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WHY ARE UKRAINIAN PRISONERS OF WAR STILL IN INHUMANE CONDITIONS?

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SPECIAL FOR HROMADA

Vitaliy Portnykov | NOTES FOR AUGUST

INDEPENDENCE AMID BATTLES AND ATTACKS



Please support Vitaliy Portnykov's new project on the YouTube channel, where you will find his streams in English. Spread it among your friends who do not speak Ukrainian, so that more people in the world get acquainted with the events taking place in Ukraine.

<https://www.youtube.com/@PortnikovPost>

Two days after celebrating Independence Day, Ukraine was once again subjected to a massive missile attack from Russia. It was the largest one since the start of the full-scale war. Russian leader Vladimir Putin has once again demonstrated that his primary goal is to destroy Ukrainian infrastructure and turn the neighboring country into a wasteland.

However, it is now becoming apparent even to the Russians themselves that if the war continues in pursuit of Putin's goals, it will reach their own homes. The Ukrainian Armed Forces conducted a daring raid into the Kursk region. This operation led to the establishment of control over part of this Russian territory. The raid showcased Ukraine's capabilities and, one might say, changed the very nature of the war. The Russo-Ukrainian war is no longer confined to Ukrainian territory; it is now happening on Russian soil as well. Putin's military and intelligence forces, having been caught off guard by the Ukrainian offensive, are now scrambling to find reserves to counter the Ukrainian army in Kursk. But this is no easy task, not least because Russian command is trying to maintain the bulk of its forces on the Donetsk front. After all, the capture of the Donetsk region has been a critical tactical objective for the Kremlin since February 2022. Yet, as we can see, significant progress in fulfilling this order has been elusive, and the Russians are clearly reluctant to halt their advance in Donetsk.

Nevertheless, they cannot ignore the consequences of their actions, particularly the "shifting of red lines"

deeper into Russian territory. In the early months of the war, when Western allies began actively supporting Ukraine in resisting Russian aggression, the non-proliferation of the war onto Russian soil was a condition for continued assistance. Western leaders openly discussed the undesirability of spreading the war to Russia. But now, the Ukrainian offensive in Kursk is met with demonstrative understanding by Western leaders. The fact that Ukrainian forces used Western weapons in this advance is also understood as part of Ukraine's defense. This clearly illustrates how Western approaches have evolved over time, recognizing that Putin can only be stopped by meeting force with force.

While the incursion into the Kursk region has changed the political character of the war, the decision to ban religious communities linked to Moscow is transforming Ukraine's spiritual life. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has finally passed a law that terminates the activities of such religious organizations on Ukrainian soil. This is an important, even civilizationally significant decision that eliminates yet another center of ideological and political, not just religious, influence of the Kremlin on Ukraine.

We all know that the Russian Orthodox Church has been used by Moscow for centuries as a tool of russification and degradation in Ukraine. In recent years, it has also become a church of war. The leader, Patriarch Kirill, and other high-ranking clerics openly call for the destruction of Ukraine. They support the aggressive Russian mili-

tary and show indifference to the fate of people who are formally members of this patriarch's flock and his wild priests.

Naturally, there will now be many questions about how this law will be implemented in practice. It will take effect 30 days after it is signed by the President of Ukraine. However, the religious communities of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP) have nine months to provide evidence of their final break with the Russian Orthodox Church.

I am confident that the leaders of the UOC-MP will now argue that this law does not concern them at all – after all, they claim to have decided to break relations with the Russian Orthodox Church back in 2022 at a council where the independence of the UOC-MP was declared. But to this day, no one has seen the statute of the UOC-MP adopted at that council. Moreover, it is known that this statute contains references to the charter of the previous Moscow patriarch and emphasizes that relations with the global Orthodox community are conducted through the mediation of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, like the Russian Orthodox Church, has indeed severed ties with global Orthodoxy by refusing to communicate with the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew after he granted the Tomos to Ukrainian believers for the creation of an independent autocephalous church on Ukrainian soil.

From a formal perspective, the




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Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate is not even a church but part of a sect headed not by Metropolitan Onufriy, but by Russian Patriarch Kirill—a church that has demonstratively broken with global

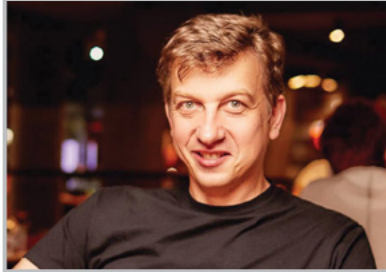
Orthodoxy and agreed to transform into the church of Vladimir Putin. And it is with this "church of Putin" that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate must sever its ties within these nine months, so that it

is no longer associated with occupiers and destroyers of Ukrainian land, with criminals in robes, and with corrupt supporters of violence and murder, whose cynical prayers will help them not at all.

SPECIAL FOR HROMADA

Oles Doniy

KURSK OPERATION. PROS AND RISKS. THE SCORE IS 7:2



On August 6, 2024, the Armed Forces of Ukraine launched operation in the Kursk region of the aggressor country. The meticulous and covert preparation by the Ukrainian army along this section of the border, coupled with the element of surprise, led to successful advances deep into Russian territory. On August 12, the Ukrainian authorities officially confirmed the involvement of the Armed Forces in this offensive. By August 15, 2024, it was announced that a military commandant's office had been established in the Ukrainian-controlled territories of the Kursk region, with Major General Eduard Moskalov appointed as its head.

The strategic consequences of this operation can only be fully assessed later, but Ukraine has already achieved significant benefits. At the same time, it is essential to recognize the risks involved so that efforts can be made to mitigate or at least minimize them.

Pros:

1. Diverting the attention of Russian forces from the Donetsk direction.

Recently, the enemy has been making steady advances on the frontline in Donetsk. The Kursk operation forces the adversary to regroup its reserves, which means the Donetsk grouping will be unable to receive additional manpower and equipment for some time. The time gained could theoretically be used to strengthen defensive lines in Donetsk.

2. Boosting the morale of Ukrainians.

Morale and motivation in war are as vital as human resources, armaments, and financing. The last Ukrainian city, Kherson, was liberated on November 11, 2022. Since then, Ukraine has only

lost territory, including several cities reduced to rubble. Sociological surveys indicate a gradual rise in pessimism. A victorious operation lifts spirits and motivates further resistance against the enemy.

3. Psychological decline among the enemy.

Equally important is the enemy's psychological state. A swift and unexpected operation on Russian soil fosters despair among the Russian population and doubts about the competence of their military and political leadership.

4. A leverage point for our allies' political elites to supply more weapons to Ukraine.

Ukraine is highly dependent on the supplies and funding provided by our allies. Recently, this assistance has slowed, partly due to doubts about Ukraine's ability to achieve military successes. A successful operation could serve as an additional argument for increasing arms deliveries – more weapons, more victories.

5. War and infrastructure destruction on foreign soil.

For over ten years, the war has raged on Ukrainian soil, with bombardments occurring on both sides of the front. This means that buildings on both sides of the front are being destroyed, and the land is littered with mines and shrapnel. The Kursk operation radically shifts the focus of infrastructure damage.

6. Replenishment of the "exchange fund" for prisoners of war.

The enemy holds more prisoners than we do, largely due to the forced conclusion of the Mariupol defense, where several thousand defenders of Azovstal were captured. Not all of them have been freed yet. The total number of Ukrainian prisoners is estimated at around 8,000. An "exchange fund" is necessary for the liberation of Ukrainian defenders. The Kursk operation was so unexpected that hundreds of Russian soldiers were captured. The Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Oleksandr Syrskyi, reported that as of August 27, the Ukrainian army had captured 594

Russian soldiers since the start of the offensive in the Kursk region. These additional opportunities will help free Ukrainian defenders held captive.

7. Strengthening negotiating positions for future talks with Russia.

I remain convinced that the noise surrounding the "freezing of the war" along the front line is a Russian information operation, but a detailed analysis of this is beyond the scope of this article. Nevertheless, there is talk of the potential involvement of Russia in some form of negotiation platform. In any negotiations, stronger positions – in this case, territorial gains – can serve as an additional argument.

Seven advantages are quite substantial.

To a lesser extent, we talk about risks. Nevertheless, in order to reduce risks, or their leveling, they should be voiced.

Risks:

1. Extension of the front line with the possibility of a future enemy counter-offensive.

In war, the army with fewer resources (both human and military) benefits from a shorter front line, while the army with greater resources seeks to extend it. A classic example is the Battle of Thermopylae, where a small detachment of Spartans resisted a much larger Persian army for an extended period by narrowing the front line.

Ukraine objectively has fewer resources, both demographic and military, than the enemy. Recently, Commander-in-Chief Syrskyi provided figures indicating the enemy's significant superiority in arms. In this situation, we are interested in reducing the front line. For a long time, the enemy focused its advances on the eastern front – Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, and partially Kharkiv. The enemy had long since halted its advances along the northeastern border, following the state border from Chernihiv to Sumy and most of Kharkiv. This was a political decision, not a military-tactical one, unlike the front line on the Kherson-Dnipro axis. On our northeastern border, enemy sabotage and reconnaissance groups operated, and



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Kharkiv, with Kharkiv region, and Sumy region were shelled, but the enemy did not cross the border with its army. Now that threat may emerge. The enemy could amass resources and launch a counteroffensive on Sumy and Kharkiv, not necessarily to capture them but to annihilate them entirely, as happened in Bakhmut and Avdiivka. Unfortunately, the enemy has not halted its offensive in the Donetsk direction and has recently made some progress near Pokrovsk. It is hoped that the military and political leadership are aware of the risk of extending the front line and are prepared to reduce it.

2. Possibility of using tactical nuclear weapons.

Russia possesses nuclear weapons and may use them. Those "experts" who categorically deny this possibility are indulging in wishful thinking. The interpretation of Russia's nuclear doc-

trine and legislation will be conducted in the Kremlin, not by "experts" at their computers. Conducting military operations directly on Russian territory does not guarantee that Russia will use tactical nuclear weapons, but it does increase such risks. This must be acknowledged.

Both risks may not necessarily materialize. Nevertheless, it is essential to clearly understand the dangers of their realization and to take all necessary steps to prevent them. The dangers of the first risk must be mitigated by readiness to repel the enemy in the Chernihiv, Sumy, and Kharkiv directions, which means accumulating additional military units, appropriate air defense forces, and constructing fortifications, among other measures. Based on the information that the authorities have announced the evacuation of the population from the 10-ki-

lometer border zone in Sumy, there is hope that the government recognizes this risk. In any case, this risk can only be mitigated through self-strengthening and skillful organization.

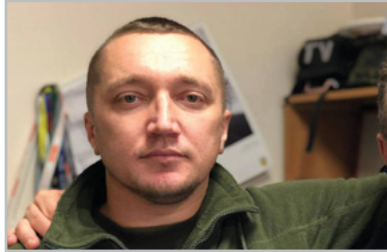
The second risk (nuclear) is currently lower, but it should not be forgotten. It can be reduced through successful negotiations with our Western allies and with China. It is no secret that negotiations or contacts with the enemy at various levels have been ongoing throughout the war. The arguments to deter Russia from using nuclear weapons have likely already been presented by our Western allies. These arguments must now be reiterated and strengthened.

Ukraine has demonstrated undeniable tactical success. Now it is crucial to avoid strategic mistakes.

SPECIAL FOR HROMADA

MYKHAILO UKHMAN | NEWS FROM THE FRONTLINE

TECHNO WAR



Mykhailo Ukhman – a film producer, war journalist, writer, makes documentaries and feature films about the Ukrainian Insurgent Army and the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Russia attempts to intimidate Ukrainians by launching missile strikes on cities. This is how the aggressor seeks to pressure Ukrainian society into negotiating on moscowites terms. However, despite having a significant advantage in personnel and technical resources, the Russians are suffering enormous material and reputational losses as Ukrainians deliver painful counterstrikes.

The Ukrainian army surpasses the Russians in both technical and innovative aspects. The accompanying photos depict the remnants of missiles and shells found at an airfield in the Rostov region of Russia. These were hit by Ukrainian drones, which turned tons of ammunition that could have been used against Ukrainians into scrap metal. Russian air defense could not withstand the assault of Ukrainian "birds".

The war between Russia and Ukraine is increasingly turning into a war of drones, electronic warfare, and other technological capabilities. No country in the world has witnessed anything like this before.

An important political aspect is the open support for the Moscow aggressor by Iran, North Korea, Belarus, and China... These nations provide the Russians with all kinds of assistance.

What does this mean for Americans and other democratic countries? Terrorist states that support Russia are acquiring new skills in warfare that NATO countries do not possess. Japan or Australia, for instance, do not know how to fight like this. That is why Americans, Europeans, and other democratic nations must increase their support



Remains of rockets and projectiles that were located at one of the airfields in the Rostov region (Russia).

for Ukraine in its struggle against these enemies. Otherwise, the indifference of democratic countries may give rise to a hydra that will wage war with the help of technology, killing thousands of people worldwide.

Russia's war against Ukraine has long ceased to be a confrontation between two countries; it is now a battle between good and evil.

Staryi

In 2014, a successful lawyer from

the city of Dnipro, Oleksandr Staryna, left his job to fight against Russian occupiers. Before going to defend Ukraine from Russian invaders, Oleksandr approached his mother and told her about his intentions.

"Alright, son," the woman said, "someone has to stop that madman (Putin)."

Oleksandr first fought in Maryinka, near Donetsk. In October 2014, Staryi (his call sign) and his comrades went

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Oleksandr Staryna from the city of Dnipro, "Staryi"

to fight at Donetsk airport, where an incredible story happened to him. We will tell you what exactly occurred in

the next issue.

Today, Oleksandr is the commander of the 140th Marine Battalion and con-



tinues to defend Ukraine from Moscow's occupiers.

"WANDERING STARS": THE STORY OF CALIFORNIA'S FIRST UKRAINIAN THEATER

Lisa Hots

Olena Bilyak is known for her enthusiasm and dedication to Ukrainian culture. She is a philologist by education. Olena arrived in the United States from her native Lviv almost three decades ago. Her journey of relocation began during the Gorbachev-era emigration, when many Ukrainians sought new opportunities in the West. Olena and her family settled in San Francisco, one of the most expensive yet atmospheric cities on the planet. Despite the challenges of adapting to a new life in a foreign country, she not only preserved but also enriched her cultural roots, transforming her experience into a benefit for the community.

In Ukraine, Olena worked as a teacher, combining her pedagogical activities with organizing a theater discussion club for students. She began teaching while still a fifth-year university student, with her first graduating class only four years younger than herself. In this club, she discovered the world of theater for herself and her students, organizing performances and discussions. Theater became not just a hobby but a true calling, which later found its reflection in her American life.

In California, Olena continued working with children and teenagers, sharing her love for theater arts with them. She offered the children the chance to engage in theater and stage performances, seeing it as an opportunity not only to teach them stagecraft but also to preserve Ukrainian traditions, culture, and language in the diaspora. However, the desire to create something more than children's performances always lived in her heart.

Last year, fate once again brought Olena back to theater, this time through social media. A chance message from Ukrainian playwright Elena Petrovska, who resides in Germany, marked the beginning of a great journey. Ms. Petrovska suggested that Olena read her play "Fish Don't Cry," dedicated to the tragedy of the Mariupol theater and the fate of its actress. The impression from the reading was so powerful that Olena could not remain indifferent and



decided to stage the play, despite having no experience working with adult actors.

"It was a shock. It is an incredible play about Mariupol, about an actress from the destroyed theater. Extremely emotional," Olena Bilyak recalls her first impressions of reading the work. She even recounts how she cried while reading the play and doubted whether

she could stage it. However, the play's author, who had been following Olena and her activities, was confident in her abilities and inspired her to take this step.

Olena found a talented actress, Lana Shcherbakova, a professional actress from Odesa who had moved to the United States several years ago. Together, they began working on



the production. Although the actress was from Odesa, she spoke Ukrainian well, which became an important factor when the idea arose to present the play in two languages. After receiving the Ukrainian translation, Olena and her team decided to perform the play in both Ukrainian and Russian to reach as wide of audience as possible.

The play "Fish Don't Cry" became Olena Bilyak's first major work with adult actors. Its premiere took place in a small Russian-speaking amateur theater "You" in San Mateo. The 70-seat hall was packed. People came to the performance from all corners of the city, as well as from neighboring areas. This unexpected success was a true revelation for Olena, who realized that Ukrainian theater in California has enormous potential and can find its audience.

"We were nervous, sitting in the dressing room, unable to believe that

so many people had come to see our play. No one knew us, but people believed in us, and we had a sold-out show," Olena recalls that evening. This success inspired her to take further action.

Olena decided to officially register a Ukrainian theater under the name "Wandering Stars." The name was inspired by Sholem Aleichem's novel, where the idea became a symbol for the new Ukrainian theater, which also had to "wander" without a permanent stage, finding refuge in various theatrical spaces in California.

Olena's work did not stop there. She continues to search for material for new performances and finds support among the local Ukrainian community. Ms. Olena recalls how, through social media, she managed to gather a group of volunteers and actors ready to help with the organization and staging of performances. Among these people,

seeking their place in the world of theater, were both professional actors and amateurs with little experience but a great desire to work.

Currently, the "Wandering Stars" theater is preparing for its first major performance – a lecture-presentation about the outstanding Ukrainian director Les Kurbas, one of the most significant figures in Ukrainian theater art. Olena has chosen three scenes from Kurbas' most famous plays by Kulish for this presentation: "Myna Mazailo," "Maklena Grasa," and "The People's Malakhiy." She aims not only to present these works but also to reveal their deep meaning, showing how Kurbas' ideas influenced the development of Ukrainian theater.

"Les Kurbas is an incredibly important figure for both Ukrainian and European theater. He should be known not only in Ukraine but also worldwide," Olena asserts. She wants the Ukrainian diaspora in California to know and understand the immense contribution Kurbas made to the development of theatrical art and to pass on the Ukrainian cultural heritage through these performances.

It is important to note that all the funds raised from ticket sales for "Wandering Stars" performances are directed to support Ukraine. During the war, every dollar raised from cultural events goes to support various funds that help those affected by the war. Olena shares that all the funds from the play "Fish Don't Cry" were donated to three different volunteer foundations in Ukraine.

"Everything we do must be aimed at victory. Otherwise, it is very sad – to do something without a purpose. Now everything must be focused on helping Ukraine," Olena emphasizes, underscoring the importance of assisting the most vulnerable segments of the population, primarily orphans. To this end, the premiere performance "Les Kurbas. The Clever Harlequin" by "Wandering Stars" will be shown to audiences in San Francisco and the Bay Area, with the proceeds going to benefit the non-profit organization "Hromada" and its "Anhelyk" foundation. This organization has been providing assistance to orphans in Ukraine for seven years, paying for medical equipment and funding various educational programs.

The "Wandering Stars" theater has ambitious plans for the future, so we wish them a successful premiere and the realization of all their plans on numerous stages across America!

CANDIDATES DETERMINED: THE FINAL STAGE APPROACHES

Nadia Banchik

Traction to the flanks

After the Republican and Democratic conventions, where the presidential and vice-presidential candidates were officially confirmed and general platforms were presented, it became clear that both parties are leaning more toward the flanks rather than the center. The programs of both parties do not appear overly radical but are certainly not centrist; the candidates themselves are positioned somewhere between the radical flanks and the overt center.

There is a grain of rationality in the program documents of both parties. The Republican program is based on the so-called "Project 2025," developed by the conservative think tank Heritage Foundation. It is noted that this project is based on the "Principles of Leadership" from 1981, a program document developed for Ronald Reagan's administration. The current document states that the White House under Reagan implemented 50% of the recommendations from this document in the first year of his administration, while Trump's first term saw 64% implementation.

This project was developed by several dozen experts and advisors, many of whom served in the Trump administration during his presidency. When journalists asked Trump, as the current presidential candidate, whether he would adopt this project, he responded in his typical style: by being as vague as possible.

"Project 2025" outlines the principles of large-scale reforms of all federal institutions based on conservative principles: reducing the management apparatus and bureaucracy; strengthening national security through border fortification, bolstering the armed forces, cybersecurity, and intelligence agencies; strengthening the "traditional American family" by supporting families with children, rejecting "gender ideology," and reforming education to increase parental involvement in school choice and influence; and protecting personal freedoms, particularly freedom of speech and the right to bear arms, "without excessive government interference."

This project includes a database of

potential conservative government employees and proposes principles for their training through a "Leadership Academy."

The Democratic Party's program was unveiled at its convention in a speech by presidential candidate Kamala Harris. The program is based on center-left principles but leans more to the "left" than during the current president, Joseph Biden. Specifically, Harris's program proposes federal protection of abortion rights (currently, states set their own policies in this area, allowing some Republican states to nearly completely ban abortions, even for medical reasons); increased regulation in "clean energy" and climate change mitigation; higher taxes on large corporations and lower taxes on the middle class; \$25,000 for first-time homebuyers (as a down payment on a mortgage); the construction of 3 million units of affordable housing; and the most controversial proposal – establishing control over large corporations and retail chains that "artificially inflate food prices."

Thus, both programs clearly contain both rational elements and purely populist theses. However, the Republicans' program – "Project 2025" – is broader and deeper than that of the Democrats: it includes not only executive branch measures for public administration but also deep personnel purges of all government institutions. At the same time, it is explicitly stated that the selection of candidates for government positions will be based not only on professional criteria but also on purely ideological grounds – commitment to conservative principles. How this aligns with the fundamental principles of non-partisanship and non-ideology for most positions and government institutions is not addressed in the "Project."

The Democrats' program – specifically Kamala Harris's presidential candidacy – leans so far "left," particularly in economic policy, that it has drawn criticism even from the economic advisors of Barack Obama's presidency.

Who will implement the programs?

Of course, announced political programs will not be implemented "to the letter." Their implementation, like all aspects of managing the domestic and foreign policies of a complex

country like the United States, will result from a complex "game" between the White House and Congress, and therefore will depend on the composition of both chambers of Congress, with members of various political and ideological orientations. With presidential candidates from both political flanks distant from the political center, it becomes extremely important for Congress to be as close to centrism as possible to counterbalance the "flank" policies of the future White House.

Meanwhile, both presidential candidates will determine and support "like-minded" candidates for Congress. Clearly, it will be very difficult for a Republican to get into Congress without Trump's "sanction." A Democrat, on the other hand, will at least need the support of party leadership, which is so enamored with Harris that it dares not critically approach some of her positions, and this will inevitably affect the Democratic candidates for Congress. Of course, the influence of Trump among Republicans is much stronger than Harris's influence among Democrats, but her "shadow" will also loom over the Democratic candidates for Congress.

In such a situation, it is almost impossible to elect candidates to Congress who are sufficiently independent of the presidential candidates. Only the extremely careful and responsible choice of a sufficient number of voters in selecting candidates for the House of Representatives and the Senate can push a certain number of candidates into Congress who are independent of the presidential candidates and the party circles that support them.

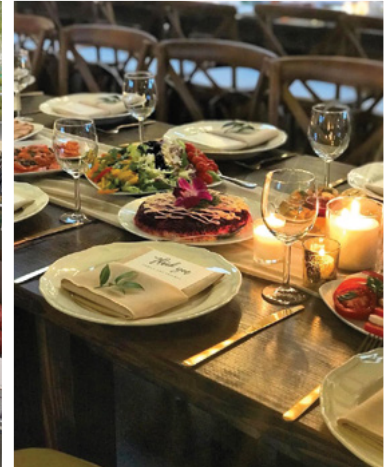
Harris's circle of supporters expands

Most voters have long since made up their minds, and they are almost evenly divided, especially in swing states. However, there remains a certain number of voters who have not yet fully decided. Among these voters, Kamala Harris has seen a slight increase in support – primarily among those who do not want either Trump or Biden. Harris has gained greater favor among younger voters, and her support base has grown among Latinos, African Americans, and "blue-collar" workers, thanks to her choice of running mate – Tim Walz. The former gov-

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error of Minnesota, Tim Walz, a former schoolteacher, has helped connect with working-class voters.

Trump's voter base has long been defined and has little room to expand, except for those dissatisfied with Harris's leftward tilt. Dissatisfied with Harris's economic policy, some may switch to Trump. Additionally, Trump's camp could grow with those unhappy with Harris's tilt toward supporting Palestinians in the ongoing Israel-Hamas war, which has dragged on too long. Despite Harris's consistent emphasis on supporting Israel's right to self-defense, she is drawing extreme left-wing Democrats who side with the Palestinians and demand more radical actions in their favor.

However, we should be aware of the dangers for the US associated with Trump: he will test the resilience of the entire American institutional system. If he loses the election, he may once again challenge the very foundation of the U.S. electoral system, as he did

with the infamous attempt to storm Congress on January 6, 2021.

What to expect for Ukraine

The short answer is to expect uncertainty. Both candidates, although they have expressed their views on Ukraine's war against the Russian invasion, leave much room for speculation.

Harris is likely to continue Biden's policies, meaning she will support Ukraine much like the current owner of the White House. She will continue to strengthen defense alliances, particularly NATO, and provide aid to Ukraine. However, whether she will be more decisive than Biden in helping Ukraine achieve a decisive victory over Russia is unknown.

Will Trump consistently and decisively support Ukraine? Or will he attempt to make a deal with Putin? And if he does, will he succeed? These figures share many similar traits and ideologies, but they will face each other as adversaries, trying to outmaneuver each other, and the outcome

of their indirect confrontation is a great unknown.

However, as with all other issues, Ukraine policy will not be determined solely by the president, regardless of who wins the White House. Once again, Congress will play a decisive role. It is often mentioned that Trump was the first to provide Ukraine with "Javelins" in 2018, but the circumstances under which this happened are rarely discussed. Concerned by Trump's excessive praise of the Russian dictator, Congress first appointed a special prosecutor to investigate allegations of connections between Trump's campaign and Russian agents, and then passed a law providing lethal aid to Ukraine. In other words, Congress pressured Trump to the point where he had no choice but to take this step.

One thing is clear: Ukrainians must maintain strong bipartisan support for Ukraine among members of Congress and their candidates.

"SHAME!" – WHY ARE UKRAINIAN PRISONERS OF WAR STILL IN INHUMANE CONDITIONS?

Karina Nikitishina

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Another year has passed. Ukraine celebrated the 33rd anniversary of its independence. But August 24 was not only a day of celebration. On Ukraine's Independence Day, the 55th prisoner exchange took place: 115 Russian conscripts captured during the Kursk operation were exchanged for 115 servicemen of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. "Today, another 115 of our defenders returned home. These are soldiers of the National Guard, the Armed Forces, the Navy, and the State Border Service. We remember each and every one of them. We search for them and make every effort to bring them all back," said Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. The exchange was facilitated, in part, by the status of the Russian prisoners of war. It turned out that when the Kremlin needs to retrieve someone, it can be organized almost instantly. After all, the mothers of conscripts write appeals to the authorities, post angry videos on social media, threaten to hold protests – and in general, negatively affect Putin's image. It is easier to "satisfy their needs" before the scandals turn into real protests.

The "I Want to Live" project, created to help Russian servicemen safely surrender to the Armed Forces of Ukraine, noted that public attention to the prisoners captured during the Kursk operation scares the Putin regime, which is built on total control of the information space. For perhaps the first time, Russia calmly agreed to an exchange and made no attempts to disrupt it. "Why is there no such treatment for ordinary prisoners of war who have been in captivity for three years now? Because, for the Putin regime, they do not exist. They are not mentioned in the media, their wives and mothers are silent and do nothing, they are not Kadyrov's vassals or FSB employees. These are convenient prisoners of war; they can sit for years without causing any discomfort to the authorities, so why exchange them?" the "I Want to Live" project notes. The project adds that, unlike Russia, the Ukrainian side never uses

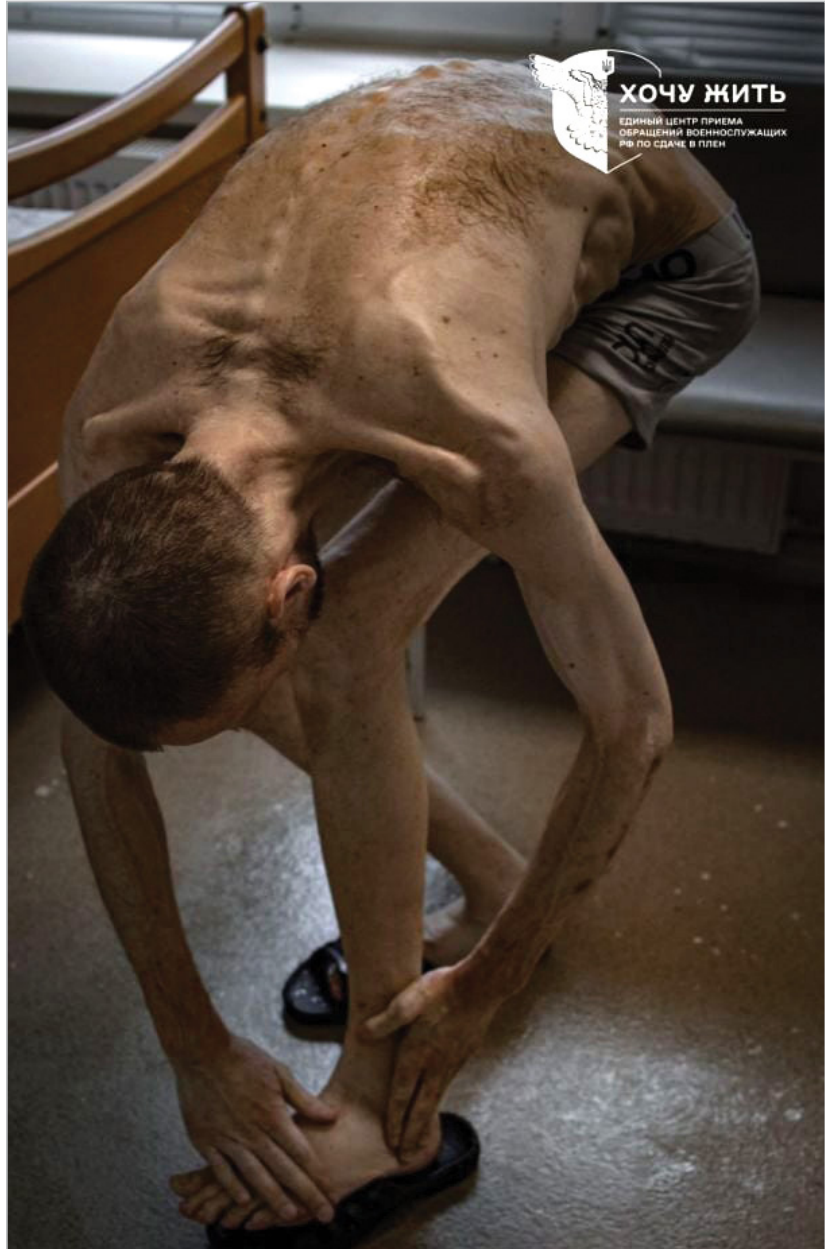


Photo: "I want to live" project. National Guardsman Roman Horilyk after two years of Russian captivity.

high-profile Russian prisoners for leverage but always seeks to exchange them for Ukrainians, as happened on this Independence Day.

At the same time, in addition to the joy of our defenders' release, a significant portion of society has mixed feelings about the exchange. This time,

Ukraine indeed had a leverage point: Russian President Vladimir Putin desperately wanted to return the Kursk conscripts to stop the decline in his own ratings and trust among Russians. Putin repeatedly promised Russian mothers that their children would be safe – that no conscripts would participate in the "special military operation on Ukrainian territory." Ukrainians, on the other hand, have a massive demand for the return of the defenders of Azovstal from captivity. Denys Prokopenko, commander of the 12th Special Forces Brigade "Azov" of the National Guard of Ukraine, believes that during the prisoner exchange, the Ukrainian side could have taken advantage of its position to bring home some of the Azov members, but this did not happen.

Olena Tolkachova, head of the Patronage Service "Angels of Azov," said that the exchange of Ukrainian prisoners of war is primarily about preserving the lives of those at great risk. These include the defenders of Azovstal, Azov members, other patriotic units, the severely wounded, and women. "Usually, it is the Azov members and defenders of Azovstal who are held in the worst conditions and sent to the worst colonies and prisons. The same applies to providing medical assistance to those who were injured two years ago defending Azovstal and are still in captivity. There, the conditions are not just inhumane – there are no conditions at all. There are colonies where conditions are more or less normal. I hope that this depends on which colonies our boys and girls were sent to. But I must note that Azov members receive 'special' treatment. It's not just about torture; food, medical assistance, drinking water, sleep – they have almost no access to these. They are simply kept in a 'borderline' state. We have cases, and they have been reported in the media, where unfortunately, we lose our boys and girls – they die from torture, diseases, untreated injuries, hunger, and lack of drinking water," said Tolkachova.

The issue of the improper treatment of Ukrainian prisoners of war has repeatedly sparked public outrage. Our boys and girls return as if they have aged 20 years, emaciated and skeletal, unlike the cleanly dressed, rosy-cheeked, well-fed Russians whom Ukraine held in accordance with all the requirements of the Geneva Conventions. On August 17, Washington Post journalists visited Russian conscripts in a Ukrainian prison. The journalists noted that there was no mistreatment of the conscripts: all the boys received



Best wishes to UCU students, faculty and staff as they begin the new academic year!

As UCU President Archbishop Borys Gudziak stated at graduation ceremonies this past June: "We are a community which strives to live according to the fruits of the Holy Spirit: peace, gentleness, patience, love."

During this unprecedented time of war in Ukraine, donor support is needed more than ever.

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medical care, ate three meals a day, chatted with the guards, and watched "Garfield" on TV. All the exchanged Russians spent only two weeks in captivity. But we have no idea what is happening to our defenders: when they will return, in what condition – barely alive or already dead.

On August 29, the Day of Remembrance for Defenders of Ukraine, the

families of captured marines held a protest outside the Kyiv office of the International Committee of the Red Cross to get answers to their question: is the Red Cross of any use to Ukraine at all? The Red Cross is currently the only organization authorized to visit places where prisoners of war are held. But to do so, it must obtain the appropriate permission from the prison, de-

tention center, or colony administration. Ukraine always allows the organization's staff to conduct inspections, but Russia almost never allows them into its detention facilities. So, the situation is this: the Red Cross systematically checks Ukraine's compliance with all standards, looking for something to "nitpick," while on Russian territory, it does... nothing. The Committee "trembles" over the health of the occupiers, their moral state, but turns a blind eye to the torture of Ukrainians. "We have no right to check anything if we are not allowed" – but there is no evidence that the Red Cross insisted on being granted such permission. Nor is there any document confirming such refusals.

It is worth noting that, on the contrary, there is evidence of violations of the organization's charter by the Russian Red Cross. The heads of regional offices of the Russian Red Cross have declared the need for a war against "Ukrainian Nazis," and employees in uniform are often present at military educational events for children. However, the International Federation did not suspend the membership of the Russian side but decided that "holding training sessions" would be sufficient. Olga Reshetilova, co-coordinator of the Media Initiative for Human Rights, expressed her opinion on Facebook: "What happened today (*August 29 – ed.*) outside the Kyiv office of the International Committee of the Red Cross is a verdict on the entire system of international law and international organizations. The families of prisoners, driven to despair, are ready to set themselves on fire because their loved ones have been tortured and killed for years, and they are practically storming the ICRC. And this is just the beginning. For years, the ICRC, the UN, the OSCE, diplomatic missions, and representations have been shrugging their shoulders, throwing mandates at each other, and simply watching as thousands of Ukrainians slowly die in captivity. Yes, Russia does not allow them access and kills them. But it is the international community, which

continues to pretend that the Geneva Conventions are in force and that everything will somehow resolve itself, that is allowing Russia to act with impunity."

Ukrainians are writing on social media: "If Russia does not grant access to our prisoners, why should we? Ask how much money the Russian authorities pay to the Red Cross so they do not care about the crimes!" Many people agree that such protests should be held outside Red Cross offices in different countries so that the problem of Ukrainian servicemen prisoners finally gets attention. A video shot by Reshetilova quickly spread across the network: a crowd with posters and photos of tortured loved ones shouting "shame." The protest was also attended by Ukrainian journalist Volodymyr Zolkin, known for his interviews with Russian prisoners of war. For several years, the man has been asking the occupiers the following questions: "What was your life like? Do you have any hobbies? What was your job? Do you have a family? Why did you decide to come to Ukraine and kill people here?" Since the journalist spends a lot of time with prisoners, he knows how they are treated in Ukrainian prisons. Accordingly, he knows firsthand how the Red Cross works with Russian prisoners of war and how it works with Ukrainians.

Recently, Zolkin published a video addressed to Ukrainians who turn to him for help. The journalist explained that he is unable to help with Ukrainian prisoners, but it is worth contacting certain organizations. Regarding the Red Cross, Zolkin almost directly says that the organization is not even trying to do anything: "This is a humanitarian organization that is supposed to help both Russians here in our captivity and ours in captivity in Russia. But it turns out that this organization only helps the Russians who are in our captivity. They constantly come; they constantly check everything. (...) They can even bring an entire medical consultation from Kyiv with our doctors if a prisoner complains that his stomach ache.

(...) The Red Cross says they are not allowed into the Russian places where our prisoners of war are held. Well, they are not allowed, that's all. Everyone knows they are not allowed, but this – attention, this is very important – is not officially documented. (...) Officially, on their page or official resources, they do not write: 'Oh, great concern, we are not allowed in, this should not be!' They don't actively work on this issue, they don't go to international platforms, they don't shout about it, as they should.

Our ombudsman asks: "How many times have you (*the Red Cross – ed.*) written a request? And to which colonies?" – in order to be more specific and get a record that they are not allowed, and to work on this issue further. And what do you think? That's right, they just "get cold feet," they don't answer anything (...). They will have to say whether they are admitted or not, they are just frozen, I'm telling you quite seriously. They travel to these camps, rent the most expensive hotels, they are just having fun, they are doing well, you understand? (...) This organization that receives funding must explain why their obligations are not being fulfilled. As far as I know this problem: go to them and ask why they are not doing anything for your relatives and friends, for your sons, husbands, parents? Why does this organization that receives funding for this does nothing?"

Volodymyr Zolkin's Ukrainian-language channel has an hour-long [video of the protest](#) on the Day of Remembrance of the Defenders, with subtitles available in English. Unfortunately, the video is still not widely distributed. Everyone is concerned about the fate of Ukrainian prisoners of war: if we all remain silent, if we do not demand that international organizations who are obliged to help provide answers to all our questions, the situation will not get better. After all, while they do nothing in response to the fact that they are "not allowed" to go places, right now thousands of Ukrainians are still between life and death, and may never return home.

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UKRAINIAN NEWS

Total enemy combat losses



According to the General Staff, the total combat losses of the enemy from February 24, 2022 to August 31, 2024 are approximately as follows:

Personnel – 614,950 people were eliminated,
Tanks – 8,582 units,
Armored personnel carriers – 16,736 units,
Artillery systems – 17,614 units,
MLRS – 1,176 units,
Air defense systems – 940 units,
Aircraft – 368 units,
Helicopters – 328 units,
Operational and tactical level UAVs – 14,471 units,
Cruise missiles – 2,557 units,
Ships and boats – 28 units,
Submarines – 1 unit,
Vehicles and tankers – 23,825 units,
Special equipment – 2,977 units.

Military aid for Ukraine



USA

On the run-up to Ukraine's Independence Day, the U.S. Department of Defense announced additional security assistance to address Ukraine's critical security and defense needs.

The new military assistance package includes
- equipment and ammunition to com-

bat unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs)
- ammunition for highly mobile artillery rocket systems (HIMARS)
- 155-mm and 105-mm artillery ammunition
- missiles with tubular launchers, optical tracking and guided missiles (TOW)
- Javelin and AT-4 anti-tank systems
- highly mobile multi-purpose wheeled ambulances (HMMWV)
- ammunition for small arms
- medical equipment
- equipment and ammunition for demolition
- spare parts, auxiliary equipment, services, training and transportation.

Previously, in August, the United States also provided the Ukrainian Armed Forces with a package of weapons worth \$125 million.

Ukraine received:

- Stinger missiles;
- ammunition for highly mobile artillery rocket systems (HIMARS);
- 155-mm and 105-mm artillery ammunition;
- multi-purpose radars;
- optically tracked tube-launched, guided missiles (TOW);
- Javelin and AT-4 anti-tank systems;
- highly mobile wheeled ambulances (HMMWV);
- ammunition for small arms;
- spare parts, support equipment, services, training and transportation.

Norway

The Norwegian government granted Ukraine a license to manufacture 155 mm artillery shells.

The agreement with the defense company Nammo allows the Ukrainian defense industry to establish the production of shells using Norwegian technology.

It is also noted that Norway will allocate funds for the production of such ammunition in Ukraine.

Germany

Germany has provided Ukraine with a new military aid package, including the IRIS-T air defense system and Vector drones.

Thus, the new German aid package includes:

- One IRIS-T SLS air defense system;
- 14 thousand rounds of 155 mm ammunition;
- 10 unmanned surface ships;
- 16 Vector reconnaissance drones with spare parts;
- materials for the disposal of explosive ordnance;
- six highly mobile demining excavators;
- one Bergepanzer 2 armored repair and recovery vehicle with spare parts;

- 55 thousand first aid kits;
- 700 MK 556 assault rifles;
- 10 HLR 338 high-precision rifles with ammunition;
- 50 CR 308 rifles.

The German government has drawn up a plan to supply Ukraine with weapons by the end of 2024. The list includes, among other things, tanks, air defense systems, and hundreds of armored vehicles.

Lithuania

On August 15, Lithuania handed over a new batch of military aid to Ukraine.

It is noted that Ukraine has received forklifts, trailers, and folding beds.

During August, Lithuania will also transfer

- 14 units of M113 armored personnel carriers
- short-range air defense launchers with missiles
- anti-drone systems
- individual silencers
- all-terrain vehicles with spare parts
- rifles
- ammunition
- smoke charges.

On August 28, forklifts, anti-drone systems, and army cots arrived in Ukraine.

Since the beginning of the war, Lithuania has provided Ukraine with more than 641 million euros in military aid. The total support provided by Lithuania has exceeded one billion euros.

At the end of June, the Lithuanian State Defense Council supported a plan to allocate at least 0.25% of GDP annually for military aid to Ukraine.

Spain

Spain provided Ukraine with seven power generators to overcome the consequences of recent Russian attacks on critical infrastructure.

Latvia

The Latvian government has decided to transfer 20 more cars to Ukraine that were previously confiscated from drivers in Latvia for drunken driving.

The vehicles will be used in various military units of the National Guard of Ukraine and the Ministry of Defense.

The total market value of the new batch of vehicles is 117,640 euros.

Ukraine received almost \$4 billion in grants from the United States

Ukraine has received a \$3.9 billion grant from the United States through the World Bank. This is the first tranche of direct budget support from the United



States in 2024. The funds will help finance, among other things, public sector salaries and social assistance.

Ukraine receives a new tranche from the EU under the Ukraine Facility program



Ukraine has received a EUR 4.2 billion tranche from the European Union under the Ukraine Facility program, which provides for EUR 50 billion over four years.

Since the beginning of the year, the EU has provided Ukraine with more than €12 billion in budget support.

According to the Ministry of Finance, the tranche consists of concessional financing of EUR 2.7 billion and a grant of EUR 1.5 billion.

In July, EU ambassadors approved a new tranche for Ukraine under the Ukraine Facility program. It was later approved by the EU Council.

Norway allocates several million dollars for UNICEF programs in Ukraine

The Norwegian government is allocating \$7.4 million to support UNICEF programs in Ukraine. The agency emphasizes that the increase in funding for the programs will allow it to continue to provide vital assistance to Ukrainian children and their families affected by the armed aggression of



the Russian Federation.

Norway is the fifth largest financial partner of UNICEF in responding to humanitarian challenges in Ukraine.

Ukraine negotiated a security agreement with Ireland



Ukraine and Ireland held talks in preparation for the signing of a bilateral security agreement.

During the online meeting, the parties discussed the content of the bilateral agreement and exchanged views on specific provisions.

In addition, representatives of Ukraine and Ireland approved the next steps in preparation for the conclusion of the agreement.

"We appreciate Ireland's multifaceted support for Ukraine and our cooperation on Ukraine's path to EU membership. Ireland demonstrates solidarity in our common struggle to protect common values."

On July 11, on the sidelines of the NATO Summit, EU countries and 21 other governments signed the Ukraine Compact. Under the document, the allies will coordinate and accelerate defense assistance to Ukraine.

Norway is the fifth largest financial partner of UNICEF in responding to humanitarian challenges in Ukraine.

Military commandant's office established on the controlled territories of Kursk region

A military commandant's office has been set up in the government-con-



trolled territories of Kursk region.

He said that the commandant's office was established to maintain law and order and meet the priority needs of the population. The newly created structure is headed by Major General Eduard Moskaev.

Earlier, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy confirmed that the Armed Forces of Ukraine are conducting an operation in the Kursk region of Russia.

Zelenskyy added that he had instructed the Minister of Internal Affairs and other SBU officials to prepare a humanitarian plan for the area of the operation.

Cabinet of Ministers allocates 24 billion UAH for drones for the Armed Forces of Ukraine



This was announced by Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal at a government meeting on Tuesday, August 20.

"Today we are allocating UAH 24 billion for the purchase of drones for the Security and Defense Forces. In the war against Russia, Ukraine relies on innovations, asymmetric responses and approaches. This is the key to our resilience and future victory," he said.

According to the Prime Minister, Ukraine has made a real breakthrough in the production and use of drones, in particular, the state has already contracted 1 million drones, and 500 Ukrainian companies produce UAVs.

The Cabinet of Ministers also approved draft amendments to the law

on the Armed Forces of Ukraine, which approves the existence of the Unmanned Systems Forces.

Verkhovna Rada ratifies the Rome Statute



On August 21, the Verkhovna Rada supported the ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The relevant bill No. 0285 was voted for by 281 MPs. Only one was against. There were 22 abstentions and 24 did not vote.

As of today, the Rome Statute has been ratified by 124 countries. Armenia was the last to join this year.

The US imposes new sanctions on Russia



Almost 400 individuals and legal entities from Asia, Europe and the Middle East, whose products and services allow Russia to support its military efforts and circumvent sanctions, have been subject to the restrictions.

It is noted that these companies and individuals are associated with the energy, mining and metallurgical sectors, as well as the financial and IT sectors of Russia.

Sanctions were imposed, among other things, against the largest coal exporters from Russia, subsidiaries of Rosatom, Novatek, and Rosneft. In addition, restrictions were imposed on UAV and electronics manufacturers, as well as companies that serve the needs of the Russian defense industry.

Zelensky signs law banning the Russian Orthodox Church



On August 24, the President of Ukraine signed a law banning the activities of religious organizations affiliated with Russia.

The law will come into force in 30 days, and UOC-MP communities will have 9 months to sever ties with the ROC.

On August 20, the Verkhovna Rada supported the ban on the Russian Orthodox Church and its affiliated organizations in Ukraine. 265 MPs voted in favor of the ban.

Ukraine returns 115 more Ukrainians from Russian captivity



This was reported by the Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War. The exchange took place with the mediation of the United Arab Emirates. These are conscripts, including those who were captured in the first months of the full-scale Russian invasion.

We managed to release nine illegally convicted defenders. Navy sailors and three border guards were released from captivity, as well as 82 Mariupol defenders, 50 of whom were defending Azovstal.

Also, 6 National Guardsmen from the garrison guarding the Chornobyl

nuclear power plant, and soldiers who defended Kyiv, Donetsk, Kherson and Luhansk regions, returned home. The soldiers also took part in heavy battles for Gostomel and the reserve command post of the General Staff in Kyiv region, and in Kherson region – for the Chongar checkpoint on the administrative border with the temporarily occupied Crimea.

The headquarters notes that many of the liberated Ukrainian servicemen have health problems as a result of their injuries and Russia's failure to comply with international humanitarian law in captivity.

Ukraine returns children from the temporarily occupied territories



The head of the Kherson Regional Military Administration, Oleksandr Prokudin, said that a total of 6 families have returned from the temporarily occupied part of the Kherson region. Among them are two boys and four girls aged 3 to 12.

Earlier, another group of children who had been living in Russia and under occupation were returned to the territory controlled by Ukraine.

Among the children returned is a 16-year-old girl who moved to Russia in 2021 but was left alone after her father died.

"Despite the attempts of the Russian authorities to convince the girl to stay and take custody of Russian citizens, she wanted to return home. Fortunately, we managed to bring her to her mother," the agency emphasized.

On August 27, five more Ukrainian families with children were returned from the temporarily occupied territory of Kherson region.

In addition, two Ukrainian families with three children managed to leave the occupation.

In early August, it was reported that eight more children had been returned from the temporarily occupied part of the Kherson region to the territory controlled by Ukraine.

And on August 1, a mother and her two daughters, aged 3 and 5, were evacuated from the temporarily occupied territories of Kherson region.

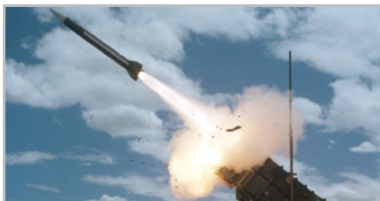
Ukraine manages to return bodies of another 250 fallen soldiers



The bodies were repatriated from the Luhansk, Bakhmut, Maryinka, Avdiivka, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia directions, as well as from Mariupol, Horlivka and morgues in Russia. The return process was carried out with the assistance of the Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War, law enforcement agencies, departments and international organizations.

It is known that the returned bodies and remains will be transported to the relevant state institutions, where law enforcement officials and forensic experts will identify them. After identification, the fallen defenders will be handed over to their families for a decent burial.

Russia has launched more than 9,600 missiles and 14,000 drones at Ukraine since the beginning of the war



Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, the Russian army has fired 9,627 missiles of various types at the

territory of Ukraine.

Most often, the enemy used S300/C400 missiles – 3008 units. Syrsky clarified that the Defense Forces managed to shoot down more than 2,400 Russian missiles in total.

In addition, the occupiers used almost 14 thousand attack drones against Ukraine. The drones attacked more than one thousand civilian targets and 3700 military targets. At the same time, most of the UAVs (9,200 units) were destroyed by the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Recently, Air Force Commander Mykola Oleshchuk said that over the 2.5 years of the war, aviation has flown more than 20,000 combat missions and destroyed more than 8,000 enemy air targets.

It was also reported that in July, the Ukrainian military launched more attack drones than the Russian occupation army.

Test of Ukraine's first ballistic missile and first use of the domestic Palyanytsia drone missile



Ukraine conducted the first test of its own ballistic missile. It was successful. Everything else remains a secret for now.

President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy also said that the Ukrainian military had struck at the Russian military for the first time using the Palyanytsia drone missile.

The President noted that the enemy was defeated.

Occupants polluted the Sea of Azov to a critical level

The Center for Environmental Protection has documented the facts of critical pollution of the Azov Sea in the temporarily occupied Genichesk district, including the Arabat Spit.

IN MEMORY OF THE FAMOUS DEFENDER OF THE UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE – IRYNA FARION

Victoria Kopynets

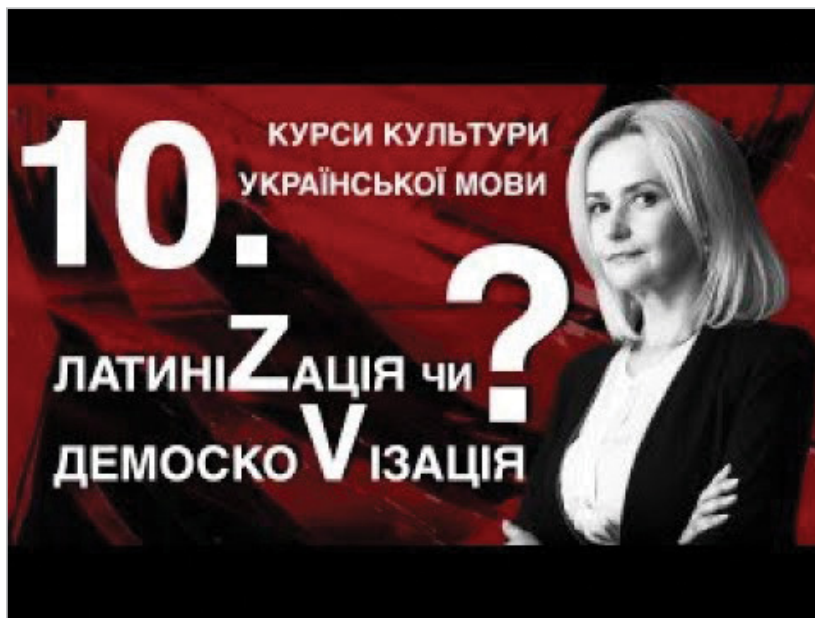
Iryna Farion was a well-known Ukrainian linguist, Doctor of Philology, professor, public figure, Member of Parliament in the 7th convocation of Ukraine, and a blogger. Her distinctive personality sparked both public admiration and resistance, making her a controversial figure in Ukrainian society. Ms. Iryna was widely recognized for her numerous actions in support of the Ukrainian language, as well as for the scandals provoked by her outspoken statements.

However, everyone was shocked by the news of her murder. On July 19, in Lviv, a fatal assassination attempt was made on Iryna Farion using a firearm, after which she was rushed to the hospital in critical condition. Following emergency surgery, she fell into a coma and passed away that evening.

However, who is Iryna Farion? The essential facts of her biography have long been public knowledge. Born on April 29, 1964, in Lviv, into a typical Ukrainian family, she graduated from the Faculty of Philology of the Ivan Franko Lviv State University in 1987. Even as a student, she worked as a laboratory assistant at the Department of General Linguistics and by 1991, she was leading the Center for Ukrainian Studies at the Department of Folkloristics of the same faculty.

It is also well-known that in 1988-1989, the linguist was a member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). Later, she explained that this was a necessary measure purely for academic career advancement and that she joined the party to undermine it from within. From 1990 to 1995, she taught at the Lviv State Institute of Applied Arts (now the Lviv National Academy of Arts), where she gave courses in Ukrainian as a foreign language, the culture of language, and Ukrainian literature.

Throughout her life, Iryna Farion was actively engaged in scholarly activities. In 1996, she defended her candidate's dissertation and earned the degree of Candidate of Philological Sciences, and in 2015, she defended her doctoral dissertation. During her years in



The cover of one of the YouTube lectures on the Farion Studio channel

academia, the linguist authored over 200 scientific articles and four monographs.

Additionally, from 1998 to 2004, she chaired the Language Commission of "Prosvita" at the National University "Lviv Polytechnic." Starting in 1998, she organized the annual language and art competition among students and pupils, "Language – The Foundation of Your Life."

Farion was also the author of the video projects "Against Anglicisms," "Political Review," and "Courses on the Culture of the Ukrainian Language" (more than 60 lectures) on her YouTube channels. In 2019, she launched the project "Gene of Ukrainians" on the NTA TV channel, which highlighted prominent Ukrainians.

For her educational activities, she became a laureate of the All-Ukrainian Boris Hrinchenko Prize, the Ivan Ohienko Prize for scientific achievements, the Oleksa Hirnyk Prize, and many other honors.

The professor was also deeply involved in political activities, the pinnacle of which was her work in parliament. From 2012 to 2014, Iryna Farion was a

Member of Parliament in the 7th convocation of Ukraine and chaired the subcommittee on higher education of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Science and Education.

For decades, the public figure fiercely defended her stance against the use of the Russian language in public places, official events, and in the educational sphere. This often made her the central figure in numerous media scandals. For example, in 2010, during a class dedicated to the problem of national identity, the linguist condemned the "Russification" of Ukrainian names like "Misha" and "Liza": "Never call Marichka 'Masha' because Masha is not our form. Let her go to where the Mashas live. Here she should be Marichka." The video of this event soon went viral in the media, and Russian propaganda quickly seized the opportunity to claim that "Ukrainian nationalists forbid children from using 'Muscovite' names."

In 2013, Ms. Iryna filed a lawsuit against MP Oleksandr Zubchevsky for refusing to speak Ukrainian during a session of the Committee on Education and Science. Additionally, for



Iryna Farion's funeral: several thousand people gathered at the Lychakiv cemetery in Lviv

many years, the linguist frequently commented on the use of the Ukrainian language in the public sphere by officials, academics, journalists, and educators. These views and statements, especially in live broadcasts, were often perceived ambiguously by the public, mainly due to her radical stance and criticism of Russian-speaking Ukrainians.

Perhaps the most significant scandal involving Iryna Farion occurred last year when she harshly criticized Russian-speaking soldiers, particularly those from the 3rd Assault Brigade formed on the basis of the volunteer Azov unit, during an episode of the

program "Rendezvous with Yanina Sokolova." This scandal led to numerous protests and her dismissal from Lviv Polytechnic. However, the most famous "language ombudsman" filed a lawsuit and won it. By May 2024, she was reinstated as a professor at the Department of the Ukrainian Language at the National University "Lviv Polytechnic."

As a public figure, Iryna Farion led several projects on YouTube, where she shared her views on political events, raised funds to support the Armed Forces of Ukraine, and was a frequent guest on other channels. She did all this in her signature radical man-

ner – everything was either black or white, with no compromises.

Nowadays, some people compare Iryna Farion to well-known Ukrainian dissident public figures who also gave their lives defending everything Ukrainian. It is undeniable that she was extremely relevant due to the fact that she raised one of the existential issues of the survival of the Ukrainian nation – the Ukrainian language, which was constantly subjected to Moscow's attempts to destroy it. Millions of Ukrainians will always associate Ms. Iryna as a person who laid down her life defending her native language.

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EVENTS 2024

SEPTEMBER

Ha/Su	Пн/Mo	Вт/Tu	Ср/We	Чт/Th	Пт/Fr	Сб/Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

28 SEP 8TH ANNUAL PARK UKRAINA HIKE & PANAHYDA

Ukrainian American Coordinating Council, St. Michael Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic Church, UNLWA, Ukrainian Heritage Club, Ukrainian School of San Francisco / Українська Школа Сан-Франциско

Where: At the end of Carden Lane, Hayward CA 94542. Next to Stonebrae Elementary School

When: Saturday, 11:15 AM – 3:30 PM

Join us for a wonderful day of Hiking, Remembering and sharing a meal sponsored by UACC.

11:15 - Meet at the End of Carden Lane

11:30 - Begin Hike.

12:15 - Panahyda

1:00 - Hike Back to Carden Lane

1:15 - Lunch at JA Lewis Park!

Join us on Saturday, September 28th at 11:15 a.m at Park Ukraina with Father Georgiy of St. Michael Ukrainian Orthodox Church and Father Roman of Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic Church, UNLWA, Ukrainian American Coordinating Council, Ukrainian Heritage Club and Ukrainian School of San Francisco for our Annual Hike & Panahyda.

We'll hike together to the resting place of Father Agapius Honcharenko where we will have a small memorial service and prayer.

Afterwards, we'll return to J.A. Lewis

Park where we'll share a Repast BBQ together in his honor. Bring your family & friends!

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1051241643188348/>

28 SEP BLOOMING FLOWERS OF PETRYKIVKA – MASTER CLASS WITH SVITLANA IVASYUK | SAN DIEGO

House of Ukraine

Where: Hall of Nations in Balboa Park 2191 West Pan American Rd., San Diego, CA 92101

When: Sunday, 3 PM – 6 PM

Join us for a master class with Ukrainian Petrykivka artist Svitlana Ivasyuk, and experience a Ukrainian artistic tradition that is listed as UNESCO Intangible Heritage.

Svitlana Ivasyuk is American artist of Ukrainian origin who creates amazing artworks in different styles like traditional Ukrainian art of Petrykivka, watercolor, neuro-art, and beadwork. Her artworks are shown in private galleries, museums and private collections all over the US. Recently her watercolor paintings were juried into the show at San Diego Watercolor Society, and one of them earned an Honorable Mention Award. Svitlana enjoys teaching others the magic of art, and has had a numerous workshops and private classes on different styles of painting.

Art of Petrykivka dates back to the 19th century when this painting was widely used in the decorations of the interiors in Petrykivka village, Dnipro region. The distinctive characteristic of Petrykivka is a prevalence of floral patterns, like leaves, flowers, viburnum berries, grapes, blossoms and sunflowers. The most popular colors are red, yellow, green and blue.

During the master class you will learn how to create a real Petrykivka painting from the very beginning. You will get the introduction to the history of famous Ukrainian art of Petrykivka and get practical instructions of painting from an expert artist.

This master class doesn't require any special artistic skills – everyone can participate, with or without experience in painting. However, completed introductory level would be very helpful.

The artist will give you step-by-step instructions and tips and you will practice your brushstroke before painting a picture. Also, you will be working with a unique cat brush that is a handmade brush exclusively used for Petrykivka style. Besides, you will see some beautiful Petrykivka paintings that you may use as an inspiration for your work.

All materials will be provided as well as some refreshments during this master class.

Price is **\$75** for 3-hour master class per person (cash, check or online payment) and includes all supplies. Light refreshments will be served.

Buy your tickets here:

<https://houseofukraine.org/event/blooming-flowers-of-petrykivka/>

There are only 15 spots available and will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Save your spot – pay online today.

All proceeds will go to humanitarian aid to Ukraine.

Please come in advance to save your spot if not paid online.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/856091259821449/>

29 SEP PRESENTATION WITH EXCERPTS FROM THE PERFORMANCES "LES KURBAS. SMART HARLEQUIN" | SAN FRANCISCO

Wandering Stars, Hromada

Where: Ukrainian Hall San Francisco, 110 Brussels St, San Francisco, CA 94134

When: Sunday, 5 PM – 8 PM

The first Ukrainian amateur theater "Wandering Stars" in California (director Olena Bilyak) invites you to its first premiere – a presentation dedicated to the work of Les Kurbas.

We will tell you about the life path and theatrical phenomenon of one of the best directors of the 20th century. Actors of the theater will show excerpts from Mykola Kulish's plays "Narodnii Malachii", "Maklena Grasa", "Mina Mazaylo". The meeting will be held in the cozy and hospitable premises of the Ukrainian Hall in San Francisco. You will be offered coffee, tea and light snacks.

All funds from the event will be directed to the "Angelyk" foundation,

which operates under the umbrella of the non-profit organization "Community" of San Francisco, and will be sent to Ukraine in order to organize celebrations and gifts for the day of St. Nicholas to the orphans of fallen Heroes of the Russian-Ukrainian war.

Spectators will also be able to take part in a charity auction with valuable lots!

Recommended donation amount is \$40. Please transfer the money

directly to the charity fund, do not forget to indicate the number of tickets, the entrance to the hall will be according to the list.

Fund PayPal link:

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=VW3RLKPANHXLU

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1293214841650583/>



Прем'єра першого в Каліфорнії аматорського українського театру «Мандрівні Зірки»

ГРОМАДА

СUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 5 PM - 8 PM

Ukrainian Hall San Francisco,
110 Brussels St, San Francisco, CA 94134

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