



*** Ukraine-America Directorate ***

UKRAINE-CANADA STRATEGY

Yuriy Bohayewski, Director of the Ukraine-America Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, is responsible for developing policies, programs and strategies for the Ministry vis-a-vis Canada and the U.S. The Monitor recently interviewed Mr. Bohayewski in Kyiv.

• **How would you evaluate Ukraine's role at the international, diplomatic level?**

With all confidence, I can state that today Ukraine is recognized internationally as an independent country, in the political context, as an equal state. During this year the role and authority of Ukraine on the European scene has grown substantially. Gradually, we enter that political and economical space of Europe with ever more confidence. In this context I would like to say, that an important role and major assistance are being given to us by such countries as Canada, the United States, Great Britain, all three Baltic countries and the Nordic countries. Today we still need political support from such countries that have a worldwide authority. We don't want anyone to come up with ideas that "Maybe something can still change with Ukraine's situation."

Today foreign embassies number somewhere near 60 in Ukraine. There are



representative offices of influential banks, the UN Office in Kyiv and the legation of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe. We are frequently invited to different international forums and conferences on different levels. Most important - we have a very active

international political program that is manifesting itself in the large number of summits, presidential visits and visits of our Prime Minister. The Chairman of our Verkhovna Rada [Parliament] also conducts aggressive work along the lines of interparliamentary relations. Our Foreign Affairs Minister, Mr. Udovenko, conducts a strong foreign policy that is unified and has a practical character.

Our President pays very serious attention to the question of implementing agreements that we reach with other states during official visits, because we can't afford to let our obligations before other countries remain on paper. That is why we have paid serious attention to the agreements reached during the President's visit to Canada.

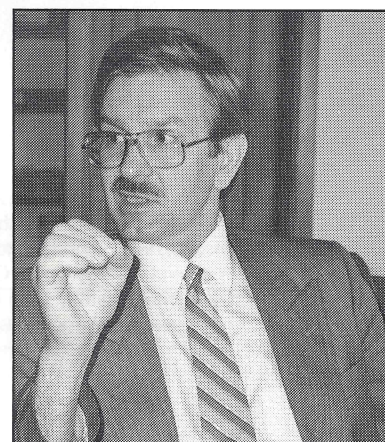
• **What priorities do you see now in relations between Canada and Ukraine?**

I consider the most important priority is to continue this positive trend that we've reached in our bilateral relations after the new government came to power in Canada, headed by Mr. Chrétien. We must maintain the role played by François Mathys as Ambassador -- the first Canadian Ambassador to Ukraine -- during his tenure here as head of Canada's diplomatic mission. We value greatly his contribution to the progress of bilateral relations. We are sad to see Mr. Mathys go, and we saw his feelings as he was leaving. He championed Ukraine's cause, and has personally done very much to support the image of Ukraine as an independent country. He did his best for Canada to provide the necessary support needed by Ukraine. We would like this special relationship continue and grow even further.

• **Do you have some special sectors where you see that more help is required?**

Taking into account our past experience, even personal experience when I worked in Canada - I would like greater attention paid to humanitarian contacts and exchanges in the cultural sphere. We once had such exchanges, but these were stopped for political and financial reasons. In political relations we have reached a significant level. While our economic cooperation is looking good, much work is still needed here. Also, the area of technical assistance from Canada is looking good. There is a large

package of beneficial scientific assistance projects being carried out consistently and purposefully. Such approaches by the Canadian government shows that they pay attention to the interests of Ukraine.



• **Can you tell us what your Ministry has defined as strategic projects that you would like to implement?**

Major assistance projects for Ukraine are ones associated with the improvement of our ecological situation. Something has to be done for our environment where we can see results. Such projects as cleaning up the Dnipro river. Then there is agriculture. Everybody says, and has said so in the past, that Ukraine is a resource-rich country. However, our agriculture must receive some support before it can become a true agricultural system and achieve a civilized level. I am not saying that the situation is bad everywhere, because there are some farms that are standing firmly on their feet today. But a lot of help is still needed. Serious attention must also be paid to the problem of conservation and processing. **Among all the projects, I would give preference to agriculture and ecology.**