

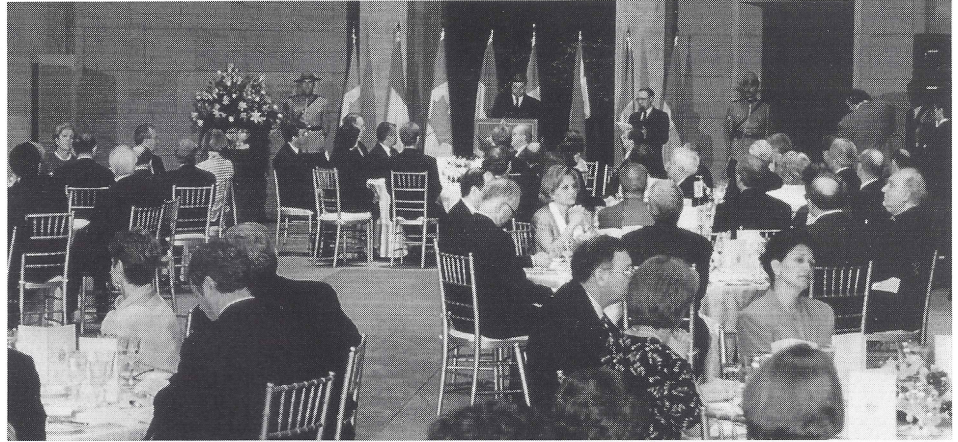


# Pride in Building a Close Relationship

**W**e Canadians care about Ukraine. We care with our heads because a strong Ukraine is in Canada's interest. A free and democratic and prosperous Ukraine is key to peace and stability in your region and beyond in Europe. Trade between Canada and a thriving Ukraine makes us both stronger. We care with our hearts because your courageous story has been kept alive in Canada by the million of our citizens with family roots in Ukraine. Anyone who knows your story hopes that the Ukrainian people can now at long last live their ancestral dream of freedom and a better life. Head and heart, Prime Minister, a powerful combination.

Taras Shevchenko wrote that, in spite of tyrants, the spirit is immortal and free, and cannot be stifled. These words capture the Ukrainian spirit. It is a spirit that has survived war, famine and repression, and it is more than equal to the profound challenge of reform. Ukrainian Canadians have helped sustain that spirit. Their dream of Ukrainian freedom would not die. And their celebration with it, when it came to pass six years ago, was almost as joyful and heartfelt as your own. It planted the seeds of trust, care and friendship in Canada.

As friends we are doing all we can to help you fulfill your dream. Our relations are close and active. Canada was honoured to host President Kuchma's first visit abroad. Our Ministers and officials were in close touch here in Canada during Minister Udoenko's visit last spring and in Ukraine, where last fall Minister Axworthy was warmly welcomed. Our program of mutual cooperation to promote democracy and free markets has helped build momentum in Ukraine for change and progress.



State dinner at the National Art Gallery in Ottawa.

Officers from Ukraine's armed forces are training in Canada. In Kyiv, Canada's Embassy is the contact mission for NATO. In Bosnia, Canadian and Ukrainian peacekeepers worked side by side. Ukraine has also made vital contributions to post-Cold War security. You have strongly supported global nuclear disarmament. You have worked hard to make sure that NATO expansion will enhance, not undermine European security.

You insisted that your great neighbour Russia be a part of the emerging European security system. You have given energy and purpose to NATO's Partnership for Peace, an effort crowned by the initialling of a new charter for NATO. You have managed relations with your neighbours with skill, vision and wisdom. This culminated just two weeks ago in a new treaty with the Russian Federation, opening a new chapter of regional stability and prosperity.

Finally, Ukraine has set an example for new democracies through the peaceful transfer of power and accommodation of diversity. This is indeed an impressive

record, Prime Minister. Canada is proud to be building a close relationship with you. We want our ties to deepen and broaden. We want to develop the great potential for investment and trade. I hope that this aspect of our relationship will strengthen during your stay.

It is my hope that your opening of the Canada-Ukraine Business Initiative will send a clear message to Canadian business and beyond, that the time has come to invest in Ukraine's immense potential. There is much at stake. Mr. Prime Minister, under your leadership, the values of democracy can be felt throughout Ukraine. Progress does not stop; and freedom demands ongoing perseverance every day. And Ukrainians now have the opportunity to enrich their lives.

As Ukraine pursues her dream, Canada will be there with friendship, trust and cooperation. I ask all here to join me now in a toast to the Canada-Ukraine partnership and to Ukraine's limitless future.

## Other Ministerial Agendas

A number of senior Ukrainian ministers accompanied PM Lazarenko with their own agendas. Following the IEC and a brief visit to Regina, Deputy PM Zubets, who is also Minister of Agriculture, continued on to Prince Edward Island to follow-up on specific business opportunities. On the technical cooperation front, Head of Ukraine's National Agency for Reconstruction and Development Roman Shpek and other Ministers met with Canada's newly-appointed Minister of International Cooperation, Diane Marleau. Canada's cooperation program with Ukraine comprises more than \$200 million in technical cooperation, humanitarian assistance and commercial credits.

In Calgary, Minister Shpek supplied details of some 200 urgent projects in Ukraine needing foreign assistance. Other meetings were held with the Ministers of Industry - Sergio Marchi, and Justice - Anne McLellan.

## Footnote

While Pavlo Lazarenko's visit to Canada was his first as Prime Minister, he had in fact been here before, back in December 1993, as a participant in the Canadian Executive Development Program for Ukraine, together with other senior government ministers. On his return home from CUBI, Lazarenko was reported to have become seriously ill, then "temporarily dismissed", and ultimately resigned his position as the fifth

Prime Minister of Ukraine in five years. This does not mean, however, that Canadians have seen the last of Pavlo Lazarenko. Presidential elections are scheduled for early 1999, and the former PM may be a candidate, along with other former high-profile Prime Ministers.

## Additional Stories

♦ Summary of Resolutions of 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of IEC - p. 43

See also:

- ♦ Air Canada Agreement - p. 11
- ♦ Joint venture DBK Teron - p. 12
- ♦ CUBI '97 Agriculture - p. 36

