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**1. Ukraine's Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich and Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdymuhamedov discuss development of bilateral cooperation
NRCU, 23 November 2007**

This was discussed by the two parties in Ashgabat within the framework of the CIS' Prime Ministers Summit. They also considered issues related to strategic reformation of the two countries and participation of Ukraine's companies in Turkmen gas projects.

According to Viktor Yanukovich, Ukraine would be able to receive Turkmen gas by direct contractual deliveries in case it participates in exploration of gas fields on the Caspian Sea shelf. However, it is now impossible to receive the Turkmen gas directly because of the legislative framework in effect, the Ukrainian Premier stated. He also said the gas agreement with Russia would be signed for several years, "as minimum as for four years with the price set".

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.nrcu.gov.ua/index.php?id=148&listid=55798>

**2. State of The Union. The Holodomor
By VIKTOR YUSHCHENKO
Wall Street Journal, 26 November 2007**

Seventy-five years ago the Ukrainian people fell victim to a crime of unimaginable horror. Usually referred to in the West as the Great Famine or the Terror Famine, it is known to Ukrainians as the Holodomor. It was a state-organized program of mass starvation that in 1932-33 killed an estimated

seven million to 10 million Ukrainians, including up to a third of the nation's children. With grotesque understatement the Soviet authorities dismissed this event as a "bad harvest." Their intention was to exonerate themselves of responsibility and suppress knowledge of both the human causes and human consequences of this tragedy. That is reason enough for us to pause and remember.

During the long decades of Soviet rule it was dangerous for Ukrainians to discuss their greatest national trauma. To talk of the Holodomor was a crime against the state, while the memoirs of eyewitnesses and the accounts of historians like Robert Conquest and the late James Mace were banned as anti-Soviet propaganda. Yet each Ukrainian family knew from bitter personal memory the enormity of what had happened. They also knew that it had been inflicted on them deliberately to punish Ukraine and destroy the basis of its nationhood. It is to honor the victims and serve the cause of historical truth that independent Ukraine is today working to promote greater understanding and recognition of the Holodomor, both at home and abroad.

We are not doing so out of a desire for revenge or to make a partisan political point. We know that the Russian people were among Stalin's foremost victims. Apportioning blame to their living descendents is the last thing on our minds. Our only wish is for this crime to be understood for what it truly was. That is why the Ukrainian Parliament last year passed a law recognizing the Holodomor as an act of genocide and why I am asking our friends and allies to endorse that position. A world that indulges historical amnesia or falsification is condemned to repeat its worst mistakes.

Genocide is a highly charged term, and there are those who still dispute its applicability in the case of Ukraine. It is therefore worth looking at how the 1948 United Nations Genocide Convention legally defines the issue. It describes genocide as "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group" including "deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life, calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part." The Holodomor falls squarely within the terms of this definition. Significantly, that was also the opinion of Raphael Lemkin, the legal scholar who conceived the Genocide Convention.

There is now a wealth of historical material detailing the specific features of Stalin's forced collectivization and terror famine policies against Ukraine. Other parts of the Soviet Union suffered terribly as well. But in the minds of the Soviet leadership there was a dual purpose in persecuting and starving the Ukrainian peasantry. It was part of a campaign to crush Ukraine's national identity and its desire for self-determination. As Stalin put it a few years earlier: "There is no powerful national movement without the peasant army...in essence, the national question is a peasant question." In seeking to reverse the policy of "Ukrainianization" that promoted limited cultural and political autonomy during the 1920s, Stalin decided to target the peasantry, representing as it did 80% of the population. His solution to the national question in Ukraine was mass murder through starvation.

Stalin's cruel methods included the allocation of astronomic grain requisition quotas that were impossible to meet and which left nothing for the local population to eat. When the quotas were missed, armed units were sent in. Toward the end of 1932, entire villages and regions were turned into a system of isolated starvation ghettos called "black boards." Throughout this period, the Soviet Union continued to export grain to the West and even used grain to produce alcohol. By early 1933, the Soviet leadership decided to radically reinforce the blockade of Ukrainian villages. Eventually, the whole territory of Ukraine was surrounded by armed forces, turning the entire country into a vast death camp.

The specifically national motive behind Stalin's treatment of Ukraine was also evident in the terror campaign that targeted the institutions and individuals that sustained the cultural and public life of the Ukrainian nation. Waves of purges engulfed academic institutions, literary journals, publishing houses and theaters. Victims included the Ukrainian Academy of Science, the editorial board of the Soviet Ukrainian Encyclopedia, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and ultimately the Ukrainian Communist Party. This was a systematic campaign against the Ukrainian nation, its history, culture, language and way of life.

The Holodomor was an act of genocide designed to suppress the Ukrainian nation. The fact that it failed and Ukraine today exists as a proud and independent nation does nothing to lessen the gravity of this crime. Nor does it acquit us of the moral responsibility to acknowledge what was done. On the

75th anniversary, we owe it to the victims of the Holodomor and other genocides to be truthful in facing up to the past.

Mr. Yushchenko is Ukraine's president.

Text available on World Wide Web,

URL:http://online.wsj.com/article/SB119602928167703318.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

3. Great Famine Anniversary in Ukraine **By MARIA DANILOVA** **AP, 25 November 2007**

KRASYLIVKA, Ukraine — After authorities broke into Yakiv Atamanenko's home in autumn of 1932 and confiscated the family's food, his mother and two brothers died of starvation and their bloated bodies were tossed among others in a freshly dug grave on the outskirts of this farming village.

Atamanenko and other survivors here said one of their neighbors, Oleksandra Korytnyk and her husband, ate their two children. "They cut their children into pieces and ate them," recalled Atamanenko, now a frail, gray-haired 95-year-old.

In the end, he and others said, the Korytnyks died as well.

On Saturday, Ukraine marks the 75th anniversary of the terrible famine of 1932-33, engineered by Soviet authorities to force peasants across the former U.S.S.R. to give up their privately held plots of land and join collective farms. Millions perished.

Now President Viktor Yushchenko is leading an effort to gain international recognition of Holodomor — or death by hunger, as it is known here — as a crime rather than merely a disaster, by labeling it an act of genocide.

Long kept secret by Soviet authorities, accounts of the Great Famine still divide historians and politicians, not just in this nation of 47 million but throughout the former Soviet Union.

Some are convinced that the famine targeted Ukrainians as an ethnic group. Others argue authorities set out to eradicate all private land owners as a social class, and that the Soviets sought to pay for the U.S.S.R.'s industrialization with grain exports at the expense of starving millions of its own people.

The dictator Josef Stalin's collectivization drive affected the entire U.S.S.R, but was particularly calamitous for Ukraine, which had some of the former Soviet Union's richest agricultural land. The campaign coincided, as well, with the Kremlin's efforts to root out a growing Ukrainian nationalist movement.

Estimates of the number of people who perished in Holodomor differ, but there is no doubt the death toll was horrific. Yushchenko estimates 10 million Ukrainians died, while Stanislav Kulchitsky, a Ukrainian historian, believes the number is closer to 3.5 million.

Authorities set production quotas for each village. But these quotas generally exceeded crop yields and in village after village, when farmers failed to meet their targets, all their food was confiscated.

Residents were prohibited to leave their homes — effectively condemning them to starvation.

In Krasylivka as many as 1,017 people — roughly the village's present day population — died in the course of that terrible year, according to a list of the victims compiled by village authorities. Elders say the famine nearly wiped out the village.

Villagers tell stories of their neighbors collapsing in the street and dying. Driven to despair, people ate whatever they could scrounge: leaves, dirt, birds, dogs, rats and — several witnesses said — even each other.

Olena Yaroshchuk, 94, her wrinkled face framed by a green kerchief, said she filled her aching stomach with grass. "Those who could survive, those who couldn't — that was the end of it, one house after another — almost all died," she said.

Kulchitsky, a leading famine researcher, argues the famine was a genocide aimed at Ukrainians who resisted Soviet rule. "The conditions authorities created for the Ukrainian peasantry were incompatible with life," he wrote in a recent article.

But Heorhiy Kasyanov, a top historian with the National Academy of Sciences, says the issue is more subtle. "There is no hard evidence that there were concrete statements or actions aimed at destroying ethnic Ukrainians by someone else. I don't have a clear answer whether or not it was genocide."

The Ukrainian parliament has already labeled the famine genocide. So has the United States, and some other countries. But Russia, the legal successor to the Soviet state, resists the label.

Under international law, genocide is defined as deliberate and systematic destruction of a racial or ethnic group. Moscow insists the famine also targeted other groups, including Russians and Kazakhs.

"There are no grounds to talk about genocide. We can talk about 'sociocide' — the extermination of peasants, a political crime on the part of Soviet leadership," said Andrei Petrov, a historian with the Russian Academy of Sciences.

But another Russian historian said Holodomor was one of many acts of genocide by Stalin against the peoples of the former Soviet Union. "It was genocide in the direct sense of this word — it is the killing of people, the killing of the Ukrainian people," he said. "The same must be done for the Kazakhs, the Russians and peoples of other territories."

Ukrainian politicians are themselves divided on the topic. The genocide vote in parliament last year was boycotted by the party of Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich, who draws his support from Russian-speaking eastern Ukraine, as well as the Communists.

Even in Krasylivka, people say the issue is complicated. Many survivors blame the Soviet government for the famine. But many also say that the cruelty of the local authorities compounded the tragedy.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5gcNKxnyzuyVt9xTHp5Lgvy3iUAOQD8T3IM580>

4. Ukraine commemorates 75th anniversary of great famine 1932-33 AFP, 24 November 2007

Ukraine mourned Saturday the millions who died in the Soviet-era famine of 1932-1933 which remains a bone of contention between Kiev and Moscow, with flags at half-mast and a solemn religious service.

"It was a genocide, an attempt to subjugate the nation, deliberately planned and put into effect," charged pro-Western President Viktor Yushchenko in a speech to thousands gathered in the centre of the capital.

"Its organiser and executor was the communist totalitarian regime," he said, adding that "the crimes of bolshevism and communism are identical to those of Nazism."

Some four to 10 million people are estimated to have starved to death as a result of a Soviet programme of forced collectivisation launched by dictator Josef Stalin in 1932.

Ukrainian farmers had their produce confiscated and the Soviet authorities also blocked food supplies into Ukraine in what some historians have argued was a deliberate attempt by Stalin to crush a drive for independence.

For years Kiev has been trying to get the United Nations to recognise the famine as "an act of genocide" committed against the Ukrainian people, though pro-Russian Ukrainians say it resulted from ideological error.

A law officially calling the famine genocide was passed only last year by the Ukrainian parliament, and by a slim majority.

Saturday's commemorations began in the 11th century St Sophia's cathedral in central Kiev in a service televised live and attended by Yushchenko and his family. They were flanked by interim Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich, a pro-Russian, and ministers representing the gamut of the country's political parties.

"We pray for the peace of God's servants killed by the famine in Ukraine," a priest wearing a gold chasuble chanted, and a choir responded, "Eternal memory."

The president then led several thousand people bearing flags adorned with black ribbons to a monument to the victims of the famine, followed by a minute of silence across the country.

The gathering, including Yushchenko, then began lighting thousands of candles on central Saint Michael's Square.

In his speech the president called the famine the "greatest catastrophe" to have struck Ukraine, and urged "world condemnation of communist terror" that had killed innocent people, including Russians, Belarussians and Tatars as well as Ukrainians.

Ukraine finally gained its independence with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5h9CYo5a2Foxmv79B0Let9xF0PjHA>

5. Ukraine remembers famine horror

By Laura Sheeter

BBC News, 24 November 2007

"I can't have you leaving here hungry," she says. "Here, just have this bowl of soup, and maybe later you'll feel like having a sandwich, or a cup of tea and a piece of cake."

The hospitable 87-year-old cannot bear the thought of her guest being less than full, but then she has a horror of going hungry.

Seventy-five years ago, Ekaterina saw seven members of her family and almost all of her neighbours starve to death, in a man-made famine that killed millions of people in Ukraine.

Tree bark and roots

The "Holodomor" or "famine plague" as it is known in Ukraine, was part of Joseph Stalin's programme to crush the resistance of the peasantry to the collectivisation of farming.

When in 1932 the grain harvest did not meet the Kremlin's targets, activists were sent to the villages where they confiscated not just grain and bread, but all the food they could find.

The confiscations continued into 1933, and the results were devastating. No-one is sure how many people died, but historians say that in under a year at least three million and possibly up to 10 million starved to death.

The horrors Ekaterina saw live with her still.

"We didn't have any funerals - whole families died," she tells me.

"Of our neighbours I remember all the Solveiki family died, all of the Kapshuks, all the Rahachenkos too - and the Yeremo family - three of them, still alive, were thrown into the mass grave."

Ekaterina, her mother and brother, survived by eating tree bark, roots and whatever they could find - but she says starvation drove others to terrible deeds.

"One day mother said to us, 'children, you can't take your usual shortcut through the village anymore because the grandpa in the house nearby killed his grandson and ate him - and now he's been killed by his son..."

And don't go near the priest's house either - because the neighbours there have killed and eaten their children."

Though some, like Ekaterina, can never forget what happened, many Ukrainians had never heard of the famine until the country's independence - such was the secrecy about it during Soviet times.

But every year since independence, events to commemorate the famine get larger, and momentum is growing behind a campaign to raise international awareness of what happened.

This weekend marks the 75th anniversary of the start of the Holodomor, and Ukraine is starting a year of commemorations.

Events are being held across the country. And around the world members of the Ukrainian diaspora are also marking the anniversary.

Ukraine has officially declared the Holodomor a genocide - it says the famine was part of a campaign to crush Ukrainian nationalism.

Russian objections

Ukraine's borders were sealed during the famine, say scholars, to ensure the subjugation of the whole country.

It is a message Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko wants to take to the world.

This anniversary is being used to boost a campaign for other countries, and the United Nations, to officially declare the Holodomor a genocide, too.

But Russia objects. The Russians are accusing Ukraine of using the tragedy of the past to gain political advantage.

The famine could not be genocide, they say, because there was starvation in many parts of the Soviet Union at the time and, they add, for the Ukrainians to claim it was aimed at them is an insult to those of other nationalities who died.

Within Ukraine there is division too.

The head of the country's Communist Party, Pyotr Simonenko, does not believe there was any deliberate starvation at all, and he accuses President Yushchenko of using the famine to stir up hatred.

"He draws people's attention to history so as not to answer questions about the problems of today - he speaks of the dead, not thinking of the living," he says.

"Yushchenko has set a time bomb under Ukrainian-Russian relations.

"His insistence that this be recognised as a genocide - which is by the way, an idea with no foundation - will only lead to someone using it in the future to ignite inter-ethnic conflict."

Though few in Ukraine share Mr Simonenko's interpretation of history, there is some sympathy with his view that the commemoration has been politicised, and that the campaign could damage relations with Russia.

None of this, however, is deterring President Yushchenko. He says he wants a new law criminalising Holodomor denial - and to see new monuments to the famine built in Ukraine before the end of the year's commemorations.

It remains to be seen whether those monuments will bring Ukrainians together in remembrance, or divide them along political lines.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7111296.stm>

6. Ukraine Marks Famine Anniversary Amid Denials **By Daisy Sindelar** **RFE/RL, 24 November 2007**

Ukrainians who survived the Great Famine remember the horrifying extremes of hunger: eating birds and earthworms; watching as family members died in their arms; and in the worst instances, consuming the flesh of the dead.

Resurrecting such painful memories is part of independent Ukraine's drive for an honest assessment of its national history. President Viktor Yushchenko, opening an exhibit commemorating the famine, or Holodomor, in Kyiv this week, said any nation that forgets the victims of past tragedies has no prospect for the future.

Estimates vary, but as many as 14 million people in the Soviet Union died of starvation during Josef Stalin's drive to force individual farmers into collectivized agriculture. The famine spread to Kazakhstan, the North Caucasus, and parts of Russia. But most of the victims were Ukrainians, and the Holodomor is viewed by many as the Soviets' attempt to destroy the Ukrainian nation.

A number of countries have formally labeled the 1932-33 Holodomor as genocide -- a man-made famine created by Stalin in one of the USSR's most fertile regions.

Historic Culpability

The issue has been a distasteful one for Russia. Moscow flatly rejects recognizing the Holodomor as genocide -- and sees Kyiv's insistence as another provocation in the two countries' thorny relations.

"This can only be interpreted as an attempt to provoke Russophobia in Ukraine, in line with current tendencies; to rewrite history in order to present Russia as an enemy, which is completely false,"

Dmitry Peskov, spokesman to Russian President Vladimir Putin, said this week. "Not only Ukrainians fell victim to the Holodomor, which took place in other former republics of the Soviet Union. It did not affect one sole nation."

Peskov's comments only heightened tempers in Kyiv. The previous week, activists from a Russian nationalist youth group attempted to destroy an exhibition on the Great Famine on display at a Ukrainian cultural center in Moscow.

The group, the Eurasian Youth Union, has also claimed responsibility for disabling Yushchenko's presidential website in October, and for other attacks on Ukrainian national emblems. It is believed to receive financial support from the Kremlin, and is banned in Ukraine.

Ukraine's parliament in November 2006 narrowly passed a bill branding the Great Famine as an act of genocide. In naming the culprit, however, the bill's language sought to distance modern-day Russia from the Bolshevik regime of the 1930s.

Distortions, Denials

Moscow, unappeased, has accused Kyiv of "unilaterally distorting history" with its account of the famine. But Foreign Ministry spokesman Andriy Deschitsya said this week that Kyiv will not waver from its position, and that it is Moscow, not Kyiv, that requires a history lesson.

"Exchanging statements back and forth is absolutely tactless; we only humiliate ourselves by doing so," he said. "The question of acknowledging the Holodomor in Ukraine as genocide is not on the agenda; we've already acknowledged it. I'd like to give our Russian colleagues some friendly advice: read history books."

In their fight to raise the issue of the Holodomor to prominence, Ukrainian activists are continuing a separate battle as well -- attempting to strip a Western journalist of a high-profile award he won for coverage of Ukraine in 1932, which made no mention of the famine.

"The New York Times" correspondent Walter Duranty won a Pulitzer Prize for his accounts of life in the Soviet Union during the early 1930s -- coverage that included reporting from Ukraine at the start of the famine.

Ivan Lozovy, a Ukrainian-based political analyst, organized a march in central Kyiv on November 21 to call for Duranty's Pulitzer to be revoked. The Pulitzer committee has ruled it will not revoke the prize, arguing it was awarded for pieces not directly related to the famine.

Lozovy and others say Duranty, who openly admired Stalin, helped cover up and perhaps deepen the effects of the Great Famine by failing to report on it. Lozovy says he hopes his campaign will highlight the role that Westerners like Duranty played in allowing the famine to continue unchecked.

"It would be historical justice," he said. "What interests me in this case is to make sure that Duranty is never forgotten, even if the prize is never revoked. Duranty is symbolic of how the West ignored this issue and Ukraine itself for many years, including after independence, until the Orange Revolution. This is a much wider and more important issue than just a prize given away 75 years ago."

(RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service and Central Newsroom correspondent Claire Bigg contributed to this report.)

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/11/30f60476-b33b-4d21-8d9a-1bbed36d7a1d.html>

7. Ukrainian Pres calls for removing all Soviet-era monuments Itar-Tass, 25 November 2007

Ukraine's President Viktor Yushchenko on Saturday urged his nation to remove all the monuments commemorating the totalitarian regime.

As he addressed a meeting on Kiev's Mikhailovsky Square that had gathered in connection with 75 years since the outbreak of famine of 1932 and 1933, Yushchenko condemned the Communist era and said his country "should put on a clean shirt, removing the symbols of totalitarianism from its body."

At the same time, he called for installing national memorials and monuments.

Saturday, Yushchenko signed a decree declared 2008 the Year of Memory of the Victims of Famine.

The reported goal of the document is to "reveal truth about the genocide of the Ukrainian people to broad public quarters in Ukraine and to the international community in connection with the 75th anniversary of the tragedy".

The decree demands that the government analyze the steps taken in connection with the Law on Famine in Ukraine in 1932 and 1933, as well as the legislative acts in connection with the anniversary of famine and pass the necessary decisions on financing the steps they specify.

Ukrainian Foreign Ministry and the World Congress of Ukrainians are expected to produce within a month a plan of commemorative and special events that Ukraine's diplomatic missions will carry out abroad with the aid of Ukrainian communities living in foreign countries.

Ukrainian officials claim that the famine of 1932 and 1933, which was caused by Joseph Stalin's police of sweeping collectivization of private farms, was a purposeful act of genocide of the Ukrainian people.

In the meantime, historians, public personalities and politicians in Russia have indicated on many occasions that the famine embraced a territory much broader than the former Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and had a telling impact on many other regions and ethnic groups of the former USSR, including the Russians and Kazakhs.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://www.itar-tass.com/eng/level2.html?NewsID=12106719&PageNum=0>

8. Ukraine May return to Way of Legal Democratic Development after Removal of Victor Yushenka: Former Speaker By Z.Novotoviski Trend News Agency, 25 November 2007

Ukraine may return to the way of legal democratic development after the removal of Victor Yushenka and the unconstructive authoritarian model of the government will be replaced with the parliamentary republic of European type, said the former Chairman of the Supreme Rada, Leader of Sociological Party of Ukraine, Alexander Moroz, on 23 November during the first meeting of the new Parliament.

According to him, the results of the early parliamentary elections testify that this unlawful reckless scheme was devised only to satisfy the political interests of certain people.

In the spring of 2007 the President of Ukraine, Victor Yushenka, dissolved the Parliament and fixed early elections which took place on 30 September. Certain political forces, including Sociological Party of Ukraine led by the Chairman of the dissolved Parliament described this act of the President as unconstructive and illegal.

Moroz said that for the first time in history, the Ukrainian overstepped the legal framework as a result of Yushenko's acts. According to Moroz, exactly due to it, no stability comes to the Country. Just against, as expected the government appears in the situation of legal chaos.

"The responsibility for this chaos which brings to the drop in the life standards of the citizens and loss of the international image of Ukraine falls on concrete politicians. It is true treason to the interest of people," Moroz said.

As a result of the early elections, the Sociological Party of Ukraine will not have seats in Supreme Rada of Ukraine.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://news.trendaz.com/index.shtml?show=news&newsid=1081824&lang=EN>

9. Ukraine's SBU creates division on counteraction to contraband and corruption Eurasian Secret Services Daily Review, 25 November 2007

The Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) has created a division which will counteract contraband and corruption in law enforcement bodies, news agency RBC-Ukraine reports, referring to TV 5th channel. The division includes 96 operatives who will cooperate with other SBU servicemen in operations on struggle against contraband. Besides they should prevent corruption at customs, in militia, Office of Public Prosecutor and the SBU. The division will also exchange information about counteraction to contraband with special services of the countries bordering with Ukraine. President of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko has expressed his criticism concerning activity of customs in the view of insufficient control of economic borders of Ukraine, and law enforcement bodies members as a whole - for corruption, RBC-Ukraine notes. AIA already reported last week that President Yushchenko ordered the firing of Ukraine's top customs officials and the creation of a new counterintelligence department within the Security Service to crack down on illegal imports. At a SBU session, President Yushchenko urged Valentin Nalyvaychenko to submit the project of the new department within seven days.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://www.axisglobe.com/article.asp?article=1436>

10. SBU will tell truth about Soviet MGB agents destroying people in Western Ukraine Eurasian Secret Services Daily Review, 25 November 2007

The Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) possesses the document demonstrating crimes committed by the agents of the Soviet Ministry of State Security (MGB), who destroyed people in the Western Ukraine dressed up as soldiers of Ukraine's Insurgent Army (UPA), news agency Interfax-Ukraine reports. It says the document will be publicised soon. " We are possessing a document now that was known to [then one of Soviet leaders] Khrushchev in 1949. It is high time to publicise it", said acting Chairman of the SBU Valentin Nalyvaychenko speaking on air of the Ukrainian 5th TV channel. He said the document was a written answer of one of military prosecutors about the special militants who posing as a type of UPA groups acted in the Western Ukraine. Nalyvaychenko said the distortions and lie about the UPA and the Hero of Ukraine Shukheich had been already introduced at that time by the MGB punitive expeditions, „and this lie lives till nowadays". Nalyvaychenko has informed that in the archives of the State Office of Public Prosecutor and the Ministry of Interior of Ukraine there are more than 500,000 files about the so-called "exposure of kulaks" and other crimes against the Ukrainian peasantry, that have not been ever publicised, RBC-Ukraine reports. „We should enable each citizen of Ukraine to see what occurred to our relatives in even not so distant past, in the 1940s and 1950s. This was the second wave of destruction of Ukrainian peasantry, that was deported to remote areas, to Kazakhstan and so on ", news agency cites Nalyvaychenko. He assured that regional managements of the SBU are ready to promote local authorities in reception of truthful documents by consideration of such questions. The acting Chairman of the SBU also told the viewers that in reply to an SBU inquiry on Great Hunger in Ukraine, Kazakhstan has already transferred the first lists of victims to the SBU and the head of the Russian FSB had answered that such lists were being prepared and the copies would be conveyed to the Ukrainian counterpart. Ukraine's President Viktor Yushchenko

has emphasized that Ukraine's policy on recognition of the Great Hunger of 1932-1933 as genocide against Ukrainians is not directed against other people. In his turn, Nalyvaychenko supported introduction of the criminal liability for organizers of the Great Hunger in Ukraine. "The documents we have publicised testify that it was genocide. Those who gave these orders clearly understood that those were criminal orders, those who executed people also understood that they destroyed civilians, and victims of this genocide also testified the same," said the acting SBU head.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.axisglobe.com/article.asp?article=1436>

11. Security Service of Ukraine to wait for Mayor of Moscow at border Eurasian Secret Services Daily Review, 25 November 2007

Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) will seek to question the mayor of Moscow Yuriy Luzhkov at the Ukrainian border, if he comes to Ukraine, in connection with his recent statement as for the doubtful fact that the Crimea belongs to Ukraine, daily Ukrayinska Pravda reports, referring to an interview to the Interfax-Ukraine news agency of the SBU Head Valentyn Nalyvaychenko. "There have been some dubious statements about my country, issued by foreign citizens, and I can assure, within my competence, that if this person is planning to come to Ukraine, we will be waiting for him and will question him as soon as he arrives," Nalyvaychenko stated. Answering the question whether SBU is likely to take stronger measures, for instance, to declare Luzhkov persona non grata, Nalyvaychenko emphasized: "Such statements have not been made at the Ukrainian territory so far. If Mr. Luzhkov breaks Ukrainian law, we will be forced to take measures." He also marked that the Ukrainian politicians do not usually venture to make such statements. "There are no politicians in Ukraine, who would actually throw doubt upon the territorial integrity of another country," Nalyvaychenko stated. He said if that were the case, SBU would react. The mayor of Moscow Yury Luzhkov stated to the journalists that he was not afraid of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), Ukrayinska Pravda writes. "All I said about the Crimea and Sevastopol was said in sound mind and memory and I am not determined to take my words back," stated Luzhkov, emphasized that he is not afraid of any security services. "It is not their business whether to let somebody into the country or not. It is to be settled by the government and the Ministry of External Affairs," Luzhkov is quoted as saying. On November 22, Luzhkov, while delivering a speech to his electorate, casted serious doubt on the Ukrainian status of the Crimea and also stated that the Black Sea Fleet should remain in Sevastopol forever.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.axisglobe.com/article.asp?article=1436>

12. Moroz is concerned about new parliament ForUm, 23 November 2007

Ex speaker Olexander Moroz submitted to the parliament information in a written form about work of the VRU of V convocation, the ForUm's correspondent informs.

Moroz said that very soon every Ukrainian would feel results of unlawful changes of power. According to him, it will influence budget quality, price hike and inflation.

Moroz opined that great promises of politicians during election campaign would not be fulfilled. He has noted that now some politicians have already refused from their promises, in particular the matter concerns issues on contract army and paying off debts of state loan of USSR.

"Under conditions of current state crisis all populist statements are nothing more but soap bubbles," he said.

According to him, new power will hardly provide normal development of Ukraine. New parliament can become not center of state initiative but center of state scandals and will spend efforts for intrigues. Some politicians are responsible for this chaos. It is a real betrayal of Ukrainian people.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://en.for-ua.com/news/2007/11/23/164035.html>

13. Ukrainian Jew gets top honor JTA, 25 November 2007

A prominent Jewish leader and member of Ukraine's parliament received a top national honor.

President Victor Yuschenko awarded Aleksandr Feldman the Order of Merit of first degree on Nov. 22 for his "prominent personal contribution to the Holodomor 1932-1933 history research in Ukraine and active public work to perpetuate the memory of the tragedy's victims."

Feldman, 47, heads the Jewish Foundation of Ukraine and International Center for Tolerance.

Feldman openly backed Yuschenko's call on Israel to recognize Holodomor, the great famine that killed millions of Ukrainians during 1932-33, as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people and organized Ukraine's Holodomor exhibition in Israel in September.

He accompanied Yuschenko on his state visit to Israel this month.

Feldman is a well-known politician, advocate of Jewish interests in the Ukrainian parliament and philanthropist. Previously he had received the Order of Merit of second degree and third degree.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.jta.org/cgi-bin/iowa/breaking/105494.html>

14. Ukraine's "orange" government uncertain By Yuri Kulikov Reuters, 23 November 2007

Ukraine's new parliament opened on Friday amid doubts over whether parties linked to the pro-Western "Orange Revolution" can convert their slender election victory into a deal to govern the ex-Soviet state.

Both Yulia Tymoshenko, the revolution's fiery advocate, and outgoing Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich, the main loser in the 2004 upheaval, expressed confidence that they would be able to lead the new government.

Two parties linked to "orange" protests that swept President Viktor Yushchenko to power in 2004 -- the pro-Yushchenko Our Ukraine party and Tymoshenko's bloc -- won a tiny majority in the September election. Together they hold 228 seats in the 450-member chamber.

The two groups have agreed in principle to form a coalition but eight members of Our Ukraine were withholding their signatures on a 100-page agreement.

"I believe a democratic coalition will be formed," Tymoshenko, sporting her trademark peasant braid, said as she left parliament after the session.

"The president told me yesterday that there was no alternative to a democratic coalition..."

Some among the eight MPs of Our Ukraine have played down their hesitation to sign the coalition deal.

"There is nothing dreadful in this," Yuri Yekhanurov told Reuters. "This is part of the process of signing an agreement. I will study the agreement and make my comments."

Yanukovich, friendlier to Moscow, said before formally submitting his resignation that he believed a "broad coalition" could be formed between his Regions Party, the biggest in parliament, and Yushchenko's allies.

RIVALS MAY JOIN HANDS

Analysts say the president, who appointed Tymoshenko his first prime minister in 2005 only to fire her within eight months, is reluctant to have her again in charge of government.

Some analysts say the president might prefer to have his allies join Yanukovich, his rival from 2004, to form a team seen as more able to breach differences between Ukraine's nationalist west and centre and the Russian-speaking industrial east.

Yushchenko, in an interview to be broadcast at the weekend, said the first task of a new government was to end political uncertainty gripping the country since the Revolution.

"The country is now beginning to understand that the main problem is not macroeconomics or living standards ... but rather political instability," his press service quoted him as saying.

Parliament, he said, was "a source of such instability".

Forming a coalition and a government could take some time in the fractious assembly. Yanukovich became prime minister last year after four months of talks in the aftermath of a parliamentary election.

Under the constitution, the chamber must form a majority coalition within 30 days and a government in a further 30 days.

Regions Party officials said mistrust of Tymoshenko might tip the balance in favour of a broad coalition.

"Even if an orange coalition is formed, it is doomed," said prominent member Mykhailo Chechetov. "And on the ruins of such a coalition a sound coalition of national unity will be formed with support in eastern and western Ukraine."

(Writing by Ron Popeski; editing by Sami Aboudi)

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://uk.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUKL23323920071123?sp=true>

15. Luzhkov says he will not retract comments about Crimea Interfax, 25 November 2007

Moscow Mayor Yury Luzhkov has commented on the statement by the chief of the Ukrainian Security Service on Saturday, who said that if Luzhkov goes to Ukraine he will be detained at the border and questioned over his statements about Crimea.

"I do not understand what it means: "questioned." This is something new in the system of the democratic country," he said.

Luzhkov said he was not going to retract his comments about the Crimea.

"I was fully aware of what I said then. I am not going to take back my words. And I am not afraid of these agencies. It is not their business whether somebody is let into the country or not. This is the business of the government and the foreign ministry," Luzhkov said.

Luzhkov said he "did not care" about Ukrainian security services.

Earlier on Saturday, acting chief of the Ukrainian Security Service Valentin Nalyvaichenko said, "Foreigners are making dubious claims about my country, I can say within my authority: if Yury Luzhkov comes to Ukraine - we are waiting for him and will question him," Nalyvaichenko said.

Ukrainian security officers will meet Luzhkov at the border, if he arrives, Nalyvaichenko added.

Asked whether the Ukrainian Security Service could apply tougher measures, for instance, banning Luzhkov from entering Ukraine, Nalyvaichenko said, "We have not heard these statements in our territory, but if he breaks our laws, then action will be taken." kk rp

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
http://www.interfax.ru/e/B/politics/28.html?id_issue=11916931

16. BYuT Believes Agreement was not Signed Due to Technical Problems UNIAN/Ukrayinska Pravda, 24 November 2007

The BYuT deputy leader Oleksandr Turchynov is convinced that the agreement on the formation of democratic coalition will have been signed by all of the NU-NS deputies by the next Tuesday.

He stated this in live broadcast of Svoboda Slova (Freedom of Speech) talk show on ICTV channel on Friday.

Turchynov said there was a joint meeting with the participation of the NU-NS and BYuT bloc political councils on Friday night.

According to him, almost all of the remarks of the political forces as for the coalition agreement are now settled. "I see no problem which would actually prevent our allies and us from signing a coalition agreement," he said.

Turchynov believes the fact that 7 NU-NS deputies refused to sign the coalition agreement was only due to some technical problems.

"I am convinced that all our allies will have signed the coalition agreement by Tuesday, when the Verkhovna Rada sets to work again, and we will then make it public at the parliament session," he added.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.pravda.com.ua/en/news/2007/11/24/9480.htm>

17. Ministries devise programme to help Ukrainian workers Prague Daily Monitor, 26 November 2007

The Czech Republic wants to fight against the system of "clients" organising illegal work of Ukrainians in the country and to show Ukrainians a legal way of employment within a programme launched by the Labour and Interior Ministries, programme coordinators from the Czech Charity told CTK Friday.

The new system connects three centres in Ukraine - in Uzhgorod, Lvov and Kharkov - with centres of assistance in Prague, Brno, south Moravia, Plzen, west Bohemia, Litomerice, north Bohemia, and Hradec Kralove, east Bohemia.

At the end of October, 58,492 Ukrainians legally worked in the Czech Republic, which is 12,300 more than at the beginning of this year.

Ukrainians make up the second largest group of foreign workers in the Czech Republic after Slovaks.

It is these people who use the services of "clients" who organise their illegal as well as legal work in the Czech Republic. Ukrainians for whom the intermediaries find a job must give them a part of their pay, they usually pay high rents for bad accommodation and for further "services."

Some non-profit organisations helping migrants point to criminal practice in connection with "clients" and trafficking in people.

The new system is designed to abolish the practice. So far, 450 Ukrainians visited the centres in Ukraine and 800 people have asked them about the possibility of legal work in the Czech Republic by phone.

There are some 200 people who are seriously interested in working in the Czech Republic and the first 30 employees have already arrived in the Czech Republic, while another 40 have applied for visas and work permits.

"The goal of the programme is not to bring as many workers from Ukraine as possible. We offer a legal opportunity and we want people to give preference to the legal way rather than illegal. We want to show people that this is also possible without 'clients.' Next time they will be able to do this on their own," Martina Kalinova from the Labour Ministry told CTK.

The Czech Charity coordinates activities of the centres in Ukraine and the Czech Republic. According to its coordinator Helena Moureckova, Ukrainians do not trust institutions and prefer to address informal networks.

The organisers of the programme have informed people about it through television and advertisements in newspapers.

The system will focus on the people who have firmly decided to go to work in the Czech Republic. In the centres, they can receive information about the situation in the Czech Republic and about the risks of illegal employment. They will learn what personal documents they need to apply for visas and work permits and centre employees will help them fill in the forms.

The centres provide all their services free of charge. People only pay administrative fees.

The centres in the Czech Republic and coordinators are looking for the employers who also provide accommodation. They have so far contacted 250 companies. One-third of them have shown interest in joining the programme, coordinator Vojteska Hervertova said.

She added that companies were mainly interested in qualified workers, supermarket employees, sewing machine operators, bakers, welders, nurses and locksmiths.

According Hervertova, one-fifth of Ukrainians who are interested in working in the Czech Republic are university graduates and the rest are people with the completed apprentice or secondary school education.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
http://www.praguemonitor.com/en/220/czech_national_news/15098/

18. Norwegians accuse Russians of dirty tricks in telecoms venture
By Martin Tomkinson and Ben Laurance
Times Online, 25 November 2007

International court rulings are ignored in the struggle for a Ukrainian mobile firm

IT BEGAN as a partnership. It became poisoned by rancour. And now it has descended into farce.

A dispute between two international telecoms companies, Norway's Telenor and Altime, part of Russia's Alfa Group, has taken a new, surreal twist ? and is threatening to spill over into the British courts.

The two groups have been involved in a bitter argument over control of a Ukrainian mobile-phone company, Kyvistar, jointly owned by the Russian and Norwegian groups since 2002.

Telenor has accused Altime ? whose parent, Alfa Group, is headed by the Russian oligarch Mikhail Fridman ? of using underhand tactics to try to gain control of Kyvistar.

The dispute went to the International Panel of Arbitration in New York. In August the panel ruled that Altime's Ukrainian offshoot had broken its shareholders' agreement with Telenor and had wrongly tried to wriggle out of an agreement under which disputes would be resolved by arbitration in New York.

But Altime's Ukrainian subsidiary, Storm, responded by saying that "according to Ukrainian law, it is impossible to recognise and enforce the arbitration award in Ukraine". The Altime-controlled company is refusing to comply with the New York panel ruling.

And now, the focus of the increasingly bizarre tale has been shifted back to Ukraine.

The Pechersk district court of Kiev ruled last month that enforcing the arbitration award "would contradict the public policy of Ukraine".

That sounds straightforward enough ? except that Telenor had not even been informed that the US ruling was being challenged in the Kiev court. The first it knew about the case was when it was told of the result by a Russian journalist. Storm, the Altime offshoot contesting the US ruling, told the Ukrainian court that Telenor had been served notice that the case was coming up.

But it later transpired that the papers informing Telenor of the hearing had been sent to an office that the Norwegian company had not occupied for months ? although its present address is well advertised. The papers were apparently signed for at the former Telenor offices by someone simply calling himself or herself "Kovalenko". Telenor has never had an employee called Kovalenko.

Nothing about the impending court case had been sent to Telenor's present Ukraine office, its Norwegian head office, or to its lawyers.

By the time that Telenor was told of the outcome of the case, the company had missed the deadline for appealing against the decision. The ruling by the judge, a Ms Grymych, contained the assertion that "Telenor Communications AS has failed to appear, though it was duly summoned and noticed of the time and place of the consideration of the motion".

However, as is now clear, Telenor did not have a clue that the case was even taking place.

Sources within the Altime camp maintain that it was the court that was responsible for handling the paperwork, not Storm.

And in a further strange twist, the judge disappeared ? apparently abroad on extended maternity leave ? the day after giving her decision.

Even within Ukraine, a country not renowned for the consistency and rigour of its legal system, the Pechersk court chosen by Altimo's offshoot as the arena for the battle with Telenor has a reputation for making some strange decisions. Earlier this year, Ukrainian president Viktor Yushchenko said: "There are legends about the Pechersk court . . . We've already got used to such a court system where, I am sure, even Jesus Christ could lose a good case . . . He would not win in the Pechersk court."

There is a further strange sub-plot to the dispute. In the argument over Kyvistar, Telenor's direct legal opponent has been Storm, the company through which Altimo holds its stake in the Ukrainian telecoms business.

Storm is owned by two offshore companies, based in Cyprus, which in turn are owned by Altimo. In late August ? after the New York arbitration ruling ? the two companies in Cyprus held a shareholders' meeting at which its Russian owners said that Storm should indeed comply with the New York panel's decision.

But Storm says it is bound by the Ukrainian court's ruling that the New York arbitration decision is unenforceable. Storm says it is banned from attending meetings of its Kyvistar joint-venture partner Telenor ? although Storm's parent, Altimo, wants it to do so. Hence now, on the surface at least, Altimo is at loggerheads with a company that it owns. The Russian company can claim that it is trying to comply with an internationally recognised panel's ruling, while its subsidiary continues to defy it.

Storm and Telenor each signed a shareholders' agreement covering their Ukrainian joint venture: this explicitly stated that any dispute should be referred to arbitrators in New York. But Storm subsequently argued that the company's director who signed the agreement didn't have the authority to do so. The argument was rejected by courts in America.

Altimo said this weekend: "Altimo has always complied with every court ruling in every jurisdiction. We fully respect the laws of every country in which we operate." Earlier this month an American judge, Gerard Lynch of the southern district of New York, gave his judgment on Storm's efforts to avoid complying with the arbitration award.

He said Storm had made "repeated efforts to renege on its agreement and to torpedo the proceedings by collusive and vexatious litigation".

The affair further calls into question the role of Altimo's six-man "advisory board" that includes Lord Hurd, the former Conservative foreign secretary Douglas Hurd; Sir Roderick Lyne, who was British ambassador to Russia; and Sir Julian Horn-Smith, who was the deputy chief executive of Vodafone until the summer of last year.

Telenor executive vice-president Jan Edvard Thygesen has said that the Norwegian group "will seek to enforce this [New York arbitration] award wherever Alfa has assets". And sources within Telenor indicate that this could involve action to seize assets in the US and UK.

Alfa has a business, Alfa Capital Holdings (Cyprus), that is regulated by the Financial Services Authority in London. Altimo Holdings is domiciled in the British Virgin Islands, but the company lists its international headquarters as being in London. Peter Aven, head of a private bank within the Alfa empire, has a mansion in Surrey that was bought for £8.5m.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/industry_sectors/telecoms/article2935757.ece

19. Shell Abandons Deal For Ukraine Oil Sites Wall Street Journal, 26 November 2007

LONDON -- Royal Dutch Shell PLC said it won't proceed with an agreement reached days ago to acquire the Ukraine assets of United Kingdom-listed Regal Petroleum PLC, following Regal's surprise move to appoint a new chairman and chief executive.

Shell spokeswoman Eurwen Thomas said the management change at Regal "wasn't expected by Shell, and we see from the new management's comments that they may have changed their thinking on this transaction."

She said that Regal, a U.K. oil-and-gas company, "indicated that they would like to review options. Therefore we have decided not to proceed" with the memorandum of understanding.

On Wednesday, Shell signed a memorandum of understanding with the previous Regal management. The Anglo-Dutch oil company agreed to pay \$50 million to Regal upfront for a 51% stake in the company's Ukrainian gas and condensate field licenses. Shell also agreed to invest \$360 million to develop the fields as part of the purchase.

On Thursday, Regal said Chairman Francesco Sclaro and CEO Neil Ritson had resigned and that David Greer -- until recently a senior Shell employee -- would take on both roles.

Mr. Greer was most recently deputy CEO of Sakhalin Energy Investment Co., controlled by a Shell until March of this year. He resigned after one of its motivational memos was leaked to the media.

Oil analyst Tony Alves of brokerage house KBC Peel Hunt in London said Shell's decision to walk away from the decision doesn't bode well for Regal Petroleum. The oil-and-gas company now has "no way of financing the drilling of the fields" in Ukraine.

No one was available for comment at Regal.

Regal shares dropped sharply in London after news the memorandum of understanding had been canceled, closing down 14% to £1.40 (\$2.89).

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB119603971099703494.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

20. Shell abandons \$410m Regal deal By Dino Mahtani FT/MSNBC, 23 November 2007

Royal Dutch Shell has called off a \$410m (£199m) deal to farm into Ukrainian gas fields held by Regal Petroleum just one day after the controversial Aim-listed oil company announced a sudden change in management.

Europe's biggest oil company this week agreed a memorandum of understanding with Regal for a 51 percent stake in the two fields. Analysts said the proposition was a good deal for Regal because Shell would have carried all the capital investment costs to develop the assets

But a day later, on Thursday, Regal surprised City analysts when it announced it had replaced its chairman and chief executive and appointed David Greer, an experienced former Shell executive, as chairman and chief executive.

Shell called off the agreement barely 24 hours later, saying it had done so because Regal's new management had indicated it was reviewing the deal that was agreed with the outgoing management.

"The management change ... at Regal was not expected by Shell, and we see from the new management's comments that they may have changed their thinking on this transaction," Shell said.

On Thursday Mr Greer told the Financial Times that he wanted to evaluate Shell's offer and compare it with other funding mechanisms ahead of a "dramatic" drilling campaign he hopes to pull off for the Ukrainian assets. One possibility he mentioned was a share issue, which, shareholders who backed his appointment would support.

Regal's shares fell on news of the deal on Wednesday, losing 8p on the day, and on Friday fell 23p, or more than 14 per cent, to close at 140p.

Frank Timis, the Romania-born entrepreneur, who holds 20 per cent of Regal said the agreement with Shell was probably not in Regal's long-term interest.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21944043/>

21. UPDATE 1-Shell cancels purchase of Regal's Ukraine fields
By Tom Bergin
Reuters, 23 November 2007

Royal Dutch Shell Plc has pulled out of a deal, announced only two days ago, to buy a 51 percent stake in the Ukrainian gas assets of UK oil explorer Regal Petroleum <RPT.L>, following Regal's surprise appointment of a new chief executive.

Regal shares dropped sharply after news the memorandum of understanding had been cancelled, closing down 14 percent at 140 pence.

"Our MOU with Regal was agreed with the previous management team. The management change of yesterday at Regal was not expected by Shell," the Anglo-Dutch oil major said in a statement on Friday.

On Thursday, Regal said Chairman Francesco Sclaro and CEO Neil Ritson had resigned and that David Greer -- until recently a senior Shell employee -- would take on both roles.

Since October 2004, Regal has had four chief executives and an executive chairman resign from its board.

A Shell spokeswoman said the oil major had taken note of an interview Greer gave to the Financial Times, in which he suggested Regal was no longer keen on the sale.

"We see from the new management's comments that they may have changed their thinking on this transaction. Regal have indicated that they would like to review options. Therefore we have decided not to proceed with the MOU with Regal," Shell said in a statement.

Greer told the FT in an interview published on Friday the Shell deal had to be compared against other ways of funding the development of the Ukrainian fields.

Analysts have questioned whether Regal has enough cash to drill the fields itself. Greer told the newspaper one solution could be for Regal to issue new shares.

No one was available for comment at Regal.

LEGAL UNCERTAINTY

Regal's Ukrainian assets have been the centre of legal disputes for over two years.

The licences were awarded in 2004. In June 2005, the company was informed by a previously unknown Hong Kong-based company called Peak Resources that Peak had an option to buy the assets.

The option was agreed by former Executive Chairman Frank Timis without the board's knowledge.

Timis, who remains Regal's largest shareholder, was forced out of Regal's management in 2005 after a Greek oil field Regal said contained up to 1 billion barrels turned out to be dry.

In May 2006 Regal said the option had been terminated.

However, by this stage the company was in litigation with a former partner over ownership of the fields.

In 2005 a Kiev court ruled Regal's licence was not valid.

Regal lost two appeals against this ruling before entering into an agreement with British Virgin Islands-registered company Alberrry Ltd., to help have the licences upheld.

In return for this service, Alberrry was invited to purchase 15 percent of the company which held Regal's Ukrainian assets for 100,000 pounds. Regal agreed to buy the stake back for \$51 million if Alberrry's efforts proved successful.

In December 2006, Regal announced all actions had been dismissed by the Ukrainian supreme court.

In June this year, Regal said it paid Alberrry 13,910,623 Regal shares -- worth 30 million pounds at the time -- to buy back the stake.

Regal was founded by Romania-born Timis, a colourful figure who has helped start a number of natural resources companies and who received two convictions for possessing heroin in Australia in the 1990s, according to a Regal prospectus.

(Additional reporting by Chris Wills; Editing by David Cowell/Sue Thomas)

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

http://investing.reuters.co.uk/news/articleinvesting.aspx?type=mergersNews&storyID=2007-11-23T174514Z_01_L23165651_RTRIDST_0_REGALPETROLEUM-SHELL-UPDATE-1.XML

22. Can't Stand D.C. Traffic? You Should See Kiev.

By Andrey Slivka

The Washington Post, 25 November 2005

There's a certain fascination in watching a city destroy itself more or less overnight. Kiev last imposed itself on the West's consciousness when it exploded into mass protests during Ukraine's so-called Orange Revolution in 2004. But looking around this still beautiful capital on Europe's edge today, you wonder how much strain an urban fabric can take before it rips.

Kiev's problem is cars. The city's increasingly well-off post-Soviet population has taken to automobiles with the intensity of the long-deprived. Ukraine's booming economy is blast-forging the country's first mass middle class, and by many locals' count, perhaps 10 times more vehicles are now rumbling through this ancient city's hilly streets than there were when the Soviet Union expired in 1991. In 2006, according to the Kiev Post, Ukraine climbed from 12th place to ninth place in Europe in terms of new car sales, which a leading Ukrainian newsmagazine reports grew 52 percent here from last September to this. About 60,000 new cars were registered in Kiev this October alone, according to the Unian news agency, bloating a total that Ukraine's Emergency Ministry puts at 1.5 million -- and the number is expected to grow by a million more by 2011.

This has meant something catastrophic for life in Kiev. Streets that in 1991 were almost empty and that five years ago remained passable thoroughfares are now gridlocked for most of each business day. In Kiev, cars are what water must be to Venetians or snow to Eskimos: the fundamental shaper of daily experience. Given Ukraine's distinctly Soviet approach to emissions controls, Kiev's air reeks in a way that residents of even the filthiest downtowns of Western capitals can't imagine. You don't want to open your windows by day if you live downtown; better to wait until well into the evening, after the dissipation of the apocalyptic traffic jams that have become the city's conversation pieces in much the same way that politics were during the Orange Revolution.

All of this is a function of what one Kiev magazine earlier this year dubbed the "Cult of the Automobile" -- the status, unimaginable to Westerners, that comes with car ownership in a society conditioned by Soviet-era scarcity. It was the great Western-looking dream of the Soviet citizen to own a set of wheels, and those dreams are now coming true -- with the help of easy credit, which is everywhere in a country where speculation was a crime just 20 years ago. Many of the late-model KIAs and Skodas in Kiev are wholly owned by local banks, which is only one of the peculiarities of a car culture so seductive that I've heard anecdotes about people who have sold elegant apartments to get cash to buy cars. Another peculiarity: Cars are really unnecessary here because Kiev's Soviet-built subway system is excellent.

And all of this is a shame, given that Kiev has historically been considered the most pleasant of the former Soviet Union's capitals -- a walkable alternative to Moscow. In his book "Imperium," about his travels through the declining Soviet Union, the late Polish journalist Ryszard Kapuscinski described Kiev as "the only large city of the former USSR whose streets serve not merely for hurrying home but for walking, for strolling." Kiev's main boulevard, Khreschatyk, he wrote, is something like a local Champs-Élysées, and he was impressed by Kiev's downtown "crowds of people" out "to get some fresh air."

A decade and a half later, the city that Kapuscinski liked no longer exists. Walking here can be dangerous because the sidewalks are covered with cars, both parked and moving. That ritual of city life -- the promenade -- has become an adventure in the sort of defensive, serpentine ambulation with which the pedestrian makes his way through a strip mall parking lot. And it doesn't help that Ukrainian traffic cops know better than to stop expensive vehicles: It can be bad for their careers. Drive a Hummer or a Bentley here (Bentleys are common), and you can barrel through any red light and over any lawn or sidewalk.

The situation is exacerbated by Kiev's geography. The city is composed of a compact downtown core that would seem better in a smaller city -- Oakland, say, not a growing population cluster of perhaps 5 million. An increasing number of Kiev's residents live in bedroom communities outside the city, endless developments of high-rise towers that each month radiate farther across the plains. Because these futuristic tower blocks don't include office space, the city's circumscribed downtown is overloaded. It's as though all of New York's economic activity were restricted to an area the size of Greenwich Village and SoHo combined.

Kiev's preponderance of wide boulevards and vast plazas -- communist showcases for an era before the automobile reigned -- exacerbate the situation, too. What 10 years ago were pleasant poplar-lined boulevards are now clogged eight-lane highways that scream and honk and pound through the city's heart. Looking at central Kiev's Victory Square is like looking down at a gridlocked Los Angeles freeway, except that many of the cars are going in opposite directions, there's more toxic haze and tens of thousands of people have to live within yards of it.

Where all this will end up, it's hard to tell. Kiev's transformation -- from a charmingly shabby stroller's city of dusty squares and streets in which there might be more stray dogs than SUVs into an increasingly charmless automotive dystopia -- has happened mostly during the past five years of economic growth.

Like survivors of a flash flood, residents (especially those who don't own cars) are just coming to terms with the sudden change in their physical reality. Their neighbors in Europe have started dealing with the antisocial effects of urban car use and are banning, restricting or taxing driving in many downtown cores. But Ukraine, despite the aspirational rhetoric of some of its Western-looking politicians, isn't

Europe. In a macho culture that has embraced conspicuous consumption, the idea of people taking to bicycles like the burghers of Amsterdam is inconceivable. Just a little less so is the idea that, in a nondemocratic culture defined by elite prerogative, the newly affluent will use public transportation like wealthy Westerners. And a culture with an almost totally corrupt public life, no functioning justice system and a tendency toward political murder seems unlikely to make "green" choices when it comes to urban planning.

Barring some unexpected development, Kiev seems fated to become less and less the "European" city that the westward-looking Orange Revolution declared it to be and more and more a hub of Third World-style chaos. Certainly the pollution situation is disturbing. Ukraine was an ecological basket case even before the car culture, and unlike car-mad America or similarly polluted Russia, it doesn't have excess space to destroy.

There is a geopolitical irony to all this: Ukraine, a poor and weak country with no oil of its own, is giving itself over to a car- and oil-based culture at a moment when that culture is approaching its limits. The global cheap-oil party is approaching its end even as Ukraine shoves its way into the rubbish-strewn foyer near midnight.

And while Ukraine may be spared \$100 barrels of oil on the world market, that's only because it has a potentially bigger problem: It gets all its oil from or through Russia, an assertive power whose leadership resents seeing its old vassal persist in its delusions of independence. Russia has also proved willing to use the "energy weapon" against Ukraine, as seen in the 2006 European gas crisis, when Russia briefly shut off gas supplies to its southerly "little brother." And so every time a patriotic Ukrainian proudly fills up his new Prado, he's pushing his vulnerable country further into the arms of the hegemon to the north. It's yet another bleak historical irony for Ukraine that its giddy embrace of Western automotive culture may someday seal its ultimate submission to Russia -- and sever it from the West.

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Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/11/23/AR2007112301297_pf.html