



The New Rusyn Times

A Cultural-Organizational Publication of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society
Культурно-сполоченський часопис Карпато-Русинського Общества

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Рочник 25, Число 2

The Political Activity of Rusyn-American Immigrants in 1918

by Paul Robert Magocsi

During the last months of World War I, many immigrant groups in the United States became actively concerned with the fate of their respective homelands. Already in early 1918, it was increasingly evident that the map of Europe would be remade after the war, and immigrant leaders hoped to influence the course of those future changes. The potential economic and political strength of American immigration was also recognized by statesmen in eastern and southern Europe. National spokespersons like Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and Ignace Paderewski, for instance, spent several months in the United States where they solicited support among their overseas brethren for the idea of Czechoslovak and Polish statehood.

It was also at this time that Rusyn-American immigrants began seriously to consider organizational efforts on behalf of their native land — Subcarpathian Rus'. In comparison with other immigrant groups, Rusyns entered the political arena quite late, but in the end, they were to be extremely successful in having their demands fulfilled.

Like most immigrants from eastern and southern Europe, Rusyns came to the United States to improve their economic status. According to the Hungarian census of 1910, they numbered 447,566 and lived along the slopes and valleys of the Carpathian Mountains in the northeastern part of the Hungarian Kingdom. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, this region experienced a series of poor harvests, a demographic increase, and the general neglect of the Hungarian government — a combination of factors that made it difficult for Rusyn peasants to obtain even the necessities for physical survival. Although the government did attempt to improve



Gregory Zatkovich

economic conditions in Rusyn-inhabited regions,¹ these efforts were short-lived and the actual situation remained dismal. In the words of a contemporary Hungarian publicist:

The sovereign stag should not be disturbed in its family entertainments... What is a Ruthenian compared with it?... Only a peasant!... The hunting periods last two weeks. There come some of the Schwarzenbergs, the Kolowrats, the Liechtensteins, ... they tell each other their hunting adventures.... In order that they should tell each other all this... 70,000 Ruthenians [Rusyns] must be doomed to starvation by the army of officials... The deer and the wild boar destroy the corn, the oats, the potato, and the clover of the Ruthenian... Their whole yearly work is destroyed...

The people sow, and the deer of the estate harvest.²

To escape their fate, many Rusyns began to emigrate, especially to the United States, where by 1914 about 60,000 had settled.³ The former woodcutters, shepherds, and farmers were transformed into industrial workers who found employment in the mining and manufacturing centers of Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Ohio. Generally, Rusyns did not intend to remain in the New World, but only work there as long as it took to earn enough dollars so that they could return to the “old country” and pay off a mortgage or buy a new homestead and more land. But despite the “temporary” nature of their stay, they did establish several organizations, especially in the vicinity of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

The largest of these was the Greek Catholic Union of Rusyn Brotherhoods (Sojedenenje Greko-Katoličeskich

continued on page 9

EVENTS

Saturday, July 7–Sunday, July 8, 2018 *Youngstown, PA*
20th Annual Festival of the Arts, with participation by the Youngstown/Warren/Sharon Chapter, Youngstown State University, 1 University Plaza, Youngstown, OH, 44555. Rusyn food booth and information table.

Monday, July 23 –Friday, July 27 *St. Louis, MO*
The Orthodox Church of America holds its 19th All-American Council, St. Louis Union Station Hotel, 1820 Market St., St. Louis, MO 63103.

Saturday, August 25, 2018 *Boardman, OH*
Vatra, hosted by the Youngstown/Warren/Sharon Chapter, Infant Jesus of Prague Byzantine Catholic Church Grounds, 7754 South Ave., Boardman, OH 44512. Rusyn food, music, genealogy, and sales tables. 12:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, September 22, 2018 *Johnstown, PA*
Slavic Festival, sponsored by the Johnstown Area Heritage Association, 201 Sixth Ave., Johnstown, PA, 15906. 12:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 13, 2018 *Wilkes-Barre, PA*
6th Annual Rusyn Genealogy and Heritage Conference presented by the Eastern PA Chapter, King's College, 133 North River St., Wilkes-Barre, PA 18711. For more information, contact Sharon Jarrow at shangp@rcn.com or phone 610-759-2628.

Sunday, October 21, 2018 *Munhall, PA*
C-RS Annual Meeting. Carpatho-Rusyn Cultural and Educational Center, 915 Dickson St., Munhall, PA 15129. The meeting will begin at 1:00 p.m.

Sunday, October 28, 2018 *Uniontown, PA*
37th Carpatho-Rusyn Celebration, St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church, 201 East Main St., Uniontown, PA 15401. Ethnic foods and dancers will be featured. 12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, November 4, 2018 *Pittsburgh, PA*
Slovak Heritage Festival, University of Pittsburgh, Cathedral of Learning Commons Room, 4200 Fifth Ave., Pittsburgh, PA., 15213. Rusyn information and sales table. 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, November 11, 2018 *Pittsburgh, PA*
Polishfest, "Celebrating Poland from the Tatra Mountains to the Baltic Sea," University of Pittsburgh, Cathedral of Learning Commons Room, 4200 Fifth Ave., Pittsburgh, PA, 15213. Rusyn information table. 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 1, 2018 *Munhall, PA*
St. Nicholas Party hosted by the National, Carpatho-Rusyn Cultural and Educational Center, 915 Dickson St., Munhall, PA 15129. St. Nicholas and his special guests will be in attendance. 2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Friday, May 17–Sunday, May 19, 2019 *Munhall, PA*
25th Anniversary of the C-RS Incorporation, Carpatho-Rusyn Cultural and Educational Center, 915 Dickson St., Munhall, PA 15129.

THE NEW RUSYN TIMES



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Submission Guidelines

The New Rusyn Times welcomes contributions by its readers. Articles selected for publication may be edited for content and length. Please note that articles promoting political agenda or specific faiths cannot be accepted.

E-mail: Send submissions to jpc@c-rs.org.

Text: Word (doc or docx) or rtf format.

Photos: jpegs in the largest file size possible. If too large to e-mail, photos may be sent to our DropBox; address available on request.

Charts or artwork with text: PDF or native file format. Otherwise scan at the highest resolution possible.

Contribution deadlines for 2018

Fall Issue — July 20, 2018

Winter Issue — Oct. 15, 2018

Sunday, May 19, 2018 *Munhall, PA*
C-RS Annual Meeting, Carpatho-Rusyn Cultural and Educational Center, 915 Dickson St., Munhall, PA 15129. Immediately following conclusion of Anniversary celebration.

On May 31, we commemorated one hundred years since the signing of the Pittsburgh Agreement and what it meant for the Rusyn people. The Agreement was formulated and signed when Americans of Czech and Slovak origin publicly announced their support for the creation of an independent Czechoslovak nation from the ashes of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It was the formal expression of the desire by American immigrants that those in their homelands have the same type of freedom and opportunity they enjoyed in the United States. This idea of autonomy within a state particularly appealed to Rusyns.



Maryann H. Sivak
National President

Like most immigrants from eastern and southern Europe, Rusyns had come to the United States to improve their economic status. In comparison with other immigrant groups, Rusyns entered the political arena quite late. In the end, however, they were extremely successful in having their wishes fulfilled. Although several countries promised Rusyn autonomy, most Rusyns in the homeland and in America felt Czechoslovakia to be the right option. With that decision made, Subcarpathia thrived. In August, 1938, *The National Geographic Magazine* published a lengthy article entitled "Czechoslovaks, Yankees of Europe."

At the end of World War II in Europe, Stalin dictated that all Rusyns of the Subcarpathian Rus'/ Transcarpathian region of Ukraine, were to be designated citizens of the USSR and ethnically "Ukrainian." Mention of the ethnonym "Rusyn" was prohibited for 40 long years.

With the collapse of communism in the Eastern Block, every country but Ukraine now recognizes Rusyns as an ethnic minority. They appreciate the fact that Rusyns positively contribute to and culturally enrich their respective states.

President's Report

- The Display Committee is developing a logo and organizing data on display items used in the past, needed presently, and/or wanted. Estimated cost is about \$4,000.
- Alexis McCormick, Chief Information Officer, is working on our new website. We are hoping to launch sometime this summer.
- We are developing an online store where we would sell products online. Working via Wild Apricot, we can set special prices for our members and add a catalogue gadget on our website to make our goods available to the public.
- The Strategic Planning Committee has been meeting regularly. We have discussed improving the Board of Directors' performance, expanding member benefits and programming, and developing a membership growth plan. We also have addressed improving fund raising and other important issues to help us make the organization even better.
- We rented a climate-controlled storage unit to house John Schweich's collection of parish histories which we recently acquired. This is a temporary measure until an archival room is completed at the Cultural Center. We are hoping this will be done by the end of summer. A special thank you to Linda Schweich for her cooperation in working out the logistics of storage and picking up John's collection.
- We have contracted with VistANet to be able to broadcast Webinar across the country. Alexis McCormick is working with VistANet using Adobe Connect Platform. This will include VoIP service, so all audio is integrated into the platform. We are inventorying our media equipment and researching what else is needed beyond the actual platform to integrate live feeds from our video studio.
- We are investigating online lectures/recordings that our members can access.
- A special thank you to Dr. Robert Hanich for his generous donation of \$20,000 for the renovation of our Cultural Center.
- We are looking forward to showcasing our Center next year as we celebrate the 25th anniversary of our incorporation. Please mark your calendar now for May 17, 18, and 19, 2019. We will combine this event with our annual meeting. More information is forthcoming, so please stay tuned.
- On May 31st, the 100th anniversary of the Pittsburgh Agreement was celebrated at the Heinz History Center of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Invited guests included dignitaries from the Czech Republic and Slovakia, family members of the original signers and elected representatives of the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. Due to my work on creating the Pittsburgh Agreement Memorial, I was invited to be their guest and was acknowledged.
- The video project featuring John Righetti's presentation "Who Are the Rusyns" is near its completion. The final version was prepared by Bob Kasarda and reviewed by Bonnie Burke, John Righetti and myself. Minor adjustments and edits are being made and the first video will soon be completed.

- We have developed a brochure for the Cleveland Rusin Garden project headed by Diana Essock. More information will be forthcoming.
- Tom Brenzovich is working with the C-RS Board and C-RS Chapter Presidents for event registration and payments via the internet. Tom is also testing an electronic (email) ballot so members will be able to vote for candidates online.
- The art exhibit "Four Artists Walk into a Church" held at the Cultural Center was so well received that we have been asked by other artists to display work there. A new project that is under consideration is for the New Renaissance Theater Company to stage the play "Wittenberg" on October 20, 2018 in the Center. Wittenberg is the German college where Shakespeare's Hamlet studied before his return to Denmark.

As you can see we are very busy. Like all non-profit organizations, we heavily rely on volunteers; they are simply invaluable to the C-RS. We would appreciate it if you could give us a few hours of your time each year. Please contact us and tell us what you would be willing to help us with. If you have special skills, we would love to hear what they are. We are deeply grateful for your support, generosity, and your commitment to the Carpatho-Rusyn Society. Please email me at pres@c-rs.org.

2018 ELECTION NOTICE

To all C-RS members, this is to inform you that for the 2018 election of board members for the 2019-2021 term scheduled for the October-November timeframe (exact date to be determined) balloting will be done online by email for most of the membership.

Members with an email address will receive an email containing voting instructions and a link to an online ballot. Instructions will walk them through opening the ballot by clicking on the embedded link, voting for the candidates of their choice and when done, submitting their vote by clicking on the submit button. Voting will be simple and straight forward.

Members who do not have email will still receive a paper ballot as in the past. Note: All votes will remain confidential.

Our People

Jim Basista

Jim was born in Struthers, Ohio, a city five miles south of Youngstown to John and Anna Basista. Both his parents were born in Tichý Potok in Slovakia, coming to America in the early 1900's. He was baptized and confirmed in Sts. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church in Struthers. Jim's childhood was spent in Struthers and he graduated from Struthers High School. He then attended Youngstown College, majoring in Metallurgical Engineering. Youngstown College became Youngstown University, where he earned his Engineering Degree. While there he was commissioned an officer in the Army Corps of Engineers and with active duty and the reserves he retired as a Colonel after thirty years of service.

He spent his entire career in the steel industry working for Republic Steel, Copperweld Steel and Birmingham Steel, the longest being 31 years at Copperweld retiring as Vice President of Metallurgy and Quality Assurance.



While working he held a variety of positions among which were Field Engineer, Superintendent Process Metallurgy, Claims Manager, Chief Inspector, Superintendent of Steel Making, Chief Metallurgist, Corporate Metallurgist and Vice President.

Jim and his wife Margaret have been married 57 years and have four children and seven grandchildren. They are members of Sts. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church in Warren, Ohio.

After retiring in 2000, Jim and Margaret have traveled to Slovakia and visited Tichý Potok, the village of his parents. They have traveled to most of North America, Central and South America, Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

Jim is a life member of the American Society of Metals, Reserve Officers Association, and the Military Officers Association of America. He is a 3rd degree in the K of C, and is a member of the American Legion, Electric Metal Makers Guild and American Iron and Steel Institute.

Jim's Youngstown/Warren/Sharon Chapter has had two Presidents. Robert Democko was the first, when the chapter was organized. Jim is the second and has been president for more than ten years. Jim credits many people in helping get the chapter started. The late Jack

Poloka, Jerry Chanda, and the New Jersey Chapter were especially helpful in the early years. Under Jim's leadership the chapter has been active in the local community with participation in Simply Slavic and The Festival of Arts at Youngstown University. This participation has exposed other nationality groups in the area to Rusyn culture. As a result, Jim says the folks in Youngstown know there is such a thing as a Carpatho-Rusyn.

Jim says his chapter is blessed to have many hard working members. It is a giving chapter and has supported Rusyn schools, Slavjane, the Cultural Center, and humanitarian programs in Europe.

Jim wishes to "invite all to our Youngstown events especially our Vatra which will take place on September 8 this year. All dates and locations will be posted on the National web site."

NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL

Four Artists Walk into a Church

To maintain our 501(c)(3) status, the C-RS offers the Cultural Center for community activities. From April 20 through May 19, the Center hosted an exhibit by four local artists. Michael Walter displayed works in colored pencil, charcoal, and blueprint. His subjects were masks, totem poles, and a series on bad leaders, including Diocletian, Herod Antipas, and George B. McClellan. Janet Carlisle showed richly-colored collages combining fabric, gouache, acrylic, ink and photo clippings. Jana Houskova provided realistic and photo-realistic images of people, pets, and places. Her media were colored pencil, oil, and watercolor. Jon Coulter is a professional medical artist. His offerings were landscapes and portraits in pen & ink, watercolor, and oil. With wildly diverse styles, the four appealed to viewers of nearly every persuasion.



Opening Night



Michael Walter, Janet Carlisle, Jon Coulter, Jana Houskova



1. Michael Walter, Herod.
2. Jana Houskova, Puppy.
3. Janet Carlisle, Do You Hear Me?
4. Jon Coulter, Anna and Maria Vasilova.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE C-RS CHAPTERS— НОВИНЫ З ОДДІЛІВ К-РО

Lake Michigan Chapter:

Professor Magocsi Examines Myths and Stereotypes about Rusyns

The Lake Michigan Chapter of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society hosted Dr. Paul Robert Magocsi on November 12, 2017, in the parish hall of St. Luke Orthodox Church in Palos Hills, Illinois.

His topic was “Myths and Stereotypes in Carpatho-Rusyn History.”

After his presentation he fielded many questions, and signed copies of his books for the 50+ attendees. The presentation included information from his over 800 publications, most notably his latest book *With Their Backs to the Mountains, a History of Carpathian Rus' and Carpatho-Rusyns*. Included in his well-illustrated presentation were observations on the Austro-Hungarian Empire (until 1918) and its treatment of non-Magyar cultures, schools and religion. For detailed coverage of

Professor Magocsi’s “Myths and Stereotypes” presentation, see *NRT* Vol. 23, No. 4.

More currently, he addressed the situation in several European countries which recognize Rusyns as a distinct cultural group whose language is even taught in schools, and where it is not.



Dallas Chapter:

We Were, Are, and Will Be Texans

Milan Reban, Professor Emeritus from the University of North Texas, was the guest speaker for C-RS Dallas on Saturday, March, 2018. President Lee Ann Slavik Erder opened the event with a PowerPoint “Who Are The Rusyns,” and Professor Reban presented a program entitled “Rusyns: A People Surviving with Changing Borders” at the Environmental Education Center in Plano, Texas. After specifically discussing the Rusyn culture, Professor Reban relayed his personal experience escaping Communist Czechoslovakia as a teenager. Complimentary snacks and beverages were served to attendees.



Girl Scouts Discover Rusyns

On March 18, 2018, Girl Scouts across the United States participated in the annual World Thinking Day event, in which each troop chooses a country on which to educate other troops. Girl Scout Troop 30218 from West Pittston, Pennsylvania, chose Slovakia and featured different minority groups in the country, including the Carpatho-Rusyns.

Pictures of life in Slovakia, assorted items from Slovakia, and books on Slovakia were on display for the people attending the event to examine.



Top: Holly Robbins, Sarah Klaproth, Lydia Marotti, Bethany Sromovsky. **Bottom:** Emily Bryan, Kayla Kleinfelder, Olivia Kiwak, and Eva Weiskerger

Pacific Northwest Branch:

Pysanky on the Pacific

The Pacific Northwest Branch hosted a Pysanky Workshop in West Seattle on the cold, bright afternoon of March 24, 2018. More than thirty people of all ages and backgrounds came together to learn the art of pysanky and participate in an ancient Carpatho-Rusyn tradition.

Co-leaders Leslie Lazar Thorn and Andrea Kaufman were joined by Donna Pacanovsky in planning and producing the event.

Andrea described her family's methods of decorating eggs and displayed several delicate and precious eggs her family had dyed more than 50 years ago.

Guest speaker Michael Kiktavy (Vancouver, BC) shared via PowerPoint illustrations of the somewhat different egg decorating methods practiced by his family, who currently live in Slovakia.

While Andrea's and Michael's families are both Rusyn, Andrea's grandparents, who came to the U.S. in approximately 1910 from Eastern Slovakia, most often made eggs with the line drawing method, using a kitska or stylus, resulting in exquisite, tiny geometric patterns, often thought to be the more Ukrainian-like tradition. Her family called them "Ukrainian Easter eggs."

Conversely, Michael's family has always focused on the drop-pull, or teardrop, method, using a pin head or nail head, which results in distinctive designs with more rounded, versus angular, features and is widely considered to be more purely Rusyn.

As Michael explained, the truth is that the techniques and designs, as well as language, practiced by any family was and are largely influenced by the locale in which they live or lived. The nature of the designs, and even the name for decorated eggs, changes from region to region, sometimes village to village. Therefore, while Rusyns rightly claim as their own this egg decorating tradition that may

have originated in the 10th century, the tools, designs, techniques, and even language describing the art differ from place to place.

The word most of us are familiar with is "pysanky." Michael introduced us to one other term, "kraslytzi," the "Rusynized" form of the Slovak word "kraslice." Its literal meaning: *beautifuls*.



Eastern Carolina Branch:

Gabe Koljesar: From Serbia to Canada to the Carolinas

On April 21, the Eastern Carolina Branch had the great opportunity to meet Gabe Koljesar, a Canadian Rusyn leader from Vojvodina, Serbia. He was in town visiting his son and we were anxious to meet a fellow Rusyn from Vojvodina. We enjoyed the camaraderie while we met casually for lunch. We all purchased the newly released book *In the Footsteps of Our Ancestors* by Michele Parvensky, Ph.D., which Gabe, as an editor, personally autographed for each of us. We are looking forward to meeting with Gabe again in the near future.



Dallas Chapter:

Warhol Takes the Cake

C-RS Dallas held a 3rd Birthday Party on Saturday, April 28, 2018, at the Environmental Education Center in Plano, Texas. Also celebrated was Andy Warhol's 90th birthday.

President Lee Ann Slavik Erder presented a talk entitled "When Icons Speak; Andy Warhol's Hidden Rusyn Art." The second half of the day featured local Dallas/Ft. Worth artist

Jerrel Sustaita, who led the attendees in "Painting Warhol," a session teaching Andy Warhol's silkscreening process. Participants were able to choose from several different designs to create and take home for their own collection. Rounding out the event was a special C-RS Birthday Cake, a Wine & Cheese Bar, a Silent Auction, and a Rusyn Photo Booth complete with cyrillic messages on the props.



The Political Activity of Rusyn-American Immigrants in 1918
(continued from page 1)



First Greek Catholic Union Convention, Scranton, PA, 1893

Russkich Bratstv), founded in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania in 1892. This was basically an insurance organization concerned with the physical welfare of its members, though it also strove to preserve the integrity of the Greek Catholic Church in the United States. The Greek Catholic Union published an influential newspaper, the *Amerykanskii Russkii Vístnyk* (1892–1952), and by 1918 counted over 90,000 members in both regular and youth lodges. A smaller group formed the United Societies of the Greek Catholic Religion (Sobranije Greko-Katoličeskich Cerkovnykh Bratstv), also an insurance organization, but one administered directly by the hierarchy of the Greek

Catholic Church. The United Societies published the newspaper *Prosvĭta* (1917–2000) and had about 9,000 members in regular, Sokol (gymnastic), and youth chapters.

In the decades following the 1848 revolution, influential circles in Subcarpathia fostered the idea of political cooperation with both Slovaks and Galician Rusyns and adopted the Russian language and cultural ideals for local intellectual life. It should be emphasized that the Subcarpathian intelligentsia had repeatedly rejected the Ukrainian national orientation and that the Galician contacts were almost exclusively with Russophile individuals and organizations there. Furthermore, since Subcarpathian Rus' was part of Hungary and subject to the assimilationist policy of magyarization, many Rusyn leaders (known as Magyarones) favored Hungarian civilization and considered themselves to be either Uhro-Rusyns (Hungarian Rusyns), or simply Hungarians of the Greek Catholic faith. Thus, a pro-Russian (and clearly anti-Ukrainian) or a pro-Hungarian cultural and political orientation, as well as a potential pro-Slovak political trend, were the predominant elements of late nineteenth-century Subcarpathian life that inevitably pervaded the intellectual framework of Rusyn immigrants in the United States.



Lodge #6 Ss Cyril & Methodius Brotherhood, United Societies, West Newton, PA

Initially, the ecclesiastical, and to a lesser degree lay organizations, tried to include Rusyn immigrants from Galicia, Bukovina, and Subcarpathian Rus', as well as Slovaks and Magyars of the Greek Catholic rite. To avoid controversy, these organizations referred to their members with noncontroversial names such as Rusyn, or the ethnically non-specific designation, "Slavish." The Greek Catholic Union was subtitled by the catch-all phrase: "A Fraternal and Benefit Society Comprised of Catholics of Greek and Roman Rite and of Slavonic Extraction or Descent," while the Greek Catholic Church, with its Galician-Ukrainian, Slovak, Magyar, and Croatian as well as Carpatho-Rusyn adherents, tried not to favor any one ethnic group.

The tendency toward separation, however, in particular between Rusyn immigrants from Subcarpathian Rus' and those from Galicia, was already evident in 1894. In that year, a Rusyn (later renamed Ukrainian) National Union was set up to accommodate nationally conscious Ukrainian immigrants from Galicia. This new organization began to compete for members with the older Greek Catholic Union. Any attempts toward cooperation between the two groups broke down completely after 1907, when a Galician Ukrainophile priest, Soter Ortyns'kyi, was appointed bishop for Greek Catholics in the United States. Backed by the Greek Catholic Union, a group of immigrant priests from Subcarpathian Rus' opposed Ortyns'kyi, especially his "policy of making the diocese Ukrainian," and they strove "to protect the Uhro- [Subcarpathian] Rusyns and segments of the Galicians against Ukrainian propaganda."⁴ The continual disagreements between the Galician-Ukrainophile clergy on the one hand, and priests from Subcarpathian Rus' (strongly supported by the Greek Catholic Union) on the other, finally led to a papal decree of April 1916, which divided the Greek Catholic Church in the United States into a Subcarpathian and Galician branch, each to be headed by its own administrator.

The Rusyn-American community was not only rent by regional Subcarpathian-Galician conflicts, but also by large scale conversions from both camps to Orthodoxy and by the attempts of the Hungarian government to gain influence over immigrant organizations. From the very beginning, Greek Catholic priests had problems with the American Catholic hierarchy concerning questions of ritual, jurisdictional authority, and the existence of married priests. In particular, the refusal of American Catholics to recognize married Greek Catholic priests resulted in the defection to Orthodoxy of more than 29,000 Rusyns between the years 1891 and 1909.⁵ These Orthodox Rusyns became staunch advocates of a Russian national orientation.

The relationship to the Slovak immigrants in this early period was more positive. For instance, the Greek

Catholic Union's newspaper was initially printed and to a degree influenced by Peter V. Rovnianek, the founder of the National Slovak Society. This organization, which included immigrants from "Slovakia" of all religious beliefs, as well as the Pennsylvania Slovak Roman and Greek Catholic Union, attracted many Rusyns. Cooperation between Slovak and Rusyn immigrants in political affairs was also evident, and as early as 1904 representatives of both groups addressed a petition to the Hungarian delegates of the world congress of parliamentarians being held in St. Louis which protested the fate of their brethren at home.

In turn, the Hungarian government tried through the Trans-Atlantic Trust Company in New York and through the Austro-Hungarian consulates in Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Wilkes-Barre to combat the "pernicious" effect of Subcarpathian contact with Slovaks and with Galician Ukrainophiles and Russophiles and to assure a favorable attitude on the part of the Greek Catholic Union and Greek Catholic Church hierarchy. The Union successfully resisted such infiltration, but the church still remained staffed with Magyarone priests who were educated and acculturized in the old world Hungarian environment. Such a situation fostered frequent controversy between the Rusyn clergy and the lay leadership of the Greek Catholic Union, and this was the predominant feature of Rusyn immigrant life in the early years of the twentieth century.

Political concerns did not really take precedence among Subcarpathian immigrants until the last years of the First World War and especially 1918, when Allied military victories and declarations by President Woodrow Wilson seemed to forecast imminent changes in the structure of Eastern Europe. Reflecting on the fate of their homeland, Rusyn immigrant leaders considered the following alternatives: union of Subcarpathian Rus' with Russia, union with the Ukraine, full independence, autonomy within Hungary or autonomy within Czechoslovakia.

The first public demonstration of Rusyn political attitudes came at the Russian Congress, held in New York City on July 13, 1917. Organized by the Galician Russophile, Peter P. Hatalak, this Congress was composed of Rusyn immigrants from "Carpathian Russia," i.e., Galicia, Bukovina, and Subcarpathian Rus'. The majority of participants were delegates from Russophile organizations set up by immigrants from Galicia and Bukovina. The Subcarpathians were represented by the chairman of the Greek Catholic Union, the editor of the Union's newspaper, and by Nicholas Pačuta, chairman of a "Carpatho-Russian" political organization, the American Russian National Defense (Americansko-Russkaia 'Narodnaia Obrana'). Although the Orthodox hierarchy was well represented, Galician-Ukrainophile leaders and Subcarpathian clergy from the Greek Catholic Church were noticeably absent. The later had only recently issued a resolution stating "that the

most advantageous things for those sons of our people who are citizens of Hungary would be to remain within Hungary after the war with full guarantees of autonomy.”⁶

The Congress issued a memorandum which traced the unfortunate history of “Carpathian Russia” and then declared:

*The whole Carpatho-Russian people steadfastly demand the liberation of Carpathian Rus’ (Priкарпатська Рус’) from foreign domination, and with the broadest autonomy the unification of all Carpathian Rus’, according to its ethnographic boundaries, with its older sister — a great, democratic Russia.*⁷

This memorandum was presented to the Russian and other Allied Embassies as well as to the State Department in Washington. However, the British Ambassador’s opposition to the idea of union with Russia, and especially the Bolshevik coup d’état in November 1917 ended the feasibility of the Russian solution. The chairman of the Russian Congress later recalled: “Towards the end of 1917 it was already clear to all Uhro-Rusyn leaders in America that Uhro-Rus’ cannot be united with Russia... because... in Russia the Bolsheviks already controlled the government.”⁸

An organization called the Ukrainian Federation of the United States claimed to represent “more than 700,000 Ruthenians and Ukrainians” and submitted a memorandum to President Wilson on June 29, 1918 asking, that he “endorse the endeavors of their mother countries for national unity and constitutional freedom” from the “unjust and incompetent rule of the Romanoff and Hapsburg dynasties.”⁹

But the most influential faction among Rusyn immigrants was that represented by the Greek Catholic Union. At the beginning of 1918, the Union’s newspaper already called upon its readers to think in political terms and to consider four possible “alternatives” for the homeland: unity with Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Ukraine, or Russia. By the end of the year, Rusyn immigrants accepted the Czechoslovak “alternative,” and the reason for this can be attributed to the activity of two men: Tomáš G. Masaryk, the future founding president of Czechoslovakia, and Gregory I. Zatkovich, the future first governor of Subcarpathian Rus’.

Although the United States did not specifically call for the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary, [Secretary of State] Lansing stressed on June 28 that “all branches of the Slav race should be completely freed from German and Austrian rule.”¹⁰ Statements like these provided favorable propaganda for the efforts of leaders like Masaryk who arrived in the United States on May 1 in order to gather

support for Czechoslovak independence among American Czechs and Slovaks.

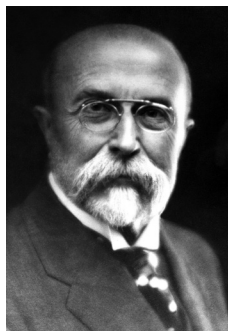
It was in the course of negotiations with Slovak immigrants in Pittsburgh at the end of May that Masaryk first met a Rusyn representative in the person of Nicholas Pačuta. Actually, Masaryk had not contemplated Subcarpathian Rus’ in his original plan for an independent state, and only during his stay in Kiev in 1917 did he discuss the problem with Ukrainian leaders who at the time were demanding autonomy within the Russian Empire. With regard to Subcarpathian Rus’, Masaryk later recalled: “it was only a pious wish, but I had to consider a plan in Russia and especially in Ukraine, because Ukrainian leaders discussed with me many times the future of all Little Russian [Ukrainian] lands outside of Russia. They had no objection to the unification of Subcarpathian Rus’ with us.”¹¹

Following the path of Czech and Slovak immigrants, many Rusyns had already volunteered for service in a Czechoslovak regiment that was fighting alongside the Allies in France. The Czechoslovak orientation was in particular being fostered by Nicholas Pačuta, a recent convert to Orthodoxy who was not only chairman of the American Russian National Defense, but until early 1918 also an editor of the Greek Catholic Union’s newspaper. Formerly an advocate of Subcarpathia’s incorporation into Russia, Pačuta now realized the futility of such a plan. He negotiated with Slovak leaders and drew up a memorandum proposing union with Czechoslovakia. He delivered this document to U.S. Secretary of State Lansing in April and to Masaryk on May 30. Masaryk accepted the memorandum though he rightly surmised that Pačuta was acting more or less on his own and did not represent the wishes of the larger and more influential Greek Catholic Rusyn community.

On the whole, most immigrants were either disinterested in politics or satisfied to follow their priests who were convinced that “the most responsible solution for the Rusyns of Hungary is to remain further under the Hungarian crown.”¹² The official organ of the Greek Catholic Church disavowed any suggestion “that Hungarian Rusyns (*uhorski rusiny*) be united with the Galician Ukrainians,”¹³ since the clergy was reluctant “to mix in the affairs of foreign countries.”¹⁴ One group of priests met in McKeesport, Pennsylvania in March 1918 and “unanimously expressed their policy, which was that we remain loyal to Hungary.”¹⁵

Reflecting on the fate of their homeland, Rusyn immigrant leaders considered the following alternatives: union of Subcarpathian Rus’ with Russia, union with the Ukraine, full independence, autonomy within Hungary or autonomy within Czechoslovakia.

The first public demonstration of Rusyn political attitudes came at the Russian Congress, held in New York City



Tomáš Masaryk

on July 13, 1917. Organized by the Galician Russophile, Peter P. Hatalak, this Congress was composed of Rusyn immigrants from "Carpathian Russia," i.e., Galicia, Bukovina, and Subcarpathian Rus'. The majority of participants were delegates from Russophile organizations set up by immigrants from Galicia and Bukovina. The Subcarpathians were represented by the chairman of the Greek Catholic Union, the editor of the Union's newspaper, and by Nicholas Pačuta, chairman of a "Carpatho-Russian" political organization, the American Russian National Defense (Americansko-Ruskaia 'Narodnaia Obrana'). Although the Orthodox hierarchy was well represented, Galician-Ukrainophile leaders and Subcarpathian clergy from the Greek Catholic Church were noticeably absent. The later had only recently issued a resolution stating "that the most advantageous thing for those sons of our people who are citizens of Hungary would be to remain within Hungary after the war with full guarantees of autonomy."

These problems were finally resolved when Rusyn clerical and lay leaders joined together at the fifteenth convention of the Greek Catholic Union held in Cleveland, Ohio and Braddock, Pennsylvania from June 9 to 22, 1918. After a heated debate, Nicholas Pačuta, the former Russophile and now advocate of cooperation with the Czechs and Slovaks, was branded an Orthodox renegade and expelled from the Union. In his stead, a new chairman, Julij Gardoš, was elected. At the instigation of the clergy, the convention decided henceforth to use only the terms "Uhro-Rusyn" or "Rusyn" when referring to its members so as to distinguish them clearly from their Galician, Ukrainian, and Russian brethren. Most important, a policy of political activism was decided upon, and at that last session a nine-man commission was formed (later to be joined by nine priests) in order "to continue intensive action with the aim to liberate Uhorska [Hungarian] Rus'." ¹⁶

To fulfill the task of "liberation," and to work out common political aims, lay and ecclesiastical leaders met at Homestead, Pennsylvania on July 23, 1918. First, the Greek Catholic Union (Sojedenenje) joined with the smaller fraternal, the United Societies (Sobranije), to form an American National Council of Uhro-Rusyns (Amerikanska Narodna Rada Uhro-Rusinov). The National Council then proclaimed itself the sole legal representative for Uhro-Rusyn immigrants and adopted the following resolution:

If the pre-War boundaries remain, Rusyn, as the most loyal people — gens fidelissima¹⁷ — deserve that Hungary provide her with autonomy.

If new boundaries are drawn, they should be made according to nationality; thus, Uhro-Rusyns can belong nowhere else than to their nearest brothers by blood, language, and faith, to the Galician and Bukovinian Rusyns.

The Homestead Resolution made no mention of the Czechoslovak solution, but rather reflected the attitudes

of the pro-Hungarian clergy and pro-Galician lay leaders. From August until November 1918, Rusyn leaders continued to debate the relative advantages and disadvantages of the various alternatives, although in general the Hungarian trend lost ground and praise was only directed toward the idea of union with "our Galician and Bukovinian brothers."

As for the Czechoslovak movement, the Rusyn press presented a very unfavorable point of view. Wrath was especially directed toward Slovak immigrants, because they claimed certain Rusyn-inhabited territories as part of a future Slovakia and because they continued "to associate with our fallen down 'bolsheviki' [Pačuta] mob leaders."

The Rusyn message was unequivocal:

....We want liberty and independence And as Rusyns we are trying to make unity with other Rusyns, left out from Russia and Ukraina [sic]... in Galicia and Bukovina, and to create for our fathers and brethren a free Carpathian republic, instead of being the gain of anybody.¹⁸

The majority of Rusyn immigrants from Subcarpathian Rus' felt themselves to be distinct from Ukrainians. In effect, the proposed Carpathian Republic was to include three separate districts (*kantony*): (1) Uhors'ka Rus', from Hungary; and from Galicia (2) a Ukrainian district; and (3) a Carpatho-Russian Lemko district. This was to be a kind of federation "after the example of Switzerland!"

Most often, Subcarpathian immigrant leaders called for union only with the Carpatho-Russian Lemkos. Thus, it would be incorrect to assume, as many Ukrainian writers do, that Uhro-Rusyn immigrant proposals to unite with Galicia and Bukovina were an indication of a Ukrainian national consciousness.

If the publications of the Greek Catholic immigrant organizations continued to criticize the Czechoslovak alternative, how was it that this solution was finally accepted? The answer can be found by examining the activity of the young Pittsburgh lawyer, Gregory Zatkovich. Though a native of Subcarpathian Rus', Gregory was brought to the United States at the age of four, educated in American schools, and became successful enough to maintain a law practice. His father Pavel was a co-founder of the Greek Catholic Union and an activist in the struggle to oppose Hungarian infiltration into that organization, but Gregory seems not have been directly involved in Rusyn affairs until the late summer of 1918. As is evident from his proposals, he advocated the idea that the Subcarpathian, or Uhro-Rusyns formed a distinct nationality. Such a view, he believed, justified their demand for separate political as well as national rights.

Because of his facility to operate within the American system, the National Council of Uhro-Rusyns called upon Zatkovich in October to prepare a memorandum for President Wilson. Having drawn up such a document, he

arranged (with the help of Congressman Guy E. Campbell, D.-Penn.) a meeting with the president on October 21. Significantly, nothing specific about unification with Galicia and Bukovina was included and no mention at all was made of Czechoslovakia.

Presumably, President Wilson recommended seeking autonomy within some larger state and also advised Zatkovich and his colleagues to enter the Mid-European Democratic Union, a group of eastern European politicians representing eleven nationalities who organized a meeting on October 23-26 at Independence Hall in



Masaryk and Zatkovich at the Philadelphia Convention

Philadelphia. At Zatkovich's request, a nationally separate Uhro-Rusyn delegation was accorded membership in the Union. Also, while in Philadelphia Zatkovich met with Masaryk to discuss the possibility of Subcarpathia's unification with the new Czechoslovak state. Zatkovich later claimed that Masaryk told him: "If the Rusyns decide to join the Czechoslovak Republic, they shall constitute a totally autonomous state."¹⁹ However, another member of the Rusyn delegation, Reverend Valentine Gorzo, asked skeptically: "How can we agree with you, our brother Slovaks, if, as your map shows, you have taken half of our population and our Rusyn land. We demand a Rusyn territory from the Poprad to the Tisa Rivers."²⁰ On this critical question, Masaryk, Czechoslovakia's future president, was credited with saying: "The frontiers will be so determined that the Rusyns will be satisfied."²¹

Whether or not Masaryk made these verbal promises to Zatkovich in Philadelphia, one thing is certain: no written agreement was concluded between the two men on October 25 or on the next day when they joined other eastern European leaders to sign the "Declaration of Common Aims of the Independent Mid-European Nations."

On October 29, Zatkovich reported the results of his meetings with President Wilson and Tomáš Masaryk to the American National Council of Uhro-Rusyns. He still did not, however, publicly support the idea of joining Subcarpathian Rus' to Czechoslovakia. The next few weeks were marked by further negotiations, during which Rusyn newspapers were filled with discussions of whether

to unite with Czechoslovakia or with Ukraine.

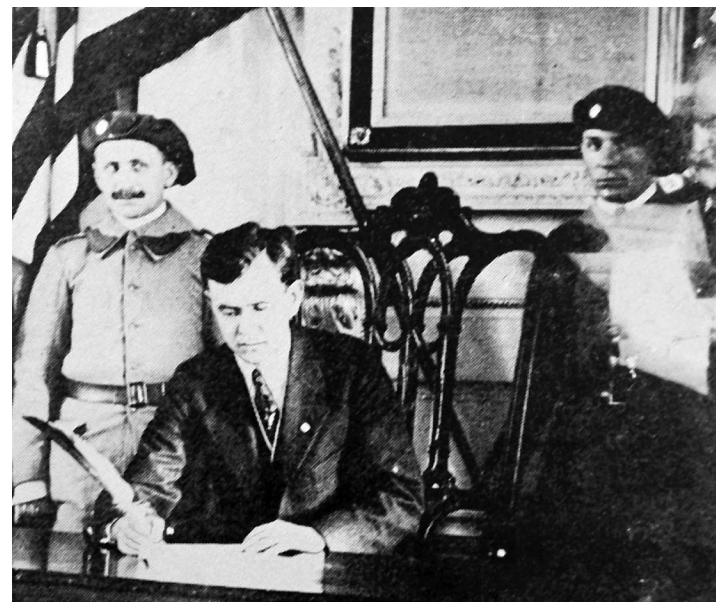
It was not until November 12, 1918, at a meeting of the National Council held in Scranton, Pennsylvania, that the Czechoslovak solution was finally adopted. Zatkovich succeeded in having the following resolution accepted:

*That Uhro-Rusyns with the broadest autonomous rights as a state, and on a federative basis, be united with the Czechoslovak Democratic Republic under the condition that to our country must belong all the original Uhro-Rusyn counties: Szepes, Sáros, Zemplén, Abauj, Borsod, Ung, Ugocsa, Bereg, and Máramaros.*²²

This territorial clause was to be the cause of future difficulty, since Slovaks were already claiming as their own the first six counties. Zatkovich also proposed at the Scranton meeting that a plebiscite be placed before all Rusyns in the United States in order to determine "where Uhro-Rusyns in the old country should belong, as an autonomous state in a Czechoslovak or in a Ukrainian federation."

On November 13, Zatkovich met with Masaryk, who "expressed great pleasure" with the Scranton resolution and stressed the need for a plebiscite so that the decision to join Czechoslovakia be viewed not "only as a decision of members of the National Council which could be objected to at the Peace Conference in Paris." The next day Zatkovich reported these recent developments in a telegram to President Wilson who responded with congratulations "on the progress made toward satisfactory relations."²³

Finally, the organs representing Greek Catholic Rusyn organizations came out in support of the Czechoslovak alternative. It was the practical reality of an existing Czechoslovak state as opposed to a still unrecognized Ukrainian government in Galicia that forced American Rusyns to link their destiny with Prague.



Zatkovich signing the "Declaration of Common Aims" as representative of the Uhro-Rusins.

In December 1918, the proposed plebiscite was held in the various lodges of the Greek Catholic Union (Sojedeneniye), the United Societies of the Greek Catholic Religion (Sobraniye), and in Uhro-Rusyn Greek Catholic parishes. According to Zatkovich's suggestion made at Scranton, each lodge and parish was allotted one vote for every fifty members. This indirect balloting was actually conducted in less than half of the existing lodges and parishes.

Zatkovich did, however, obtain the result he desired: out of 1102 votes submitted, 732 (67 percent) were for union with Czechoslovakia, and 310 (28 percent) for union with the Ukraine. Zatkovich immediately informed Czechoslovak authorities in both Prague and Paris as well as the State Department in Washington of the results. The plebiscite gave greater credence to the decision of the American National Council of Uhro-Rusyns since it seemed to be an expression of popular will and not just an expression of the desire of a few energetic leaders.

The Scranton resolution and the subsequent plebiscite brought to a close the first state in Rusyn immigrant political activity. Under the influence of cultural and national traditions brought from the old country, Rusyn-American leaders had wavered between a Hungarian, Russian, Ukrainian, Czechoslovak, and independent orientation. It was not until late 1918 that the Czechoslovak alternative was finally adopted, and this was in large measure due to the activity of Gregory Zatkovich.

Zatkovich headed a three-man Rusyn-American delegation, which in February 1919 presented the Scranton resolution and plebiscite to the Czechoslovak Delegation at the Paris Peace Conference. Information about the Rusyn immigrant decision had already reached the homeland and local leaders admitted that the views further stimulated them to incline toward Czechoslovakia. Zatkovich himself arrived in Subcarpathian Rus' on March 10 and began immediately to organize a national council. Finally, on May 8, 1919, the Central Russian National Council (Tsentral'na Russka Narodna Rada) met in Uzhorod to declare that "in the name of the whole nation it completely endorses the decision of the American Uhro-Rusyn Council to unite with the Czechoslovak nation on the basis of full national autonomy." Moreover, it was Zatkovich himself who formulated the political demands of the Uzhorod Council regarding the future relationship between the "Russian State" (Russkij Shtat) — as Subcarpathian Rus' was referred to — and Czechoslovakia.²⁴

Recognizing the crucial role played by Zatkovich, Czechoslovakia's President Masaryk appointed him to serve as head of Subcarpathia's ruling Directorate in 1919 and as its first governor in 1920.

This work was first published in East European Quarterly, Vol X, No 3 (Boulder, Colo., 1976) pp. 347–365.



Zatkovich family in Uzhorod

Notes:

1 The so-called Highlands Action was initiated in 1890 by a Hungarian official, Edmund Egan, but his untimely death put an end to further economic or social improvements. See Egan's memoir, *Ekonomichne polozhenie rus'kykh selian v Uhorshichyni*, 2nd ed. (Prague, 1922).

2 Miklós Bartha, *Kazár földön* (1901), cited in Oscar Jászi, *The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy* (Chicago, 1966), p. 235.

3 Studies by Oleksander Mytsiuk, "Zemihratsii uhro-rusyniv pered svitovoiu viinoju," *Naukovyi zbirnyk Tovarystva 'Prosvita'*, XIII-XIV (Uzhhorod, 1937-38), pp. 21-32, and Ladislav Tajták, "Pereselennia ukraïntsv skhidnoi Slovačchyny do 1913 r.," *Duklia*, IX, 4 (Prešov, 1961), pp. 97-103.

4 Program of the Rusyn Civilian Church Council, May 14, 1908, cited in Warzeski, *Byzantine Rite Rusins*, p. 120.

5 Warzeski, *Byzantine Rite Rusins*, pp. 105-110; Keith S. Russin, "Father Alexis G. Toth and the Wilkes-Barre Litigations," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, XVI, 3 (Crestwood, N.Y., 1972), pp. 128-49.

6 Cited from a resolution signed by 32 Subcarpathian Rusyn priests who met in New York City on June 28, 1917. *Prosvita*, July 12, 1917; Svoboda (Jersey City, N.J.), July 17, 1917.

7 Josef Markov, "Přispěvek k ústavním dějinám Podkarpatské Rusi," *Bratislava*, V (Bratislava, 1931), pp. 517-518.

continued on page 19

The Pittsburgh Agreement

by Maryann Sivak

During World War I, a group of Slavic nationalists met in Paris. Inspired by a vision of ethnic sovereignty for Central European peoples, they created the Czechoslovak National Council. They pledged themselves to promote an independent state carved from the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk was a professor, philosopher and a member of the Austrian Parliament. His father was Slovak and his mother Moravian. It seemed that prior to 1907, only Masaryk among prominent personalities was interested in uniting Czechs and Slovaks. For example, in 1902, Slovak physician (and later, pro-independence politician) Vavro Šrobár stated: "There cannot be any question of a fusion in the political sense; we are citizens of the Crown of St. Stephen [Hungary] and have recognized this publicly; we are obliged to defend the integrity of our homeland against anyone."

Nevertheless, World War I began to change that apathy. In 1916, Professor Masaryk, Czech attorney Edvard Beneš, and renowned Slovak astronomer Milan Štefánik met in Paris to promote independence for a Czechoslovak State. They formed the Czechoslovak National Council, whereupon Austria immediately declared them traitors. Beneš promoted their cause in London and Paris. Štefánik championed independence in France and Italy. Masaryk travelled throughout Europe. In May, 1918, Masaryk, whose wife was Charlotte Garrigue from Brooklyn, would come to the United States to enlist American support for the proposed new nation.

From 1893 to 1913, some 300,000 Czechs, Slovaks, and Rusyns had left Austria-Hungary for America. This was in large part stimulated by America's need for industrial labor. Agents of the Carnegie Steel Company, for example, actively recruited Slovaks and Rusyns to work in the mills of Pittsburgh. These immigrants longed for their people in the homeland to experience the economic, religious, and political freedom that they found here.

The Pittsburgh area, as one would expect, included one of the largest concentrations of Slovaks and Rusyns outside of Europe. Many of their newspapers and fraternal organizations traced their origins to the Pittsburgh area: the Slovensky Sokol, Slovanic-Carpathian Progressive Union, the National Slovak Society, Slovak League of America, First Slovak Evangelical Union, Živena-Fraternal for Slovak Women in America, and the Slovak Calvin Union. The national fraternals also had many lodges in this area, including: the Slovak Catholic Union, Pennsylvania Roman and Greek Catholic Union, the Slovak Lutheran Society, the Slovak Gymnastic Union Sokol, Roman and Greek Catholic Sokols, Mission of the Congregational Church, and the First Catholic Slovak Women's League.

In September, 1906, Slovak newspaper writers from around the country had met with church leaders in Pittsburgh to organize the Slovak League of America. In 1915, the American Czech National Alliance invited the Slovak League to discuss a joint program for political unification of their homelands. At this time, the Czechs proposed a federal state that would maintain autonomous Slovak and Czech republics with their own languages, financial institutions, and diets.

In 1918, with a majority of the Slovak leadership behind him, Professor Masaryk toured America with a three-part agenda:

1. To meet with Secretary of State Robert Lansing
2. To raise money for the proposed new nation of Czechoslovakia
3. To recruit for and promote the Czechoslovak Legion as the military component of an allied state fighting the Central Powers and, later, the Bolsheviks

After visiting Chicago, then the country's largest Czech community in May, Professor Masaryk arrived in Pittsburgh. On the May 30, the day before the signing of the Pittsburgh Agreement, an estimated 10,000 adherents to the Czechoslovak cause held a grand parade to show their support. They marched from the Allegheny Commons on the north side of the city to the Exposition Hall, then located at the point where the three rivers meet. Reporters claimed this was the largest political gathering that Pittsburgh had ever experienced. Professor Masaryk and several local dignitaries delivered speeches to a crowd that filled the Hall and overflowed into the adjacent streets. Masaryk, as recounted by newspapers, was "greeted with tumultuous and thunderous applause," delivering a speech which the *Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch* described as "striking heart fire."

Albert Mamatej, President of the National Slovak Society, urged Masaryk to put his ideas in writing. Masaryk obliged by setting them down on a nearby napkin. After further consultation and modifications, five formal copies were made. The copies, in Slovak, were then signed in the old Loyal Order of Moose Building downtown on May 31. Over two dozen leading Czech and Slovak Pittsburghers added their signatures to Masaryk's declaration. Masaryk's own signature on the document made it an official declaration of the Czechoslovak National Council. Subsequently, the Pittsburgh Agreement was presented to Secretary of State Lansing, then to President Wilson himself at a meeting with Masaryk on June 19. On June 28, the State Department issued a strong statement supporting the freedom of the Slavic people from Austro-Hungarian rule. Shortly thereafter, Britain and France recognized Czechoslovakia as an Allied nation, with the Czechoslovak National Council as its official governing body.

The United States extended recognition in September. On October 28, while Masaryk and Pittsburgh attorney



One of the original five copies of the Pittsburgh Agreement. A translation is presented at right.

Gregory Zatkovich attended a convention of "Independent Mid-European Nations" in Philadelphia, Czechoslovakia became an independent republic.

On November 14, Masaryk became Czechoslovakia's first president. Known as "the President-liberator," he held office until ill health forced him to resign in 1935.

One of the original five copies of the Pittsburgh Agreement was preserved by an American priest for decades, hidden under his bed for safekeeping. In 2007 the document was donated to the Senator John Heinz History Center on Smallman Street, Pittsburgh, where it continues to attract international visitors and historians.

Czecho-Slovak Agreement

agreed on in Pittsburgh, Pa., May 30, 1918

The representatives of the Slovak and Czech organizations in the United States

The Slovak League, the Czech National Alliance and the Federation of Czech Catholics

deliberated in the presence of the Chairman of the Czecho-Slovak National Council, Professor Masaryk, on the Czecho-Slovak question and on our previous declarations of program and have passed the following resolution:

We approve of the political program which aims at the union of the Czechs and Slovaks in an independent State composed of the Czech Lands and Slovakia.

Slovakia shall have her own administration, her own diet, and her own courts.

The Slovak language shall be the official language in the schools, in the public offices and in public life generally.

The Czecho-Slovak State shall be a Republic, and its Constitution will be a democratic one.

The organization of the co-operation between Czechs and Slovaks in the United States shall, according to need and the changing situation, be intensified and regulated by mutual consent.

Detailed provisions regarding the organization of the Czecho-Slovak State shall be left to the liberated Czechs and Slovaks and to their duly accredited representatives.

The Pittsburgh Agreement Memorial

by Maryann Sivak



Milan Getting, Jr. and Maryann Sivak
at the Pittsburgh Agreement Memorial

The Pittsburgh Agreement of 1918 was signed in the Loyal Order of Moose headquarters building. In 1984, that building was razed to make room for the new Consolidated Natural Gas Company offices. Local architects had failed in their attempt to have the building declared an historic landmark, so it was torn down and replaced by the CNG Tower. Today that structure is known as the EQT Building.

In May, 1984, I was Secretary of the Czechoslovak Room Committee at the University of Pittsburgh. I read how local architects had tried and failed to prevent demolition of the building where the Pittsburgh Agreement had been signed. Being then a newly-naturalized citizen, I saw that here was an opportunity to honor this accomplishment of our immigrant ancestors. I spoke to the Committee Chairman, Milan Getting, Jr., about creating a suitable memorial. Mr. Getting formed an exploratory committee with himself, Zdeněk Suda, Milan Liptak and me. He appointed me to spearhead the project.

My researching the history of the Agreement was facilitated by Professor Suda of the University of Pittsburgh, who gave advice on sources to investigate. A great deal of information was found in Pittsburgh newspapers printed immediately after Masaryk's address. Additional advice was provided by E. Maxine Bruhns, Director of the Nationality Rooms at the University.

The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust is the organization that oversees restoration of significant Pittsburgh buildings and creates suitable markers/memorials when appropriate. The Trust had once reserved a room for commemorating the Agreement, but had finally given it to another tenant. We were then offered a niche near the new building's

escalator. They also said that they were busy renovating the Benedum Center and had no money to spare for the Pittsburgh Agreement Memorial. After unsuccessful requests for financial support from the American Slovak fraternal organizations, I provided the initial funding myself. Fortunately, the Cultural Trust eventually agreed to underwrite the project. In the spring of 1989, I contacted local attorney Cynthia Maleski and asked her to meet with Carol Brown, President and CEO of the Trust, to prevent any future difficulties over financing.

The Trust hired a Brooklyn firm to design the memorial's cabinet. At my recommendation, sculptures and graphics were created by Pittsburgh artists. Large bronze medallions of Presidents Masaryk and Wilson were sculpted by Eleanor Milleville. A bronze plaque was created by Jon Coulter. This included the Czechoslovak Coat of Arms, a copy of the Pittsburgh Agreement, a 1918 map of the Czechoslovak states and an architectural rendering of the Moose building. I wrote a brochure describing the history of the Agreement. Funds for printing were provided by the Czechoslovak Nationality Room Committee. From inception to completion the project took 3 years.

Dedication of the monument took place on October 28, 1989. Professor Suda served as moderator. Brief remarks were made by Pittsburgh Mayor Sophie Masloff, Richard Dickey III, Board Chairman of the Cultural Trust, and Czechoslovak Ambassador to the US Miroslav Houstecky. The Keynote speaker was Professor Victor Mamatey from the University of Georgia, son of signer Albert Mamatey. Dr. Ladislav Melioris, Rector of Comenius University of Bratislava presented a contemporary copy of the Pittsburgh Agreement to Milan Getting, who was the son of another signatory.

We finally had a fitting tribute to the determination of our Czech, Slovak, and Rusyn ancestors.

NRT Editor Position Available

The term of the current *New Rusyn Times* editor will expire on December 31, 2018. Since, due to other obligations, he cannot continue in the position, we are searching for a successor. Ideally, those interested in becoming editor should have a good command of written English. They should also be familiar with Microsoft Word and Adobe Photoshop or another photo manipulation software and have access to a scanner. For additional information, applicants can contact:

Maryann Sivak at: pres@c-rs.org
or
Jon Coulter at: editor@c-rs.org

Rusyns from Around the World Meet in Croatia

by John Righetti

While many ethnic groups with their own countries have governments to advance their cultural agenda, those without their own states have to figure out a way to keep their culture alive and growing on their own.



Such is the situation of Carpatho-Rusyns who have no state of their own in the world. So from the fall of Eastern Block communism, when one could legally be Carpatho-Rusyn again, the Carpatho-Rusyn community internationally has determined goals and cultural endeavors together at the World Congress of Rusyns—a biennial meeting of delegates from the lands where Carpatho-Rusyns are a recognized nationality or where they have a significant presence.

The first World Congress was held in Medzilaborce, Slovakia, in 1991. The Congress is overseen by the World Council of Rusyns, a leadership body that keeps the international agenda on track and achieves some of the actions of the Congress in between Congress meetings. Nine seats make up the World Council: Slovakia, Ukraine, Poland, Hungary, Serbia, Croatia, Romania, Czech Republic and North American (USA and Canada together).

The Congress has, over the years, been held in every member country except North America because the cost and distance for European delegates is too great. Meetings are hosted by the Carpatho-Rusyn organizations in that specific country. One recent gathering was held in Osijek, Croatia, hosted by the Society of Rusyns in Croatia—Druzstva "Rusnak."

Croatia? While the Croatian Rusyn community is small (3,500) it is a vibrant and longstanding community. More than 350 years ago, large groups of Carpatho-Rusyns from what is today eastern Slovakia emigrated to the Vojvodinian/Srem region. Today Vojvodina is in Serbia and Srem is in Croatia but 350 years ago Croatia, northern Serbia, Slovakia...it was all the Austrian Empire, all one country.

And not only have the Rusyns of Croatia kept their culture alive, but they, with those in Serbia, were the first to have the Rusyn language codified back in the 1920s. So in fact, the first place Rusyn language was standardized was Croatia and Serbia—not the Carpathian Homeland! It is even taught to Rusyn children in public schools there.

Each country can send 10 delegates to the Congress, along with youth delegates who attend a corresponding meeting for the Rusyn youth organizations worldwide. Local and state officials attend the opening ceremonies and

welcome the delegates. Rusyn-language media and local media from throughout Eastern Europe cover the event. This is real stuff from a real people with a real culture and agenda. And the governments and media know it.

Sometimes the agenda is very meaty and there is serious discussion on major issues. Sometimes the agenda is rather light with little decision making that has to happen.

But that's not the only—or perhaps real work—of the Congress. The Congress has over the years dealt with the codification of Rusyn language, Rusyn recognition as a national minority in member states, the creation of Rusyn language education programs at all levels and lots more. But the real work happens between the delegates and the Council members, as they share and discuss what each of their organizations is doing in their respective countries to grow and further develop Rusyn culture.

Formally, each delegation gives a report on the activity in their country, usually prepared and delivered by the Council member from that nation. So at the Croatian meeting, the North American activities report was written and delivered by John Righetti, the North American representative to the World Council. The reports are comprehensive, and give you a real sense of all the activity going on in each particular country to further develop Rusyn culture. As country after country present their reports, you could almost become overwhelmed with the number of Rusyn cultural festivals, film festivals, educational presentations,

university level programming, elementary school language classes, books published, and government and state interactions. It is clear that the Carpatho-Rusyn community internationally is vibrant and working diligently to make sure its culture survives and thrives.

A separate session is held for the youth organizations where young people do that same thing, presenting their organizations' achievements using the utmost in modern technology.

Not only are there meetings and elections of officers, but there is always a Carpatho-Rusyn cultural program the last evening in a formal theater setting, with performances of Rusyn songs and dances, reading of poetry, etc. by performers from across the spectrum. In Croatia, performances were delivered by Carpatho-Rusyn cultural groups from Romania, Croatia and Ukraine.

Perhaps proof that the World Congress is achieving its goal of uniting and advancing Carpatho-Rusyn culture is the informal collecting of delegates on the last evening to sing Rusyn songs and dance Rusyn dances. Here were people from 10 different countries, all of them singing the same words to the same songs. United in culture. How could anyone tell these people so bonded around those words that they don't exist — that they are some branch of something else?

All you would need to do is watch them sit around and sing their cherished Rusyn folks songs together to know that Rusyns simply "are."

The Political Activity of Rusyn-American Immigrants *(continued from page 14)*

8 Petr Hatalák, *Jak vznikla myšlenka připojit Podkarpatskou Rus k Československu* (Uzhhorod, 1935), pp. 11–21.

9 United States State Department document 763.72119/1775.

10 *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, Supplement I: *The World War 1918*, Vol. 1 (Washington, D.D., 1933), p. 816.

11 Tomáš G. Masaryk, *Světová revoluce za války a ve válce 1914-1918*. (Prague, 1938), p. 290. Masaryk is the only source regarding the Ukrainian point of view.

12 *Prosvěta*, March 14, 1918

13 *Ibid*, January 24, 1918

14 *Ibid*, January 17, 1917

15 Cited in "Podkarpátští Rusíni v Americe," p. 276

16 *Prosvěta*, June 20 and July 4, 1918.

17 This term was used by Hungarian writers in recognition of Rusyn loyalty to Prince Ferenc II Rákóczi during the latter's early eighteenth-century anti-Habsburg revolt.

18 "Answer to our 'Bolsheviki,'" *Amerycanskii russkii vístnyk*, August 22, 1918.

19 Žatkovič [Zhatkovich], *Otkrytie-Exposé*, p. 5.

20 Cited in *Prosvěta*, February 21, 1926

21 Cited in Žatkovič, *Otkrytie-Exposé*. p. 5.

22 Protokol yz zasídaníia Amerykanskoj Narodnoi Radý Uhro-Rusynov poder-shanoho dnia 12-ho noiabria 1918 v Skrenton, Pa, " *ibid*, November 14, 1918.

23 The correspondence between Zatkovich and Wilson is reprinted in Danko, "Plebiscite," pp. 203–205.

24 Zatkovich considered Subcarpathia's relationship to the Czechoslovak republic as somewhat analogous to the position of a state in the United States. This federalist view conflicted with the centralist orientation of the Prague regime. The specific political demands of Zatkovich were included in a fourteen-point plan accepted by the Uzhorod Council on May 16. Reprinted in Peška and Markov. "Příspěvek," IV (1930), pp. 419–422.

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RUSYN RAMBLINGS — РУСИНСЬКІ БИСІДЫ

May 31, 2018, the 100th Anniversary of the Pittsburgh Agreement

The occasion was marked with a day-long celebration. It began with a symposium on the historical background of the Agreement at the University of Pittsburgh. Panelists were Dr. Hugh L. Agnew from George Washington University, Mgr. Matej Hanula of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava, and prof. PhDr. Milada Polišenská from the Anglo-American University, Prague. Afterwards, guests were invited to a wreath laying ceremony at the site of the Agreement Memorial downtown. In the evening, guests attended an impressive program at the Senator John Heinz History Center. They heard greetings by Hynek Kmoniček, Czech Ambassador to the United States, and Petr Kmec, Slovak Ambassador to the United States. Miluše Horská of the Czech Senate, Katarina Cséfalvayová, Chair of the Slovak Foreign Affairs Committee, and Lucáš Parizek, State Secretary of the Slovak Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs added their insightful remarks. As President of the C-RS, Maryann Sivak attended as an Honored Guest.



C-RS President Sivak with Czech Ambassador Hynek Kmoniček



Maryann Sivak, her guest Milan Lach, Bishop of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Parma, OH, and Laurel Tombazzi