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Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation and Public Lands of the House of Representatives Resources Committee, thank you for the opportunity to address this Subcommittee on issues relating to the erection of a monument to the victims of the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide in Washington, D.C.

Speaking on behalf of the 1.5 million Americans of Ukrainian descent, the subject of the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide is of great importance to our community as it is one of the most tragic pages of Ukraine's recent history. It acquires even more significance in the next several years (year 2008), as communities worldwide will commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Famine-Genocide. For years, the Ukrainian American community has been educating the general public and speaking out about one of the most horrific cases of genocide in the 20th century. Ukrainian Americans have found great support in local communities throughout the United States and now would like to thank the Subcommittee for allowing us to raise this issue at the federal level.

Purpose of the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America

The Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA), over which I preside, is the national umbrella organization representing the interests of the Ukrainian community in the United States. Founded by the First Congress of Ukrainians in America in 1940 in Washington, DC, the main purpose of the UCCA is to support cultural, educational, and humanitarian activities that emphasize the Ukrainian American heritage and to effectively coordinate the work of the community. These goals are achieved through a nationwide network of over 75 branches, member organizations, and a variety of internal UCCA commissions that are tasked with specific projects.

As a not-for-profit, educational and charitable institution, the UCCA has a long history of actively pursuing issues that affect the Ukrainian American community, particularly in the arena of U.S.-former Soviet and now U.S.-Ukraine relations. Throughout its existence, the UCCA has adapted to changes in world politics and modified its activities accordingly. Initially, the purpose of the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America was to provide authoritative information regarding the Ukrainian nation's plight for national independence and human rights. In this regard, early initiatives included the UCCA's support for legislation on displaced persons following World War II and ratification of the Genocide Treaty. During the height of the Cold War, the UCCA spoke out against Soviet human rights violations; initiated a U.S. Congressional Resolution on the Soviet destruction of Ukrainian churches; supported several U.S. Congressional resolutions commemorating the victims of the 1932-1933 Ukrainian Famine-Genocide; and, was instrumental in promoting the Captive Nations Week Resolution (Public Law 86-90). The UCCA's activities have historically been geared at creating awareness about Ukraine, Ukrainian Americans, and the true nature of Soviet imperialism. By supporting such freedom of speech, as well as by organizing campaigns to free imprisoned dissidents in Ukraine, the UCCA took an active role in Ukraine's liberation struggle from Soviet oppression.

The hopes and dreams of Ukrainians worldwide came to fruition when Ukraine restored its independence on August 24, 1991. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the UCCA redirected its efforts toward supporting Ukraine's democratic development and economic rebirth while sustaining a vibrant Ukrainian community in the United States. In 2004, the UCCA organized the largest NGO election monitoring team for Ukraine's presidential elections, with over 2,400 international elections observers traveling to Ukraine during the Christmas holiday to ensure that Ukraine's re-run-off of the presidential elections were held in a free, fair, and transparent manner. The results became known as the "Orange Revolution" with the nation of Ukraine democratically electing their next president, Viktor Yushchenko.

In addition to the UCCA's continued work in conducting charitable and educational programs, the UCCA began implementing various comprehensive civic education programs including "get-out-the-vote" pre-election campaigns; U.S. study tours for Ukrainian NGO's and representatives of the mass media; and, "Rock-the-Vote" youth concerts, to name a few. Most recently, the UCCA expanded upon a multi-media project that not only entertains but also educates children and students about Ukraine's history and culture by producing audiocassettes and CD's that are sent free of charge to schools, libraries and orphanages throughout Ukraine.

However, the most important task of the UCCA was, and continues to be, educating the American public about Ukraine, its history, culture, and political development. Pursuant to this mission, the UCCA has raised U.S. awareness of Ukraine, as well as represented the interests of Ukrainian Americans before the U.S. government by organizing various conferences, seminars, commemorations, cultural events and the like. The UCCA also strives to educate the American public about the long, rich, and sometimes tragic history of the Ukrainian people through various publications including The Ukrainian Quarterly, the only English language scholarly journal of Ukrainian and international affairs. In our efforts to disseminate information, one of the most important projects of the UCCA is the on-going educational campaign about Ukraine's Famine-Genocide of 1932-1933.

History and Integrity of the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide

The Ukrainian Famine-Genocide has been called many things—"the Forgiven Holocaust", "the Forgotten Holocaust", "the Unknown Holocaust". These titles spring from the fact that most individuals were and continue to be unaware of what happened in Ukraine during 1932-1933. It is largely because of a successful cover-up effort on the part of the Soviet Union, assisted by Western journalists such as Pulitzer Prize-winner Walter Duranty, that this tragic event has failed to enter into Western consciousness.

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In an effort to industrialize the Soviet Union as quickly as possible and transform Ukraine so that it resembled the Socialist paradigm, Stalin began to forcibly collectivize agriculture. As a preliminary step, Stalin ordered the liquidation of "kulaks" (individual peasants), who, according to party doctrine, had traditionally exploited rural workers. In reality, however, this title came to be applied to anyone considered undesirable by those in the party apparatus. Even the richest peasants, at this time, had only two or three cows and up to ten hectares of sowing area. So, in effect, the most prosperous peasants were executed, deported, or sent to labor camps in Siberia.

After the draconian dekulakization, the remaining peasants were bullied into joining collective farms, whose harvests belonged to the state. Having been put into this vulnerable position, the remaining peasants now bore the brunt of Moscow's assault.

In 1932, Stalin ordered the grain quota for Ukraine to be raised by 44%. In August of that year came a decree that "stealing Socialist property" (taking even a handful of grain from a collective farm) was an offense punishable by death. As it became apparent that the grain quota could not be met, party leaders were given the legal right to seize whatever grain or food could be found. Robbed of their last remaining grain, Ukrainian peasants began to eat anything they could get their hands on. It is estimated that upwards of 7 million people starved to death in Ukraine proper and in the largely ethnically Ukrainian Kuban region.

Even as the famine situation deteriorated, the Soviet Union continued to refute claims that Ukraine was experiencing a famine and refused international offers of assistance for the starving peasants. The authorities claimed that there was no famine and showed off Potemkin villages to visiting dignitaries, such as French premier Edouard Herriot. Despite the many letters sent from Ukraine to relatives abroad pleading for any kind of help, the Soviet border remained sealed both to relief efforts and to peasants attempting to travel to other parts of the USSR in search of food. "Clear orders existed to stop Ukrainian peasants entering Russia where food was available...and to confiscate any food they were carrying when intercepted on their return."

Why were peasants living in Ukraine subjected to this horrifically cruel policy that could only result in their death by starvation? The answer lies in the national politics of the Soviet leadership. It is well known that Stalin had an acute fear of Ukrainian separatism. As Soviet newspaper Proletarska Pravda (Proletarian Truth) stated in 1930, "collectivization in Ukraine has a special task...to destroy the social basis of Ukrainian nationalism." If Ukrainian resistance to collectivization could be destroyed, Ukrainian national aspirations could be similarly done away with. Indeed, being that the majority of the Famine-Genocide victims were Ukrainians it seems that the party knew only too well whom they were supposed to target.

Ukraine suffered tremendously during this time. A few statistics will illustrate this:

- Ukrainian villages were dying at the rate of 25,000 per day or 1,000 per hour or 17 per minute;
- The Soviet regime dumped 1.7 million tons of grain on the Western markets - nearly a quarter of a ton of grain for every Ukrainian who starved to death;
- Among the children, one in three perished as a result of rapid collectivization and the forced famine-genocide; and,
- The 1933 Famine-Genocide was geographically focused for political ends as it stopped precisely at the Ukrainian-Russian ethnographic border.

The economic, demographic and cultural results of the Famine-Genocide are immeasurable. Ukrainian agriculture to this day has yet to reclaim its reputation as "the breadbasket of Europe" after the imposition of the grossly inefficient collective farm system (although recently, the farming sector has seen some positive trends). Also, together with the Great Terror of the 1930's, the Famine-Genocide terrified the population and broke down the trust necessary to maintain civil society. People were never allowed to mention the Famine-Genocide, much less to mourn their dead. Even the word "Famine-Genocide" [Holodomor – sic] was banned.

Along with the damage done to Ukrainian society and the economy, the Famine-Genocide represented the final crackdown on

a cultural revitalization that had been going on in Ukraine during the 1920's. After the purge of the Ukrainian intelligentsia and the destruction of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, the Soviet authorities turned their attention to the larger body of Ukrainian peasants where the Ukrainian national idea remained strong. Given the background of outright destruction of Ukrainian cultural institutions, the Famine-Genocide can only be considered the culmination of the genocidal policies of the USSR towards non-Russian nationalities.

Worldwide Response to the Famine-Genocide

Due to confluence of circumstances, the world did not make any substantial efforts to assist or relieve the Ukrainian nation or dispute the genocidal policies of the Soviets. The depression in world economics in previous decades fortified the sympathetic sentiment toward the socialist philosophy worldwide. Many intellectuals joined socialist and communist parties and supported the Soviet Union in their idealism without considering the price of nationalization and collectivization policies to the subjects of the state. Due to the overwhelming control of the information flow from the Soviet Union, its attacks on foreign correspondents that dared to speak of the Famine-Genocide did not receive much resonance. In combination with the reluctance of the international community to complicate relations with an emerging superpower, this led to almost complete avoidance of the issue by foreign governments, which allowed the Stalinist Soviet Union to remain unpunished and deny the existence of the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide.

Prominent journalists of the time, such as New York Times correspondent Walter Duranty, aided the Soviets in concealing their crimes by proliferating their propaganda in the West and slandering those who reported on the Famine-Genocide in Ukraine. Mr. Duranty was even awarded the Pulitzer Prize for 'Excellence in Journalism' for his reports on the Soviet Union and its "successful development," while in private admitting that up to 10 million people might have starved to death.

One of the heroes who attempted to inform the world of the incredible belligerence to which the Ukrainians were subjected is Gareth Jones, a Welsh journalist and diplomat, who made it his mission to promote the truth about Soviet policies in Ukraine despite great harm to his career and personal life. After his first article on Ukraine's situation was published, New York Times' Walter Duranty published a response denying Jones' analysis. Many others joined Duranty in his attacks as evidenced by Eugene Lyons, a Moscow based correspondent, who wrote in his 1937 book *Assignment in Utopia*: "Throwing down Jones was as unpleasant a chore as fell to any of us in years of juggling facts to please dictatorial regimes—but throw him down we did, unanimously and in almost identical formulas of equivocation. Poor Gareth Jones must have been the most surprised human being alive when the facts he so painstakingly garnered from our mouths were snowed under by our denials."

Nevertheless, Mr. Jones refuted their allegations and published a response in which he recounted his travels and observations:

... I stand by my statement that Soviet Russia [Ukraine – sic] is suffering from a severe famine. It would be foolish to draw this conclusion from my tramp through a small part of vast Russia, although I must remind Mr. Duranty that it was my third visit to Russia, that I devoted four years of university life to the study of the Russian language and history and that on this occasion alone I visited in all twenty villages, not only in the Ukraine, but also in the black earth district, and in the Moscow region...and did not immediately leave for the next village.

My first evidence was gathered from foreign observers. Since Mr. Duranty introduces consuls into the discussion, a thing I am loath to do, for they are official representatives of their countries and should not be quoted, may I say that I discussed the Russian situation with between twenty and thirty consuls and diplomatic representatives of various nations and that their evidence supported my point of view. But they are not allowed to express their views in the press, and therefore remain silent.

Journalists, on the other hand, are allowed to write, but the censorship has turned them into masters of euphemism and understatement. Hence they give "famine" the polite name of "food shortage" and "starving to death" is softened down to read as "widespread mortality from diseases due to malnutrition." Consuls are not so reticent in private conversation.

My second evidence was based on conversations with peasants who had migrated into the towns from various parts of Russia. Peasants from the richest parts of Russia coming into the towns for bread. Their story of the deaths in their villages from starvation and of the death of the greater part of their cattle and horses was tragic, and each conversation corroborated the previous one.

Third, my evidence was based upon letters written by German colonists in Russia, appealing for help to their compatriots in Germany. "My brother's four children have died of hunger...We have had no bread for six months. If we do not get help from abroad, there is nothing left but to die of hunger." Those are typical passages from these letters.

Fourth, I gathered evidence from journalists and technical experts who had been in the countryside. In The Manchester Guardian, which has been exceedingly sympathetic toward the Soviet régime, there appeared on March 25, 27 and 28 an excellent series of articles on "The Soviet and the Peasantry" (which had not been submitted to the censor). The correspondent, who had visited North Caucasus and the Ukraine, states: "To say that there is famine in some of the most fertile parts of Russia is to say much less than the truth: there is not only famine, but - in the case of the North Caucasus at least - a state of war, a military occupation." Of [the] Ukraine, he writes: "The population is starving."

My final evidence is based on my talks with hundreds of peasants. They were not the "kulaks" - those mythical scapegoats for the hunger in Russia - but ordinary peasants. I talked with them alone in Russian and jotted down their conversations, which are an unanswerable indictment of Soviet agricultural policy. The peasants said emphatically that the famine was worse than in 1921 and that fellow-villagers had died or were dying.

May I in conclusion congratulate the Soviet Foreign Office on its skill in concealing the true situation in the U.S.S.R.? Moscow is not Russia, and the sight of well-fed people there tends to hide the real Russia.

Unfortunately, Mr. Jones was nearly alone in this overwhelming struggle against Soviet propaganda. The U.S. media heavily influenced the opinions of U.S. intelligence, policy makers, and the public, regarding the Soviet Union. Duranty's dispatches may have influenced the U.S. government's formal recognition of the Soviet Union in 1933 -- at the height of the Famine-Genocide. This official recognition sanctioned Stalin's repressive regime, which led to decades of continued brutality and the slaughter of untold millions.

Relief Efforts of the Ukrainian American Community

The Ukrainian American community was well aware of the brutality of the Soviet regime and actively worked to inform the wider public about the magnitude of the Famine-Genocide and incomprehensible callousness and disregard for human life with which the Moscow government implemented its deadly policies. In November of 1933, the community organized a commission for the "Immediate Relief of the Starving in Ukraine," tasked with disseminating information about the Famine-Genocide and attempting relief efforts. In this regard, the community began a letter writing campaign and lottery aimed at collecting money for those affected by the tragedy. With funds collected, the community was able to send many humanitarian assistance packages to their homeland. Although many packages were confiscated at the border, some did reach their destination as documented by letters of gratitude the Ukrainian American community received, which now can be found in Washington, D.C. archives.

In addition to humanitarian assistance, the Ukrainian American community launched a wide-reaching informational campaign. Prepared articles were sent to various mass media outlets, periodicals, and international and national charitable organizations including the International Red Cross and the American Red Cross. The community also sent a letter to U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and was disheartened when the State Department Chief of Eastern European Affairs Division responded by stating that there appeared to be no reason for the United States to intervene. Letters also were penned to various Members of the House of Representatives and Senate, influential religious organizations, local papers, and other ethnic organizations. Regrettably, the majority of the community's pleas fell on deaf ears.

In 1988, after decades of campaigning about Ukraine's Famine-Genocide, the Ukrainian American community was instrumental in helping to persuade the U.S. government to create a U.S. Congress Commission on the Ukraine Famine. The Ukrainian community lauds the creation of this Commission, which was created expressly for the purpose of conducting a study of the 1932-1933 Ukrainian Famine-Genocide. In its "Investigation of the Ukraine Famine of 1932-1933," the Commission concluded "Joseph Stalin and those around him committed genocide against Ukrainians in 1932-1933."

The United Nations Genocide Convention of 1948 defines genocide as "any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group as such: (a) killing members of the group; (b) causing serious bodily or mental harm to the members of the group; (c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) imposing measures to prevent births within the group; (e) forcible transferring children of the group to another group." The Commission on the Ukraine Famine, having conducted an extensive study of this episode in Ukraine's history, concluded "One or more actions specified in the Genocide Convention was taken against the Ukrainians in order to destroy a substantial part of the Ukrainian people and thus to neutralize them politically in the Soviet Union."

Thus, the erection of a monument to the victims of the Famine-Genocide is an important vehicle in informing the world community of the atrocities inflicted on Ukraine by the oppressive Soviet regime.

Importance of Constructing a Monument in Washington, D.C.

The Ukrainian American community is proud and fortunate to live in one of the world's most developed democratic nations.

We could not have wished for a better home. The United States welcomed us and allowed us to preserve our cultural heritage and identity, develop a strong community, and integrate into the American society as equal members. Because of the freedoms guaranteed by the United States, we have had the opportunity to voice our opinions, as well as those of the 50 million Ukrainians who were trapped behind the Iron Curtain during the years of Soviet oppression.

It is because of this that the Ukrainian American community considers it extremely important that a monument to the millions of innocent victims of the Famine-Genocide be built in our nation's capital. Standing in Washington, D.C., a symbol of democracy and liberty, a monument will serve as a reminder to all who have, or continue to, suffer under oppressive regimes. It is crucial that such chapters of world history be known and remembered. Knowledge gives us the power to foresee future tragedies and intervene before it is too late.

The United States is a bastion of freedom and democracy and it is our task to continue fighting until freedom reigns supreme everywhere. In a statement on the occasion of the 69th anniversary of the Famine-Genocide in 2002, President George W. Bush wrote: "Now better than ever, we recognize the Ukrainian people's heroic struggle nearly 70 years ago, in which millions died because they resisted Stalin's brutal regime. We honor their memory and pledge to never forget their suffering. As we remember their struggle, we also condemn all authoritarian governments who have terrorized their people in the past and continue to do so, thus continuing the fight for freedom and safety of all people."

Additionally, erecting a monument in the capital of the United States would be a highly symbolic gesture in the context of improving U.S.-Ukraine relations. Post-"Orange Revolution," Ukraine has demonstrated its devotion to Euro-Atlantic integration. Most recently, by joining the 'Coalition of the Willing', Ukraine sent a battalion of nuclear, chemical and biological defense troops to the Iraqi conflict zone, thus clearly supported U.S. objectives in our fight against terrorism. The authorization of the erection of a monument would serve as a sign of appreciation for Ukraine's support.

In his proclamation on the occasion of the 65th anniversary of the Famine-Genocide, former President Clinton recognized that "while this anniversary is an occasion for both sorrow and reflection, it also reminds us of Ukraine's steadfast commitment to democracy and to continuing its political, social, and economic evolution. Today is a time of extraordinary opportunity for the nations of the world as old barriers fall and a new and truly global community emerges. The people of Ukraine, with their rich heritage and reverence for freedom, have much to offer this global community." Indeed, what words of foreshadowing to the Ukrainian "Orange Revolution" of the autumn/winter of 2004.

In conclusion, we consider it of great importance that the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide be recognized as such. The magnitude and gravity of this atrocity remains unknown to the world and a monument dedicated to the innocent victims would serve as not only a memorial to those who perished but also as a tool to help educate the global community of such heinous crimes. The American public should remember that although the Soviet Union has been defeated, the struggle for universal freedom continues. Many regimes continue to oppress their citizens and deny them basic human rights in order to achieve political objectives. The people of the United States must appreciate how fortunate they are to live in a freedom-loving society and should continue to strive for the liberation of all nations of the world. The Ukrainian American community feels that the building of a monument dedicated to the victims of the Famine-Genocide would instill in the hearts of all Americans the importance of our inherent right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.