate that 30 percent of all children need psychological help.

UKRAINE: HEALTH ISSUES

Overview. As in most of the former Soviet states, health care in Ukraine is in crisis. Life expectancy is dropping, infant mortality is rising, and the general health of the population is declining. Health education is also deteriorating due to low salaries, supply shortages and inadequate facilities and equipment. General measures of health (e.g., WHO) rank Ukraine among third world countries statistically, despite the presence of a large medical care and medical training system. Ukraine has one doctor per 222 people and a total of 3,900 hospitals (with 679,000 beds), 7,000 state run out-patient clinics and 50 private clinics. Respiratory diseases, heart ailments and alcoholism are the major adult afflictions. Since 1992, incidence of tuberculosis, diphtheria and cholera has increased sharply.

High cost. Health care services are funded almost entirely by the government and are delivered very inefficiently. The government plans to spend three percent of GDP on health care in 1997. The emphasis is on in-patient care, with long hospital stays the norm. Preventive medicine has been neglected. Moreover, physicians -- most of whom are women -- are often assigned tasks that could easily be carried out by less-trained health professionals. Hospital administrators are almost uniformly male. There is a clear need to reduce the number of hospitals and staff.

Pharmaceuticals. Ukraine's dependence on suppliers in other former Soviet republics for most pharmaceutical raw materials has resulted in serious shortages since the breakup of the USSR. Domestic manufacturing meets less than 20 percent of the country's pharmaceutical needs. Ukraine lacks production facilities for some essentials, such as oncological drugs, cardiovascular medicines and vaccines. In 1997, availability of the simplest antibiotics, hypertension medications, insulin, and other medications improved somewhat, but prices increased dramatically. Major multinational pharmaceutical companies have begun marketing their products, but the prices charged limit availability to the wealthiest consumers. Patients are required to supply their own medications for hospital stays.

AIDS. Although few deaths from AIDS have been recorded in Ukraine, accurate data are not available and the incidence of sexually-transmitted diseases and AIDS is believed to be increasing. Ukraine recently saw a sharp increase in newly infected injecting drug users in cities bordering the Black Sea. HIV-positive persons in Nikolayev, for example, rose from 1.7% of injecting drug users to 56.5% during 1995. The potential for the infection to spread, particularly to women, is worrisome given low condom usage and sexual trafficking in Ukrainian women.

Trafficking to Western Europe, Turkey and the Middle East is reputedly common. Resources for prevention, counseling and availability of prophylactics are extremely limited. Combined with sexual promiscuity among the young, the potential for a sharp increase in AIDS cases is large.

Ukraine and Health Care

- ▶ Epidemics of infectious diseases plague Ukraine - the worst epidemics are AIDS, TB, STDs and Hepatitis. The Ministry of Health is asking the World Bank for help in all these areas.
- ▶ TB already infects one-third of the world's population, 50 million of whom have drug-resistant strains of TB. Approximately 3 million people will die from TB this year. Rates of TB have nearly doubled in the last 5 years in Ukraine-they are now five times the rate of the US. Odessa oblast has the highest rate of TB in Ukraine with 52.2/100,000 cases in 1996 compared to 25.5/100,000 for Kiev City.
- ▶ There are 12,000 recorded cases of AIDS out of a population of 52 million. This is the highest number of official cases of any country in the FSU. AIDS, HIV, and STDs are all on the rise in Ukraine due to unsafe sexual practices, prostitution, and intravenous drug use. As in Russia, the actual numbers of AIDS cases may be as much as 10 times higher—these are just official numbers.
- ▶ *Maternal and Child Health.* There are striking - and ominous - indicators of the deteriorating condition of maternal and child health. Infant and maternal mortality continue to be a serious indicator of the health crisis. The Health Minister singled this issue out recently because of its urgency.
- ▶ The facts and figures singled out in the Bader letter of September 30 remain accurate with respect to the major crisis as the result of the lack of pharmaceuticals, diagnostic equipment, and even “off the shelf” items for hospital emergency rooms.

LEVEL 2 - 17 OF 311 STORIES

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SERIES: CRUMBLLED EMPIRE, SHATTERED HEALTH. First in a series.

HEADLINE: CRUMBLLED EMPIRE, SHATTERED HEALTH / DIAGNOSIS: CRITICAL / IN THE REMNANTS OF THE USSR, HEALTH CARE IS IN A DEADLY STATE OF SHAMBLES (NS BULLDOG EDITION) . CRUMBLLED EMPIRE / SHATTERED HEALTH / THE COLLAPSE OF HEALTH CARE IN THE FORMER SOVIET UNION. NEWSDAY COVER PHOTO BY VIOREL FLORESCU- (PATIENT IN A RUSSIAN HOSPITAL)

BYLINE: Laurie Garrett. STAFF WRITER; Others making key contributions to the series were Newsday's Moscow Bureau chief, Susan Sachs; former bureau chief Ken Fireman; research Tami Luhby; and staff writer Delthia Ricks.

DATELINE: TSKHINVALI, GEORGIA

BODY:

IN THE SERIES. Today, Newsday begins a series of stories by Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter Laurie Garrett and photographer Viorel Florescu on the collapse of public health in the former Soviet Union at a time of dramatic social upheaval. The stories will appear in the news section, in special reports in the Discovery section and online at <http://www.newsday.com>. Researching the story led Garrett and Florescu to Moscow, Kiev and St. Petersburg, as well as locations as far-flung as Tallinn, Estonia, in the Baltics; Ulan-Ude on the Russo-Mongolian border; Nor'ilsk, 175 miles above the Arctic Circle in Siberia; war-torn Ossetia, on the Georgian frontier; Chernobyl, **Ukraine**; and Bohemia in the Czech Republic. TSKHINVALI, GEORGIA Most of the patients have been sent home because the vast medical complex has no heat. The nurses are huddled around a burning log in a makeshift fireplace carved out of a cement floor. But up on the fourth floor of Republican Hospital, remarkably, medicine is still being practiced. Two surgeons are performing a hernia operation with uncommon skill - and uncommon speed.

As a doctor anesthetizes the patient with an ether-soaked handkerchief and a nurse keeps him breathing with a hand-operated ventilator, the scrub nurse scoops up a pile of bloodied surgical instruments and carries them to a basin of pink water that has been standing uncovered for hours.

Working barehanded, she dunks the instruments in the water, swishes them about and returns them to the operating table with no further effort at sterilization. A moment later, one of those instruments is inside the patient, clamping off a section of intestines.

The operation is finished in less than 10 minutes. When the surgeons are complimented on their speed, one replies: "It's not a matter of choice. We must



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go fast. The generator only supplies 15 minutes of electricity for the lights."

This provincial hospital is far removed from Russia's great cities, and Georgia has fared far worse than most former Soviet republics since the union split apart in 1991. But while the problems here may be especially acute, they are not atypical. Throughout this vast ex-superpower, the health care system once touted by the Soviet leadership as an exemplar of "the human, caring face of socialism" is a shambles.

Life expectancy rates have plunged precipitously, driven downward by a deadly combination of spreading disease, alcohol and drug abuse, poor nutrition, chronic underfunding of medical facilities and isolation from Western scientific advances. In one year alone, 1993, the life expectancy at birth for Russian males dropped from 61 to 58, according to the World Health Organization. Russia's death rate in 1995 was 1.6 times greater than its birthrate, triggering a decline in its population unprecedented in post-war times, and the premature death rate for adults has more than doubled since 1960, according to government data.

The impact of this crisis is also falling heavily on those most vulnerable: the region's children. They suffer from high rates of birth defects, disease and mortality, bear the brunt of their parents' drug and alcohol abuse and are often denied medicines because of a belief that they are "weakened" and cannot handle certain antibiotics or vaccines.

As a consequence, they are far less likely to reach adulthood than their Western European counterparts, according to UNICEF. Children in Russia, the largest of the former Soviet republics, are 2 1/2 times more likely to die before age 5 than American children, global health experts say.

Some doctors find this unbearable. At the Leningrad Republican Infectious Disease Hospital, for instance, Dr. Paul Sergeyev tenderly strokes the blond head of 9-month-old Natalia, who was abandoned by her HIV-positive, opium-addicted mother as soon as she was born.

"We can't know for sure whether a child is infected with HIV until 3 years old," he says with a frustrated shake of his head as he gently places Natalia back in her crib. "We have no money for genetic testing. We have no money for anything."

Dr. Lev Mogilevsky, co-director of an infectious disease treatment facility in the Ukrainian city of Odessa, sums up the situation succinctly: "We can no longer control or manage disease," he said. "It manages us."

An eight-month examination by Newsday that ranged over 4,500 miles, visiting 20 cities in five formerly communist countries, has found that this once-proud health care system has become a casualty of the region's wrenching historic transition.

It's not clear how quickly this occurred, because past health care claims by the communist government were unreliable at best, fabricated at worst. But it is crystal clear the system today is collapsing, unable to adapt to a non-authoritarian society where individual choice reigns, power is decentralized and economic realities constrain choices. And while most experts are focused on the profound economic and political problems plaguing the region, it is also



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clear that the collapse of public health is potentially just as destabilizing.
Here's what Newsday found:

- Infectious diseases long thought to be under control or largely extinct in the developed world have swept through former Soviet republics in a rolling series of epidemics, producing disease rates far exceeding those in Western countries. These diseases - which include tuberculosis, hepatitis, cholera, typhoid and influenza - have been spread by chronically poor medical hygiene and sanitation, as well as misuse of antibiotics. The tuberculosis rate, for instance, is 10 times the rate in the United States, and growing.

- The long decades of government-enforced isolation from the rest of the world have bred a striking ignorance of many modern medical advances among health care professionals, and a widespread public belief in unscientific folk remedies. For example, only 60 percent of Russian children under age 5 have been fully immunized - according to World Health Organization standards - against the six most common vaccine-preventable diseases, in large part because of opposition from parents and doctors who believe children with the mildest health problems should not be vaccinated. The U.S. rate, meanwhile, is above 95 percent.

- The former health-care delivery system - inefficient, expensive and authoritarian, but widely accessible - has all but collapsed in the wake of a massive funding crisis, and little has been done to replace it. The Russian government, for example, currently earmarks less than 2 percent of its annual budget for health services, compared with nearly 20 percent in the United States, resulting in chronic shortages of supplies, deteriorating physical facilities and late payment of wages to personnel. In most hospitals visited by Newsday, strapped officials had stopped ordering rubber gloves and paper towels to save money.

- Long-term environmental problems are taking a growing toll on the public's health. In St. Petersburg, for instance, officials acknowledge they can no longer supply safe water to the city, a problem that resulted this summer in more than 500 cases of dysentery. In Russia as a whole, the Environment Ministry has concluded half the nation's drinking water supply is unsafe.

- Hundreds of thousands of new patients are now entering the health system due to an unprecedented surge in drug abuse, which has fueled an explosion of HIV and hepatitis and compromised part of the region's blood supplies. There are few public education programs on the dangers of sharing needles, for instance, within a huge region in which two-thirds of AIDS patients are drug users.

"We broke old mechanisms which managed society and health care, and we didn't create new ones, we didn't know how to," Mogilevsky added. "Now health care is on the brink of complete ruin."

The crisis threatens to engulf not only the 280 million people who live in the republics that once composed the Soviet Union but, because of immigration patterns and political interdependence, large parts of the rest of the world as well. For as the incidence of infectious disease increases, neighboring nations in Europe and popular immigration destinations such as the United States and Canada become increasingly worried.



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One World Health Organization official called a 1995 diphtheria epidemic in Russia "the biggest public health threat in Europe since World War II."

Just as ominously, there is concern that the health care crisis will provide potent new ammunition to ultra-nationalist politicians who argue that American-style democracy and cooperation with the West have failed and that only a revival of authoritarianism can solve Russia's problems.

"How can the society, the economy, the military bear such a burden?" asked Murray Feshbach, a Georgetown University demographer who has studied Russian trends for years. "Will it lead to social disarray? Can the economy survive? Will a conservative military-type leader decide to overthrow the government? Why are these not viable possibilities if one looks at Russia from the demographic and health prism, and not just the political and economic dimensions?"

There is some evidence that this concern is well-founded. A poll ranking the concerns of Russian citizens earlier this year found that declining public health had risen to fifth (from ninth in 1995) and was cited by 29 percent of those responding as their top concern (up from 16 percent two years ago).

Opponents of the present Russian government are seeking to exploit health care as a political issue. Communist leaders routinely blame Western-style capitalism for the surge in infectious diseases, alcoholism and drug abuse. They argue that the nation's strength and security have been compromised, citing government statistics that one in three army recruits are now rejected for health reasons, as opposed to 1 in 20 in 1985. And Russia's most prominent nationalist leader, Alexander Lebed, apparently has incorporated the issue into his standard stump speech.

"Tuberculosis has increased - it's a rampant wave," Lebed barked in his gravelly baritone during a recent talk to a group of supporters in the Siberian city of Irkutsk. "We have to stop this rampant increase. We need to deal with AIDS too - we cannot wait . . . There are skyrocketing infectious diseases. We must stop that - now."

But translating such stern rhetoric into reality may prove difficult for any politician, even one as accustomed to command as Lebed, a former army general. And if Lebed has any doubts of that, he might have a chat with a fellow Afghan war veteran named Konstantin.

In 1993, two years after Konstantin was discharged from the military, communist and ultra-nationalist rebels seized the Russian White House in defiance of President Boris Yeltsin's order disbanding the old Soviet-era parliament. Konstantin grabbed his old army rifle and manned the barricades.

The rebellion was crushed, and Konstantin wound up in Butirka Prison, charged with treason. When his case finally came up for judicial review last January, a judge dismissed the charges and ordered him freed.

But by that time Konstantin had contracted tuberculosis, a huge and growing risk in Russia's grossly overcrowded jails and prisons. The treatment he received was erratic and ineffective, and the disease eventually spread from his lungs to his liver, kidneys and heart.

Today, Konstantin, 39, who won't allow his last name to be used, lies dying



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in a bed at the Moscow Tuberculosis Research Center, his disease beyond the reach of any drug. "It's like a joke, a particularly Russian joke," he says. "In principle, I was given a death sentence."

The rampant growth of tuberculosis among Russia's huge prison population - estimated to be as many as one million out of a total population of 140 million - is one of the engines that have driven the country's overall TB rate to a level at least 10 times greater than that in the United States. And while Russian scientists debate how to cope with the epidemic, those who care for TB victims in provincial facilities across the far-flung nation often work in the face of heartbreaking shortages.

In one such facility, in the city of Ulan-Ude, capital of Buryatia, a region of Russia just north of Mongolia, Dr. Galina Dugarova cares for patients housed in three unheated log cabins. Patients must supply their own pajamas and bed linens; supplies of antibiotics and other medicines are erratic at best.

"They are all going to die," Dugarova says as she ministers to four patients in the facility's intensive care ward. "We cannot treat them . . . We would like to give them four drugs and some protein, but we have no money and they have no money. They are sentenced."

As ominous as the TB epidemic is, it is just one of the infectious diseases that have swept through Russia and other former Soviet republics in recent years. While statistical comparisons over time are difficult because Soviet-era data were notoriously unreliable, both domestic and foreign experts agree that many diseases have registered alarming increases.

Diphtheria, for example, infected 200,000 people in the region and killed 5,000 before it finally slowed down last year, thanks in part to a major international effort spawned by fears that the contagion would spread to other parts of the world.

Polio rolled into Azerbaijan in 1991, Uzbekistan in 1993 and war-ravaged Chechnya in 1995. Hepatitis is now so common throughout the former Soviet Union that it is regarded as endemic rather than epidemic. Influenza hit the region so hard in 1995 that the entire **Ukrainian** government was forced to shut down for a week. Typhoid infected 20,000 in the central Asian republic of Tajikistan last year, much of it surfacing in drug-resistant forms. Russia's second largest city, St. Petersburg, is currently coping with dual epidemics of cholera and dysentery for the third time since 1993.

While there are many reasons for these contagions, one source is health care practitioners and medical facilities themselves, according to Western experts who have studied the problem.

"I can't tell you how surprised I was by their lack of infection control," said Howard Cohen, former executive director of Coney Island Hospital in Brooklyn, which serves as a "sister" institution to a hospital in Odessa. "In the operating room they had commonly used soap bars, commonly used towels. Surgeons were going from one patient to another without washing."

Sometimes, lack of funds is the culprit, as in a children's hospital in St. Petersburg that suffered several outbreaks of internally generated infections last year. Investigators discovered that the cash-strapped facility had ceased

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buying paper towels and rubber gloves.

But in other cases, simple lack of knowledge born of isolation from Western colleagues is at fault. Cohen and others say most Russian and **Ukrainian** doctors believe airborne bacterial spores are the major source of infection within hospitals, whereas Western practitioners learned years ago that unsterile hands and instruments were the main culprits.

"For seventy years, public health here was linked to ideology instead of science," said Regina Napolitano, chief of infection control for Coney Island Hospital. "Now they're paying the price."

In some parts of the region, these problems are exacerbated by the misuse of antibiotics, leading to the emergence of drug-resistant strains of bacteria. Dr. Ed O'Rourke of Boston's Children's Hospital, an expert in infectious diseases who has visited Russia and other ex-Soviet republics on many occasions, says physicians there often "simply add one antibiotic on top of another" without any particular rationale.

O'Rourke has been urging doctors in the region to revamp their system for controlling infectious diseases, but fears he's made little impact. "It's as if they have horses and carriages but want diesel trucks," he said. "And we're trying to tell them that what they need to do is forget about these diesels and use the horses and carriages properly."

Another key source of the epidemics is a plummeting rate of vaccination against infectious diseases that began in the 1980s and has continued unchecked into the current decade.

Part of the blame for this lies with Soviet-era health officials, who trained pediatricians to withhold vaccinations from children with minor ailments - or merely a family history of a disease - on the theory that such "weak" children would be harmed rather than helped by inoculation.

One scientist, Dr. Galena Chervonskaya, carried this theory to extreme lengths, arguing that domestically produced diphtheria and pertussis vaccines were contaminated with poisons. Her views were publicized in a mass-circulation newspaper, further depressing the vaccination rate - and opening the door to the likes of Boris Nikitin.

Nikitin, 82, was trained in engineering, not pediatric medicine. But he has proclaimed himself an expert in child rearing, and his influence in Russia is often compared to that of Dr. Benjamin Spock in the United States. His "Nikitin Doctrine" holds that most clothing and medical treatment weaken children.

"Nature has designed a certain stage in child development when natural immunity is formed," Nikitin says as he plays with his naked 6-month-old granddaughter outdoors on a chilly afternoon. "This natural mechanism is called children's infections. So this immunization of society is a great medical mistake."

A similar attitude toward medical science can be found at an AIDS clinic in the **Ukrainian** capital of Kiev, where a patient named Viktor rejects the drug AZT in favor of another "treatment": a bullet-shaped piece of tin taped to his

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chest.

The 38-year-old postal worker explains he received the apparatus from a local healer who invented it "to measure biocurrents from my body. She charges the currents with a piece of tin, which we call a bullet. And the bullet counters my negative biocurrents."

Such unscientific credulity can, of course, have tragic consequences. But given their history, citizens of the former Soviet Union might be forgiven their willingness to trust street healers over certified scientists. For most of their lives, the health care system was run entirely by the state - the same state that was systematically befouling their air, water and soil in its headlong race to create an industrial and military superpower regardless of human cost.

The grim results of these policies can be found throughout the former union - from the ruined Reactor No. 4 at the infamous Chernobyl power station, to the 50 secret cities where nuclear weapons production has left a deadly legacy of contamination, to the toxic shroud that envelops scores of industrial cities like Angarsk.

Angarsk, a Siberian city of 280,000, is ringed with aging chemical factories, oil refineries and energy production plants. The forest around the city has been denuded by acid rain; the landscape is webbed with rusting petroleum ducts. The sky is perpetually gray. The air smells of sulfur and methane and leaves an acrid taste in the mouth. "It's my perfume," one woman says sourly as she waits for a bus.

Some Russian scientists believe that this rampant environmental degradation, when combined with the political disasters that have stalked their century, has permanently damaged the raw human material of the nation and damaged the population's health.

In the industrial regions of Siberia, for example, the incidence of adult leukemia and Hodgkin's disease is nearly twice that seen in Western Europe. Overall, Russians are 1.8 times more likely to die of cancer than are Americans.

"The Russian gene pool is destroyed," asserts Dr. Askold Maiboroda, dean of the Federal Medical University in the Siberian city of Irkutsk. "First, there were Stalin's slaughters of millions of people, the most creative and intelligent people. Then more good people perished in the gulags . . . And now we suffer an environmental assault unlike anywhere else. We are weakened. Our genes are damaged. You cannot expect much from the Russian people; do not ask much of us."

This attitude of passive hopelessness helps fuel another scourge: widespread and growing alcohol and drug abuse.

Alcohol consumption, traditionally high among Russian men, has increased 600 percent in the nine years since the Soviet government called off an effective but highly unpopular anti-drinking campaign. During that time, deaths from alcohol poisoning and cirrhosis rose by 300 percent and 250 percent respectively. And many younger Russians, caught in the psychic backwash of their society's unprecedented transition, have turned to hard drugs to relieve their angst.



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"Look at that drunken idiot!" a teenager shouts to his laughing buddies as they watch a sodden man try to enter a Moscow subway through the exit turnstile. "Only fools drink bad vodka!"

The teenagers, it turns out, are high themselves - but not on vodka, good or bad. They've been doing a popular opium-based drug called poppy straw.

Hundreds of miles east of Moscow, in the Siberian city of Novosibirsk, another group of young people has gathered in a nightspot called the 888 Club to drink, smoke and contemplate their uncertain futures.

"I'm just a human, rolling through life," says 20-year-old Sevi. "I'm totally against drugs. My choice is vodka. I'm an alcoholic!"

A bit later, the group is asked, "What is a Russian?" Alex, 18, has a ready answer: "Drinking. And loneliness. No one is lonelier than a Russian."

This existential glibness may sound hip and trendy in the mouths of young people. But when damaged, alienated people grow older and begin families, continued alcohol abuse can reap a harvest of misery, especially for the children of such parents.

Vanya's parents were such people - chronic alcohol abusers who battled ferociously and sometimes violently when they drank. After one such bout, they separated. Vanya's mother brought him to Moscow's bustling Byelorussky train terminal when he was 9, let go of his hand, and disappeared into the crowd.

When the police finally picked Vanya up last year, he had survived two winters by begging and sleeping in phone booths. Now, the 11-year-old boy lives in a children's shelter, trying to master the involuntary blinking and bed-wetting that remains with him as a reminder of his life on the streets.

Similar stories can be found throughout the former Soviet Union. At least 700,000 children are homeless in Russia, according to government data, and a recent UNICEF report predicted the number is likely to mount. Alcoholism, the report said, "not only directly affects the child's well-being, it also tends to increase family conflicts, stress-related paternal mortality' and other types of breakdowns."

And children caught in the toils of these problems are likely to be the most vulnerable to infectious diseases. The rate of childhood tuberculosis in former Soviet republics, for example, is now at its highest level since antibiotics-based treatment was introduced in the 1950s. In **Ukraine**, the second largest republic, the incidence of diagnosed TB in those aged 14 and younger has doubled during the past six years.

At the Kiev Institute of Pulmonology, where many of these children are treated, staff members are up against familiar obstacles - chronic shortages of money, drugs and diagnostic resources.

In a ward in the institute, a woman named Galina lies quietly next to her 5-year-old grandson, Janya, bundling against the sick boy to ward off the chill of the unheated room. The lights have also been turned off in daylight to save electricity costs, making it difficult for Galina to read to the child on this



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overcast afternoon.

"The situation is just dreadful," says Dr. Viktoria Kostromira, the institute's director of pediatric services. "The government should take drastic action immediately, or we will have a huge epidemic."

But such relief is unlikely, given the tight fiscal constraints that governments in **Ukraine** and every other former Soviet republic now face. And so the **health** care crisis deepens, statistical indices worsen - and those responsible for coping with the problems issue increasingly pointed warnings.

"We want to make it clear to everybody that the national security of the country is threatened," said Dr. N.F. Gerasimenko of the Academy of Medical Sciences in a speech to the Russian parliament earlier this year. "The situation is catastrophic . . . It's even worse than it was in Russia one hundred years ago." TOMORROW: The Tuberculosis Epidemic ****. Expected Life Span. Comparing life expectancy at birth, in 1995, in Russia and the former Soviet republics with the United States and several other western nations.. .

Life expectancy.

Male Female. Russia 58 72. Armenia 68 74. Azerbaijan 66 75. Belarus 64 75. Estonia 65 76. Georgia 69 78. Kazakhstan 64 74. Kyrgyzstan 63 72. Latvia 63 75. Lithuania 63 75. Moldova 65 73. Tajikistan 66 66. Turkmenistan 62 69. **Ukraine** 64 74. Uzbekistan 66 72. . United States 74 80. Canada 76 82. Germany 73 79. France 74 82. United Kingdom 74 79. Italy 75 81. . SOURCE: World Bank 1997 World Development Indicators. . . ****. Measuring Health. Comparing Russia with the United States by several measures of health and health care. All statistics are from 1994, unless otherwise noted.. . Health care expenditures . (as a percent of gross . domestic product, 1990-95). Russia 4.8%. United States 14.3%. . People per physician. (1993). Russia 222. United States 421. . Infant mortality. (deaths per 1,000 live births, 1995). . Russia 18. United States 8. . . . Death rate (all ages). (deaths per 100,000 population).

M F. Russia 1,765.2 1,369.5. United States 919 839. . . Malignant neoplasms (cancer). (deaths per 100,000).

M F. Russia 243.9 167.1. United States 220.7 190.5. . Cerebrovascular disease (stroke). (deaths per 100,000).

M F. Russia 227.7 350.9. United States 47.4 69.8. . Pneumonia and flu. (deaths per 100,000).

M F. Russia 32.5 9.7. United States 29.4 33.1. . Tuberculosis of the respiratory system. (deaths per 100,000).

M F. Russia 26.7 2.9. United States 0.5 0.3. . Infectious and parasitic diseases. (deaths per 100,000).

M F. Russia 35.6 8.8. United States (1992) 12.2 12.5. . Diabetes mellitus. (deaths per 100,000).

M F. Russia 6.3 13.1. United States 21.8 19.5. . SOURCE: 1995 World Health Statistics Annual, a publication of the World Health Organization; Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1996; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,



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Newsday (New York, NY), October 26, 1997

National Center for Health Statistics.. Newsday Photos by Viorel Florescu- 1) Quick Cleanup. A nurse at Republican Hospital in Tskhinvali, Georgia, cleans instruments between surgeries by swishing them in a basin of water that has sat uncovered for hours. 2) Heartbreaker. Dr. Paul Sergeyev of Leningrad Republican Infectious Disease Hospital holds 6-month-old Lisa, who was abandoned by her HIV-positive mother. 3) Stretched. At Republican Hospital in Tskhinvali, Georgia, above, doctors perform an emergency surgery using generators and a manual pump. 4) At left, a piece of cloth that serves as a face mask and a pair of rubber gloves have been left to dry on a radiator at a tuberculosis hospital in Ulan Ude, Buryatia, where they will be reused. 5) Compassion. Dr. Igor Boychenko and nurse Galina Efremova talk to a patient at **Ukraine's** Odessa Oblast Hospital, now a sister' to Coney Island Hospital in a deal that is benefiting both. 6) A mother's warmth. Above, an unidentified woman tends her newborn baby at a hospital in Kurta, Georgia, in a former schoolroom with just a wood stove for heat. 7) At left, an unidentified man fills two buckets with water from a street pump in Irkutsk. Most homes in the Siberian city do not have running water. 8) TB Tests. Dr. Ludmila Ierbadaeva handles sputum samples in a TB lab in Siberia. There is no money for gloves, masks or for her salary. 9) Cold Comfort. A patient at a TB hospital in Tskhinvali has gotten a log to burn on the floor for warmth.

GRAPHIC: Newsday Charts- 1) Expected Life Span. Comparing life expectancy at birth, in 1995, in Russia and the former Soviet republics with the United States and several other western nations. SOURCE: World Bank 1997 World Development Indicators. 2) Measuring Health. Comparing Russia with the United States by several measures of health and health care. All statistics are from 1994, unless otherwise noted. SOURCE: 1995 World Health Statistics Annual, a publication of the World Health Organization; Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1996; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. (see end of text). Newsday Photos by Viorel Florescu- 1-9) see end of text for captions. 10) Newsday Cover Photo by Viorel Florescu- (a patient in a Russian hospital; NS bulldog edition)

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SERIES: CRUMBLING EMPIRE, SHATTERED HEALTH. First in a series

HEADLINE: CRUMBLING EMPIRE, SHATTERED HEALTH / FOR YEARS, A SECRETLY SICK SYSTEM

BYLINE: By Susan Sachs. MOSCOW CORRESPONDENT

DATELINE: MOSCOW

BODY:

MOSCOW Demographer Leonid Rybakovsky remembers the day that health statistics died in the former Soviet Union.

It was 1976 and, in an Orwellian turn of phrase, the Communist Party central committee had created a "Commission on the Non-Publication of Data."

"I was on this commission," said Rybakovsky, now, as then, the director of the federal Center of Demographics.

"There were also generals from the Ministry of Defense and people from the ministries of central planning and economics," he said.

"A general got up and said to us all: We must not reveal the number of boys being born in the Soviet Union. Our enemies could use this information. We must make it a state secret.' "

There was no arguing with a general, Rybakovsky recalled.

And so statistics about Soviet births by gender were classified. So was all information about life expectancy. Scientists in the know, like Rybakovsky, even had to sign a pledge never to reveal data about the state of the Soviet citizen's health.

"It reflected the Soviet attitude toward human beings," he said. "We couldn't talk about public health so the problems were never dealt with."

The paternalistic mania for secrecy in the Soviet Union produced a generation of health-care workers who knew that the country's medical system was sick but could do nothing about it.

Soviet researchers, for example, sometimes studied the ecological disaster areas dotting the country and their effect on public health. But not until a few years ago were the studies acknowledged and, in some cases, acted upon.



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"Fifteen years ago we did ecological research, but the studies were stuck in a cupboard," said Larissa Shcheplyagina, a Moscow pediatrician who has worked with children affected by the Chernobyl nuclear power plant explosion. "Leaders changed. Times changed. But the statistics stayed in the drawer."

These days, she believes people are listening. Last year, Shcheplyagina headed a study of 3,500 children under the age of 14 in the highly polluted city of Klin, the birthplace of the composer Tchaikovsky, about 50 miles north of Moscow. The water, soil and air is polluted with sulfur dioxide, mercury, heavy metals and other contaminants from heavy industry.

The study found alarming rates of asthma, chronic digestive diseases and endocrine system problems in young residents.

"These children begin to fall ill from the day they are born," said Shcheplyagina. "But now the local authorities have instituted a special project for diagnosis and treatment of ecological diseases. You could say that one of our achievements is the right to call a spade a spade."

In the new Russia, there are mountains of health statistics - more than the average person can digest. And they are, almost universally, bad news - catastrophic, even - when compared with the rosy propaganda that most Russians grew up believing.

"In 1964 and 1965, our life expectancy for both men and women was as good as in the major industrial countries of the West," said Rybakovsky. "It was a period when we had combatted mass epidemics. Then everywhere else in the industrialized world, they began to improve the health system. In Russia, we only increased the number of beds."

The overall decline in the quality of health services, according to Russian health officials, really began in the 1970s, dubbed by subsequent historians as the "period of stagnation."

It was the time of Leonid Brezhnev, the Communist Party general-secretary whose own health deteriorated over the years to the point that he was barely aware of what was going on around him.

One tragic legacy of the period is the widespread incidence of iodine deficiency in Russia, which occurred because of the suspension in the 1980s of public health measures to counteract a natural shortage. The effect can be seen in the worsening health of young children - thyroid problems, low birth weights, mental retardation.

By 1980, the average life expectancy at birth for Soviet males was 61.4 years, down from the 1965 post-war peak of 65 years. By 1984, the death rate was 11.6 per 1,000 population, up from the low of 7.2 deaths per 1,000 in 1964.

But the conspiracy of silence remained.

While the death rate now is considered astronomically high by global health experts, it was also "very high in 1980," said Vladimir Shkolnikov, deputy director of the Russian Center for Demographics. But even then, he said, "I couldn't talk about it. Nothing was allowed to be published."

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UKRAINE: U.S. ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Objectives. The primary mission of U.S. assistance to Ukraine is to help Ukraine succeed in the fundamental restructuring of its economic and political systems. The U.S. supports the economic and political reforms essential to dismantling the vestiges of a centralized, planned economy and establishing a stable democracy with a prosperous market economy, while maintaining social welfare and stability during and beyond this transition. Specifically, the U.S. assistance program seeks to catalyze an improved environment for business, investment, and trade while simultaneously encouraging environmentally sustainable development; promoting the democratic transition through strengthened rule of law and fostering of a civil society; and creating a more secure social safety net, including humanitarian assistance to the weaker segments of society.

Funding. From 1991 through 1996 the USG obligated over \$1.3 billion to assistance programs in Ukraine. For Fiscal Year 1997, approximately \$225 million was budgeted for Ukraine from the Freedom Support Act (FSA). Through USAID, technical assistance is provided to such fields as economic restructuring, agriculture, environment, health, democratic reform, and private sector development. Programs such as the Peace Corps and the transport of humanitarian assistance are also funded from FSA. In addition, \$51 million in Nunn-Lugar funds was provided in FY97 to assist Ukraine with nuclear dismantlement, non-proliferation programs, and industrial partnerships. The assistance budget for FY98 will likely be commensurate with FY97 assistance levels.

Transition to a market economy. On the macroeconomic level, USAID provides technical assistance and training to help Ukraine formulate sound fiscal policies, fair tax systems and enforcement, transparent and accurate budgeting, customs regulations conducive to trade, and regulatory bodies that encourage savings and investment. USAID is assisting Ukraine to develop a civil code which would provide a legal foundation for basic business activities and reshape the banking system. Privatization and restructuring of existing state-owned and managed enterprises, development of capital markets, the encouragement of new business start-ups, and the easing of the regulatory and fiscal burdens on all enterprises are essential strategic steps towards a market economy. Linkages to USG-funded venture capital and lending programs, such as the Western NIS Enterprise Fund and the Eurasia Foundation, complement the full range of business services.

The U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) Special American Business Internship Training (SABIT) program provides training and financial services to Ukrainian professionals through placement

in U.S. firms. DOC's Business Information Service (BISNIS) encourages and facilitates business partnerships between U.S. and Ukrainian companies. USDA's Cochran Fellowship Program provides short-term training to public and private sector specialists. There are currently about 190 Peace Corps volunteers serving in Ukraine, primarily in the areas of business development and English language instruction.

The USG is providing expertise to restructure Ukraine's electric power monopoly and its coal sector. Working with its G-7 partners and the EU, the U.S. is seeking to develop an engineering solution to the sarcophagus which covers Chornobyl's destroyed Unit 4 reactor (preventing the release of radioactivity to the environment) and enhance operational and fire safety at all nuclear reactors in the country.

Transition to democracy. The U.S. is assisting Ukraine to become a nation in which government policy and activity reflects the needs and wishes of an informed citizenry. USIA's exchange programs support this effort by providing over 8,000 Ukrainians the opportunity to meet U.S. counterparts. A new initiative, Community Connections, will bring Ukrainian entrepreneur, legal, and government officials from 10 regions to establish linkages with U.S. counterparts. Through USAID support to civic groups, NGOs, political parties, and democratic free unions, the U.S. seeks to strength civil society, local government capacity, long-term viability of an independent media, and competitive and fair political processes, including elections.

Support for the social sector. Political support for reform risks evaporation unless affordable programs can help protect Ukraine's most vulnerable citizens. USAID is helping to facilitate the price increases necessary to improve the quality of social services, laying the foundation for a sustainable social insurance system. USAID also helped set up a means-tested housing subsidy program which helps Ukraine's neediest while reducing Ukraine's fiscal problems. The program is now being replicated nationally.

USAID and USEPA support pilot projects in developing reliable supplies of potable water; pest and pesticide management in agriculture; energy efficiency audits; and waste minimalization. USEPA recently provided Ukraine with a mobile radiation laboratory to help delineate areas of the country which suffer excessive radiation levels.

Through mid-1997 the U.S. has directly provided or facilitated delivery of over \$475 million in U.S. humanitarian assistance to the Ukrainian people, including excess military humanitarian

commodities and food assistance under USDA's Food for Progress Program.

Refugee and migration assistance. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) both provide assistance to Ukraine as part of the follow-up to the 1996 International Conference on Refugees and Migration in the CIS. The U.S. has contributed \$16.6 million to the \$90 million UNHCR/IOM Joint Appeal for the CIS. Migration and refugee assistance to Ukraine included in the Joint Appeal totals \$7.3 million which includes money for humanitarian aid to refugees, self-help assistance to minorities (such as the Crimean Tartars) returning to Ukraine, and support for Ukrainian government efforts to strengthen its own migration management capacity.

UKRAINE: ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

While the most public environmental issue in Ukraine remains the nuclear legacy in general, and Chornobyl in particular, Ukraine has other significant environmental issues.

Nuclear contamination. The long-term health consequences of nuclear contamination in Ukraine remain undetermined and controversial, but a large "exclusion zone" near the site of the Chornobyl reactor remains sufficiently contaminated that human use of these areas is restricted. Given the long and continuing use of nuclear power reactors of unsafe design, this issue will be important well into the future. The U.S. has been active in assisting Ukraine in nuclear remediation and safety. In particular, we have been working to improve reactor operations and to phase-out the oldest and least safe units.

Chornobyl Shelter. Experts believe the temporary, 20-story concrete shelter enclosing the radioactive ruins of the reactor which exploded in 1986 could collapse, releasing radiation into the environment. The G-7, under U.S. chairmanship, and Ukraine have devised a \$750 million plan to make it safe and environmentally stable. The Vice President and President Kuchma will chair an International Pledging Conference on the Chornobyl Shelter November 20 in New York to secure contributions.

Industrial pollution. Ukraine suffers the same industrial pollution found throughout Central Europe and much of the former Soviet Union. Abandoned waste and manufacturing sites, as well as operating ones, are a significant problem. This and a deterioration of the basic infrastructure has presented an immediate problem of lack of potable water and basic sanitation services. These environmental problems are related to general economic weakness and the slow development of local government, which normally addresses this type of environmental issue.

Environmental activism. While Ukraine faces many environmental problems, it seems willing to try to address them, and the public is engaged in a public debate on the issues. In fact, environmental activism is helping provide some impetus for reform of local government, which we wish to encourage.

UKRAINE: U.S. EMBASSY

The American Embassy in Kiev is located on a quiet street two kilometers north of the city center. The Chancery building was constructed in the 1950s to house Communist Party and Komsomol (Communist Youth League) headquarters of one of Kiev's neighborhoods. The U.S. Embassy opened in 1991 and occupied the present building on January 23, 1992. In December 1992, the "America House" cultural center, with a reference library and computer facilities, was opened.

America's diplomatic mission to Ukraine consists of 125 U.S. government employees representing the State Department, Agency for International Development (USAID), United States Information Agency (USIS), Department of Defense, Peace Corps, Foreign Commercial Service, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Treasury Department. Ukraine is host to one of the largest Peace Corps programs in the world. The program began in 1992, and currently has six full-time American employees and 160 volunteers. USAID, USIS, the Peace Corps, and the Foreign Commercial Service are housed in separate office buildings.

Ambassador	William Green Miller
Deputy Chief of Mission	James Schumaker
USAID Director	Gregory Huger
Public Affairs Officer	Mary Kruger
Defense Attache	Colonel Bruce Berry
Peace Corps Director	Joroslav Dutkewych
Senior Commercial Officer	Andrew Bihun
Legal Attache	Michael Pyszczymuka
Senior Treasury Advisor	David Darby

UKRAINE: JEWISH CEMETERIES

History of intolerance. Ukrainian history includes an unfortunate legacy of intolerance toward minorities. The Jews of western Ukraine were regularly subjected to forced migrations - "pogroms." Millions of Ukrainians were exterminated in Stalin's forced labor camps. Ukraine was singled out for a disruptive campaign that ruined its once-rich agriculture and led to a massive famine in the 1930s that killed millions of Ukrainians of all origins. Post-Soviet Ukraine has begun to take steps to address previous wrongs. While the human rights record has recently improved, historic anti-Semitism remains a serious concern.

Bilateral agreement. In 1994, Ukraine signed an agreement with the United States to preserve cultural sites important to both countries. While this agreement was not specifically aimed at any particular ethnic or religious group, early on, the rehabilitation of Jewish cemeteries became the first focus of efforts.

Jewish cemeteries. Under Jewish religious law, a cemetery is forever a sacred site. In L'viv, decades before the Nazi occupation, the historic central cemetery was full and closed to new burials. A new cemetery on the city outskirts served the Jewish community. The Nazis used gravestones from the central cemetery as paving blocks for roads. The visible elements of the cemetery were destroyed, but most of the graves remained undisturbed. After the Nazis were defeated, the Soviets took control of L'viv and turned the site into a large marketplace. Thus, the current use of the L'viv marketplace is considered an ongoing desecration and an affront to the Jewish community. This pattern was repeated in numerous communities throughout Ukraine (and eastern Europe generally).

Competing priorities. The issue of restoration of cemeteries -- in L'viv and elsewhere -- must take place in the context of present-day realities. Many U.S. Jewish organizations prefer to focus on the needs of the small communities of Jews still living in Ukraine, giving restoration of cemeteries a lower priority. Orthodox Jewish leaders tend to give precedence to the cemetery issue both on religious grounds, and because some of the greatest rabbinical scholars of the 17th and 18th century are buried in what are now unmarked graves. Resident Jews tend to fear an anti-Semitic backlash if too much emphasis is put on Jewish religious needs and requirements - they urge restraint in dealing with the Ukrainian government.

Dealing with the problem. The Ukrainian government has ordered an absolute freeze, or moratorium, on any construction or privatization of sites that have been identified as Jewish cemeteries, either presently or in the past. A Joint Cultural Heritage Commission has been established to oversee identification of Jewish cemeteries and non-Jewish cultural heritage sites throughout Ukraine, and to seek a mutually-agreed means of addressing the cemetery problem.

Future steps. International Jewish groups have already indicated a willingness to provide resources to repair, restore, preserve, and protect Jewish cemetery sites in Ukraine. We estimate that there are over 2000 such sites in Ukraine, many in places where there are few or no Jews left. This issue is on the agenda of the Joint Commission on Cultural Heritage, envisioned by the 1994 bilateral agreement, which next meets in Washington this fall.

THE CENTRAL JEWISH CEMETERY IN L'VIV

Setting. Following the Nazi invasion in 1941, the occupying German forces flattened and paved over the central Jewish cemetery in the heart of L'viv. (This cemetery space had long been filled to capacity with graves, and several greatly revered Jewish sages were buried there.) After the war, the central city market was built, mostly involving kiosks and metal sheds, on the cemetery site. Over the intervening decades, at least one several-story building was built on the grounds - now used as the meat and dairy market - as well as several smaller permanent structures.

Adjacent to these grounds is a hospital complex of several buildings which are embellished with Jewish symbols and inscriptions. This was the Jewish hospital, and now serves as a maternity hospital. We know that no graves lie under the hospital complex, as the Jewish residents of the last century would never have constructed anything atop graves. The whole area is immense, with the aggregate dimension of several football fields.

Construction issues. In the summer of 1996, construction started on the land just between the market and an adjoining hospital complex. International protest stopped this construction, whereupon the Kuchma government articulated its intention for a national freeze on any construction or privatization on Jewish cemetery sites. In September and October, 1996, a mixed commission of local and GOU officials met in L'viv and determined that the market should be moved and the cemetery in some way memorialized. An AID study completed on August 8, 1997 estimated the project cost between \$4 and \$12 million. The mayor of L'viv is believed to be committed to this project, which is viewed, if done well and sensitively, as a boon to the city on several levels.

The site. Apart from the actual movement of the market from the cemetery grounds, still blocked by lack of funds, the major issue remaining is the form the preserved cemetery would take. Care must be taken to insure that, while Jewish law and sensitivities are abided with, a forbidding, impenetrable wall not be erected around the perimeter of what was for decades the busiest place in town, thereby risking fomenting discord among L'viv's Jewish and Ukrainian communities. The form, function, and accessibility of this space are very much at issue. The cemetery itself cannot be recreated as it was, as the headstones are all gone. If the term "memorial park" is to be the operative one, it must be designed, constructed, and utilized with great care, mixing legitimate religious requirements with real-world considerations of access

by Jews and non-Jews alike. For this, we will look to the leadership provided by the U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad; to Michael Lewan, Rabbis Morris Sherer (Agudath Israel) and Chaskel Besser, and others. Meetings that State Department officers have attended lead us to believe that Rabbis Sherer and Besser understand the art of the possible, that they will impose by their own moral authority the proper amount of restraint, and that the most Orthodox and Hasidic rabbis will defer to their judgment (within reason).

Restoration costs. We have long discussed with the Jewish Orthodox leadership the eventual need for significant financial contributions by the Jewish community in L'viv and elsewhere. Recognizing the cardinal principle that Ukraine's Jews should not be asked to buy back their own cemeteries, the costs of restoration are a different matter. If the cash-strapped GOU and local governments act to protect the estimated 2,000 Jewish cemeteries across Ukraine, much of the cost of subsequent preservation must fall to the Jewish community, particularly that part of the world Jewish community in the United States and Israel that has been leading this effort. We believe this point to be inherent to this discussion, and to be a matter of at least implicit agreement.

UKRAINE: ARRIVAL STATEMENT

I am delighted to be in Ukraine again and am looking forward to spending time with my friend Ludmila Kuchma. L'Viv has always been a link between east and West and it is fitting that I have the opportunity to visit here following several days in Central Asia and Russia. In the United States we are proud that our society is a "melting point" in that blends diverse communities together into a strong society that has stood for the same ideals and I want to see how you are making it work.

I am looking forward to spending time with some of these communities and to visiting the landmarks that speak of L'Viv history. I am also eager to meet with Ukrainians and Americans working together at the L'Viv oblast hospital.

UKRAINE: DEPARTURE STATEMENT

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to spend time with the people of Ukraine. I am especially touched by the hospitality shown by Ukraine's First Lady, Ludmila Kuchma.

I decided to come to L'Viv because it has been a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic city for centuries. The ability to create a society that tolerates - even celebrates - differences is one of the great strengths the United States and Ukraine have in common. Our shared values were evident as I visited the L'Viv Oblast Hospital and saw the work that our healthcare professionals are doing together.

I want to again thank the people of Ukraine for their hospitality and to reaffirm the admiration of the American people for the great strides independent Ukraine has made in developing a democratic society which fully honors human rights.

FIRST LADY'S TALK WITH FIRST LADY LIUDMYLA KUCHMA (UKRAINE)

- THANK YOU FOR YOUR WARM GREETINGS ON MY BIRTHDAY
- YOUR OBSERVATION ABOUT THE CLOSE LINKAGE BETWEEN THE EQUALITY OF WOMEN AND DEMOCRACY WAS SOMETHING I FEEL VERY DEEPLY AS WELL.
- I'M DELIGHTED THAT WHEN WE TALK ABOUT DEMOCRACY AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS, WE CAN TALK ABOUT THE CLEAR UNDERSTANDING IN UKRAINE OF THEIR INTER-RELATIONSHIP. MUCH OF WHAT UKRAINE HAS ACHIEVED IN THIS REGARD RESULTS FROM YOUR EFFORTS AND THOSE OF PRESIDENT KUCHMA.
- AS YOU MENTIONED IN YOUR LETTER, I HAVE SPOKEN OUT ABOUT OPENING DOORS FOR WOMEN - ABOUT HOW THIS IS ACHIEVED THROUGH THE CREATION OF A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY.
- IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN CLEAR TO ME THAT THE FULL POTENTIAL OF ANY SOCIETY CAN ONLY BE REALIZED WHEN OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND MEN ARE EQUAL.
- YOU KNOW, ONE OF MY CLOSEST ADVISERS IS OF UKRAINIAN HERITAGE, SO I FEEL I HAVE SOME SENSE OF HOW OUR TWO GREAT NATIONS COMPARE.
- THROUGHOUT THE LONG YEARS OF COMMUNIST OPPRESSION, UKRAINIAN-AMERICANS REMAINED LOYAL TO THEIR LANGUAGE, CHURCHES AND VALUES. THEY HELD ONTO THEIR CULTURAL IDENTITY.
- THE IDEA OF UKRAINE'S INDEPENDENCE REMAINED STRONG IN MY COUNTRY, PARTICULARLY IN THE CITIES WHERE UKRAINIANS GATHERED - CLEVELAND, PHILADELPHIA, NEW YORK, CHICAGO.
- THESE UKRAINIAN AMERICANS WERE ABLE TO KEEP U.S. FOREIGN POLICY ORIENTED TOWARD UKRAINE'S EVENTUAL INDEPENDENCE THROUGH SOME VERY HARD TIMES.
- I'M PROUD THAT THE PRESIDENT AND I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO PRESIDE OVER THE PERIOD OF UKRAINE'S EMERGENCE AS A FREE AND DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY.

FIRST LADY'S MEETING WITH UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT LEONID KUCHMA

- THE PRESIDENT ASKED ME TO CONVEY HIS GREETINGS. HE APPRECIATED THE MEETING YOU AND HE HAD IN NEW YORK IN SEPTEMBER, AND HE'S LOOKING FORWARD TO HEARING FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT AFTER YOU SEE HIM IN JUST A FEW DAYS.
- UKRAINE'S EMERGENCE AS A FREE, INDEPENDENT STATE, SECURE IN ITS BORDERS, HAS BEEN A TOP PRIORITY FOR THE UNITED STATES SINCE UKRAINE GAINED INDEPENDENCE SIX YEARS AGO.
- THE COMMITMENT OF THE UNITED STATES, AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, TO THESE PRINCIPLES REFLECTS THE DEEP RESPECT WE HAVE FOR THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE.
- YOUR HISTORY OF STRUGGLE AGAINST OPPRESSION AND TRAGEDY HAS MADE YOU STRONG, EVEN IF NOW, CONDITIONS ARE DIFFICULT.
- MY COUNTRY HAS TRIED TO HELP IN MANY WAYS - BY PROVIDING POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE INTERNATIONALLY, BY BRINGING UKRAINIAN STUDENTS TO THE U.S., BY PROVIDING FINANCIAL AID, AND BY SENDING OUR BEST TECHNICAL EXPERTS AND OUR PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS TO HELP YOU REBUILD.
- OUR HOPE IS THAT UKRAINE'S TRANSFORMATION TO A MARKET-ORIENTED ECONOMY WILL ACCELERATE, TO BRING THE BENEFITS OF THE TRANSFORMATION TO THE GREATEST NUMBER OF PEOPLE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

- ONE OF THE ISSUES I WILL BE EMPHASIZING DURING MY VISIT IS ONE ON WHICH YOU AND MRS. KUCHMA (LIUDMYLA) HAVE SHOWN REAL LEADERSHIP. THAT IS, THE NECESSITY FOR A COUNTRY IN TRANSITION LIKE UKRAINE TO MAKE FULL USE OF ITS HUMAN RESOURCES BY OPENING OPPORTUNITIES TO WOMEN.
- CLEARLY, THERE ARE VAST DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SITUATION FOR WOMEN IN THE MAJOR CITIES AND THE COUNTRYSIDE, SO THE DEGREE OF PROGRESS WILL VARY.
- BUT I'M PLEASED TO LEARN OF YOUR COMMITMENT IN THIS AREA.

- ANOTHER ISSUE I WILL BE DISCUSSING IS ONE THAT'S BEEN RAISED IN THE EUROPEAN UNION CONTEXT - THAT IS THE PROBLEM OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN.

- AS YOU KNOW, MANY YOUNG GIRLS FROM UKRAINE, RUSSIA AND POLAND HAVE BEEN ENTRAPPED IN SITUATIONS WHERE THEY FIND THEMSELVES IN THE MIDDLE EAST OR THE WEST AND ARE FORCED INTO PROSTITUTION OR INTO SEX-ORIENTED ROLES THAT THEY NEVER SOUGHT.
- ORGANIZED CRIME ORGANIZATIONS ARE BEHIND MANY OF THESE OPERATIONS.
- WE HOPE TO HELP UKRAINIAN ORGANIZATIONS TO BEGIN TO EDUCATE YOUNG WOMEN ABOUT THIS DANGER AND TO EQUIP THEM TO DEAL WITH THE SITUATION IF THEY ARE CONFRONTED WITH IT.

- I DECIDED TO COME TO L'VIV BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN A MULTI-CULTURAL, MULTI-ETHNIC CITY FOR CENTURIES.
- THE ABILITY TO CREATE A SOCIETY THAT TOLERATES - EVEN CELEBRATES - DIFFERENCES IS ONE OF THE GREAT STRENGTHS THE UNITED STATES AND UKRAINE HAVE IN COMMON.
- WE BOTH HAVE LARGE COMMUNITIES OF CITIZENS WHO SPEAK A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE OR COME FROM DIFFERENT ETHNIC OR RELIGIOUS BACKGROUNDS.
- WE HAVE CREATED A "MELTING POT" IN THE UNITED STATES THAT BLENDS THE COMMUNITIES TOGETHER INTO WHAT WE CALL THE TYPICAL AMERICAN. YOUR GOVERNMENT HAS STOOD FOR THE SAME IDEALS AND I WANT TO SEE HOW YOU ARE MAKING IT WORK.

PUBLIC THEMES - PRESS THEMES (UKRAINE)

- "FAMILY FEMINISM" IN UKRAINE:
 - "FAMILY FEMINISM" IS A TERM THAT CERTAINLY APPLIES IN UKRAINE.
 - THE STRONG FAMILY VALUES FOUND IN UKRAINE AND FEMINIST GOALS ARE COMPLETELY COMPATIBLE.
- THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNIST INSTITUTIONS PUT AN EVEN GREATER BURDEN ON WOMEN IN THIS SOCIETY.
 - REDUCED FAMILY INCOMES, ABSENCE OF AN ETHICAL CODE TO BE TAUGHT IN THE SCHOOLS, STRESSES BROUGHT ON BY ECONOMIC DECLINE - THESE ARE ALL BURDENS THAT UKRAINIAN WOMEN HAVE SHOULDERED FOR THEIR FAMILIES.
 - THESE PROBLEMS MADE IT NECESSARY FOR PARENTS, ESPECIALLY MOTHERS, TO PROVIDE EVER MORE GUIDANCE TO CHILDREN.
- AS THROUGHOUT MUCH OF THE WORLD, THE WOMEN OF UKRAINE BEAR THE BRUNT OF CHANGES IN SOCIETY.
- IT IS IMPORTANT THAT SOLUTIONS TO UKRAINE'S SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS INCLUDE WOMEN'S INPUT. WOMEN UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEMS, AND THEY CAN HELP FIND SOLUTIONS THAT WORK.
- THAT IS THE ESSENCE OF "FAMILY FEMINISM:"
 - EMPOWERMENT IN POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SPHERES
 - BASED ON STRONG FAMILIES AND A STRONG ETHICAL AND MORAL FOUNDATION

DIFFICULT Q'S AND A'S (L'VIV)

Q. What has the U.S. done to persuade L'Viv authorities to restore the ancient Jewish cemetery?

(The cemetery was desecrated by the Nazis, then converted by the Soviets to a marketplace - now, one of L'Viv's largest.)

A.

- IN 1994, THE UNITED STATES AND UKRAINE ENTERED INTO A FORMAL, BILATERAL AGREEMENT ON PRESERVATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE.
- THAT AGREEMENT SERVES AS THE BASIS FOR REACHING SOLUTIONS ON DIFFICULT ISSUES LIKE THE FATE OF JEWISH CEMETERIES, AND THE RECOVERY OF UKRAINIAN CULTURAL SYMBOLS THAT HAVE MADE THEIR WAY TO THE UNITED STATES.
- UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF VICE PRESIDENT GORE AND PRESIDENT KUCHMA, THE U.S.-UKRAINE BINATIONAL COMMISSION IS ADDRESSING THE ISSUE OF THE L'VIV CEMETERY, AND THE OTHER QUESTIONS I MENTIONED.
- WE NEED TO FIND SOLUTIONS THAT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE GREAT HISTORICAL AND RELIGIOUS IMPORTANCE OF THE SITES AND ARTIFICATS IN QUESTION, AND ALSO THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE OF L'VIV.



Ukraine

President

Leonid Kuchma

(elected July 1994)



Date of Independence: 1 December 1991

Population: approx. 51 million

Cabinet of Ministers

Prime Minister	Valeriy Pustovoytenko
First Deputy Prime Minister	Anatoliy Holubchenko
Deputy Prime Minister/ Labor Minister (social policy)	Mykola Biloblotskyy
Deputy Prime Minister (economic reform)	Serhiy Tyhypko
Deputy Prime Minister (humanitarian affairs)	Valeriy Smoliy
Agriculture Minister	Yuriy Karasyk
Cabinet of Ministers	Anatoliy Tolstoukhov
Coal Industry Minister	Stanislav Yanko
Culture Minister	Dmytro Ostapenko
Defense Minister	Oleksandr Kuzmuk
Economics Minister	Viktor Suslov
Education Minister	Mykhaylo Zgurovskyy
Energy Minister	Oleksiy Sheberstov
Emergency Situations/Chornobyl Aftermath	Valeriy Kalchenko
Environmental Protection/Nuclear Safety	Yuriy Kostenko
Family and Youth Affairs	Valentina Dovzhenko
Finance Minister	Ihor Mityukov
Foreign Affairs Minister	Hennady Udovenko
Foreign Economic Relations/Trade	Serhiy Osyka
Health Minister	Andriy Serdyuk
Industry Minister	Vasyl Hureyev
Information Minister	Zinoviy Kulyk
Interior Minister	Yuriy Kravchenko
Justice Minister	Susanna Stanyk
Science and Technology	Volodymyr Semynozhenko
Transportation Minister	Valeriy Cherep

Key Ukrainian Officials

Ambassador to the US
Chief of Staff
General Affairs
National Bank Chairman
National Security Secretary
State Commission for Enterprise
National Bureau of Investigation
Prosecutor General
Security Service Chairman
State Property Fund (Acting)
Nat'l Agency for Reconst. & Devel.
UN Perm Rep

Yuriy Shcherbak
Yevhen Kushnaryov
Oleksander Volkov
Viktor Yushchenko
Volodymyr Horbulin
Yuriy Yekhanurov
Vasyl Durdynets
Oleh Lytvak
Volodymyr Radchenko
Volodymyr Lanovyy
Roman Shpek
Anatoliy Zlenko

Rada (parliament)

Chairman
Deputy Chairman
First Deputy Chairman

Oleksandr Moroz
Viktor Musiyaka
Oleksandr Tkachenko

Selected Rada Commissions and Chairmen

Organized Crime and Corruption
Defense and State Security
Nuclear Policy and Safety
Finance and Banking
Basic Indies & Social Devel. of Regions
Foreign Affairs/CIS Relations
Budget Issues
Econ. Pol. & Admin. of Nat'l Economy

Hryhoriy Omelchenko
Volodymyr Mukhin
Mykhaylo Pavlovskyy
Viktor Suslov
Valeriy Cherep
Borys Oliynyk
Mykola Azarov
Oleh Taranov

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. reports	bios (13 pages)	c 1997	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
Speechwriting (Noa Meyer Subject Files)
OA/Box Number: 13007

FOLDER TITLE:

The Trip of the First Lady to Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Uzbekistan, Russia, and Ukraine,
November 9-18, 1997 (Laura) [Binder] [6]

2012-0869-S

kc965

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

Clinton Library

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002. report	Government Structure (1 page)	nd	P1/b(1)

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Ukraine



Ukraine, the second-largest country in Europe, is slightly smaller than Texas and consists of fertile plains and plateaus with mountains in the west (the Carpathians) as well as in the Crimean Peninsula in the south. Ethnic Ukrainians constitute approximately 70 percent of the population with the majority being located in western Ukraine. Ethnic Russians comprise approximately 20 percent of the population and are generally found in eastern Ukraine and the Crimea. Although Ukrainian is the official language of the state, Russian is also widely spoken, especially in eastern Ukraine.

Even though Ukraine's agricultural and industrial sectors have declined substantially over the last several years, the country's resources continue to support exports of some agricultural products, ferrous metals, chemicals, and machinery. The country's major economic vulnerability continues to be its heavy dependence on imported energy, primarily from Russia.

Ukraine's Current Administrative Structure



Unclassified

730223 (PUB-73) 9-94

November 17 - Lviv, Ukraine

Event: A USG contracted IL-76 will arrive in Lviv on November 6th carrying approximately \$650,000 in humanitarian cargo donated through the U.S. private volunteer organization the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund. Most of this cargo is destined for the Lviv Regional Childrens Pediatric Center and includes neonatal resuscitation equipment, medicines and medical supplies, and an ambulance. Also on this aircraft is 5 pallets of cold weather clothing and relief supplies orgainized by Congresswoman Kaptur of Ohio from the Anastasia Fund and the Toledo Sister Cities organization.

Suggested talking points relating to this relief flight are:

- o In the area of neonatal care, I am pleased that on November 6th a USG contracted IL-76 delivered humanitarian cargo destined for the Lviv Regional Childrens Pediatric Center. Thanks to Nadiya Matkiwsky and the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund for their continued commitment to the people of Ukraine and this humanitarian project in Lviv.
- o This mission was the 53rd airlift of humanitarian commodity to Ukraine since 1992 funded through the Department of State as part of a continuing humanitarian program called Operation Provide Hope. I am especially pleased to see that the receipients of this assistance are the children of Ukraine.
- o Over the last five years Operation Provide Hope has worked with over 400 U.S. private volunteer organizations to deliver donated humanitarian commodity to the Newly Independnt States (NIS). It is estimated that by the end of this calendar year Operation Provide Hope will have delivered over \$2 billion in assistance to the twelve NIS countries. This cooperative effort goes well beyond global politics and humanitarian programs and is a shining example that the people of the U.S. care for and support the people of Ukraine and the rest of the NIS during a critical period of change.
- o To date this Operation Provide Hope has delivered over \$300 million in humanitarian commodity to the people of Ukraine from donors throughout the United States.

UKRAINE: JEWISH CEMETERIES

History of intolerance. Ukrainian history includes an unfortunate legacy of intolerance toward minorities. The Jews of western Ukraine were regularly subjected to forced migrations - "pogroms." Millions of Ukrainians were exterminated in Stalin's forced labor camps. Ukraine was singled out for a disruptive campaign that ruined its once-rich agriculture and led to a massive famine in the 1930s that killed millions of Ukrainians of all origins. Post-Soviet Ukraine has begun to take steps to address previous wrongs. While the human rights record has recently improved, historic anti-Semitism remains a serious concern.

Bilateral agreement. In 1994, Ukraine signed an agreement with the United States to preserve cultural sites important to both countries. While this agreement was not specifically aimed at any particular ethnic or religious group, early on, the rehabilitation of Jewish cemeteries became the first focus of efforts.

Jewish cemeteries. Under Jewish religious law, a cemetery is forever a sacred site. In L'viv, decades before the Nazi occupation, the historic central cemetery was full and closed to new burials. A new cemetery on the city outskirts served the Jewish community. The Nazis used gravestones from the central cemetery as paving blocks for roads. The visible elements of the cemetery were destroyed, but most of the graves remained undisturbed. After the Nazis were defeated, the Soviets took control of L'viv and turned the site into a large marketplace. Thus, the current use of the L'viv marketplace is considered an ongoing desecration and an affront to the Jewish community. This pattern was repeated in numerous communities throughout Ukraine (and eastern Europe generally).

Competing priorities. The issue of restoration of cemeteries -- in L'viv and elsewhere -- must take place in the context of present-day realities. Many U.S. Jewish organizations prefer to focus on the needs of the small communities of Jews still living in Ukraine, giving restoration of cemeteries a lower priority. Orthodox Jewish leaders tend to give precedence to the cemetery issue both on religious grounds, and because some of the greatest rabbinical scholars of the 17th and 18th century are buried in what are now unmarked graves. Resident Jews tend to fear an anti-Semitic backlash if too much emphasis is put on Jewish religious needs and requirements - they urge restraint in dealing with the Ukrainian government.

Dealing with the problem. The Ukrainian government has ordered an absolute freeze, or moratorium, on any construction or privatization of sites that have been identified as Jewish cemeteries, either presently or in the past. A Joint Cultural Heritage Commission has been established to oversee identification of Jewish cemeteries and non-Jewish cultural heritage sites throughout Ukraine, and to seek a mutually-agreed means of addressing the cemetery problem.

Future steps. International Jewish groups have already indicated a willingness to provide resources to repair, restore, preserve, and protect Jewish cemetery sites in Ukraine. We estimate that there are over 2000 such sites in Ukraine, many in places where there are few or no Jews left. This issue is on the agenda of the Joint Commission on Cultural Heritage, envisioned by the 1994 bilateral agreement, which next meets in Washington this fall.

THE CENTRAL JEWISH CEMETERY IN L'VIV

Setting. Following the Nazi invasion in 1941, the occupying German forces flattened and paved over the central Jewish cemetery in the heart of L'viv. (This cemetery space had long been filled to capacity with graves, and several greatly revered Jewish sages were buried there.) After the war, the central city market was built, mostly involving kiosks and metal sheds, on the cemetery site. Over the intervening decades, at least one several-story building was built on the grounds - now used as the meat and dairy market - as well as several smaller permanent structures.

Adjacent to these grounds is a hospital complex of several buildings which are embellished with Jewish symbols and inscriptions. This was the Jewish hospital, and now serves as a maternity hospital. We know that no graves lie under the hospital complex, as the Jewish residents of the last century would never have constructed anything atop graves. The whole area is immense, with the aggregate dimension of several football fields.

Construction issues. In the summer of 1996, construction started on the land just between the market and an adjoining hospital complex. International protest stopped this construction, whereupon the Kuchma government articulated its intention for a national freeze on any construction or privatization on Jewish cemetery sites. In September and October, 1996, a mixed commission of local and GOU officials met in L'viv and determined that the market should be moved and the cemetery in some way memorialized. An AID study completed on August 8, 1997 estimated the project cost between \$4 and \$12 million. The mayor of L'viv is believed to be committed to this project, which is viewed, if done well and sensitively, as a boon to the city on several levels.

The site. Apart from the actual movement of the market from the cemetery grounds, still blocked by lack of funds, the major issue remaining is the form the preserved cemetery would take. Care must be taken to insure that, while Jewish law and sensitivities are abided with, a forbidding, impenetrable wall not be erected around the perimeter of what was for decades the busiest place in town, thereby risking fomenting discord among L'viv's Jewish and Ukrainian communities. The form, function, and accessibility of this space are very much at issue. The cemetery itself cannot be recreated as it was, as the headstones are all gone. If the term "memorial park" is to be the operative one, it must be designed, constructed, and utilized with great care, mixing legitimate religious requirements with real-world considerations of access

by Jews and non-Jews alike. For this, we will look to the leadership provided by the U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad; to Michael Lewan, Rabbi Morris Sherer (Agudath Israel) and Chaskel Besser, and others. Meetings that State Department officers have attended lead us to believe that Rabbi Sherer and Besser understand the art of the possible, that they will impose by their own moral authority the proper amount of restraint, and that the most Orthodox and Hasidic rabbis will defer to their judgment (within reason).

Restoration costs. We have long discussed with the Jewish Orthodox leadership the eventual need for significant financial contributions by the Jewish community in L'viv and elsewhere. Recognizing the cardinal principle that Ukraine's Jews should not be asked to buy back their own cemeteries, the costs of restoration are a different matter. If the cash-strapped GOU and local governments act to protect the estimated 2,000 Jewish cemeteries across Ukraine, much of the cost of subsequent preservation must fall to the Jewish community, particularly that part of the world Jewish community in the United States and Israel that has been leading this effort. We believe this point to be inherent to this discussion, and to be a matter of at least implicit agreement.

UKRAINE: GHETTO MONUMENT

SCENESETTER

Wreath Laying at the Ghetto Monument on Monday, November 17,
1:25 - 1:45 p.m. Attendees will include: Rabbi Bleich
(Chief Rabbi of Ukraine) and others.

In a solemn ceremony, you will acknowledge the memorial (by
laying a wreath, placing a stone, or lighting a candle).

BACKGROUND

Rabbi Bleich will explain that Jews during WWII were led
down this road to their deaths. The sculpture is entitled
"Why?" and resembles a man holding his hands up to God.

Moment of Remembrance at Ghetto Monument

Government

Ukraine-hosted Lunch

UKRAINE: GOVERNMENT LUNCH

SCENESETTER

Lunch at a setting to be determined hosted by the government of Ukraine and will likely include Mrs. Ludmila Kuchma. President Kuchma may attend, but he will be leaving for the U.S. on November 18 and may not be able to participate. It may be sponsored by a Ukrainian candy company, Svitoch. Attendees will also include other government officials and local dignitaries.

BACKGROUND

Svitoch is an outstanding example of a successful Ukrainian company. Svitoch enjoys better name recognition than almost any other Ukrainian firm.

UKRAINE: ICON RESTORATION INSTITUTE

SCENESETTER

Tour of Icon Restoration Institute or National Museum on Monday, November 17, 3:45 - 4:30 p.m. Attendees will include government officials and other dignitaries.

The Institute is one of the world's leading facilities for restoring priceless icons. Part of the Institute's restoration staff recently moved to the National Museum. The Museum houses displays of 15th to 19th century Ukrainian icons. At the museum you may participate in restoring a work of art.

BACKGROUND

You will tour one of these two sites and view religious works of art that are currently undergoing restoration.

Anthony Jackson
religion
for Jewish
to Jewish
Synagogue

UKRAINE: ST. GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL

SCENESETTER

Tour of St. George's Cathedral on Monday, November 17, at 4:45 - 5:45. Attendees will include: Boris Gudziak (Vice Rector, L'Viv Theological Seminary) and other dignitaries.

You will tour the cathedral, which is the "Vatican" of the Greek Catholic Church in Ukraine (also known as the Ukrainian Catholic Church).

BACKGROUND

The Greek Catholic church recognizes the authority of the Pope. The church represents a focal point of Ukrainian pride and nationalism. As such, many priests and members of the church were persecuted under the Soviet regime. St. George's was returned to the Ukrainian Catholic Church in 1990 after 44 years of compulsory Soviet-imposed Orthodox control.

Dr. Gudziak and the Lviv Theological Seminary have been working on an oral history project that records the heroism and plight of Greek Catholics during the years of Soviet oppression. Constructed between 1774 and 1790, St. George's is an excellent example of Ukrainian stylized Baroque architecture. This church is the historic sacred center of the Ukrainian Catholic Church.

UKRAINE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN L'VIV

SCENESETTER

An event with the American community will be held at the D'niester Hotel in the 2nd floor dining room on Monday, November 17 at 6:00 - 6:30 p.m. Attendees will include: Ambassador and Mrs. Miller, U.S. Embassy and USAID employees and Peace Corps volunteers and staff.

BACKGROUND

You will have a chance to meet and greet the local American community.

Speech at Opera House

UKRAINE: TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN

On November 21, the United States Government and the European Union will formally launch a joint information campaign to combat the trafficking of women from and through Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States of the Former Soviet Union (NIS). The USG and the EU began discussing such a campaign in April 1997 as a mechanism to expand migration activities within the context of the New Transatlantic Agenda and to address a common, serious problem which we face. At the U.S.-EU Summit on May 28, President Clinton highlighted both the despicable nature of the problem -- terming it as "modern day slavery" -- and U.S.-EU resolve to undertake joint action to prevent it.

The U.S. and the EU are developing the information campaign concept jointly and will implement it on separate, twin tracks in the region. The U.S. will sponsor an information campaign designed for Ukraine and will use the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as its implementing partner, while the EU will sponsor one in Poland, using a European non-governmental organization (NGO) as its implementing partner. While the two countries are considered as both source and transit venues for trafficking in women, they were chosen for this project not to single them out in this status, but as likely candidates for a successful and productive effort.

The Government of Ukraine has responded enthusiastically to our proposal. Ukrainians already recognize trafficking in women as a problem for women who lack opportunity in the existing economic system. "La Strada" -- a European network of NGOs funded by the EU and the Dutch NGO, "STV," focused on preventing trafficking in Central and Eastern Europe -- has opened a branch office in Kiev. "La Strada Ukraine" has established a hotline in Ukraine for exploited women and has begun a small information campaign focused on young women who are finishing high school -- the group considered to be the most at risk.

The U.S.-EU information campaign will focus on providing information to both potential victims so that they can protect themselves from exploitation, and to host-country officials, indigenous NGOs, and foreign consular officers to assist them in identifying and preventing potential problems. At the November 21 workshop hosted by the EU in Luxembourg, all involved parties -- the USG, EU Commission, EU Member States, EU implementing NGO, IOM, and the governments of Ukraine and Poland -- will review the information campaigns designed for Ukraine and Poland and will formally launch the joint initiative. Detailed components of the information campaigns will be further developed from December through February and will be implemented from mid-March through mid-May. We envision that the overall project will end with a USG-sponsored wrap-up workshop in June 1998 in Ukraine for all involved parties, as well as local NGOs, to evaluate the effectiveness of the campaigns in the two countries and to highlight their messages. If the project is successful, we hope to broaden the campaign to other countries in the region.

UKRAINE: L'VIV OPERA HOUSE SPEECH

SCENESETTER

Speech at the Ivan Franko Opera House on Tuesday, November 18 at 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. Attendees: local dignitaries and prominent women in Ukraine.

You will give a speech at the L'Viv Opera House, a beautiful example of Viennese style opera houses, built in 1897-1900. The Opera House seats approximately 1000. The audience will consist of prominent Ukrainian women, parliamentarians, local dignitaries, students, artisans and others (guest list TBD).

BACKGROUND

Zonta International Club of L'Viv, an association of professional women, will sponsor this event in coordination with the American Chamber of Commerce.

Meet and Greet with
Prominent Women

UKRAINE: MEET/GREET UKRAINIAN WOMEN

SCENESETTER

Meet and greet prominent Ukrainian women (parliamentarians, business leaders and activists) at the L'Viv Opera House after the speech from 11:15 - 12:00 noon. Attendees will be the same as those who attend the speech.