



MARTA KOLOMAYETZ

Canadian representatives at the official Anniversary Celebrations in Kyiv. Senator Gildas and Madame Allison Molgat (centre) join Canada's Ambassador to Ukraine Christopher Westdal (r) and Madame Sheila Hayes, and Ukraine's former Ambassador to Canada Victor Batiuk (far left).

main street Khreshchatyk, enjoying front row seats at the traditional military parade. The 30-minute spectacle was part of the day-long celebratory events. Rigorous preparations by Ukraine's recently created military included sealing off the Kreshchatyk every evening for a week before the parade for practice runs.

Afterwards, Kyivites and tourists wandered around the city centre enjoying the kiosks and atmosphere, selecting

contribution to the development of the Ukrainian state.

The dominant feeling throughout the celebrations was that of accomplishment. Many references were made to the historic struggle of the Ukrainian people for freedom and independence. On August 24th, Ukrainians throughout the country felt proud that despite extreme hardship and initial international scepticism regarding the longevity of a Ukrainian state, they have reached a measure of stability and have been accepted by the international community. Underscoring this was the raising of the Ukrainian blue and yellow flag by the Crimean Parliament for the first time, and congratulatory statements from UN General Secretary Boutros Boutros Gali and Council of Europe Secretary General Daniel Tarchys, welcoming Ukraine as a new stable international player.

Not all of Senator Molgat's visit was spent in meetings. Accompanied by Canadian Ambassador Westdal, he also lay flowers at the Taras Shevchenko Monument, attended the Presidential Awards Ceremony at the Mariinskyi Palace, and joined the gala celebrations at the Ukraina Palace.

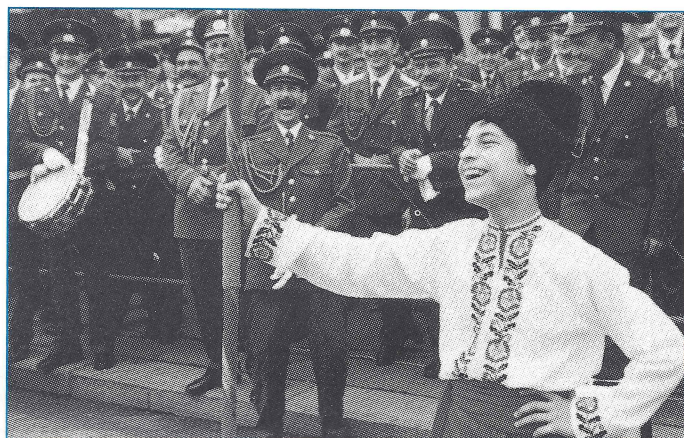
In the keynote address President Kuchma stated, "Starting with practically nothing, in five years of conditions which were far from ideal, we have created all the attributes of statehood - from borders to an awards program, a complete state mechanism has been set up. This national concept (of a Ukrainian state) is grounded

which open-air afternoon concert to attend. Among the crowds were many Canadians, as links between Canada and Ukraine are by no means limited to the governmental level.

Numerous private Canadian citizens have been travelling to and working in Ukraine, participating in the processes of state building on various levels. On the occasion of the fifth anniversary of independence

celebrations two such individuals from

Toronto, Peter Jacyk and Erast Huculak, were honoured for their efforts at the Mariinskyi Palace. Along with 54 others, Leonid Kuchma bestowed upon them the Presidential Award (Orden Prezydenta) in recognition of their con-



SERHIY DOLZHENKO

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Ambassador Westdal echoed these sentiments, saying, "For Canada it has been an honour to stand shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine for these past five years, working in both bilateral and multilateral contexts on developing common interests, supporting democratic development and open markets and also strengthening continuing relations between our countries."

Afternoons and evenings were spent attending street festivals, concerts, boating events on the Dnipro River. Closing the celebrations were spectacular fireworks from Kyiv's Independence Square and outdoor concert park "Spivochke Pole", the Singing Field.



Reviewing the troops.

in deep, historic traditions, which date back to the days of Kyivan Rus, the Halytsko-Volynsky kingdom, the Kozak state."

On independence day itself, Saturday August 24th, Canadian dignitaries joined Ukrainian leaders on the podium on Kyiv's

