



they have supplied us with about a million textbooks to date. Unfortunately, these books are usually in English, but we are grateful for this, too. This particular project has been realized by Ukrainians living in US, but we would also like to have closer contacts with Ukrainians in Canada in this connection.

Of course, there are other areas. We have not even touched on the question of baby food - this is also a problem. We have two plants that specialize in baby food production. Unfortunately our crises have not left this industry untouched, and there is now a serious need to put our baby food production in order.

## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

There are also serious problems associated with senior citizens and their pensions and insurance. We are working on it, but we certainly could use some professional and experienced advice.

We are experiencing serious problems in the conversion of our military-industrial complex to civilian uses. Associated with this are numerous social problems: retraining and requalification of the former employees of the military-industrial complex and their adaptation to civilian conditions, civilian lifestyle and means of livelihood.

In fact, the most difficult of all our problems will be the social problem, and we are already feeling it. This is a problem that resulted from the market reforms and the transition period that we are going through. Naturally, accompanying this will also be the problem of employment; in fact, we already have it. If a person is on an unpaid leave for three months a year, this is not normal - although he is not unemployed. By the same token, if a person works only three days a week and is idle for three other days without compensation, then this is a problem as well.

## INFORMATION AND MEDIA

The entire area of information and media is crucial. We have constructed a wonderful building for our radio stations, but unfortunately we cannot get modern equipment because it is not

manufactured here. The government and even the President himself have looked into the matter, but it is progressing too slowly -- not because we lack the will, but simply because we lack financing. These are issues that are of real concern to us, and should be the subject of greater discussion with our appropriate institutions. Speaking quite frankly, no one here is satisfied with the level of either our radio or television broadcasts; all we hear are constant complaints.

Then we have the question of the Russian Ostankino channel beaming into Ukraine [from Moscow] and saturating our people. We must consider all the



aspects of the problem carefully, because we don't wish to quarrel with the Russians all the time, and yet they persist in interpreting events in a manner that is beneficial for them. They are always here, touching on political issues, the statehood and political life of Ukraine and problems arising during crisis situations such as with Crimea and Black Sea Fleet. When they distort these events to suit themselves, then that becomes a problem for Ukraine. And yet, we do need a Russian channel because we have 12 million Russian-speaking citizens, which they cannot yet afford to pay for themselves. We would be interested in this channel becoming ours, and in our having access to its development.

We must also move to a policy of putting everything on a legal basis, whether it is Russian TV broadcasts or book trade. Our market is flooded with their cheap publications, because they have the ability to produce them, and we don't have typesetting equipment for our

own books, magazines and newspapers. Yet we are the ones who have to cope with the results. Another concern is that we still don't have reporters in every country: Shouldn't we at least have some correspondents in the leading countries of the world?

## MEASURING PATRIOTISM

There is much discussion of the topic of national consciousness. I have given much consideration to this question. It is one thing to proclaim slogans, and completely another to do something practical for this national rebirth, for our schools, for our culture, science, economy. We have inherited a complicated heritage indeed. A great deal of promises and proclamations have been made without sufficient basis and analysis of our ability to carry them out. For example, when Ukraine agreed to accept 400,000 Germans, only about 2,000 came, and still we were unprepared because we needed to provide them with houses, jobs, schools, medical facilities, and so on. Some 250,000 Tatars have returned to Ukraine; this is a good thing, they should return. But let's do things gradually. We must set up infrastructures first, because in the long run, we are the ones who will have to deal with the new situations, not our neighbours. So there should be some serious thought given to how we measure patriotism.

Finally, let me tell you that we are quite satisfied with the fact that an acceptable agreement on the Black Sea fleet has been found and it will allow us to sign an agreement on cooperation with Russia in all areas. Then we can put our relations on an international legal basis. Until we have an agreement, it is impossible to solve the questions of territories and sovereignty. We must confirm all of that again. I think there is unwillingness behind these delays and so they put off solutions to these problems. Once we have signed such an agreement, we will be able to tackle all of our priorities and establish some realistic schedules for solving them.