



Ukrainian Genealogy Group

National Capital Region

The Ukrainian Genealogist

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February 22nd UGG-NCR Webinar

On February 22, 2022, Borys Gengalo spoke on *Ukraine's Strategic Situation: Geography, Germans, Gas, Guns, The Kremlin and Guerillas*. Borys had a long career in the Canadian military, was a Long-Term Election Observer in Ukraine, worked in private enterprise and has held various posts within Ukrainian-Canadian organizations. Borys also made previous presentations to the UGG on military and related subjects.



February speaker: Borys Gengalo

With the aid of contemporary and historical maps of Ukraine, Borys provided a geographical description and military analysis of the various regions of Ukraine during the Cossack era, the post-First World War period and contemporary years. He explained that after the independence of Ukraine in 1991, Ukraine under President Leonid Kuchma, followed a 'Multi-Vector Foreign Policy' in 1994-2005

and Ukraine was not a member of any military alliance. There was a general orientation by the Ukrainian government to become a member of the European Union after 2013 but this was prevented by President Viktor Yanukovich who supported a 'partnership' with the Russian Federation. Opposition to this policy resulted in the 'Maidan' in 2014.

At that time, the Ukrainian military was largely ineffective and the Russian military occupied Crimea and also parts of eastern Ukraine. Ukrainian volunteer battalions were formed and fought the invading Russian military and their proxies. But the involvement of the Russian Army created a 'frozen conflict'. The United States recommended that the Ukrainians avoid conflict with the Russian military. The Russians initiated a 'Hybrid War' that Borys defined as using 'economic, political, informational, subversive and military' methods to further their objectives. Borys outlined President Vladimir Putin's role in this conflict, his motivations to destabilize NATO, fear of Ukrainian democracy and ambitions to restore a 'Russian Empire'.

One of Putin's methods is the use of 'salami' tactics, that is, use small incremental actions to further his objectives. This tactic also invited the use of sanctions by NATO and the western nations in an attempt to limit Putin's expansionism. However, Putin was successful in Georgia and Syria and sanctions did not deter him. President Volodymyr Zelensky requested that sanctions be applied against Russia to prevent any military aggression rather than after an invasion of Ukraine. Sanctions against the Russian oil and gas industry was one example.

Borys continued his presentation by outlining the strategic situation in the Black Sea area and the possible role of Romania, Hungary and other NATO countries. In the conflict with Ukraine, he outlined the advantages that the Russian Federation had at the political, economic, cybernetic, and military levels. He included the possible military aid from Russia's ally, China and the dominant myth of 'One Russia'.

Borys also mentioned the disadvantages that included Putin's isolation from political advice, international political isolation, threats of sanctions, and the possibility of large military casualties. Borys also described Ukrainian advantages in this conflict that included national unity, a strong Ukrainian Army, international political and military support and international public opinion. He mentioned Ukrainian disadvantages that included the geographical position, economic vulnerability, external political pressure to compromise, relative military weakness in the air force and navy.

Borys discussed a few other issues that may influence the course of the Russian-Ukrainian War such as the use of cybernetics, electronic warfare, performance of the Russian Army in Ukraine.

The presentation was followed by a question-and-answer period. Borys answered questions relating to sanctions, Germans and the oil and gas pipelines from Russia, cyber attacks, relations between China and Russia and the current status of the Budapest Memorandum of 1994. Borys recommended that one of the better methods to lobby on behalf of Ukraine is to contact your Member of Parliament by phone, e-mail or letters and request further military and humanitarian aid from Canada for Ukraine.

War in Ukraine

We are deeply saddened by the atrocities and suffering currently being experienced in Ukraine due to the Russian invasion. Please keep the people of Ukraine in your thoughts and prayers.

There are many local, national, and international organizations currently engaged in fundraising and other support activities to help Ukrainians during the war. If you are looking for a charity to support, we have listed a few [here](#). The American-based charities in the list have been identified to us by our friends at [Nashi Predky](#).

Our list is not exhaustive, and there are many other worthwhile charities not on our list that you can consider supporting which will make a difference during these difficult times in Ukraine.

Слава Україні / Glory to Ukraine

Volunteers needed - varenyky/perogies sale

The Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral, 1000 Byron Avenue, Ottawa is holding a varenyky/perogies blitz for sale raising funds being sent to the Canada-Ukraine Foundation, (CUF), Toronto. Financial support is for soldiers and refugees in Ukraine.

Volunteers will be asked to assist in peeling potatoes, boiling, and pinching the varenyky/perogies, packaging.

Volunteers are required:

Tuesday, March 22, 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 pm,
Friday, March 25, 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Saturday March 26, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Please contact Helen M. Bednarek (613-727-7237) if you are able to help.