

HOLODOMOR COMMEMORATION HELD AT ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL

Thousands gathered at St. Patrick's Cathedral on Saturday, November 22nd to mark the 81st anniversary of Ukraine's Genocide of 1932-1933. The event began with a solemn procession organized by the UCCA New York City Branch headed by Ivanka Zajac. The procession of Holodomor Survivors and Ukrainian American school children, carrying stalks of wheat, icons and traditional funeral bread, proceeded down the main aisle to the melodious voices of the Dumka Choir of New York. Following the procession, His Excellency Bishop Paul Chomnysky of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Stamford, welcomed the faithful before the hierarchy of the Ukrainian Catholic and Orthodox churches concelebrated a memorial service dedicated to the victims of the Holodomor.



L to R: Children who participated in the procession; Holodomor Survivors

Following the memorial service, UCCA President, Tamara Olexy delivered remarks in which she reminded those in attendance that the Holodomor "is but one example of Russia's ongoing campaign to enslave Ukraine..."



From L & R: T. Olexy speaks; Ihor Sybiga addressing the crowd

Following her remarks William Pope, Senior Advisor for Europe to the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, delivered the Statement by the White House Press Secretary on Holodomor Remembrance Day. Mr. Ihor Sybiga, Ukraine's Consul General of NY, then read a portion of President Petro Poroshenko's statement, which was followed by an eloquent statement by Ambassador Yuriy Sergeyev, Ukraine's Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

His Eminence Metropolitan Antony of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA concluded the requiem service by thanking Archbishop Timothy Dolan for graciously allowing our community to commemorate the Holodomor at St. Patrick's Cathedral and reminded everyone that it is our sacred duty to become the voice of the victims of the Holodomor.

FOURTH "UKRAINIAN DAYS" SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDES

On November 19th the Ukrainian National Information Service (UNIS), the Washington, DC public affairs bureau of the UCCA, conducted its unprecedented 4th "Ukrainian Days" advocacy event of 2014 in our nation's capital. In light of the critical situation in Ukraine, UNIS called upon the community to travel to Washington, DC to meet with their Members of Congress to press for urgently needed military assistance to Ukraine. Nearly 100 people from New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Texas, Michigan, Illinois, Maryland, and Virginia heeded UNIS' call and participated in the event.

The event began with a morning briefing session where participants were updated about the main topic of concern – military assistance to Ukraine. A briefing packet was distributed to the participants, which included information on current bills in Congress that affect Ukraine – military and security assistance for Ukraine, and Crimean annexation non-recognition. As many as 30 congressional offices from both the House and Senate were visited by the "Ukrainian Days" participants.

Meetings were held to urge Members of Congress to support two vital pieces of legislation – S.2828, the Ukraine Freedom Support Act of 2014, which would provide \$350 million for defensive military assistance to Ukraine. The bill was introduced in September and unanimously passed by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; and, H.R.5190, the Ukrainian Security Assistance Act of 2014, introduced by the co-chairs of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus in July. The bill would provide \$100 million for security and military assistance to Ukraine. Each bill also would designate Ukraine as a Major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA) and thus accord it certain bilateral privileges with the United States.



Congressman Bill Pascrell (D-NJ) met with members of the Ukrainian Army & Maidan.

The overall day was extremely successful. Though Congress left Washington for the Thanksgiving holiday without voting on the Ukraine-related bills, they will return in December. It is incumbent upon the Ukrainian community to contact their congressional offices and seek support for the above-mentioned bills.

UCCA ISSUES STATEMENT ON 1ST ANNIVERSARY OF “EUROMAIDAN”

Today, Ukrainians observe a new national holiday -- the anniversary of the start of the Revolution of Dignity. In subsequent years and decades, we will gather on November 21st to remember the “Euromaidan” protesters, those seemingly ordinary people who stood out in the cold, united in prayer and in song, astounding the world and exceeding its expectations about Ukraine. This massive, months-long movement in support of reform and modernization led to the end of a criminal regime, and the beginning of a future based on European values, free of corruption and where rule of law and human rights are respected.

On this Day of Freedom and Dignity, we applaud the achievements of the past year, including the open election of Ukraine’s new President and its new Parliament. The UCCA stood witness at both of these historic elections in 2014, which saw the final demise of the Communist Party as a political power in Ukraine.

Perhaps the longest-lasting legacy of last winter’s revolution will be the transformational sense of national identity and patriotism in Ukraine, with its vibrant and thriving civil society, full of extraordinary volunteers and young professionals dedicated to reforming their country. The Maidan transformed not only Ukrainians in Ukraine, but the worldwide diaspora as well. In the United States, hundreds of demonstrators would gather in support of their countrymen in the streets of New York and Chicago, in Georgia and in Texas, Ohio and California and beyond. Ukrainians and their supporters marched on Washington, DC in numbers that had not been mobilized since the fall of the Soviet Union. And across the country, new organizations were formed, joining dozens of pre-existing community organizations in supporting Ukraine in its struggle for Freedom and Dignity.

The UCCA applauds the countless hours of humanitarian work undertaken during and after the revolution. The enormous charity and goodwill of our community helped support our people, from the massive shipments of the United Ukrainian American Relief Committee, to the proceeds of church bake sales and charitable fundraisers. The UCCA would also like to thank the incredible outpouring of support from our non-Ukrainian friends, especially those in elected office, who stood and condemned the draconian measures of Ukraine’s former government. Throughout the course of the Euromaidan Protests, numerous Congressional and Senate resolutions of support were passed with near unanimity, and many more in local state houses and municipalities.

While a year ago there was peace on Ukraine’s borders and injustice and tyranny ruled within, today Ukraine is dealing with a bloody invasion from a familiar foe. Toward this struggle, both Ukraine and its diaspora remain united: vigilant against the return of tyranny and mindful of this opportunity for which the Heavenly Hundred laid down their lives. The Ukrainian Congress Committee of America will continue to unite our community in support of the fundamental ideas of Freedom and Dignity for which Ukrainians stood and died on the Maidan.

WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY ISSUES STATEMENT ON HOLODOMOR

On November 21st, the Press Secretary of the White House issued a Statement on Holodomor Remembrance Day. The text of the statement reads:

“Today, we join Ukrainians around the world, including many Ukrainian-Americans, to honor the memory of the millions of Ukrainians starved to death in 1932 and 1933 by the barbaric policies of Stalin’s Soviet Union. The Holodomor, or “death by hunger,” remains one of the gravest atrocities of the last century and is a singularly tragic chapter in Ukrainian history.

While the suffering of the Holodomor was immeasurable, this man-made famine failed to extinguish the unconquerable spirit of the Ukrainian people. As we commemorate this horrific tragedy, we also pay tribute to the enduring strength, courage, and spirit of the people of Ukraine – qualities that Ukrainians continue to draw upon today as, in the face of great adversity, they seek to build a more prosperous, secure, and democratic state.

As we unite in remembrance of the millions of innocent victims of the Holodomor, we also reaffirm our shared commitment to Ukraine’s bright future, and to promoting respect for the universal human rights and fundamental freedoms that are the birthright of all humankind.”

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

The Executive Board of the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America would like to wish all of its members and the entire Ukrainian community here and in Ukraine a very Blessed and Merry Christmas and a Happy & Healthy New Year.



May this holiday season bring God’s blessing upon all Ukrainians and peace to our Ukrainian nation!