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More detailed information on political repressions in Ukraine could be found at «POLIT-TERROR- history of political repressions and violations of human rights in Ukraine» Web-site — polit-terror.info. The mentioned Web-site monitors Ukrainian mass media outlets which publish materials on legal lawlessness demonstrated by Ukrainian authorities. On-line versions of previous issues of bulletin (in Russian, English and German) could be found on the Web-site. The bezsenzury.info (No Censorship), novavlada.info (New Power) and patriot-ua.info (Patriot — Antiglobalist library) will provide with critical publications reflecting problems of external and home policy of Ukraine during president Yushenko tenure.

The «Violation of human rights and political repressions in Ukraine» bulletin is being published in Russian, English and German languages. The last July issues contains two on-line video supplements.

POLITICAL PERSECUTION

Government Stonewalling National Referendum, Denies Public Free Expression

■ **Viktor Medvechuk, the chairman of the Social-Democratic Party of Ukraine (United)* has asserted that the president is acting illegally to block a nationwide referendum on Ukraine entering NATO and partnering with Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan under the framework of the Common Economic Area**. He said:**

«Ukraine has a chance to determine its own fate in conformity with the supreme principle of democracy — free expression of will as guaranteed by the Constitution. The SDPU (U) considers that a referendum would provide the ability to shape the foreign policy of the country in consideration of the opin-

*SDPU (U) - a centrist party headed by Viktor Medvedchuk, former chief of the Presidential Administration. The party is in opposition to the current government.

**SDPU (U) initiated the idea of a referendum on Ukraine's entrance to NATO and partnership with Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan under the framework of the Common Economic Area. On Nov. 24, the SDPU (U) passed the Central Election Commission documents for registration of groups to collect signatures in favor of a referendum. In May 2005, President Yushchenko pledged that the question of Ukraine's membership in NATO and the EU will be discussed in a referendum.



Viktor Medvedchuk

ions and interests of a majority of Ukrainian citizens.

«The antinational foreign policy pursued by the current government has had inevitable consequences, in particular for the country's economy. Curtailing the partnership with Russia and other states within the framework of the CEA, acting against the will of the Ukrainian nation and giving absolutely no thought to consequences, the orange team has already inflicted multibillion losses upon the country.

«Ukraine has already been granted a role in NATO's «sanitary zone» in great geopolitical games in favor of the interests of overseas partners of the current Ukrainian government. This fact has nothing in common with the «European integration course» assiduously proclaimed by the authorities.

«I state that the current administration is pursuing its personal narrow political interests and goals, trying to drag Ukraine into NATO by any means.

«At the same time the presidential team undertakes illegal actions and employs illegal methods in an attempt to frustrate a Ukrainian nationwide referendum regarding Ukraine's entrance into NATO. The Central Election Commission is being pressured by using the «phone call law», administrative and moral pressure with only one goal — to disrupt the process of registering initiative groups and preventing a referendum.

«I resolutely state that we will not allow the Ukrainian nation to be robbed of the right to freely express people's will and the right to determine one's fate independently without instructions from overseas.

«A nationwide referendum about Ukraine joining NATO and partnering with Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan within the framework of the CEA will certainly be held!»

A Statement Issued by the Zaporizhya SDPU (U) Regional Party Committee Says:

«According to a SDPU (U) initiative, early in November the election of initiative groups to collect signatures in favor of a nationwide referendum was held in all regions of Ukraine.

«The need for such elections was stipulated by active operations by the president and the government in doing everything to speed up the process of entering the North Atlantic Alliance, in particular, by adopting a set of documents providing the

allocation of 90 billion hryvnias from the budget to bring the Ukrainian Armed Forces to NATO standards starting from the beginning of 2006.

«The procedure for any country's entrance into NATO stipulates a corresponding referendum. The nation has to choose and determine whether Ukraine shall be part of NATO.

«The Social-Democratic Party of Ukraine is disturbed by the fact that the Central Election Commission violated procedural rules and examined documents from only nine groups out of the papers confirming the conduct of people's assemblies in all regions of Ukraine. Only five groups were registered. We consider that the CEC intentionally delayed the process of registering groups and collecting signatures due to pressure from the authorities».

The Dnipropetrovsk SDPU (U) Regional Party Committee Issued a Statement Saying the Following:

«We have found from reliable sources that N. Deeva, the chairman of the regional state administration, persistently advised mayors of cities in the Dnipropetrovsk region to withdraw documents registering groups to collect signatures in favor of a referendum (for Ukraine's entrance into NATO and partnership within the framework of the CEA) from the Central Election Commission under any pretext.

«We express our resolute protest against such rough violation of the law committed by high-ranking officials in the executive branch of power.

«We also appeal to the regional administration with a request to avoid interfering in the legal activities of city mayors. We ask that it stop creating obstacles to realize the rights of Ukrainian citizens by expressing their opinion on the future of their country — a right guaranteed by the Constitution.

«Signed by Dnipropetrovsk SDPU (U) leader Gennady Gvozdev».

Commenting on the Response by the Government to Initiators of a Ukrainian Referendum, Efim Fiks, parliamentary deputy and secretary of the Crimean SDPU (U) committee, said the following:

«Some Crimean officials recommended that city mayors withdraw documents on a referendum they have already forwarded to the Central Election Commission. I found this from a direct source in recent conversations with city mayors and the executors of this «order».

«I warned them that this is a criminal offence, because such actions contradict the Constitution of Ukraine and block the free expression of the will of the nation. We will not allow the withdrawal of documents on groups from the CEC under administrative pressure».

**Lviv City Council Refuses to Register Referendum for NATO
Ihor Shurma, SDPU (U) deputy chairman stated:**

«The fairness of claims presented by the city council will be checked in court. NATO membership will cost Ukraine more than conducting a referendum on the feasibility of entering the North Atlantic alliance.

In case of a forced entrance into NATO, Ukraine will have to pay nearly 90 billion hryvnias. At the same time 1,500 enterprises belonging to the military industrial complex (which are doing well now), will be ruined and 1.5 million Ukrainians will lose their jobs».

On Dec. 8 the SDPU (U) Press Office Spoke About Attempts to Block a Referendum in the Kherson Region:

«The Central Election Commission has registered 16 groups already. But then the authorities realized that the idea of a referendum is gaining momentum and now they are trying to block it. Acting in such a way they are neglecting laws of Ukraine and becoming unreasonable.

«For instance, the chairman of the Tsurupinsk district council (in the Kherson region) appealed to the Central Election Commission with a request to withdraw a motion to register a group to conduction a nationwide referendum. He wrote the following in his appeal:

«The Tsurupinsk district council, in reference to registering groups, asks that the fact that the question (on a referendum) is not in the best interests of the community of the district be taken into account. That is why, taking into account wide public opinion, I recall my motion».

«It seems that these comments are excessive. Mr. Klevtsov has simply decided to speak on behalf of all citizens of the district and stripped them of their right to participate in determining Ukraine's future».

Attacks on Opposition Party Offices Continue

■ On Dec. 5, the Office of the Krasnoarmeysk SDPU (U) city party committee office (in the Donetsk region) was broken into and the interior destroyed.

According to information from the SDPU (U) press office, someone broke the door, destroyed documents kept in the office of the city party committee, and stole a computer and other office equipment.

It should be noted that the office is located downtown in the same building as the office of the People's Union of Our Ukraine branch. The building also hosts representative offices of other parties, but only the SDPU (U) was hit.

This is the second attack on a SDPU (U) office. On the night of Nov. 28 an attack was launched on the party office located in Brovary city (in the Kyiv region). Unknown assailants stole office equipment and party documents.

Parliamentary Deputy Accuses Authorities of Surveillance of Ukrainian Politicians

■ Stepan Havrysh asserts his office was illegally bugged.

According to the LIGA-Business-Inform Internet site, Havrysh said that on Nov. 27 «experts found equipment that could possibly be used



Stepan Havrysh

for tapping conversations» near his desk.

Havrysh said the equipment was active and working, and its radiation was registered by equipment used to inspect the office. The experts do not exclude the possibility that additional passive eavesdropping systems that could be voice activated could be installed.

«Taking into account the fact that the last inspection of my office was conducted at the beginning of 2005, the devices were activated not later than this spring. This autumn, as a result of multiple appeals to law enforcement agencies of Ukraine, a powerful antenna secretly installed ten meters from my Kyiv apartment (on the roof of a private company) was dismantled», he remarked, adding that experts acknowledged that such a device can be used both for bugging conversation in

the apartment and over the phone, in particular calls made over mobile phones.

«The facts show that the authorities conduct complete surveillance of Ukrainian politicians. The goal is to create a databank for the political persecution of opponents and the sale of data for blackmail which is, unfortunately, going to be a common event in Ukraine. This was confirmed by the president of Ukraine, who when he appointed the Prosecutor General at a collegiate session of the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine, acknowledged that the State Security Service of Ukraine and the Ministry of the Interior conducted more than 10,500 illegal intercepts a year. Viktor Yushchenko has called this political persecution. In addition, the Special Forces receive more than 40,000 permits to intercept conversations. Almost every one of a thousand Ukrainians is being illegally bugged around the clock», stressed Havrysh.

«It has become clear that «statements by the new administration about the rights and freedoms of people represent only cheap populism which conceals a schedule of new victims. The authorities need enemies to harass society in order to justify the poor economy and unprecedented corruption around the head of state».

Havrysh noted that the bugging of his office is «a sign of a new totalitarian system».

The parliamentarian demanded that the Prosecutor General's Office initiate a criminal case to investigate illegal bugging, the influence of radi-

ation on health (if registered by experts), the disassembling of all wiretapping devices in the presence of victims and journalists, the open sharing of information about the case, and the destruction of all materials obtained through eavesdropping.

Former SBU Chief Suspects Government of Political Provocations

■ **Alexander Turchinov, the head of the central headquarters of the Bloc Yulia Tymoshenko* said the following:**

«I know that systematic provocations are being planned and realized against our bloc. The aim of these provocations is to invoke dissatisfaction among Ukrainian citizens and irritation toward the political party led by Yulia Tymoshenko».

According to the Polit-Terror Internet site, Turchinov showed false invitations to an inter-party assembly of the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc and forged invitations to McDonald's restaurants which supposedly offered free treats from the bloc. Turchinov stated that party members have detained distributors of such forged materials:

*Bloc Yulia Tymoshenko - an alliance of political parties headed by Yulia Tymoshenko, former prime minister of Ukraine and Batkivshina Party leader. Alexander Turchinov is a former chairman of the State Security Service of Ukraine.



Alexander Turchinov

«The distributors happened to be supporters and activists in the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists* which is part of the Our Ukraine bloc**».

Commenting on forecasts by political analysts on the danger of escalating political repression in Ukraine as the election gets underway, Turchinov emphasized:

«When Ukraine will start acting within the framework of the Constitution and other laws, we will be able to stop being afraid of political repression. I hope that the current administration will be wise enough not to break any pledges it has given. I hope that the president will become the guarantor of the law not

only for his party's bloc, but for all citizens of Ukraine, and I also hope that the president's entourage will not push him to commit crimes».

600 Opposition Party Members Interrogated this Year

■ Delivering a speech at an assembly of the People's Democratic Party (NDP)*, Serhiy Kunitsyn, the leader of the Crimean branch, said that 600 NDP members were interrogated this year after the presidential election.

According to the Ukraine and World Today newspaper, Kunitsyn stated: «I personally had to sustain 12 interrogations. Seventeen criminal cases were initiated and some party members were jailed. Politically motivated persecution continues in Ukraine. This is inadmissible for a country building a democratic society. NDP members are indignant about such bold actions against their party and demand that guilty officials are punished».

The assembly's delegates appealed to the president to stop political persecution.

*Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists - a right-wing party.

**Viktor Yushchenko Bloc Our Ukraine - an alliance of pro-presidential political parties.

*NDP - a centrist party headed by Valery Putovoienko, a former prime minister of Ukraine.



Petro Symonenko

Government Tries Discrediting Opposition Party

■ **Petro Symonenko, the leader of the Communist Party of Ukraine***, pledged to make public information about SBU involvement in a special project aimed at discrediting his party. He said that the project is being implemented on orders from the Presidential Secretariat.

Symonenko stated that recently during a live program on TV he was asked to sign a document restricting his freedom of speech. Symonenko expressed his indignation about freedom of speech in mass media outlets. It can be stated that

*Communist Party of Ukraine.

the new administration will pursue sophisticated means of political struggle to neutralize the Communist Party of Ukraine.

Opposition Party States Start of Election Campaign Marked with Wave of Police Lawlessness and Political Blackmail

■ **The Communicative Informative Department (CID) Internet site publicized information in order to prevent illegal action against an opposition leaders and other citizens. Here is a chronologic sequence of the events (abridged version).**

«Dec. 7. An anonymous source said that a brigade of Ministry of Interior employees (18 officers — six from Kyiv and 12 from Luhansk) were dispatched to the Donetsk region to obtain testimony by any means against Boris Kolesnikov, the chairman of the Donetsk regional council and regional branch of the

*Centrist party headed by Viktor Yanukovych, a former prime minister of Ukraine. The party is in opposition to the current government. Boris Kolesnikov, Party of Regions member, was in detention from April 6 to Aug. 2, 2005. He was released under recognizance not to leave his permanent place of residence. His allies consider his detention as revenge upon a representative of the opposition.



Boris Kolesnikov

Party of Regions*, from two illegally detained people.

«The detained people are in no way associated with Kolesnikov and never met him. According to information provided by the source, the people are former law enforcement officers abducted near the capital of the region in Donetsk.

«Judging by the details from the source, the information sounds true. If it is true, then the people who encountered the interrogation from the officers shall be saved.

«The parliamentary election campaign has just started and the list of candidates of the Party of Regions has been published. Boris Kolesnikov was tenth on the list as it suits one of the party's leaders. As the criminal case against him is not closed yet, he may be a tempting target for a dirty blackmailing game — maybe from Interior Min-

ister Yuriy Lutsenko or perhaps those around him.

«December 8. Our source has named the detained people today. Their surnames are Shilov and Shuchkin. They are former law enforcement officers and worked in the transport police. They have been in cells at a police precinct for three days. Now, according to information provided by our source, a third detainee named Fageev has joined them.

«Our source says that all of them were taken away from Donetsk. They are being kept in a pre-trial detention center either in Kyiv, or in Brovary*. He also states that Serhiy Kornich — chief of the department dealing with organized corruption at the Ministry of the Interior — is in charge of the operation.

«The source is also asking the relatives of the detainees to come immediately or to call the Donetsk regional advocates board. He said that the board is ready to provide them with free legal representation.

«December 10. Mass media outlets received information from the Public Relations Center of the Ministry of the Interior in the Donetsk region, and then from Serhiy Prokopenko, the chief of the department fighting organized crime in the Donetsk region, saying that «no Lutsenko brigades» from Kyiv or Donetsk have ever come here, abducted people or squeezed testimony against Boris Kolesnikov, the chairman of the Donetsk regional council.

«This was the reply to the infor-

*Suburb of Kyiv.

mation provided by our anonymous source. Now see how he reacted to the data distributed by law enforcement agencies.

«At first, he was indignant at the comments made by Prokopenko because his information is based on facts which were mainly acknowledged by Prokopenko in his comments.

«As for Prokopenko's words — «the investigation is being conducted in observance of procedural norms and within the framework of the law» — the source states that according to his information, procedural norms are being violated. He asks the following question — if everything is going on in observance of the law, then why were lawyers not allowed to visit the detainees and relatives were not informed where they were? They have already spent seven days behind bars and they have no access to lawyers. No one has any idea about their exact location.

«The source has a simple reply to these questions — this is an old trick employed by the organized crime department to obtain necessary testimony first, and only then to register the detention.

«The source continues to assert that Kornich demanded that his subordinates conduct the operation in order to maintain status of a victim for Boris Penchuk*. The issue is that everything develops in such a way that Penchuk and his accomplices will have to be brought to



Yuriy Lutsenko

account for fabricating the criminal case against Kolesnikov. Kornich and his deputy may become accomplices because they know that when Kolesnikov's case is closed Penchuk will be automatically transformed from a victim into an accused and then Kornich (and other fabricators of Kolesnikov's case) will also face criminal liability

«The source regrets that law enforcement officers have to waste time working with such orders because if the order was really given by Lutsenko, then they should remember that Lutsenko will have a deputy's immunity with the help of a certain party in three months and will not have to face any charges. And here is a big question — what will the people engaged in making trumped-up charges that have no deputy's ID do? The source supposes that they will be behind

*Boris Kolesnikov is charged with "extortion with threat of murder" for the extortion of White Swan shares belonging to Penchuk V.A. and Penchuk B.V.

bars and asks law enforcement officers who are being pressured to falsify this case and squeeze testimony from people to wake up».

Kyiv Lawyers Charge Kyiv Organized Crime Department with Torture of People Detained in Kolesnikov Case

On Dec. 14 the Ostrov Internet site said that former officers Alexander Shuchkin, Serhiy Fateev and Yevhen Shilov sustained torture to provide testimony against Boris Kolesnikov, the chairman of the Donetsk regional council.

The information was released by Irina Markova and Ihor Olegov, the lawyers representing the detainees, at a press conference in Donetsk.

The lawyers said that the detention looked more like abduction. For instance, Shuchkin was abducted on Dec. 6 at Privokzalnaya Square in Donetsk. He was driven to a forest where seven officers beat him, electrocuted him, gave him no chance to sleep, and deprived him of food and water for more than a day. Markova, Shuchkin's lawyer, said that her client is seriously ill as he suffers from cancer and diabetes. The many hours of torture may have seriously worsened his health. Markova was not allowed to have a medical examination of her client.

The goal of the harassment, the lawyers stated, was to force the detainees to testify that they organized an attack on Boris Penchuk, one of the co-owners of White Swan as ordered by Kolesnikov.

The lawyers said that the detainees had no access to them

and relatives were not informed about their detention.

The lawyers think that these actions were blatantly illegal. The lawyers said that until now the investigation failed to place any charges.

The lawyers appealed with a complaint to Interior Minister Yuriy Lutsenko, asking for the release of Shuchkin and Fateev (Shilov was released after spending a night in a jail) and «to conduct an internal investigation to charge the people who have committed severe violations of the law during the detention and pre-trial investigation».

Olegov said that Shilov now constantly receives threatening phone calls from unidentified people: «Shilov said that he receives calls saying that if he continues appealing to various institutions with complaints, then he and his family (including his pregnant wife) will regret it».

Markova said that today Shilov's wife, who is in the 40th week of her pregnancy, was hospitalized in Donetsk city hospital #3 with premature labor pains. «She is now in the intensive care ward. A premature delivery has happened and her condition is critical».

According to the Party of Regions press office, Parliamentary Ombudsman Nina Karpachova visited one of the detained in the Kyiv ambulance clinic today. She will personally monitor this case. The statement issued by the Party of Regions says:

«The beginning of the election campaign was marked with a new wave of police lawlessness and polit-

ical blackmail. We are deeply indignant that police, which should be apolitical, are used as a tool of pressure on Boris Kolesnikov, the chairman of the Donetsk regional branch of the Party of Regions.

«When everyone realized that the case had been falsified, its organizers plunged into falsifying a new case about an attack on the notorious Boris Penchuk.

«Acting in a sophisticated and cynical manner, the organizers and falsifiers of the Kolesnikov case again try to blacken the public image of the opposition party leader in the opinion of society and voters by any means.

«We appeal to Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko and Prosecutor General Alexander Medvedko with a request for an immediate assessment of the activities by the Ministry of the Interior and Minister Yuriy Lutsenko. We appeal to the guarantor of the Constitution for an urgent intervention in this situation to put a stop to police lawlessness».

The Party of Regions supplemented the appeal with a complaint by A. Shilov. Here are some excerpts:

«...I was literary abducted from my car by Ukrainian law enforcement officers who put a dark cloth sack on my head and delivered me to the organized crime department of the Interior Ministry in the Donetsk region. I spent more than a day in the office.

«During that period I was subjected to repeated torture, harassment and beatings. They slipped a gas mask on my head, cutting of the air supply. They poisoned me with asphyxiating gas, beat me and

electrocuted me. All these things were followed by abuses and mockery.

«I spent those hours blindfolded. Moreover, at least five police officers gave me no chance to eat or sleep.

«They pressed me to provide «necessary» testimony for the Interior Ministry about the participation of my friend Alexander Shuchkin in a crime against Penchuk allegedly committed in 1999.

«All my explanations that I had no knowledge were neglected and the torture continued with redoubled energy.

«The criminal department officers and Interior Ministry officials hoped that I would be unable to stand the pain and harassments and would provide them with the necessary testimony.

«I have no idea how long this horror could have lasted if it were not for the intervention of lawyers and relatives (my and Shuchkin's relatives).

«...Shuchkin is a disabled person. He suffers from cancer and diabetes. He needs insulin shots every three hours and he has not received any for a long time. However, paramedics were not allowed to examine us.

«Due to threats, psychological and physical pressure I was forced to sign a document stating that I have no complaints about the actions of the law enforcement officers. At the same time I was threatened that otherwise I would never be released. Being afraid for my life, health and my family, I had to sign the paper».

Judges Assert that Governor Interferes with Courts and Discredits Professionals

■ A second consecutive appeal to the president was forwarded by the Council of Judges of local courts and courts of appeal from the Rovneskiy region. The first appeal addressed to Viktor Yushchenko and managers of state law enforcement agencies of the state complained about the lack of solving crimes against judges and asked that investigation of such cases be monitored. The second appeal is a complaint regarding Vasily Chervony, the chairman of the Rovenskiy regional state administration.

According to the Rovno Vechee newspaper, the statement says:

«Chervony, boldly violating the requirements of Article 6 of the Constitution of Ukraine on the independence of each branch of power, constantly interferes with the courts with the purpose of suborning regional judges by appointing loyal people without considering of their professional qualities.

«Chervony should know that for at least the last three decades no regional judges were brought up on corruption charges or bribery. Judges are abused by Chervony's accusations like the one cited — «courts of the Rovenskiy region have the status of private companies» and by his statement that the «situation in regional courts demands surgical interference». Judges are certain



Vasil Bertash

that such statements «are nothing but the infringement of the rights of the judicial branch of power with the purpose of damaging its authority».

«The chairman of the regional state administration wants to discredit the regional judiciary in order to distract attention from the fact that among people he has appointed as chiefs of departments or deputies are those who were charged for committing misdemeanors in office. In addition, some are listed in recently compiled protocols about corruption».

«The regional judges are indignant at the behavior of the chairman of the regional state administration who has boldly interfered with the activities of the judicial branch of state power. Article 376 of the Criminal Code stipulates criminal charges for such violations. They consider that Chervony «does this intentionally in order to belittle the status of

regional judges». They ask the president «to explain to Chervony the essence of the Constitution and the notion of an independent judiciary in a democratic society». They have reserved the right to appeal their complaints about the chairman of the regional state administration to international legal institutions.

«V. Bertash, the chairman of the Rovenskiy regional branch of the Party of Regions, in an interview with the Ukrpartinform.com Internet site stated that «since the appointment of Vasily Chervony as chairman of the regional state administration, losers-revolutionaries have come to power at all levels, replacing professionals. More than a thousand of professionals in various fields are being pressured. They are being criticized by Volyn newspaper which publishes lists of «enemies of the nation» in each issue.

Interior Minister Threatens to Boot Protesting Students

■ **Alexander Eremenko, a police lieutenant-colonel and an associate professor of legal philosophy and cultural sciences at Luhansk University of the Interior, stood up for a university rector dismissed due to political motives. He said the following in an article distributed by the Rakurs Plus Internet site:**

«The dismissal of Eduard Didorenko, the rector of the Luhansk University of the Interior, and the appointment of a new rector by Interior Minister Yuriy



Eduard Didorenko

Lutsenko left a bad taste. It confirmed to me that the politics of double standards is not only working — this is a triumphal moment for it.

«Lutsenko insisted that the dismissal of Didorenko was not connected to politics. I doubt this statement. Otherwise, how can one explain the fact that the Luhansk University won every lawsuit against the Luhansk department of internal security at the Ministry of the Interior? How can one explain the fact that there was no corpus delicti found in the actions of the university administration?

«How can one analyze the demand to send protesting students back to class* so that they complete their studies? Lutsenko manifested no such zeal in sending students from Maidan back to Kyiv universities*, which are public as is the

*Yuriy Lutsenko, the minister of the interior, visited LUVU to present the new rector of the higher education establishment. He was met by pickets organized by students protesting the dismissal and persecution of former rector Didenko, a colonel-general, professor and member of the Academy of Law of Ukraine, who had dedicated almost 50 years to police service and 30 years to science. Delivering his speech in the hall where students stayed, Lutsenko, according to the Molodogvardeets newspaper, said: "Who is the deputy rector responsible for studies? Stand up and send the students to class. We do not have to spoil the process of studies."

Luhansk University. Some may say that the students came to Maidan because of some spiritual values, but I consider such statements abusive. Does that mean that Kyiv youngsters have «wonderful impulses» while Luhansk ones only demonstrate directed indignation?

«Several students told me that during their protest action the minister advised them to disperse if they did not want to be dismissed from the university. I will not reveal the names of the students who told me.

«I consider it my duty to assert that if even one of our protestors is dismissed, then all talks on movement toward Europe, the supremacy of law and a law-abiding state shall be considered to be black humor demonstrated by our «dear revolutionary» administration. This will be an indisputable confirmation of the victorious march of Ukraine toward a state of even greater lack of citizens' rights and abuse of office by the authorities».

According to 2000 weekly, the administration previously tried to fire the unwanted rector by initiating several criminal cases against him. The cases fell apart. 2000 weekly describes the development of the situation (abridged version):

«On Aug. 2, officers of the internal security department at the Interior

*A tent camp hosting hundreds of students - representatives of various universities of Ukraine - was installed at the central Independence Square in Kyiv during the 2004 presidential election. Students also took an active part in other mass political actions in support of Viktor Yushchenko.

Ministry in the Luhansk region headed by Michael Pritula and backed by special Sokol police attacked the Luhansk University of the Interior and the Charitable Foundation for Fostering Education and Professional Training of Employees of the Ministry of the Interior in the Luhansk Region.

«They confiscated documents belonging to the academy and foundation for nearly two days. The documents were transported by two cars. The next day UT-1 TV* stated that students at the academy «paid for education to private pockets» for four years.

«These accusations fell to pieces in courts. The first case charged the chief of the financial and economic department at the university. The second case was linked with bringing officials of the Luhansk University and charitable foundation to account for forgery in public office. The third case was initiated for seizure of property by deceit or by breach of trust against the chairman of board of the charitable foundation. The fourth case was linked with providing intentionally untrue information by officials of the university and the charitable foundation to obtain loans...

«In the end, no crimes were revealed. What about the alleged and publicized theft of 10 million hryvnias? The courts examined five lawsuits with complaints of illegal actions undertaken by Pritula and his subordinates.

«The administration of the university has a major problem now in how to restore its honest image.

*Central Ukrainian TV channel reflecting the politics of the government.

«It was found in court that the raid that confiscated documents with the backup of the Sokol special police department, in Lutsenko's opinion, was a «routine preventive inspection» of the business activities of the Luhansk University of the Interior.

«Probably such an attentive attitude by law enforcement agencies to the university rector was invoked by the fact that this April, Eduard Didenko, police colonel-general and deputy of the regional council, refused to chair the deputies' headquarters set up «for the dismissal of Viktor Tikhonov, the chairman of the regional council». Moreover, he invited Tikhonov to the graduation assembly and later he and his fellow lawyers rendered their help in describing differences between notions of «federalism» and «separatism».

School Directors Forced to Sign Resignations. The Chairman of the District State Administration Threatens Reporter

■ The Social-Democrat newspaper says 28 school directors out of a total of 32 were recently fired in the Rachov district in the Transcarpathian region. An abridged version follows:

*Viktor Tikhonov, the chairman of the Luhansk regional council, was one of the first people accused of infringement of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. Criminal charges against Tikhonov were initiated soon after Viktor Yushchenko's inauguration and are characterized by Tikhonov's allies as a political repression.

«Teachers are still afraid of the «democratic» administration. They ask not to disclose their names because they fear for their children, relatives and close friends who are being threatened as well. We'd like to cite a story told by a teacher anonymously».

«I was fired as school director by an order issued by the education department of the Rachov district state administration on Aug. 25, 2005, allegedly at my «own behest».

«However, I was only summoned to Ihor Moroz, the chief of the education department, on Aug. 30. Moroz demanded that I resign because I allegedly failed to comply with my duties. I signed the note under pressure.

«I have been working as a school director since 1991 and for all those years I always tried to improve both the internal and external condition of the school. I have rendered moral support to the teachers and I always met any demands and requests from parents and teachers. I have tried to create the best possible conditions for children's education and for fruitful work by teachers. There were no complaints about me and I always had warm and friendly relations with schoolchildren, their parents and teachers. That is why I consider the actions undertaken by officials of the education department at the Rachov district state administration as extremely unjust and illegal».

«The editorial board has several similar letters containing a common touch — a feeling of acute abuse at being forced to resign or being fired without any explanation...»

«Marina Galamba, the editor-in-

chief of Uzhgorod* newspaper Vesti Nedelya Center, who has contacted the chairman of the district state administration on behalf of the Center of Journalistic Investigations at the request of teachers who suffered from arbitrary actions by district authorities, received a bit of advice from Moroz — «Do not poke your nose» in his «education sphere». He threatened that he would order the city prosecutor to check Uzhgorod defenders of «counterrevolutionaries» in the Rachov education system.

«We have no idea whether Moroz has really given an order to the prosecutor, but he managed to force some local officials to hunt down the reporter. The young woman was coming back to Uzhgorod by a commuter minibus and was stopped by border guards at a checkpoint near Delovoye village. They tried to detain her as a «suspicious» person, but she was supported by the bus driver and other passengers.

«We do not know what the role of Moroz, an «ardent fighter for freedom and democracy», was in the but no one (besides him) threatened our employee in Rachov. That is why we are forced to appeal to the corresponding institutions requesting protection for a journalist who fulfills her legal, professional and social duties.

«Officers of the local department for grave crimes at the Ministry of the Interior are also engaged in the «establishment of order» in the education sphere of the Rachov district. In company with the chief of the district police department they have visited houses of school directors and

their relatives. They have taken passports and workbooks away from frightened people.

«People are numb with fear. They are being threatened with criminal charges and jail. Even in the courtroom, without any embarrassment at the presence of the judge and representatives of the editorial board, Moroz threatened teachers with prosecutors, police and criminal charges because the humiliated people dared to appeal for court protection.

«How can people have no fear if teachers were really thrown behind bars in Mukachevo? One of them even attempted suicide.

«The wave of illegal repression at last has reached the social workers of the territorial center for managing job placement and social protection. Women who have selflessly assisted helpless disabled people and sick veterans for miserable salaries were thrown into the street without any reason or explanation».

Presidential Party Representatives Beat Opposition Party Member Protecting Teenagers Who Decorated City with Opposition Symbols

■ According to 2000 weekly, Arsen Klinchaev (Party of Regions member, journalist and chairman of the city trade union of entrepreneurs) was hospitalized in Luhansk city hospital with a brain concussion, damaged kidneys and smashed ribs.

*Uzhgorod - a regional center.



The incident took place near the building of the regional council where a group of teenagers were decorating trees with blue ribbons.

Andrei Nedovesov, the chairman of the regional branch of the People's Union of Our Ukraine, happened to be there. He was accompanied by eight athletic men. They arrived in two foreign cars. He

approached the youngsters with a camera and took several shots. He asked who they were, where they came from and who paid for their work. Having found out that the boys were doing their job not for money but due to their beliefs, he demanded they take down the ribbons. When the teenagers refused that's when everything started....

«When they twisted my arms, Nedovesov shouted: «Scoundrels, rascals! I will force you to take these ribbons down with your teeth», Klinchaev recalled. «I tried to push him aside, but his bodyguard poked his gun at my head saying: «We will teach you to love Ukraine!»

Klinchaev asserts that the gun poked at his head was a real firearm. As a retired officer decorated with medal «For Valor» he can distinguish a real gun from a gas handgun or a pistol firing resin bullets.

«Having realized that Nedovesov's team arrived with a particular goal,



Arsen Klinchaev



Alexander Efremov

out of fear for the young boys Klinchaev shouted: «Drive away, I will tackle the issue myself».

«But they did not let the youngsters leave. Nedovesov blocked the road and when the old Moskvich car started backing up, he jumped on the hood and began jumping up and down. The hood still bears dents from his feet. At the same time he shouted obscene words at the driver.

«To prevent any escape, Nedovesov's accomplices blocked

the Moskvich with their foreign cars.

«Naturally, the driver did not want to ram the expensive SUV and paid dearly for his decision. He was dragged out of the car and beaten. After that the attackers jumped into their cars and quickly left the scene.

«The victims spent nearly three hours with the police filing a complaint. Police officers started doing something only when Klinchaev said he was a reporter at ZAO LOT TV Company.

«The beaten driver of the Moskvich car was also summoned to police and for several hours they tried to persuade him to retract the complaint. He is also in the hospital now.

«I am amazed by the position of our police», Alexander Efremov, the leader of the Party of Regions regional branch remarked at the press conference. «People suffered as a result of the incident. This is exactly one of those cases when law enforcement agencies shall reveal the truth. However, both people who really suffered were told at the Leninsky district police department that the «case has no prospects».

ABUSE OF OFFICE BY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND COURTS

The Number of Verdicts by the European Court against Ukraine has Significantly Increased this Year

■ Starting from the beginning of 2005 the European Court for Human Rights has ruled 66 times against Ukraine and 23 of them have already come to force. In 2001 and 2002 the court ruled only twice against Ukraine, in 2003 seven times, and 13 times in 2004.

According to the Ukrainskie Novosti information agency, 17 Ukrainians shall receive reimbursements for delays in examining their cases in courts. The total amount of the reimbursement due is 29,900 euros. There are five plaintiffs from Donetsk and the Donetsk region, six from Chernihiv, one resident of the Luhansk region, dwellers of Khmelnytsky and Kyiv and a family from Eupatoria. In 2005, the European Court acknowledged the violation of the rights of Viktor Gorshkov (a Simferopol resident) who was released from a psychiatric facility two years later than he should have been. The court has also obliged Ukraine to pay 2,200 euros to Alexander Stryzhak (a Dnipropetrovsk resident) and 1,700 euros to

Alexander Kechko (a Donetsk region resident) who complained about illegal actions by Ukrainian judges.

Human Rights Activists Accuse Presidential Secretariat and Prosecutor General's Office of Harboring Offenders in the State Department for the Execution of Punishment

■ A Ukrainian human rights Web portal published a statement by Hennady Zherdev, a representative of the International Society for Human Rights — Ukrainian Section, forwarded to the European Court for Human Rights and addressed to the president of Ukraine and the chief of correctional labor colony SVK-92 located in the Umansky district of the Cherkassy region. In his statement he accuses the Presidential Secretariat and the Prosecutor General's Office of harboring offenders working in the Department for the Execution of Punishment. His statement contains the following:

«Appellant Sergey Davydov is currently incarcerated in labor colony SVK-92. He has informed me that he will be transferred to another penitentiary. However, he thinks that State Department for the Execution of Punishment and the administration of the correctional labor colony have other plans for him. He thinks are

preparing to discredit him in order to try him (with the ultimate goal of isolating him), or kill him using other prisoners. A similar provocation was set up for Davydov on March 6, 2005, but it failed due to support from several people, including my actions aimed at publicizing the events.

«The State Department has blocked my correspondence with appellant Vitaly Ilchenko for two years already. He is incarcerated in a correction labor colony in the Donetsk region called EIK-52 and I am not able to receive his authorization demanded by court.

«The appellants sustain constant pressure: physical, moral and psychological. They are constantly being harassed and beaten. They are constantly blamed for various offences in order to have pretexts for regular punishment. Unbearable conditions have been created for them. A lot of appellants are unable to sustain pressure and wrote retraction of previous multiple complaints.

«However, not only the appellants receive threats. Those who correspond with them, including me, are also threatened. These threats made by state department officers were described in explanatory notes provided by Ilchenko. I forwarded copies of the notes to the court last year.

«I appeal to the Prosecutor General's Office and the Presidential Secretariat, with the European Court as a witness, and say if something happens to these appellants, you will be blamed. You are responsible for harboring criminals working in the state department. Only you, in violation of the law, forward complaints about the state department to the state

department. You are sending complaints about criminals to criminals! Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko is personally responsible for the existence of such a Secretariat and Prosecutor General in Ukraine».

Judges Blame Minister of Justice and Other Ranking Officials for Discrediting Court System

■ According to the UNIAN information agency, Justice Minister Serhiy Holovaty said the following at a press conference:

«Ukrainian courts do nothing about the supremacy of the law despite the fact that they represent a component of the system. More and more we observe court actions which are incompatible with the notion of the supremacy of law. Ukraine has failed to adjust the mechanism of provision of fairness of justice as well as free access of human beings to fairness in court».

The minister explained that he was talking about certain cases of abuse of office by judges, delays in examining cases, unfair verdicts and irresponsibility by judges.

In turn, the Kyiv Council of Judges published an open letter addressed to the president, the

*The president dismissed Sviatoslav Piskun as prosecutor general by a decree dated Oct. 14. On Nov. 18, the Shevchenkivsky District Court of Kyiv ruled that the dismissal of Piskun by the president was illegal.

parliamentary speaker, the prime minister, the chairman of the Supreme Court and the chairman of the Council of Judges. The statement says the following:

«Recently high-ranking state officials, parliamentary deputies, representatives of the executive branch of power and other politicians made statements in mass media outlets evaluating a resolution in the Sviatoslav Piskun lawsuit against the president of Ukraine adopted by the Shevchenkivsky district court of Kyiv on Nov. 18, 2005*.

«These statements contain traces of interference with the process of case examination and pressure applied to courts. Such things witness rough violations of the provisions of Articles 8, 126 and 129 of the Constitution of Ukraine, the European Convention for Human Rights, and basic principles of the independence of courts approved by the UN General Assembly.

«All state and other institutions shall respect the independence of courts and abide by this constitutional provision. There shall be no illegal or unauthorized interference with justice.

«The events going on in Ukraine now show that representatives of the authorities purposefully act to discredit courts and manifest overt disrespect to the judicial branch. The representatives of the court system shall enjoy the trust of society and to ensure this they shall be protected from destructive attacks».

Journalists Suspect Prosecutors of Intentional Delay in Investigating Case of Interference with their Professional Activities

■ **Reporters of Kherson newspaper Vgoru, who had their tape recorder and camera taken away in public by law enforcement officers assert that four months of investigating the case has had no results. Vgoru states the following:**

«On July 12 an offence was committed against Vgoru reporters Nataliya Kozarenko and Maxim Soloviev — interference with their professional activities and even seizure of a tape recorder and camera.

«Later on the equipment was returned, but there were no tape in the recorder and no flash card in the camera. Police officers were present but when we approached them asking for help, they made no move and did nothing to ascertain the names of the attackers.

«We filed a complaint about the offence with police the same day. In 10 days we received a reply stating that no case would be initiated.

«The regional prosecutor's office cancelled the resolution and passed the case to the Suvorovsky district prosecutor's office for another investigation.

«Judging by the events, senior investigator O. Zhakomin, who passed an illegal resolution, committed a lot of drawbacks, because

Dmitry Sheshenko appointed instead of him to investigate this case was unable to examine the case properly in four months. The investigation is not complete. However, the newly appointed investigator failed to interrogate all witnesses and fulfill all necessary investigative actions. Is it a coincidence, or maybe prosecutors are not interested in revealing the truth?»

Teacher's House Illegally Searched

■ **The Krymskoe Vremya newspaper published a letter from Lyudmila Reva, a teacher of mathematics at Eupatorian School # 16 with 30 years of experience, who complained about representatives of law enforcement agencies. They searched her house in a flagrant violation of the law. We offer an abridged version of the letter with comments provided by Mark Agatova, a prominent Crimean publicist and author of several books.**

«When I was absent, camouflaged and black-masked people with machineguns burst into my house. They were a special police detachment assigned to drug dealers and searching for drugs.

«My father, Nikita Morkus, who was born in 1928, was dragged undressed from his bed by the masked police officers and taken out into the yard. They constantly waved guns near his face and explaining nothing to him.

«My son-in-law, Dmitry Popov, a

graduate of Moscow State University, was dragged from the house into the yard and placed on a bench near my parents. He was only wearing underwear and socks and spent half an hour at the frosty yard handcuffed.

«When the operation was complete, they told the police officers that they had to leave some paper or a copy of the search. The man «V» replied that he «owed nothing to us» and that we «should have been happy that they did not find what they were looking for».

«They looked for drugs. I would like to draw your attention to the fact that my mother sustained an illegal body search and a search of her personal belongings. A policewoman ordered my mother to come inside a cold barn, ordered her to take off all her clothes and thoroughly examined them.

«At that moment at approximately 4:00 p.m. my daughter returned home from work. When she saw that her grandma felt sick due to a drastic increase in blood pressure as a result of the shock and humiliation, she decided to call an ambulance. However, the police officers would not allow her to touch the phone. Only after my mother was unable to stand and sat down and started groaning, did they agree to call an ambulance. When doctors have arrived there was no chance to treat her because police officers did not let my mother come out of the cold barn. My mother is a war veteran, a labor veteran and a disabled person who has sustained surgery five times.

«I sincerely hope that your news-

paper will help us and other decent citizens to at least slow down the lawlessness organized everywhere by rascals with the authorities. I hope that you will help us perceive the fairness which is discussed a lot, despite the fact that few people have found it.

«L. Reva, N. Reva, T. Morkus, N. Morkus, D. Popov and V. Popov»

Mark Agatov comments:

«So what was the reason for searching the house of a law-abiding family of a teacher in Eupatoria? The reason was dubious testimony from a drug addict detained by police. He stated that he purchased drugs from an «elderly woman».

«I have talked with friends of Lyudmila Reva, her colleagues and former prosecutors who knew her family well. All of them unanimously stated that members of her family never participated in anything illegal. They called the search of her house «police lawlessness».

«I have personally passed documents and a request for information with a demand to initiate a criminal case against the officers who conducted the arbitrary search to Crimean Autonomous Republic prosecutor A. Domnikov, who has pledged to conduct a thorough investigation of the case.

«I also ask our honored minister of the interior to inform the nation when illegal practices by law enforcement agencies will be stopped in Ukraine, and who will be brought to account for the illegal search of the house of the teacher from Eupatoria».

SBU Detainees Police Officers for Extorting Bribes to Release of People Detained On Trumped-Up Charges

■ The Odessa regional SBU department detained five local police officers for extorting bribes.

In an interview with Facity newspaper, Volodymyr Romanenko, the chief of the regional SBU department press office, said that «the detention of a commanding officer of a department of the Ministry of the Interior in the Odessa region and his deputy was preceded by an inspection conducted at the end of October. SBU officers revealed a criminal plot by local police.

«So, having «influenced» an Odessa resident, policemen asked him to pass a matchbox allegedly filled with drugs to one of his pals. The ultimate goal of the plot by the police officers was the extortion of a bribe to «release» of a citizen detained with drugs. The SBU officers arrested both officers at the moment when they received a \$200 bribe in marked notes.

«A similar version of enrichment was used by three field officers working in Odessa district police departments. Romanenko said they organized the sale of heroin. After selling drugs they detained the buyer and psychologically abused him in their office located at the premises of the district police department, pushing him hard to pay ransom. The three law enforcement officers were detained accepting a \$1,370 bribe.

«The scheme was curious for the fact that police officers intentionally created and organized legal offences by citizens — the alleged storage of drugs», the SBU representative emphasized.

Criminal Case Initiated Against Law Enforcement Officers for Torturing Suspect

■ **The regional prosecutor's office in the Odessa region initiated a criminal case of abuse of office and official authority by police officers, and the illegal detention and beating of innocent people.**

In an interview with Facy I Kommentarii newspaper, Alexander Galkin, deputy prosecutor general and Odessa regional prosecutor, said that a relative of a detained person appealed to the prosecutors' office with a complaint of abuse of office and official authority by officers of the Odessa regional drug enforcement agency of the Ministry of the Interior. The results of an inspection, including checks conducted by the department of internal security of the regional police department confirmed that six officers of the regional drug enforcement agency detained a person suspected of armed assault and possession of drugs, accompanied by three other citizens during investigative activities. The detained were delivered to the police precinct where they were beaten by the police officers. In order to obtain a confession,

the policemen poured boiling water on the legs of a suspect. Such «interrogations» resulted in the hospitalization of the tortured suspect in the city burn center with major burns to both legs. According to forensic medical examinations, the other three detained suspects had slight bodily injuries including bruises and scratches. One of them had two broken ribs and an eye injury.

After the beating the suspects were thrown into a pre-trial detention center in the custody of the Odessa city department of the Ministry of the Interior. Later three of them were released and the suspect delivered from the hospital admitted his guilt to several grave crimes. However, he refused to incriminate himself with the purchase and storage of drugs. He said that the drug enforcement agency officers planted the drugs on him.

«In addition, a check of the complaint revealed an array of rough violations by the police officers including the right to a defense because the detainees had no access to a lawyer and their relatives were not informed of the detention», the prosecutor remarked.

Acting Odessa Prosecutor Serhiy Danilin initiated a criminal case according to the complaint and uncovered facts. The charges are associated with sections of articles of the Criminal Code of Ukraine «Abuse of Office or Abuse of Official Authority by a Law Enforcement Officer» and «Abuse of Office or Abuse of Official Authority Accompanied with Violence, Use of Weapons or Actions Painful or Abusing the Human Dignity of a Person».

Human Rights Activists State that Police Force Detainees to Sign No-Complaint Receipts

■ **The Poltava Regional Media Club human rights watch organization appealed to the minister of the interior and the chief of police department in the Poltava region B. Kernitsky with the following request:**

«Unfortunately, the anniversary of the orange revolution was not marked with achievements in the sphere of providing basic rights and freedoms of human beings in Ukraine and in the fight against corruption.

«This fact is especially noticeable for human rights activists and independent mass media outlets that our citizens consider to be the last resort for assistance and protection.

«We are not seeing fewer complaints about the bureaucracy and aloof officials at all levels, or about the inability to find fairness in courts and prosecutors' offices. The number of complaints about violent and humiliating attitudes at law enforcement agencies has not lessened either.

«The public states that there has been no change in the activities of law enforcement agencies despite the change in administration.

«In the process of examining citizens' complaints about maltreatment the most cynical thing is the reference of high-ranking law enforcement officials to the fact that complainants have allegedly personally signed receipts that they have no claims about police.

«Law enforcement officers are

always the initiators of such receipts taken in order to prevent citizens from complaining about illegal police actions to ensure immunity. Such receipts are quite frequently forced from people and detainees are not released until they sign such receipts.

The Poltava Regional Media Club demands that the Poltava regional police department and the leaders of the Ministry of the Interior immediately cease the practice of obtaining such receipts from detainees in any form (either under pressure or not). The Media Club demands the issuance of an official corresponding resolution which shall not only be passed to ministry personnel, but also made public by means of mass media outlets. Journalists will be ready to assist in this cause.

«Such a resolution will bear witness to a real desire by leaders of law enforcement agencies to cease torture and humiliation of human dignity, striving to observe rights guaranteed by Article 3 of the European Convention for Human Rights and Article 28 of the Constitution of Ukraine.

«We'd like other Ukrainian human rights activists to support this appeal».

Fired Law Enforcement Agency Commander Protects Rights in Court

■ **Gennady Abramchuk, the fired commander of the Berkut special police regiment is going to protect his rights in court.**

According to the Segodnya newspaper, he was fired at the end of October 2005 along with several high-ranking officers of the Kyiv police.

Gennady Abramchuk stated:

«For the nine months I was in charge of the regiment, I received no serious disciplinary reprimands. This August I was even decorated with the Ministry of the Interior award «For Excellence in Service» of the second rank. I think I deserved it. The psychological atmosphere in the regiment improved after my appointment because people previously were depressed. For the nine months of that year Kyiv Berkut was best regiment and ranked second among all police departments in Ukraine».

Vadim Barteniev, a former commander of the liquidated special police department Titan-2 accused of servicing oligarchic needs — has also released his intention to file a lawsuit.

BUSINESSMEN UNDER PRESSURE

Social Movement Representatives Accuse High-Ranking Official and Judge of Bribery

■ **At a press conference on Nov. 28, representatives of the Ukrainian Social Committee For Fighting Corruption in Executive Agencies and Law Enforcement Agencies accused state officials for making businessmen pay bribes.**

According to the Polit-Terror Internet site, Valery Cherny, the deputy chairman of the committee presented businessman Volodymyr Krivoruchko, who was allegedly pressured by Ivan Dyadechko, the chairman of a court located in Kremenchug.

Cherny stated that the judge demanded the businessman pay him 50% of his company's profits, and the businessman was forced to pay the judge.

*The Ukrainian nationwide social alliance Committee to Fight Corruption in Executive Agencies, Law Enforcement Agencies, Prosecutors' Offices and Courts was established in October, 2005. Eduard Efimenko, the chairman of the organization, asserted that authorities, despite pledges to fight corruption and to create a favorable climate for business, do nothing of the kind. He thinks that "business is being destroyed now." The organization announced the establishment of agencies that will help businessmen "get rid of the custom of bribery" in each region of the country.

The amount already paid to Dyadchko is more than 160,000 hryvnias. But the judge was not satisfied with the amount. He said that all employees of the enterprise should join the Sobor Party and pay membership fees.

He then demanded jobs for some people who do nothing for the enterprise. Among these people are the wife of Milash, the chairman of the Poltava regional court and V. Bagatsky, an assistant to parliamentary deputy Hryhory Omelchenko.

According to information provided by Cherny, the judge's appetite constantly increased. «Dyadchko developed a strong desire to take over Krivoruchko's business and the judge trumped up two criminal cases against him. The businessman was arrested and asked to pay \$20,000 «to avoid humiliation and beatings».

«The committee to fight corruption in executive agencies and law enforcement agencies passed audio records and other evidence of bribery to law enforcement agencies. The documents were also forwarded to the Prosecutor General's Office, the SBU, the Ministry of the Interior, parliamentary deputies, and A. Matvienko, the Sobor Party leader.

According to the Rodina-Vostok Internet site, Dmitry Zminko, the deputy chairman of the committee told reporters about a second example of «Ukrainian style rackets»:

«Kherson Port Company Dnepr Cargo Limited faced dirty plots

organized by officials of the Ministry of Transport and judges. The company has operated in Ukraine since 1997. It has invested \$1.5 million and paid more than 5 million hryvnias in taxes. The company prospered. However, some representative of the minister of transport informed the managers of the company that they have two weeks to determine the amount of constant payoffs to the minister's councilor. Otherwise the port operation would be banned».

The person presented no documents backing up his statements and the reaction of foreign investors was adequate:

«How could that be? The issue is that President Yushchenko asserted that investors may check out the «line of expenses» for bribes to Ukrainian side... The refusal to give «bonuses» to representatives of the Ministry of Transport marked the beginning of a war against the company. The company sustained several investigations organized by the Kherson prosecutors», Zhminko said.

*Ukrainian republican party SOBOR. The party is part of Viktor Yushchenko's Our Ukraine bloc of political parties.

XENOPHOBIA AND INFRINGEMENT OF FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE

Israel Demands Ukraine Act to Stop Anti-Semitism

■ Alexander Khomyak, Ukrainian acting charge d'affairs in Israel, was summoned to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs where he was told that if Ukraine continues to ignore repeated requests of Israel to close down the Interregional Academy for Personnel Management (MAUP), Israel will react in an appropriate manner.

According to the Gazeta Po Kievski newspaper, Israel reacted to a MAUP statement supporting the Iranian president's call to wipe Israel off the world map. Israel is disturbed by the fact that the administration of the MAUP Academy (where more than 50,000 students study) systematically spreads anti-Semitic ideas. Israel demands urgent action in relation to MAUP from Ukraine, including closing the academy down instead of just verbal condemnation.

State agencies of Ukraine failed to undertake efficient measures to prevent the illegal activities.



Alexander Feldman

Commenting on the problem, Alexander Feldman, a parliamentary deputy, stated that government deputies are members of the editorial boards of mass media outlets distributing anti-Semitic ideas:

«The MAUP problem might have been solved years ago without waiting for an international scandal. I, as president of the Association of National and Cultural Alliances of Ukraine, as well as many other politicians and prominent public figures, have repeatedly drawn the attention of the authorities to the problem of xenophobic propaganda in Ukraine that is overtly and with impunity led by MAUP publications, the Silski Visti newspaper, and other publications.

«However, state agencies that ought to react to such things pretend that we have no such problem in Ukraine. The existence of higher education establishments where xenophobia and anti-Semitism are official educational poli-

cies can hardly be imagined in any civilized country. One can hardly imagine a situation in which mass media outlets (whose editors are parliament deputies and members of the government) publish overt anti-Semitism with impunity. One can hardly imagine a situation in which repeated act of hooliganism based on ethnic and racial grounds, as well as systematic manifestations of cultural vandalism, are interpreted by the authorities as an ordinary «hooligan actions».

«Those who should stop manifestations of xenophobia and anti-Semitism do nothing, thus framing the president of Ukraine and making the nation appear uncivilized».

According to 2000 weekly, following many anti-Semitic publications in Ukraine that led to appeals to the president, he made a statement appealing to society for solidarity in condemning any manifestations of anti-Semitism and xenophobia.

He has also said that the state will pursue a hard line in this respect and expressed his disturbance at manifestations of anti-Semitic activities in Ukraine.

2000 weekly said it repeatedly wrote that MAUP publications split society by planting ethnic discord:

«We have published articles analyzing some MAUP publications. We have forwarded questions to Ukrainian leaders asking how long attempts to blow apart already shaky ethnic accord in the country will continue. In particular, in one article we compared words from articles published in Personal, Personal + and other

similar publications and the notorious Mein Kampf. MAUP disliked our articles and the academy filed eight lawsuits against 2000 weekly.

«Meanwhile there were incidents this August and September when drunken crowds beat a Jewish university student nearly to death, and then a rabbi who is a former Israeli consul in Ukraine was beaten. They were attacked because they are Jews and wore traditional Jewish priestly clothing.

«Such actions would happen if anti-Semitic hysteria was not pumped up in society, and MAUP bears responsibility. 2000 weekly wrote with bitterness and indignation about those barbaric assaults inappropriate for a civilized state. We appealed to the president demanding the government pay attention to these flagrant acts as well as to the the publication and distribution of xenophobic, provocative literature by MAUP all over Kyiv in special kiosks.

«It was only after a note from the Israeli embassy addressed to President Yushchenko of Ukraine that he at last reacted to the problem discussed in our newspaper for several months».

Representatives of Ethnic Communities Say Authorities Do Not React to Xenophobic Manifestations

■ **The Sixth Forum of national cultures All of Us are Your Kids, Ukraine was held**

recently in Kyiv. Speeches were filled with disturbance at the current situation with ethnic minorities in Ukraine. The state neglects their problems.

According to 2000 weekly, many ethnic groups have no premises. Many have no newspapers and their ability to publish literature is restricted due to a lack of state support. Most disturbing are acts of inciting ethnic hatred, and events described by the mass media represent only the tip of the iceberg. The authorities do not react to xenophobic actions committed by some citizens and they are not adequately assessed by the state as the Constitution stipulates.

Ilya Levitas, president of the Council of National Communities and Jewish Council of Ukraine, stated:

«A year ago the current president gave us hope by stating that cultures will be developed under his guidance and all state actions will be open and transparent. We believed his words.

«Now it is impossible to meet him! He does not respond to letters. I have sent him six letters on behalf of the Jewish Council. He simply does not acknowledge them. It seems that he and his entourage are cowboys with swords and we are merely a horse for riding. Unfortunately, the president has absolutely no idea of life in ethnic communities in Ukraine».



Nadir Bekirov

Minority Rights Organization Provides UN with Facts of Persecution of Ethnic Activists in Ukraine

■ **Nadir Bekirov, the president of the Foundation for Research and Support of Native Minorities of Crime***, said at a press conference in Kyiv that **Ukraine is being transformed into a racist state as revealed by its attitude towards Crimean Tatars.**

According to the Poluostrov newspaper, the chairman of the foundation listed several facts that in his opinion demonstrate repression of Crimean Tatar activists and said:

«If previously the former regime was blamed for everything, then

*Established in 1997 by representatives of the Tatar intelligentsia.

now repression is taking place on a wider scale under the new democratic administration. Unfortunately, its attitude toward Crimean Tatars shows that Ukraine is being transformed into a racist state. This is a highly dangerous tendency. We want to have open and normal relations based on mutual respect and recognition of interests. But nothing of the kind happens».

Bekirov is certain that «law enforcement agencies of Ukraine trump up criminal charges against Crimean Tatars».

The Foundation for Research and Support of Native Minorities of Crimea appealed to the UN special representative for discrimination against native minorities and the representative of the UN Secretary General.

Opposition Party Says Removal of Orthodox TV Program From Air Violates Believers' Rights

■ The Social-Democratic Party of Ukraine (United) issued a statement on the removal of the Orthodox World TV Program from air:

«Production of the Orthodox World TV program was stopped on Nov. 19. The program was broadcast by the ERA TV and Radio Company on UT-1 TV. Company management abruptly (without announcing its reasons) refused to allow representatives of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to continue producing the program.

«The Orthodox World program was broadcast weekly and was popular among the Orthodox audience. The main theme of the program was the current life of the Orthodox Church and Christian sermons.

«Cessation of production can be explained only by political and ideological motives. The state overtly patronizes several Orthodox churches by granting them «national» status, while the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which comprises the greatest number of Orthodox believers, is ignored as being an alien one. The orange TV company associated with the government acts the same way. It is not hard to guess that the National Council for TV and Radio Broadcasting has played a role in this case, because its previous policy also featured the total removal of the Russian language from the air. The council considers this job its main goal. The withdrawal of the unwanted church from the air is a continuation of such policies.

«The Social-Democratic Party of Ukraine (United) considers the removal of the Orthodox World TV program as a blatant violation of the rights of members of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and an overt display of disrespect to these people — like to stepsons of the state».

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Journalists Blame Judges for Restricting Freedom of Speech in Ukraine

■ **The Donetsk Regional Journalists' Union has appealed to the president, the parliamentary speaker, the prosecutor general and the chairman of the Supreme Court of Ukraine referring to the verdict of the Donetsk district court in the case of Anatoly Eremenko, a reporter working for the Zerkalo Nedeli weekly. The verdict «practically bans the genre of investigative journalism, prejudicing the very possibility of the existence of an independent mass media». The statement says the following:**

«The Petrovsky district court of Donetsk has violated the Constitution and Ukrainian and international laws which guarantee freedom of speech and the right of citizens to access to information.

«On Oct. 20, the court passed a verdict obliging the Zerkalo Nedeli weekly to remove an article by Donetsk reporter Anatoly Eremenko on the activities of Donetsk regional business courts from its Internet site.

«Despite that fact that no Ukrainian law obliges either a newspaper

or a reporter to censor thoughts, viewpoints or beliefs, Judge O. Funzhyi accused Eremenko of «not checking» officially presented conclusions and opinions expressed by an official. The reporter acted in good faith and in observance of all professional standards when writing the article.

«No names were mentioned in the investigation of business courts by Eremenko. In the article «the reporter reveals schemes and mechanisms for achieving «necessary» results in business courts using real examples».

«We consider that the verdict of the Petrovsky district court of Donetsk violates Part 1 of Article 10 of the European Convention for Human Rights.

«We are convinced that the verdict represents an attempt to marginalize all Ukrainian mass media outlets, and create areas that are closed to the mass media».

District Newspaper Editor States Dismissal Motivated by Refusal to Comply with Orders from Local Authorities

■ **Oleh Tkachenko, the chairman of the Kamensko-Dniprovska district state administration (in the Zaporizhya region) and leader of the local branch of the People's Union of Our Ukraine political party, has issued an order suspending Irina Holovchenko, the editor-in-**

chief of the Novyny Dnya district newspaper.

According to 2000 weekly, this happened several days prior to the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the newspaper. Novyny Dnya is one of the oldest newspapers in the Zaporizhya region. The circulation of the biweekly is approximately 4,600 copies and it has been growing steadily since the editorial board was chaired by Irina Holovchenko.

«Readers respect the newspaper for providing non-partisan coverage of life in the district and the entire spectrum of social and political life. The refusal of the editorial board to comply with the political ambitions of the current government invoked a reaction from Oleh Tkachenko, the chairman of the district state administration.

«Holovchenko may provide irrefutable facts of pressure and threats of dismissal from Tkachenko. In addition, the motivation for the resolution contradicts the facts, in Holovchenko's opinion.

«That is why newspaper staff decided to address deputies of the district council and readers with an open letter published in the newspaper. The letter says that the editorial board considers this step by the chairman of the district state administration as «an act of political repression waged by Tkachenko; as revenge against a manager unwilling to serve the new authorities by fulfilling absurd orders that contradict the interests and expectations of the local community».

Journalists Suspect Authorities of Eliminating Opposition Mass Media under Pretext of Selling Newspapers

■ **A Kievskie Vedomosti newspaper correspondent in eastern Ukraine says that newspaper wholesalers were given an order to stop distribution of opposition publications. The reporter inspected several outlets in Kyiv and found no copies of his newspaper on the stands.**

According to the newspaper, «it seems like someone started separating Ukrainian daily newspapers into «our» and «alien».

«The salesmen repeated the same thing — nobody purchases your newspaper. It is interesting to ask why. Isn't it because every issue of our newspaper publishes articles criticizing the actions of the current authorities?

«Every region demonstrates its own peculiarities in «purging information». For instance, all newspaper kiosks were shut down in central areas of Ivano-Frankivsk, Dnipropetrovsk and Lviv. This was done under pretext of organizing orderly sales and sprucing up kiosks. Kyiv also was going to dismantle 152 newspaper kiosks primarily near subway stations and in underground crossings. However, protest actions organized by businessmen and reporters turned into a cold shower on the heads of local officials».

FREEDOM OF PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY

Kyiv Authorities Restricted Protest Actions, Infringe upon Freedom of Peaceful Assembly

■ **Kyiv city council has decided to put an end to opposition political protest actions. Kyiv deputies approved the resolution, which says:**

«With the purpose of maintaining public order, the observance of laws and the provision of normal operation of legislative, executive and court agencies in downtown Kyiv (within the boundaries of European Square — Hrushevskoho Street — Park Road — Glory Square — Suvorova Street — Moskovskaya Street — Kutuzova Street — Lesya Ukrainka Square — Lesya Ukrainka Boulevard — Basseinaya Street — Bessarabskaya Square — Shevchenko Boulevard, and from Sofievskaya Square to Independence Square) and adjacent zones only national events or events organized by the city are to be held in compliance with decrees by the president of Ukraine and resolutions issued by the Cabinet of Ministers and so on».

According to Our Newspaper Plus, organizers of any protest action need permits issued by state and city authorities. The authorities will

strictly observe the provisions of this cunning resolution to ban political actions by the opposition».

The Socialist Party of Ukraine issued a statement, which says:

«The sixth attempt of the city council chairman to push the resolution through Kyiv city council was successful. The content of the resolution may be briefly explained by the phrase «It is forbidden for more than three people to gather!»

«Kyiv city council has practically cancelled Ukrainian constitutional provisions in Kyiv which provide citizens with the right to peaceful assembly.

«It seems that Kyiv authorities prefer dialogue with the public exclusively through fences, barriers, police lines and from a great distance. Taking into account the logic of the resolution, the introduction of a curfew in the city may be the next step.

«The Kyiv city committee of the Socialist Party of Ukraine resolutely condemns this decision by the Kyiv city council and will appeal it in court soon».

Volodymyr Chemeris, a member of the board of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union for Human Rights*, stated that the number of violations of the rights and freedoms of citizens in Ukraine increased in 2006.

According to the For-UA.com

*Ukrainian nationwide association of human rights organizations fostering the observance of humanitarian articles of the Helsinki meeting of the OSCE in 1975 and other international legal documents created on its basis. The association was established on April 1, 2004.

Internet site, Chemeris is going to file a lawsuit if the Kyiv city council resolution banning the peaceful assembly of citizens at certain locations is implemented.

Chemeris said that approximately 100 groundless court verdicts banning peaceful assemblies (in violation of the Constitution) were registered this year*. At the same time, Chemeris emphasized that the following «political technology» is employed — if one political movement forwards an application for a

peaceful assembly, its opponents have to apply for an action at the same location. Then both actions are banned.

Chemeris noted that representatives of the authorities propose introducing «draconian rules» regarding peaceful assembly. For example, organizers are obliged to register at least 10 days prior to any action. Kyiv authorities are also trying to restrict the area where rallies can be held. This is also illegal».

NON-OBSERVANCE OF CITIZEN'S RIGHTS

Physicians Announce Ukrainian Nationwide Protest Action. Physicians Protesting in Hunger Strike Receive Threats

■ **On Nov. 29, more than 2,500 doctors, nurses and pharmacists from various regions of Ukraine picketed the Ukrainian parliament demanding increases in salaries and additional financing for healthcare. They have announced a nationwide protest action.**

«Neglect of such a vitally important social sphere by the authorities has forced physicians to act to protect their constitutional rights and need of the nation for high-quality medical coverage.

«According to the Prima News information agency, the average salary for Ukrainian physicians amounts to \$105, ranking in 29th place. Tamila Kazarina, the chairman of the union of medical workers of Ukraine, stated that poverty among physicians and lower budget expenditures on healthcare have resulted in Ukraine having the highest level of deaths per capita in Europe.

«Physicians work under an incomplete legal framework. Their working hours have not been revised

since 1940. There are laws protecting their rights. Several decrees by the president of Ukraine and resolutions by the Ukrainian parliament to improve working conditions and salaries were never implemented. The basic provisions of Ukrainian law in regard to the healthcare system are being ignored. Financing of the healthcare does not exceed 3% of GDP in comparison with a recommended level of at least 10%. According to the World Health Organization, healthcare crumbles when levels of financing drop below 6% of GDP».

According to Rabochaya Gazeta, the current death rate in Ukraine is more than double the birth rate. Ukrainians live ten years less than residents of developed countries do. Poor financing of healthcare infringes upon current laws and the constitutional rights of citizens of Ukraine for medical treatment, not to mention the right to normal working conditions decent salaries for physicians.

When the government celebrated the anniversary of the orange revolution, Lviv regional hospital employees organized a hunger strike demanding salary increases and reform of the healthcare system.

According to the Glavred Internet site, since healthcare workers are not allowed to strike they had to go on hunger strikes in their work places after sending a list of requirements to the president of Ukraine, Ihor Gerich, the chief of the healthcare department of the Lviv regional state administration, and Alexander Lem-

ishok, chief physician of the Lviv regional hospital.

The leaders of the hospital union said that more than 120 employees took part in the protest action. Nataliya Got, one of the participants of the hunger strike and a member of the presidium of the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions in the Lviv region, told Glavred that after a day the number of participants dropped to 20 people. Nurses comprised the most protestors. She asserts that the employees of the hospital were threatened with dismissal.

«People sustain unbelievable pressure. When they saw that the names of those who wore white headbands were placed on a list, they immediately took them off for fear of losing their jobs».

Dmitry Rybko, the deputy chairman of the union at the hospital, states that reprimands from the hospital's administration regarding political motives for the protest actions are groundless. Rybko, a urologist, currently receives 650 hryvnias per month while trying to raise four children.

«Is that a decent salary for a doctor?» Rybko asks. «This Tuesday I gave out 350 headbands to employees at the hospital, but in couple of hours people took them off because they were harassed.

«Colleagues from many cities in the Lviv region, and Lutsk, Donetsk, Volyn, Kyiv, Ternopil, Zaporizhya and Donetsk expressed their support».

Opposition Party Representative Demands Paying Back Salaries for Teachers

■ On Nov. 29, Tamara Proshkuratova, a member of the SDPU (U) parliamentary faction, delivered a speech in parliament:

«A year ago the Ukrainian parliament adopted a law initiated by SDPU (U) members on restructuring unpaid salaries for teachers and scientists. The salaries are guaranteed by Article 57 of the Law of Ukraine «On Education». However, dozens of letters show that this problem has not been solved in certain districts.

«I appeal to you, honorable employees of the education system. Please, send letters to me or other SDPU (U) deputies telling us where this problem is not being solved. We will name these districts and the surnames of local leaders and we will do everything to ensure teachers get their money.

«The SDPU (U) faction is indignant that the resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers has postponed payment of subsidies for communal services to teachers, physicians, and cultural employees in rural areas. We demand the restoration of these payments, because they are the only motive for teachers to work in rural districts».

Authorities Infringe Upon Rights of Former Military Personnel

■ **More than 20,000 veterans* of the Afghanistan war blockaded executive agencies all over Ukraine, protesting neglect by the state. The protest actions took place in 15 cities**

According to the Tovarish newspaper**, neglect of appeals, letters and warnings as well as a careless attitude and mean treatment by the government forced Afghan war veterans to employ such radical measures in order to remind the state of its heroes that it has forgotten.

«The state now pays monthly allowances to families of dead heroes of 29 hryvnias (approximately \$7). Yet people disabled during the war receive 270 hryvnias monthly.

«On May 31 the Ukrainian Union of Afghan War Veterans conducted a protest action «Together We are Many — Warning» warning all branches of power that it is not going to agree with overt neglect of demands for social guarantees for those who fulfilled their duty, or for the families of the dead and people disabled in the war. A tent camp was installed near parliament. Organizers of the action collected tens of thousands of signatures from supportive citizens. However, they failed to receive the support of the government. Statements made by

parliamentary speaker Volodymyr Lytvyn about his personal obligation to correct the situation were just hollow words. Yulia Tymoshenko, the former prime minister, promised to organize a personal meeting with the «field commanders». The meeting was held, but the results were sorrowful. Tymoshenko agreed with demands put forward by the protestors, but the next day she ignored them in a separate resolution.

«Drafts of next year's state and local budgets already contain provisions on decreasing financial assistance to this socially unprotected category of Ukrainian citizens. The state executive agency to replace the liquidated State Committee for Veterans has not been established yet. Shutting down military hospitals and the closure of the only health resort for Afghan war veterans continues».

Representatives of Social Movements Accuse Ministry of Defense Officials of Corruption Resulting in Failure to Provide Military Housing

■ **Representatives of several social movements demanded that Viktor Yushchenko dismiss Defense Minister Anatoliy Hrytsenko and his deputy Vyacheslav Kredisov.**

According to 2000 weekly, Eduard Bagirov (the chairman of the board of directors of the International

*The Soviet military took part in the war in Afghanistan from Dec. 25, 1979, to Feb. 15, 1989.

**Printed publication of the Socialist Party of Ukraine.

League for Protection of Rights of Citizens of Ukraine), Volodymyr Nemtinov (the head of the Kyiv city society of veterans Vityaz) and Pavel Barnatsky (councilor of the parliamentary committee for organized crime and corruption) made a joint statement saying that the «Administration of the Ministry of Defense is involved with corrupt activities resulting in the failure of a program to provide military housing».

Bagirov says the 2005 state budget provided an allocation of 210 million hryvnias to settle housing problems for military personnel. However, 148 million was not used by the ministry. It means that «On Dec. 31, that amount will be deducted from accounts belonging to the ministry of defense and forwarded to the State Treasury», he emphasized. He further noted that it is outrageous that ministry «has money, but is unable to use it».

Bagirov also said that the failure of the housing construction program was a result of both corruption in the ministry and non-targeted use and illegal sale of land belonging to the ministry. As an example, he spoke about an investor who offered 250 million hryvnias for a lot located in Kotsubinskoe village, but was refused. Later on, the lot sold for only 70 million hryvnias. He said a similar situation happened with the sale of a lot located in Kyiv on Podvysotskoho Street.

Nemtinov stated that he will insist on the resignation of Hrytsenko and his deputy Kredisov because they are «engaged in populism» instead of settling real problems. He said that upon his arrival at the ministry Hryt-

senko suspended action on more than a hundred agreements on housing construction for military personnel. The reason was alleged corruption revealed in related contracts. «However, no criminal case was initiated. In other words they have replaced «alien» investors with their own businessmen».

He has also recalled Hrytsenko's statement made on April 19. The minister said then that in 2005 military men will get 3-4 times as many apartments than in previous years. «In total this figure would be 15,000—16,000 apartments», said Nemtinov, but he emphasized that he knows only about 1,641 apartments. Moreover, military men moved into only 600 apartments.

The representatives also said that data on corruption at the ministry was recently published by the Pravda Ukraini newspaper. «When the article was published the author was contacted by officers from the ministry's press office. Later on the editor-in-chief of the Pravda Ukraini newspaper started receiving threats. They lost control of the situation and started pressing the mass media outlet», Bagirov said.

Gunmen Shut Down Children's Library. Librarians Accuse Government of Lack of Performance and Pandering to Lawlessness

■ **Poltava has lost 150,000 books and almost 10,000 young readers were left without library.**

According to the UNIAN information agency, at the end of November the building of the Panas Mirny Poltava regional children's library was occupied by gunmen. They ousted children who were in the library and established a special permit required to enter the building. The armed men fulfill only orders given by new owners.

This building was passed to the library in 1973, however a battle for the building started in 2001. It was repeatedly sold to various commercial companies who appealed to courts to force the library to move to some other location. The library lost the case in court, but it has nowhere to move because authorities failed to provide it with a new building.

At the same time the librarians note that an appeal to cancel a resolution on forceful eviction was forwarded to the court of appeals. The court hearing scheduled for Nov. 10 was postponed at the request of the new owners of the building. The librarians emphasize that prosecutors have enough authority to suspend enforcement procedures as

being illegal, but prosecutors failed to come.

The Ministry of Culture and leading public figures made multiple statements supporting the library, but law enforcement agencies say nothing about protecting children's rights.

According to the court verdict the library was to be evicted in September 2005. But the Poltava community managed to prevent this action by blocking the entrance to the library and preventing bailiffs from coming inside. The SDPU (U) and Socialist Party of Ukraine activists took part in protest actions against transferring the library's building to a group of local businessmen. At the same time the regional state administration announced its intention to return of the building to communal property.

On the night of Oct. 11, a fire erupted in the library and destroyed more than 300 books including both new, and highly valuable antique ones. The custodian of the library explained that the fire started when a smoke bomb was thrown through a broken window in the reading hall by unidentified people.

Panas Mirny Poltava regional children's library personnel release open letter addressed to Volodymyr Grishko, the chairman of the Poltava regional council.

The librarians accuse Grishko of poor performance for the last three years when the question of providing a new building for the library became especially acute. The library lost the building it occupied after it was sold to private companies. The



Leonid Shkolnik

lack of action by Grishko was the cause of this sorrowful result, the librarians say.

The library personnel ask the president, the Ukrainian parliament and the prosecutor general to put an end to this lawlessness.

«There is no justification in the 21st century to burn books in Ukraine and have gunmen oust children from a library and seal it!» — says a statement signed by director Leonid Chobitko and the secretary of the public council of the library Olha Klimko.

Social Movement Leaders Blame Authorities for Inability to Protect Consumer Rights

■ Leonid Kravchuk, the first president of Ukraine, chairman of the SDPU (U) parliamentary faction and leader of Let's Unite Ukraine Civil Forum, and Leonid Shkolnik, the chairman of the Union of Consumers of Ukraine, signed a partnership agreement to establish public control over the activities of the current authorities in the sphere of protecting consumers' rights.

According to the Polit-Terror Internet site, Kravchuk stated: «Thousands of people are dying now in Ukraine because of low quality food. Greed for profits forces some people to import poor quality goods to Ukraine and, unfortunately, the country has failed to develop a clear mechanism of professional public control over the actions of the authorities in this sphere».

In turn, Shkolnik noted that «Ukrainian authorities have not made the slightest attempt to establish a dialogue between the government and citizens. The authorities allocated nothing to protect consumers' rights, that is why we have to pay to publish brochures containing information on consumers' rights with money provided by the U.S. and Canada».

Rock Group Leader Speaks about Violation of Intellectual Property Rights in Ukraine

■ Oleh Skripka, leader of popular rock group VV, stated at a press conference called **Human Rights in Ukraine on the Way to the EU** that only joint public efforts can decrease the level of intellectual property rights violations in Ukraine.

According to the Liga Business Inform news agency, the musician said that the provision of intellectual property rights is one of the requirements for Ukraine's accession to the European Union. The existence of violations impedes Ukraine on its way to European integration.

Skripka thinks that the volume of counterfeit products produced in Ukraine is amazing. At the same time the authorities undertake no measures to fight counterfeiters. That is why performers who own intellectual property rights sustain huge losses.

«We realize that common people earn money on counterfeit products because they need to eat and to feed their children and their families. This is another social problem when people have to intentionally violate laws. That is why the state and executive agencies should pay more serious attention to this problem». Replying to a question about the scope of losses VV sustained because of counterfeit products, Skripka emphasized that they can be calculated only hypothetically:



Oleh Skripka

«The problem is not in the emptiness of my pockets. The problem is that modern Ukrainian culture is not developing, it is dying».

Human Rights Activists Accuse Authorities of Connivance in Advertising Banned Sexual Services

■ Artur Gorin, the press secretary of the human rights group **Kyiv Youth Center for Protection of Women's Rights**, stated that **printed publications published in Ukraine and financed by U.S. groups foster the growth of prostitution in Ukraine with the connivance of the government.**

According to the Bez Tzensuri Internet site, despite the fact that prostitution is illegal in Ukraine, some mass media outlets including Kyiv

Post and Afisha, are publishing materials advertising sexual services and the sex industry.

Gorin is indignant with the fact that neither state agencies, nor the Ministry of the Interior, nor prosecutors' offices, nor agencies monitoring the mass media undertake any real steps in fighting this criminal activity.

«This is happening at a time when Ukraine ranks among the worst countries in Europe in terms of AIDS infections».

Nataliya Tkach, the chairman of the human rights group Kyiv Youth Center for Protection of Women's Rights, has also expressed her indignation with the advertising of prostitution by Kyiv Post and Afisha:

«How can sales of «human commodities» prosper in Ukraine during the 14th year of its independence with the silent consent of the authorities? The publications in essence are playing the role of pimps».

Marina Saprykina, chair of the Women's Prospects social council, stated that according to unofficial data, 150,000 Ukrainian women between 18-30 years old are engaged in the sex industry.

Human rights activists appealed to mass media to refuse to publish ads associated with sexual services and announced support for protest actions against the popularization of prostitution. The action was conducted on Nov. 29 by the social movement Ukrainian Social-Democratic Youth. During the action participants filed an appeal to the editorial boards of Kyiv Post and Afisha demanding an end to advertising of a provocative nature. Lawyers representing women's

human rights groups are preparing a lawsuit against Kyiv Post and Afisha.

Kyiv Resident Accuses Employees of Alcohol Detox Center of Illegal Actions

■ The Vechernie Vesti newspaper published testimony provided by Kyiv resident Alexander K., whose rights were violated at the Urgent Detoxification Center for patients suffering from alcohol poisoning. An abridged version of the testimony follows:

«We were delivered to the detoxification center located in the Podol district. They took all our clothes, money and belongings away. Then they wrenched our arms and took blood samples for testing. We were thrown into a room where 12 people stayed in absolutely unhealthy conditions! Huge cockroaches live in the lavatory. They do not give out slippers and you have to go there barefoot. A nurse locked our ward and left us there until morning. A doctor came in the morning and asked us to pay 80 hryvnias for «medical treatment». Our relatives had no idea of our whereabouts — personnel forgot to call them! The next morning I begged to make a call to my wife under the pretext that I had to ask her to bring the 80 hryvnias. She came, paid my «ransom» and took me home. They «forgot» to give me back the 15 hryvnias they took from me. Human rights are mere words in this country!»

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