



## U.S. support for Ukraine's liberation during the Cold War: A study of Prolog Research and Publishing Corporation

Taras Kuzio

Visiting Fellow, Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University, Japan

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### ABSTRACT

The US government established contact in Western Europe with anti-Communist refugees following World War II and covertly supported a variety of groups. Initially in the 1940s cooperation between the OSS/CIA and émigré groups provided support for the parachuting of couriers to contact underground organizations in ethnic homelands and over the next four decades until the late 1980s through support for non-violent methods against Soviet power. One of the organisations supported by the US government was Prolog Research and Publishing Corporation that existed from 1952 to 1992. Prolog was established by zpUHVR (external representation of the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council), the political umbrella of Ukrainian nationalist, anti-Soviet partisans who fought a guerrilla war against the Soviet state until the early 1950s. US government support facilitated a democratic alternative to nationalist émigrés who dominated the Ukrainian diaspora as well as a different strategy towards the pursuit of the liberation of Ukraine. Prolog proved to be more successful in its liberation strategy of providing large volumes of technical, publishing and financial support to dissidents and opposition currents within the Communist Party of Ukraine. The alternative nationalist strategy of building underground structures in Soviet Ukraine routinely came under threat from infiltration by the KGB. US government support enabled Prolog to publish books and journals, including the only Russian-language journal published by a Ukrainian émigré organization, across the political spectrum and to closely work with opposition movements in central-eastern Europe, especially Poland.

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This article is the first scholarly analysis of U.S. Government support for Prolog Research and Publishing Corporation which existed for four decades from 1952 to 1992. The story of Prolog is an untold success story of U.S. support for Ukrainian émigrés in the Cold War that played an important contribution to the achievement of Ukrainian independence which, as the second largest Soviet republic, had a dramatic effect on the future viability of the Soviet state. In financially supporting Prolog, the U.S. government provided a democratic alternative to Soviet totalitarian rule in Ukraine for democratically minded Ukrainian émigrés. Without U.S. government financial support the organized Ukrainian émigré community would have been dominated by Ukrainian nationalist groups and the only alternative to Soviet rule would have been nationalism. Independent of the émigré community, the more democratically minded Prolog was able to reach out to a far wider political spectrum inside Ukraine as well as cooperate with a broad spectrum of Western NGO's, academics and politicians as well as new Eastern European opposition movements such as Poland's Solidarity. Unlike Prolog, nationalist émigrés were ideologically incapable of cooperating with Western NGO's or new opposition movements, had little influence inside academia and Western political institutions. Prolog was a leader in the smuggling of literature into Soviet Ukraine (tamvydav, or published there), the smuggling of literature out of the country (samvydav [samizdat] or self-published) and maintaining contacts with Ukrainian underground organizations and overt dissidents and opposition movements.

Prolog maintained a close relationship with U.S. funded Radio Svoboda (the Ukrainian-language service of Radio Liberty) throughout its existence which reflected a close inter-connection between different U.S. government-funded operations. Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty radio programs and research departments were dominated by anti-communist émigrés. Prolog Vice President Anatole Kaminsky and Prolog President Roman Kupchinsky left their positions to become heads of Radio Svoboda in 1978 and 1990 respectfully. Prolog leaders Kaminsky and Kupchinsky, and Prolog freelancer Bohdan Nahaylo, headed Radio Svoboda for a quarter of a century from 1978 until 2003 during the disintegration of the USSR, drive to Ukrainian independence and the first decade of Ukraine as an independent state.

This article is divided into five sections. Section 1 provides background on the emerging cooperation between the Office of Strategic Services (OSS)/Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the external representation of the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council (zpuhvr). The UHVR was established as an umbrella political movement in July 1944 by the underground Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) nationalist movement and Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) partisans who fought the Nazis, Poles and Soviets between 1942 and early 1950s (Potichnyj and Shtendera, 1986). This section surveys the evolution of U.S. policies in support of the nationalist partisan underground through parachuted couriers and, following the failure of this strategy, to that of supporting the establishment of Prolog in 1952 and its development through to the 1960s. This article does not seek to analyze the Ukrainian nationalist movement which remains a controversial area of study with regard to its ideological orientation, especially in the 1930s when it was close to Italian fascism and accusations of its involvement in atrocities and pogroms during World War II (see Bruder, 2007; Motyl, 2010; Rudling, 2011; Rossolinski-Liebe, 2011; Carynyk, 2011). Section 2 investigates changes in Prolog's development in the 1970s after its leadership is taken over by younger generation Ukrainian-Americans. This coincided with the launch of ideological crusades by the Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan administrations against the 'Evil Empire' (USSR). Sections 3 and 4 chronicle the ideological crusade and covert activities in the 1980s against the USSR undertaken by Prolog facilitated by greater political and financial support from the Carter and Reagan administrations. Section 5 analyzes changes in US policies in 1988 under President George W. Bush to halt covert activities against the USSR, because of the threat of an imploding USSR that could become a 'nuclear Yugoslavia,' which led to the closure of Prolog in 1992.

## 1. US support for Ukraine's liberation

Towards the end of World War II the OSS/CIA was instructed to investigate anti-communist émigrés from Eastern Europe and the USSR living in Western Europe who would be willing to cooperate with the U.S. The US believed zpuhvr among Ukrainian émigrés to be the most attractive for cooperation because it had links to opposition movements inside Soviet Ukraine in the Soviet Union that gave it an air of legitimacy, and it was relatively democratically minded. A November 1946 overview by U.S. intelligence of Ukrainian émigré groups in Western Europe narrowed them down to two influential groups: zpuhvr, the political base of the future Prolog, and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists loyal to Stepan Bandera (OUNb also known as OUNr [revolutionaries]).

The underground UHVR inside Soviet Ukraine had sent 'external representatives' Rev. Ivan Hryniokh and Mykola Lebed to the West in 1944 to lead the zpuhvr which established contacts with the allies in Rome and soon after in Munich. Other prominent members and supporters of Prolog from its founding in 1952 were Myroslaw Prokop, Omelian Antonovych, Yuriy Lopatynsky, Lev Shankovsky, Bohdan Czajkowsky, Marta Skorupska, Daria Rebet, Vasyl Okhrymovych and Anatole Kaminsky (see their biographies in Kaminsky, 2009). The first and last Presidents of Prolog were Mykola Lebed and Petro Sodol respectfully. The first meetings between zpuhvr and the OSS took place in Rome in April 1946 with the main negotiations undertaken through Lebed, Rev. Hryniokh and Yuriy Lopatynsky. Myroslaw Prokop, a leading ideologue of zpuhvr, explained that they had taken U.S. government financing in order to enable them to provide support to the patriotic and democratic movement in Soviet Ukraine but, he added, they insisted zpuhvr/Prolog maintain its autonomy from the U.S. authorities (Prokop, 1961; Kaminsky, 2009, 56 and 69; Center for Research into the Liberation Movement). At the time, the CIA also developed ties to other anti-Soviet émigrés, including the Russian émigré NTS (Peoples Labor Alliance), which had links to the World War II anti-Soviet movement led by General Andrei Vlasov, commander of the German controlled ROA (Russian Liberation Army). Vlasov was handed over to the Soviet authorities by the Americans and executed in 1946 in Moscow. Some senior U.S. officials remained skeptical about the NTS who had no underground structure in Soviet Russia. There was practically no cooperation between NTS and anti-Soviet groups, such as Prolog, because of the nationality question as NTS opposed their independence.

Ukrainian and Baltic nationalist partisans fighting against Soviet rule expected there to be a war between the USSR and the West following the capitulation of Nazi Germany in 1945 and therefore sent their representatives to the West to establish military and political contacts for what they believed was to be a forthcoming conflict where they would operate behind Soviet lines for the allies. 'In the absence of viable alternatives, the Baltic and Ukrainian nationalists pinned all their hopes on the conflict between the Soviet Union and its Western allies' (Statiev 95) writes. The Cold War that emerged in 1947–1948 sustained the determination of Ukrainian nationalists to continue fighting in the hope that a Soviet-Western war would break out.

The first example of cooperation between the OSS and zpuhvr was codenamed 'Operation Belladonna' where zpuhvr intelligence capabilities were tested in rooting out Soviet agents among the hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian DP (Displaced Persons) in Germany following the end of World War II. A second aim of 'Operation Belladonna' was to provide on-going intelligence on the Soviet armed forces and Soviet policies from two sources, firstly, from the nationalist underground in Ukraine which would, it was hoped, be obtained from parachuted couriers and radio messages sent back from Soviet Ukraine

and secondly, through covert meetings between zpUHVR personnel and numerous Soviet Ukrainian officers stationed in occupied Germany and Austria.

These developments on the ground in Western Europe were being supported by new directions in U.S. policy in Washington DC. George Kennan is credited within the U.S. Government with formulating a strategy for a large-scale program of political warfare against the USSR that would become 'a use of soft power' (Johnson, 2010, 237). Kennan became the first Director of Policy Planning, the State Department's internal think tank. Planning began in December 1947 with a National Security Council (NSC) Directive that authorized the CIA to conduct, 'covert psychological operations designed to counteract Soviet and Soviet inspired activities which constitute a threat to world peace and security' (Johnson, 2010, 8). A June 1948 NSC Directive superseded the Directive issued the year before and inaugurated US political warfare by outlining the planning and conducting of covert operations, including providing assistance to émigré groups in the form of broadcast and printing facilities, 'subversion against hostile states' and 'overt foreign information programs.' Until the 1960s U.S. support was provided to 30 émigré organizations and publications, including Prolog, and thereafter narrowed to a smaller number of groups who received U.S. financial assistance.

The U.S. aim of providing financial support to émigré groups and Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe was defined as 'self-liberation;' that is, the encouragement of internal opposition in communist ruled states. 'Liberation was American political rhetoric, never U.S. foreign policy,' Johnson (2010, 54) points out. The aims of this strategy were to keep alive hopes of resistance, give sustenance to dissenters, support alternatives to communist rule, promote autonomist tendencies in the USSR and outer Soviet empire, give air to national communist leanings, and, from the 1960s, provide a voice to the emerging dissidents, civil society and opposition.

With the approval of covert operations against the USSR, the CIA launched from 1948 until 1952 training for couriers sent by zpUHVR, with whom the US preferred to cooperate, who were parachuted into Soviet Ukraine and Communist Poland where they were to establish contact with the nationalist underground. The CIA parachuted twelve zpUHVR couriers while the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS [usually referred to as MI6]) trained and parachuted nearly fifty OUNb couriers. Most of the couriers were trained as wireless operators and brought with them equipment so the nationalist underground could communicate within its regional branches inside Soviet Ukraine as well as communicate with a CIA base in the American occupation zone in Germany. An underlying aspect of the couriers was competition between zpUHVR and OUNb in attracting the loyalty of leaders of the nationalist underground in Soviet Ukraine (Koshiw, 2011).

Parachuted couriers were nearly always caught because of the penetration of Soviet spies such as Kim Philby who were ensconced at high levels inside the SIS, 'but more importantly the Soviets riddled the OUNb with agents and almost every courier group had at least one Soviet agent' (Koshiw, 2011). Kim Philby fled to Moscow in 1963 after the 1961 defection of KGB officer Anatoliy Golitsyn who revealed to the CIA that there was a high level mole in the British SIS. Both of these factors, Soviet agents in the SIS and OUNb, undermined the program of parachuted couriers. Another factor was the destruction of the nationalist base of operations in South-Eastern Poland from where the Ukrainian ethnic minority was ethnically cleansed in what was codenamed 'Akcja Wisła.' The Ukrainian minority was scattered throughout Northern and Western Poland in territories that had been 'recovered' (the official phrase used at the time) from Germany. The aim of 'Akcja Wisła' was to destroy links between the Ukrainian ethnic minority and the nationalist underground and to make them susceptible to assimilation into the Polish ethnic majority (Snyder, 1999). Wojciech Jaruzelski, future Polish President who imposed martial law in 1981 to crush the Solidarity movement, was a young captain during 'Akcja Wisła' in the newly formed Soviet dominated internal security troops, Korpus Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego ([KBW], equivalent of the Soviet NKVD (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs)). A photograph of Jaruzelski in a KBW uniform during 'Akcja Wisła' can be seen in *Szcześniak and Szota, 1973, 379*. 'Akcja Wisła' destroyed the ability of UPA to undertake further military operations in Poland or use the region as a rear base of supply and rest. Following 'Akcja Wisła' nationalist couriers parachuted into Poland were therefore doubly vulnerable to being captured because of the infiltration of Soviet agents and lack of a Ukrainian support base in South-Eastern Poland.

One of the last zpUHVR couriers was Vasyl Okhymovych who was parachuted into Soviet Ukraine on May 19, 1951 (together with 3 others), established contact with the nationalist underground leadership, and spent winter 1951–1952 together with Vasyl Kuk who had become UPA commander following the death of UPA Commander Roman Shukhevych in battle with Soviet NKVD forces in 1950. Kuk was himself captured by Soviet forces in 1954 and given six years imprisonment after which he was amnestied when he agreed to cooperate with the Soviet authorities. Captured OUN and UPA combatants were usually executed or sentenced to long sentences in the Soviet Concentration Camp [Gulag] System. Okhymovych was captured by the NKVD Soviet secret police on October 6, 1952 and in May 1954 sentenced to death and executed. One of the last OUNb couriers was Myron Matviyeiko who was parachuted at night on May 14–15, 1951, landed immediately into NKVD hands, was turned by them and continued to act as a double agent over the next decade pretending to work for the OUNb (Kaminsky, 2011). A number of Ukrainian diaspora nationalists had suspected Matviyeiko of having already been a Soviet agent in World War II when he cooperated with the Abwehr (Nazi German military intelligence).

A change in US and Ukrainian émigré strategy in the early 1950s came about because of two factors. The first was Polish communist and later Soviet defeat of the nationalist underground in the late 1940s and early 1950s after a ferocious decade long guerrilla war. The Ukrainian nationalist movement was the largest in the annexed Soviet borderlands with 25–40,000 guerrillas and upwards of 400,000 supporters involved in various duties in the underground network. This, 'was a deeply rooted underground network enjoying popular support' and 'Ukrainian guerrillas fought with a resolution that no resistance in Western Europe could have imagined' (Statiev, 2010, 106 and 108). The second factor for the change in strategy was the failure of parachuted couriers due to Soviet agents such as who had penetrated the senior levels of British intelligence.

The change in strategy led to a switch from American support for hard to soft power that provided support for émigré publications and anti-Soviet political activities and, in the Ukrainian case, the establishment of Prolog. Kaminsky, a leading ideologue of OUNz (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists abroad), the most democratically minded of the three wings of OUN, split from OUNb in 1954 over whether to support the zpUHVR. OUNz published the *Ukrayinsky Samostiynyk* magazine in Munich in 1945–1975. Kaminsky (2009, 69) explained the new situation in the early 1950s after the failure of armed resistance to Soviet rule demanded new strategies, ‘which meant a movement from military struggle to exclusively political-propaganda work.’ Prolog, Kaminsky explained, was established as a ‘self-defensive’ organization with the aim of maintaining ‘Ukrainian potential’ by promoting Ukrainian national identity and culture which was believed to be under threat in the USSR from Soviet nationality policies and russification. ‘This was a turn towards evolutionary methods of struggle, a peaceful project with the aim of preparing a base for further future struggle which played an important role in the peaceful revolutionary disintegration of the USSR in the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s’ (Kaminsky, 2009, 70). Kaminsky defined the change in strategy as a move from guerrilla warfare to non-violent struggle of ideas. Kaminsky (1970, 1996) elaborated an evolutionary strategy for Prolog and its émigré supporters through a number of books and articles. The establishment of Prolog signified a movement, he writes, ‘from forceful revolution to evolution in form and methods but at the same time the struggle remained revolutionary in form and content’ (Kaminsky, 2009, 101).

While supporting émigré groups and Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe, the US remained concerned that anti-communist émigrés would promote violence or extremist nationalism through organizations and the two radio stations. A 1968 US guideline on Radio Liberty outlined moderate aims and objectives that, ‘Should preserve and stimulate the growth of Ukrainian cultural values and national identity, reflect in its broadcasts a continuation in the history and life of the Ukrainian nation which antedates the Soviet era and will persist and flourish in the future’ (Johnson, 2010, 180). Prolog also signed up to similar objectives that were, as Kaminsky points out, nevertheless ‘revolutionary’ for the Soviet authorities.

In 1952 a new phase in U.S. support to zpUHVR led to the establishment of Prolog in Philadelphia (codenamed by the CIA as ‘QRDynamic’). After a short spell in that city Prolog moved to New York city where it spent the majority of its existence except for its last five years in Newark. Prolog opened its offices with a \$50,000 check from the U.S. State Department which at that time coordinated financial support to Soviet émigré groups. Nevertheless, as Kupchinsky (2008) admitted, Prolog was, ‘since the time of its creation, a subsidiary company of the CIA.’ Walt Raymond, who joined the CIA in 1952 and moved to the NSC in 1982, was Kupchinsky’s main liaison in Washington DC. After becoming Assistant Director of the U.S. Information Agency in 1987, Raymond continued to be involved in programs to promote democracy in Eastern Europe and the USSR, although now through overt means such as the National Endowment for Democracy (NED).

The OSS/CIA view that the zpUHVR and OUNb represented the two most influential Ukrainian émigré groups concurred with that of the Soviet KGB. Not all Ukrainian émigré groups were seen as a threat to Soviet power by the KGB which was a calculation based upon the degree to which they retained influence inside Soviet Ukraine where only zpUHVR (i.e. Prolog) and OUNb had ties to the nationalist underground in the second half of the 1940s and early 1950s. The KGB’s estimation of where it believed the main threat to Soviet power existed was clearly seen in the assassination of OUNz leader Lev Rebet and OUNb leader Bandera by Soviet KGB agent Stashynsky (2011) in Munich in 1957 and 1959 respectively. Stashynsky defected to Western Germany in 1961 where he was tried and following his conviction was given a new identity by the CIA in the US. His trial revealed he had used a spray gun that fired a jet of poison gas from a crushed cyanide capsule designed to induce cardiac arrest, making the victim’s death look like a heart attack. An unofficial ‘non-aggression pact’ between the KGB and CIA, did not permit assassinations to take place in the U.S. and therefore zpUHVR leaders such as Lebed, who was based at Prolog in New York, was out of reach of Soviet assassins.

In the following three decades Prolog proved to be more successful than other Ukrainian émigré groups in its covert and overt activities vis-à-vis Soviet Ukraine because of three factors. First, Prolog had little need to collect funds in the émigré community because of a relative stable financial relationship with the U.S. government, although the 1970s were lean years. Prolog President Kupchinsky (2008) recalled that, ‘All of this (Prolog activity) would have been impossible without the U.S. government as a secure financial base.’ Not having to seek funds in the émigré community enabled Prolog to remain outside bitter émigré conflicts between rival organizations.

Second, Prolog’s activities were overt unlike other nationalist émigrés (such as OUNb and NTS) who sought to build underground organizations in the USSR that were routinely infiltrated by the KGB. Nationalist émigrés such as OUNb had close ties to SIS (MI6) in the late 1940s and early 1950s during the sending of parachuted couriers but this had terminated after the destruction of the nationalist underground by 1952. OUNb continued to seek foreign government support from countries led by anti-communist and right-wing authoritarian governments, such as Taiwan, which provided assistance to the OUNb dominated Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (ABN) that was part of the World Anti-Communist League. Ukrainian nationalist émigrés continued to seek to build underground structures in Soviet Ukraine and these in most cases became infiltrated by the Soviet secret services and headed by Soviet double agents (Stashynsky, 2011). Prolog adopted a different approach to nationalist émigrés, as this article shows, and did not export émigré politics to Soviet Ukraine or seek to re-build a nationalist underground in the USSR (Kuzio, 2011a). Because of this strategy Prolog was more successful than OUNb in achieving its objective of working towards liberating Ukraine (Kuzio, 2011b).

Prolog staffers and supporters who cooperated with Prolog met and courted visitors from Soviet Ukraine, including high level writers and members of the Soviet establishment such as Ivan Drach (future leader of Rukh, the Ukrainian Popular Movement for Restructuring) and Dmytro Pavlychko. A member of the younger Ukrainian–American generation explained

that, 'Prolog was more realistic, less suspicious and willing to work with anyone official, semi-official, or outright dissident and enemy of the state. They had good resources and high quality intellectual products' (*Young generation Ukrainian–American*, 2011). Meetings with liberal cultural figures and members of dance and choir groups from Soviet Ukraine developed contacts and unofficial networks that facilitated the smuggling of anti-Soviet literature to the USSR. Soviet Ukrainian cultural figures and Soviet Ukrainian UN officials were entertained in Ukrainian–American homes in New York city with the active support of Prolog staffers and supporters (*Kaminsky*, 2009, 113).

In addition to cultivating networks with Soviet Ukraine, these meetings proved to be an invaluable source of intelligence as Prolog, Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe, employees interviewed tens of thousands of Soviet bloc travelers to the West. These contacts and networks proved to be important in the late 1980s when senior members of the Soviet Ukrainian cultural establishment became leaders of Rukh. Nationalist émigrés adopted a different strategy of hostility to members of the Soviet Ukrainian establishment and distrusted the Ukrainian democratic opposition (*Kuzio*, 2000).

Third, Prolog could publish a wide ideological variety of books by national communist, liberal democratic and nationalist authors and dissidents (see for example *Maystrenko*, 1962). 'In other words we had real political academic pluralism here (in Prolog),' *Kaminsky* (2009, 72) writes, citing the publication of the ground breaking three volume history of Ukrainian political thought that was also prepared in mini-format for smuggling into the USSR (*Hunczak and Solchanyk*, 1983). Prolog published Euro-Communist Ivan Dzyuba's *Internationalism or Russification? in Ukrainian and Russian-language editions* and assisted in its translation into English and Chinese (*Dzyuba*, 1968a,b, 1973). *Internationalism or Russification?*'s English-language edition was prepared for publication by Victor Svoboda, a Professor at the School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies, University of London, from a copy provided by Prolog. Prolog also published nationalist dissidents such as Valentyn Moroz. Prolog's flagship journal *Suchasnist* magazine was a forum for a wide diversity of opinions becoming, as *Kaminsky* points, a 'non-party journal,' and bridge between Soviet Ukraine and the Ukrainian diaspora. OUNb published ideological journals, such as *Vyzvolnyy Shlyakh* (Liberation Path) in London, that were narrowly focused and intolerant of alternative opinions.

A member of the younger generation of Ukrainian-Americans explained how 'Prolog was flexible because it was not answerable to nationalist diaspora opinion.' He continued:

'It therefore was open to contact with and cooperation with emerging dissident groups of all stripes, including socialists, moderate reformers, as well as outspoken nationalists. Because it was free of the rhetoric of radical liberation and pragmatic in its approaches, it sought to reach out to liberal officialdom as well as heroic dissenters. Both currents (Drach, etc) among cultural liberals and Vyacheslav Chornovil (dissident political prisoners) became influential in the establishment of a Ukrainian state. Prolog was also open to exploring and reacting to trends among Ukraine's Communists (especially in the Petro Shelest era, when it became clear patriotism and autonomy trends existed in some corners of Communist Party of Ukraine)' (*Young generation Ukrainian–American*, 2011).

During Prolog's four decade history, from 1952 to 1992, it published more than 200 books and monographs in history, political science, literature, and culture primarily in Ukrainian but also in other languages. Prolog and Smoloskyp publishers, based in Baltimore, published the largest volume of samvydav materials from the Ukrainian dissident movement. Many of Prolog's books in Russian focused on the national question in the USSR at a time when Russian dissidents and nationalist émigrés downplayed the nationality question (*Kupchinsky*, 1975; *Maystrenko*, 1978) while Western Sovietologists largely ignored the nationality question in the USSR (*Subtelny*, 1994). Books and pamphlets were also published by Prolog in Polish, Lithuanian, Chinese, and Japanese and in the 1980s during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in Urdu and Farsi.

In the 1950s Prolog published the bi-weekly *Suchasna Ukrayina* and monthly *Ukrayinska Literaturna Hazeta* in Munich which merged in 1961 to become the monthly flagship *Suchasnist* magazine. *Kaminsky* (2009, 75) explains, 'Suchasnist became the published voice and authoritative voice for Ukrainian human rights defenders and the entire dissident movement in the free world.' Among magazines and publications that Prolog published the most unusual for an émigré Ukrainian group was the English-language magazine *Prologue*. *Problems of Independence and Amity of Nations*. *Prologue* was edited by Lev Shankovsky who was a veteran of the UPA partisan movement and a military historian. *Prologue* was unusual because it was directed at the newly emerging post-colonial nations many of whose leaders were left-wing and in some cases pro-Soviet as seen by its masthead announcing local representatives in 'New York–Munich–Cairo.' The seven issues of *Prologue* magazine published from 1957 to 1961 featured articles that critically analyzed Soviet nationality policies and Soviet imperialism, anti-communist resistance movements in post-colonial countries, the activities of pro-Soviet countries in the UN, Soviet influence in post-colonial countries, splits in the ruling elites of Communist states (with, for example, a feature on Yugoslav dissident communist Milovan Djilas), the Soviet Gulag, and Soviet expansionism into Africa (e.g. Ghana). Splits in Communist elites and ruling parties were a common theme pursued by Prolog and other U.S. government-funded bodies, such as Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe. Prolog worked on, and extensively published on the national communist question in Ukraine which surfaced during periods of liberalization in the USSR in the 1960s and again in the late 1980s.

Prolog's most well-known English-language publication was *Digest of the Soviet Ukrainian Press* (DSUP) which was published from 1957 to 1977 by its New York office. DSUP resembled the *Current Digest of the Soviet Press* (CDSP) and U.S. government-funded FBIS (Foreign Broadcast Information Service) which also translated and analyzed Soviet and foreign media. DSUP was briefly published in Portuguese and French in the 1960s. Many of the younger generation of American-Ukrainians who worked part-time during their university studies at Prolog in the 1970s edited and translated DSUP (see later).

Prolog established extensive links to Soviet Ukraine in the 1960s and 1970s and its publications and *Suchasnist* magazine circulated beyond Western to Eastern Ukraine. Growing up in Dnipropetrovsk in the 1970s and 1980s, Zhuk witnessed Prolog

literature and *Suchasnist* magazine circulating among dissident and cultural activists. The main conduits for smuggling into Soviet Ukraine were through Lviv in Western Ukraine, Poland and Czechoslovakia. 'The KGB feared active contact between Dnipropetrovsk intelligentsia and their colleagues in Lviv and Kyiv because their discussions contributed to the spread of anti-Soviet and national ideas,' *Zhuk* (2010, 40) writes. The city of Lviv was a major source of concern for the KGB, 'because all the ideological dangerous literature came to Dnipropetrovsk from this city' (*Zhuk*, 2010, 40).

Many of Prolog's books and *Suchasnist* magazine were re-published in miniature format for easier smuggling into the USSR. Miniature copies of *Suchasnist* were printed on special paper that would dissolve if dropped into water, enabling Ukrainian dissidents to destroy émigré literature in the event of a raid by the KGB. Some of Prolog's books were disguised as Soviet books, such as Lebed's *History of UPA* that was concealed inside the covers of a history of Soviet partisans, with the purpose of not being detected by Soviet border guards. Publications were also distributed by gas balloons. Prolog excelled in forging a programme of mini publications disguised as letters which were mailed to Soviet Ukraine from around the world drawing on addresses in Soviet telephone directories (telephone directories were not readily available to the Soviet public and had to be smuggled out of the USSR).

U.S. government support to émigré publications and groups was never solely confined to Ukrainians. The Paris-based *Instytut Literackie*, the most prestigious Polish émigré publishing house and publisher of *Kultura* magazine, was funded by the Paris-based Congress for Cultural Freedom, a U.S. government covert organization that funded anti-communist publications in Western Europe. *Instytut Literackie* played a major role in Polish émigré politics, inside Communist Poland and in the promotion of Polish–Ukrainian and Polish–Lithuanian reconciliation. *Instytut Literackie* and *Kultura* were founded by Jerzy Gedroyc in 1946 and closed in 2001, a year after he passed away.

In Western Europe many Polish émigrés were from former Eastern Poland, lands incorporated by the USSR inside Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine, and they were hostile to these neighbouring nationalities, particularly towards Ukrainians. A Polish–Ukrainian civil war in World War II in Volhynia led to 60,000 Polish and 20,000 Ukrainian mainly civilian deaths. *Instytut Literackie* and *Kultura*, which received financing that made them independent of Polish nationalist émigrés, could support the unpopular step among Polish émigrés of reconciling Poles with their immediate neighbours, especially Ukrainians. These efforts were at the time nothing short of revolutionary and came decades ahead of similar steps taken by the Polish Solidarity opposition in the 1980s (see later) that Prolog also supported. The U.S. government, working through Gedroyc and *Instytut Literackie*, laid the groundwork for Polish–Ukrainian reconciliation that was solidified with the election of Pope John Paul II (Karol Józef Wojtyła) in 1979 and rise of the Solidarity movement in 1980 (*Hvat*, 1983).

Russian émigrés presented a different picture as there were few democratic and liberal groups and they were dominated by nationalists such as the NTS that published books and the *Posev* magazine. The situation changed from the late 1960s with the arrival of émigré Russian democratic dissidents who ended the monopoly NTS held over Russian émigré life. Russian-language book publishing programs with the purpose of smuggling them into the USSR were established in New York (Bedford Publications headed by George Minden and Ludmilla Thorne, who went on to work at Freedom House), Paris (YMCA), London (Overseas Publications Interchange) and elsewhere (see *Matthews*, 2003). New Russian democratic émigré journals appeared such as *Strana i Mir* (Munich), *Grani* (Frankfurt), and *Forum* (Munich). *Forum* was the only Russian-language journal published by a Ukrainian émigré group as a quarterly in 1983–1985 and bi-annually in 1986–1990. *Forum*'s editor, Russian-speaking Ukrainian dissident Vladimir Malynkovych from Kyiv who had been expelled from the USSR for his membership of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group, was a journalist at Radio Svoboda. Prolog could only publish a Russian-language journal because it received U.S. government support.

## 2. Carter, Reagan and the Evil Empire

In the late 1970s Prolog witnessed a generational shift in its leadership that proved to be fortuitous. Prolog's younger generation of Ukrainian-Americans were radicalized by 1960s and 1970s politics in Soviet Ukraine and the West, or in the case of Kupchinsky, they had been also influenced by their tour of military duty in Vietnam. New York members of the Committee to Defend Soviet Political Prisoners (CDSPP), out of which many Prolog's younger generation of Ukrainian-Americans emerged, were on the left-wing of the Democratic Party and therefore perceived as 'radicals' by the émigré nationalist community. The New York Ukrainian Student Hromada (Community), with which CDSPP closely cooperated, published *New Directions* from 1969 to 1975 edited by Anisa Sawycky, Jaroslaw Koshiw, Christine Lukomsky, and in its last years by Alexander Motyl. For the first time many young Ukrainian-Americans began to write and hold conferences on politics, literature, and culture. The Canadian branch of the CDSPP was different, as it had emerged out of the student movement (Union of Ukrainian Students of Canada [SUSK]), and was led by University of Alberta Professor Bohdan Kravchenko, Canada's leading intellectual in the 1970s on the question of the USSR and in particular Ukraine. *Motyl* (2011) says, 'We came to cooperate with them, but there was always some tension, as they were Marxists and we were just liberals.' Canada had an active Ukrainian–Canadian Trotskyist movement which published the English-language *Meta* and Ukrainian-language *Dialoh* magazines whose members dominated the Canadian branch of the CDSPP.

The CDSPP was initiated in 1972 by Koshiw and Kupchinsky in response to the widespread arrests of dissidents and cultural figures in Ukraine that year and became one of the leading Western organizations defending Soviet political prisoners. The CDSPP was never funded by Prolog although it supported the work the CDSP did in defending Ukrainian political prisoners. Stephen *Welhasch* (2011) recalls, 'The CDSP kept its distance from Prolog because of its ties to the US government.' *Motyl* (2011) adds, 'The Prolog people were sympathetic to the 'Young Rebels' in the New York student community, the New

Directions magazine and the Committee for the Defense of Soviet Political Prisoners. They were also intelligent, non-dogmatic and open minded while Prolog was liberal, both in its politics and with respect to Ukraine and its approach to the diaspora.' The CDSPP's attempt to reach out to other Ukrainian émigré groups concerned with political persecution in their homelands reflected discomfort with the ghetto mentality of 'old timers.' The younger generation, such as Kupchinsky, developed networks outside the émigré ghetto both in the West and Eastern Europe. The Ukrainian–Canadian left and Prolog were united by their interest in national communism in Ukraine in the 1920s and 1960s and by the left-wing turn in OUN and UPA ideology following the democratization of OUN at its 1943 congress. Both groups were also outside the nationalist establishments in the USA and Canada.

Kupchinsky, a key activist among the younger generation of Ukrainian-Americans in Prolog's last two decades of operation was described by an *Economist* (2010) eulogy as, 'a warrior in and out of uniform, who died on January 19th aged 65, was one of the most remarkable of those who fought a seemingly hopeless but ultimately triumphant struggle against the Soviet seizure of power in the eastern half of Europe.....Mr Kupchinsky was emblematic of a generation that had escaped totalitarianism and found new homes in the west....' *The Economist* (2010) continued: 'Mr Kupchinsky was one of the most formidable: equally at home in dealing with troubled bureaucracies such as the FBI and CIA or with Ukraine's also ill-run intelligence bureaucracies, as well as the private sector, the media and think-tanks. He continued reading, writing and talking—fueled by a prodigious intake of nicotine and alcohol—right up to his death.'

Diuk (2010), Vice President for Programs at the National Endowment for Democracy, described the atmosphere in the Prolog offices in the early 1980s, a few years after Kupchinsky became President:

'Prolog, in those days was a fascinating place. Located in New York across the road from Penn Station, on the more seedy side of town, the first things you noticed when you came in were the stacks of books, newspapers and filing cabinets. It had that distinct smell of old Soviet newsprint and of musty books. Then the various warring clouds of smoke hit you—Lebed in one office smoked a pipe with a very sweet and distinct tobacco, and in another office was Kupchinsky, puffing away on more proletarian brands of cigarette, punctuated every now and again by the notes of a fine cigar.'

Diuk continues,

'You never really knew what was going on in those offices behind the clouds of smoke, but after a while it became very clear to me that Kupchinsky was the gravitational force that brought together a number of intersecting universes. There were the 'Old Timers' who established Prolog in the 1950s: Lebed and Prokop, who had taken part in the OUN and the UPA. Their friends and co-workers included Nina Ilnytska, who kept order in the office, and eminent Ukrainians such as Rev.Hryniach, Chaikiwsky and others who drifted in and out of the office on some business or other.'

Some young generation Ukrainian-Americans had worked part-time in Prolog and the CDSPP as students and after completing their university degrees retained close contacts with Prolog. Such individuals included Motyl, who together with Diuk edited the bi-monthly Soviet Nationality Survey published in 1984–1991, former head of the international department of the AFL-CIO and President of Freedom house Adrian Karatnycky, and Yuriy Mayivskyy, son of a prominent member of UHVR Dmytro Mayivskyy who in December 1945 was on a special mission to Western Germany together with another leader of the nationalist underground Dmytro Hrytsay, where they were 'intercepted' by Soviet and Czechoslovak security services and committed suicide rather than face interrogation and torture. Soviet agent Andriy Pechera, who had infiltrated the nationalist courier network between Ukraine and Western Germany, betrayed them. Other younger generation Prolog staffers included former U.S. military officer Petro Sodal, Welhasch, who became Prolog Treasurer in 1979 after a short stint as researcher and translator, and Yuriy Smyk, son of the editor of *Ukrainski Visti*, the main newspaper for the Eastern Ukrainian diaspora in North America and its political face, the Ukrainian Revolutionary Democratic Party. Prolog staffers also included Pavlo Movchan, a Soviet Ukrainian army deserter from Afghanistan. Movchan was part of growing work by Prolog with Soviet defectors in Afghanistan who were brought to the UK and US (the NTS were also active in this area). Two Soviet Ukrainian defectors, Sgt. Ihor Ryzhkov and Pvt. Oleh Khlan, were brought to Britain by Mail on Sunday newspaper journalist Askold Krushelnicky and 'baby sat' by the Ukrainian Press Agency, and in November 1984 voluntarily returned to the USSR. Such work included publication of a mini-format Russian-language book critical of the Soviet occupation that was distributed to Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia, GDR and Afghanistan.

The election of Kupchinsky for Prolog President in 1978 represented a competition between generations as well as one of outlook. Kupchinsky represented the first generation 'baby boomers' born and raised outside of Ukraine. Having been raised with a strong sense of patriotic devotion to a non-existent Ukrainian state by their parents, they found upon reaching adulthood that most of the rest of the world neither knew nor cared much about the Ukraine that they were ready to struggle for. Kupchinsky's work in creating organizations, such as the CDSPP, and his efforts to make contact with and publicize the plight of Ukrainian dissidents and political prisoners, formed a connection to the real world which most of the 'Old Timers' living in the émigré ghetto lacked.

Kupchinsky was a leader figure in this work, and upon becoming President of Prolog began to shape new directions for its activities by projecting Ukrainian issues into the main stream and placing them on the agenda of human rights organizations such as Freedom House, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, League for Industrial Democracy and other American organizations that struggled for human rights and civil liberties. Prolog reached out to American trade unions (through Karatnycky) and civil rights organizations as a way of bringing the Ukrainian cause to a broader American and Western public. Young generation American-Ukrainians promoted Prolog's inter-action and cooperation with the CDSPP, Helsinki Watch (just

as it was coming to be established), and with Amnesty International USA and its Riverside Group. Informal cooperation and the sharing of information with Nahaylo (see [Nahaylo, 1999](#)) developed when he covered the USSR at Amnesty International's international headquarters in London ahead of moving to Radio Svoboda.

Kupchinsky's election as Prolog President came fortuitously at the right time in the Carter administration and two years before Reagan was elected U.S. President as both administrations injected additional resources into Prolog. [Welhasch \(2011\)](#) recalled, 'it became clear to me that whatever funding they were receiving in the 1970s was quite meagre.' Then Prolog President Prokop told Welhasch that they might be forced to close in the 1970s during the height of détente between the U.S. and USSR. Prolog's finances improved during the Carter and Reagan eras when both US presidents launched ideological crusades and a competition with the USSR over human rights values. [Welhasch \(2011\)](#) revealed that U.S. government funding began to increase in the late 1970s, after Kupchinsky became President and the Carter administration increased its focus on human rights in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and 'our funding grew with every year from then until we were closed.'

### 3. America intensifies its ideological war against the USSR

As dissident groups and opposition movements grew in the 1970s, particularly following the 1976 Helsinki Agreement, the USSR became increasingly 'sensitive' and 'insecure' when 'paranoid Soviet party leaders' became concerned at Western encouragement for dissidents ([Gates, 1996, 88](#)). [Richard Gates \(1996, 90–91\)](#) believes that President Carter took this ideological struggle into the USSR before Reagan by promoting human rights, supporting dissenters and 'stirring up the nationalities' through efforts that 'went far beyond presidential statements and letters.' Carter instructed National Security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski to initiate, 'an unprecedented White House effort to attack the internal legitimacy of the Soviet government' that included undertaking covert and overt actions inside the USSR. These became the subject of a May 1977 Working Group set up to generate and review proposals after Brzezinski was distressed, [Gates](#) recalls, at the nearly non-existent level of covert actions by the CIA against the USSR. Prolog's ability to wage ideological war against the Soviets rested upon the enthusiasm of its personnel and greater U.S. financing during the Carter and Reagan eras. U.S. government support to Prolog and other émigré anti-communist organizations, 'gave comfort and support to those inside the Soviet Union seeking to promote change and challenge the system' ([Gates, 1996, 537](#)). [Gates \(1996, 560\)](#) writes, 'We waged the war of ideas and a covert human rights campaign inside the Soviet Union and supported the growing opposition in Eastern Europe, especially in Poland. CIA carried out a propaganda war against the Soviet regime, publicizing to the world Soviet abuses inside the USSR and aggressions beyond its borders.'

This new U.S. strategy, approved in October 1977, aimed to increase the clandestine distribution of books and journals inside the USSR, particularly of samvydav, 'a measure pushed by émigrés' ([Gates, 1996, 91](#)). The new US strategy also provided subsidies and support for book and journal publishing for distribution into Eastern Europe. The CIA was tasked by Brzezinski with increasing its covert actions inside the USSR ([Gates, 1996, 142](#)) and supporting increased U.S. assistance to the Polish Solidarity movement that was to be undertaken covertly through the CIA and overtly through the AFL-CIO, then headed by Lane Kirkland. After the Polish declaration of martial law in 1981, covert and overt support greatly increased to the Polish underground from the CIA through covert actions, 'worked through third parties or other intermediaries in Western Europe' ([Gates, 1996, 237](#)).

Prolog was the only Ukrainian émigré organization that had a well-established base of cooperation with the Polish Solidarity opposition and Ukrainian minority in Poland that built on decades of Polish–Ukrainian reconciliation supported by *Kultura* and *Suchasnist* magazines. In the 1980s the CIA supplied dissident groups and opposition movements in Eastern Europe, especially Poland, with printing presses, and photocopiers, and reprinted underground literature that had been smuggled to the West. Prolog extended and expanded these activities by using the Polish underground to train, smuggle and assist Ukrainian opposition groups. 'We were most active in Poland' [Gates \(1996, 450\)](#) admits.

In Eastern Europe Prolog's cooperation was most extensive with the Polish Solidarity movement and opposition groups (see [interview with Kuzio, 1990](#)). The Polish Solidarity and opposition underground became an important avenue for the publication and distribution of Ukrainian émigré literature and production of video cassettes that were smuggled into Soviet Ukraine or distributed among Soviet travellers. In London, the Ukrainian Press Agency worked closely with the official Solidarity Trade Union Working Group office headed by Marek Garztecki ([Goddeeris, 2011](#)). Mirek Dominczyk, a Solidarity leader who went into exile in the U.S. in 1984, became an active link in this cooperation between Prolog and the AFL-CIO where Karatnycky headed up these covert activities. Two double issues of Polish-language editions of *Suchasnist* magazine were published by the Polish underground which aimed to bring the Ukrainian question to the attention of the Polish opposition and intellectuals and to further Polish–Ukrainian reconciliation. Prolog published the *Perturbantsii* (Perturbations) journal aimed at the large Ukrainian minority in Poland which was edited by Roman Kryk, currently Kyiv correspondent of the Polish Press Agency.

A flood of new Ukrainian samvydav, which began to grow in number from 1987 to 1988 after *Rukh* was established, was reprinted in large numbers in Poland and Lithuania and re-smuggled into Soviet Ukraine. Prolog published a Ukrainian-language book on the Solidarity movement and strikes in Poland which was reprinted many times in that country for the purpose of being smuggled into Soviet Ukraine, receiving widespread attention when General Jaruzelski complained about the book on Polish television. The Polish underground, with Prolog's support, assisted the Ukrainian opposition with technical assistance on the mechanics of underground silk screen printing that was conveyed through instructions on video cassettes. In the late 1980s the Polish underground assisted in the smuggling of fax and photocopy machines to the democratic opposition in Soviet Ukraine, particularly to *Rukh* and the Ukrainian Helsinki Union. At that time, Prolog was the primary supplier of technology and publications to newly merging Ukrainian opposition groups; other Ukrainian émigré groups either



lacked the funds or, in the case of émigré nationalists, were suspicious of them because they were headed by Soviet Ukrainian cultural figures whom they had boycotted and criticized when they had earlier travelled to the West within Soviet delegations. Since the 1960s Prolog members had in place developed networks to senior members of the Soviet Ukrainian establishment who became leading members of the opposition in the second half of the 1980s.

Prolog's more democratic profile also enabled it to cooperate through the London-based Ukrainian Press Agency with central-eastern European opposition groups on the left and right. In Poland, Prolog and the Ukrainian Press Agency cooperated with the center-left KOS (Komitet Oporu Społecznego [Committee in Defence of Society]) and center-right *Solidarność Walcząca* (Fighting Solidarity) and conservative underground political parties. The future President of Poland, Bronisław Komorowski, was one of Prolog and Ukrainian Press Agency's contacts in Poland when he edited the underground publication *ABC. Adriatyk, Bałtyk, Morze Czarne* that provided information on the nations lying between Russia and Germany and supported reconciliation and cooperation between Ukrainians and Poles. *ABC. Adriatyk, Bałtyk, Morze Czarne* was published by the Liberal-Democratic Party *Niepodległość*. In 1984–1989, *Obóz*, a Polish underground magazine dedicated to providing information on the countries of the Soviet empire and fostering Polish–Ukrainian cooperation, was edited by *Józef Darski* (pseudonym for Jerzy Targalski) who was in exile in Paris from 1983 to 1997 where he cooperated with the émigré *Kultura* and émigré *Solidarity* magazine *Kontakt*. Targalski edited the first of two double issues of the Polish-language *Suchasnist* that the Ukrainian Press Agency published for Polish readers (the second was edited by this author). In 1982–1990, Targalski and his team also edited the magazine *Niepodległość* and in the same year the magazine closed and they opened the *Studium Europy Wschodniej* at the University of Warsaw.

In Hungary the Ukrainian Press Agency and Ukrainian Peace Committee cooperated with *Fidesz* (Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége [Alliance of Young Democrats]) as well as Social Democrats. Cooperation with the Czech opposition worked through the London-based Palach Press headed by Czech political émigré Jan Kavan who became Czech Foreign Minister in 1998–2002. Cooperation with the Czechs was therefore more restricted to the social democratic left. Karel Kovanda, a Czech dissident who emigrated to the West during the Cold War, also cooperated with Prolog. The Czech opposition, through Kavan, inter-acted with European Nuclear Disarmament (END) who, in turn cooperated with the Ukrainian Peace Committee (UPC) in opposing the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and highlighting the disastrous effects of the 1986 Chornobyl (Chernobyl) nuclear accident (see later). The Czechs were less interested than the Poles in cooperating in covert and overt operations against the Soviet Union.

The CIA was ordered to stay clear of direct contact to Soviet dissidents as this would give ammunition to the KGB to use against them and therefore organizations such as Prolog could play an intermediary role between the U.S. government and opposition movements on the ground. At the same time, *Gates* (1996, 92–93) and *Kupchinsky* (1980) write that the, 'CIA aggressively worked to feed dissident writings back into the Soviet Union and give them wider circulation.' Besides distributing books and journals, dissident materials were also re-broadcast by Radio Svoboda and Radio Free Europe. The Carter administration launched an ambitious covert action program that led to, 'a significant increase in the quantity of dissident and Western information and literature smuggled into Eastern Europe and the USSR' (*Gates*, 1996, 94).

In the 1980s the CIA covertly supported the production of videos and cassettes and publishing activities which, 'laid the foundation for glasnost and continued to the erosion of the myths that had sustained the Soviet government at home' (*Gates*, 1996, 536). Prolog mass distributed videos of the 1983 Ukrainian émigré documentary *Harvest of Despair* about the 1933 holodomor (terror-famine) before it was discussed openly in the Soviet press in the late 1980s (the Communist Party of Ukraine only admitted to the famine having taken place in 1990).

The Carter administration's covert program targeted Soviet Muslims, Ukrainians and human rights activities more broadly and Prolog became the main Ukrainian conduit for this new U.S. covert action of smuggling publications and technology. *Gates* (1996, 177) writes, 'The administration also covertly worked to keep alive the heritage of ethnic minorities in the Soviet Union by infiltrating written materials about their history and culture.' This area benefitted Prolog the most because it included a, 'minorities program aimed at infiltrating written materials focused on the culture of and condition in diverse ethnic regions of the USSR, primarily Ukraine.' *Gates* (1996, 91) reports that, 'The proposal called for the transfer of one such ethnic group supported by the CIA from the United States to Europe with an expanded charter...'

The Soviet nationalities question was an important element in the disintegration of the USSR and it was therefore surprising how it was ignored by Western academics and policymakers (*Subtelny*, 1994).<sup>1</sup> Ukrainian-Americans such as Alvin Kapusta at the US State Department brought the Soviet nationalities question into the U.S. government. The longest running academic journal dealing with the Soviet nationality questions is *Nationalities Papers*. The journal is published since 1972 and was launched with grants from the Shevchenko Scientific Society in America, again showing the influence of Ukrainian-American émigrés in publicizing Soviet nationality problems.

In expanding covert action on Soviet nationalities a key question for the cautious U.S. State Department was whether the nationalities question was 'manageable;' that is, whether nationalist movements would not become extremist and violent, a fear, as discussed earlier, that was already evident in the 1950s and 1960s. Brzezinski, 'wanted to pursue a covert action in that arena and forced State, after a long delay, to produce a paper on nationalities in the USSR and proposed U.S. policy alternatives,' *Gates* (1996, 560–561) writes. The State Department's response was that the U.S. possessed insufficient

<sup>1</sup> This author undertook a postgraduate Soviet Studies degree at the School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies, University of London, in the mid-1980s where the nationalities question in the USSR was downplayed.

information on the Soviet nationalities question and needed to expand its collection of intelligence and analysis. Although the Soviet nationalities question was raised in 1978 it took another five years before Kapusta and Paul Goble convinced the State Department to launch its in-house publication *Soviet Nationalities Survey*.

Soviet nationality problems were propelled on to the agenda of U.S. policymakers by defections from Central Asian Soviet troops who were present in large numbers in the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. This galvanized nationality problems in the Soviet armed forces and more broadly in the non-Russian republics (Kuzio, 1987). As Gates admits, CIA efforts had until then been focused on Moscow and, 'we were only beginning to realize how small and inadequate were our collection capabilities and expertise on the non-Russian republics and ethnic groups' (Gates, 1996, 510). Again, Prolog and other U.S. funded émigré anti-communist groups played a proxy role for Washington.

The US government dealt with the emerging Soviet nationalities issue in four ways.

First, Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe's interviews of Soviet tourists increasingly focused on Soviet nationality problems. One outlet for research on this question was the U.S. government-funded *Problems of Communism* magazine published and distributed free of charge by the U.S. Information Agency. *Problems of Post-Communism*, its successor, are published by the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research and continues to receive funding from the U.S. State Department.

Second, the Rand Corporation think tank received U.S. government funding to publish studies on nationality problems in the Soviet armed forces. Some of the scholars who authored these articles went on to publish books predicting growing nationality problems in the USSR, particularly due to the Soviet demographic dynamic turning in favor of the Islamic peoples of Central Asia and Azerbaijan (D'Encausse, 1979; Bennigsen and Broxup, 1983; Wimbush, 1985). Such a view seemed to be confirmed by the mass riots in Kazakhstan in 1986 (see Kuzio, 1988) but, as events in the Soviet Union in 1990–1991 showed, the six Soviet Islamic republics played no role in the break-up of the USSR. Enders Wimbush and Marie Broxup founded and directed the Oxford-based Society for Central Asian Studies that published the journal *Central Asian Survey* and Russian-language books on Islamic problems, many of which were smuggled into the USSR. Wimbush was formerly a Senior Analyst for the Rand Corporation and led its pioneering studies on nationality problems in the Soviet armed forces (Wimbush and Alexiev, 1981, 1982; Alexiev and Wimbush, 1988).

Third, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) at the U.S. State Department launched *Soviet Nationalities Survey* which was edited and written by INR staffer Goble. The project idea was brought into fruition by Special Assistant for Soviet Nationalities Kapusta. Kapusta and Goble reported directly to the head of INR/SEE. *Soviet Nationalities Survey* aimed to raise the profile of Soviet nationalities problems within US government circles. The initiative had the support of the NSC; that is, the White House, rather than the more cautious State Department (Goble, 2011). In 1989 the Soviet nationalities unit became part of the broader Division on Soviet Internal Affairs at the State Department after Goble moved to Radio Liberty. Twenty issues of *Soviet Nationalities Survey* were distributed in-house from 1983 to 1989 to U.S. government officials and after three months each issue was de-classified and sent to specialists working in the Soviet Studies field.

Fourth, *Soviet Nationality Survey* was launched as a monthly publication in 1984 and published through to 1991 by the London-based Society for Soviet Nationality Studies, a British registered company financially supported by Prolog. *Soviet Nationality Survey* was edited by Motyl, who had just received his PhD in political science from Columbia University, and later by Diuk, who was completing her doctorate at Oxford University. Both were academic experts on Soviet nationality problems and Ukrainian affairs. *Soviet Nationality Survey* covered much of the same content area as *Soviet Nationalities Survey* although with ten issues a year *Soviet Nationality Survey* appeared more frequently and also included greater coverage of Ukrainian issues (Motyl, 1990, 1992a,b; Diuk and Karatnycky, 1990, 1993). *Soviet Ukrainian Affairs*, an additional publication of the Society for Soviet Nationality Studies, was published from 1987 to 1989 in a short-lived attempt to revive Prolog's DSUP.

The London-based Society for Soviet Nationality Studies and Ukrainian Press Agency were directed by two staffers, Taras Kuzio and Peter Shutak, which published all of Prolog's English-language publications in the 1980s (*Overview of Taras Kuzio's Papers*). The *Digest of the Soviet Ukrainian Press* was the last English-language publication published by Prolog in the USA until 1977 because of new restrictions imposed on the CIA following the Watergate scandal. The opening of the Society for Soviet Nationality Studies and Ukrainian Press Agency in 1985 would enable Prolog to resume English-language publications, but outside the US.

The UPA opened unofficial offices in Warsaw, Moscow and Kyiv from which it received news, samvydav and analysis by courier and, with the arrival of fax machines in 1988, by telephone. This voluminous information became the basis for hundreds of Ukrainian and English-language press releases sent to Western governments, media and academics. These three UPA offices also became avenues for the smuggling of émigré literature and technology to Ukrainian opposition groups. News and analysis from these three offices of UPA in the Soviet bloc enabled the publication of the bi-monthly *Ukrainian Reporter* from 1990 to 1991.

#### 4. US covert activities in the Gorbachev Era

U.S. Government financing increased in the 1980s under President Reagan, particularly during his second term in office, and CIA head Bill Casey was central to his war against the USSR. As Gates (1996, 199) writes, '...Bill Casey came to the CIA primarily to wage war against the Soviet Union.' Casey demanded more timely and aggressive National Intelligence Estimates on the USSR, pushed for an increase in covert CIA activities and subversion and an expansion of analysis and collection of intelligence on Soviet policies and actions (Gates, 1996, 206). The Reagan administration aimed to change the correlation of forces in favor of the US and the West through military, political, ideological and economic means. At that time, ironically in

the light of the CIA's 'alarmist' reports on the nationality question in the USSR (see later), the Reaganites believed the CIA had been corrupted by liberals overly influenced by the policy of détente in the 1970s who had therefore under-estimated Soviet military capabilities (Gates, 1996, 191).

The infusion of additional funding under Reagan permitted Prolog to inject \$3.5 million into Soviet Ukraine. This additional funding was used for publications, finances and technology, including computers, printers, camera's, video equipment, photocopiers, fax machines, tape recorders, and printing machines which had a great impact upon sustaining and increasing anti-regime activities and opposition groups in the late 1980s in the final push towards Ukrainian independence (Kuzio, 2000).

In the 1980s, Prolog assisted the CIA in undertaking other forms of covert and diversionary tactics outside the USSR in Europe which became an arena for U.S.–Soviet competition. In 1986, the CIA undertook diversionary actions in Geneva to make Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev unwelcome during his first meeting with US President Reagan. 'CIA mobilized its assets to participate in a wide range of anti-Soviet demonstrations, meetings, exhibits, and other such activities in Geneva,' Gates (1996, 358) recalled. In Geneva, Prolog staffers and freelancers also organized press conferences and met with journalists to raise awareness of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear accident and human rights in Soviet Ukraine. Fake Soviet press releases prepared by Kupchinsky announced a new initiative by Gorbachev to withdraw Soviet troops from Afghanistan. Accepted as genuine by Western journalists the press releases sowed dissension within the Soviet delegation.

During the 1980s the USSR undertook active covert operations and 'active measures' on nuclear weapons issues which included propagandizing, organizing, coordinating and financing peace movements in Western Europe with Moscow mobilizing local Communist Parties and front groups in NATO and EU member states. In 1982, Soviet funding of the Danish peace movement to the tune of \$100,000 per annum through the Danish Communist Party was exposed in the Danish media. As Gates (1996, 357) writes, in 1985–1986, 'The Soviets were all over the place secretly supporting opponents of continuing INF deployments and then SDI, which they sought to discredit in all possible ways.'

In 1986 the World Peace Council (WPC), a Soviet front organization based in Helsinki, held its first congress in a NATO country in Copenhagen and the CIA was, according to Gates (1996, 261), determined to disrupt and undermine it. Prolog launched the UPC on the eve of the WPC congress and sent a large group of young staffers and freelancers to disrupt the congress. That this was a CIA covert operation against the WPC could be seen when NTS, another U.S. funded émigré organization, were evicted after staging a protest inside at the opening of the congress. Heading the UPC group were Ukrainian–British Labor Party activist Stephan Krywawych, END activist Peter Murphy and Soviet army defector Movchan, then employed at Prolog.

UPC published a booklet on the Chernobyl nuclear accident that had taken place earlier that year entitled *Chernobyl and World Peace* and sought to be accepted as a participant in the WPC congress. Krywawych, Murphy and Movchan staged a protest in the plenary hall with a banner 'This is a KGB Conference!' after the WPC initially refused to permit UPC's participation. On the last day of the WPC congress the Danish People's Socialist Party agreed to permit Krywawych and Murphy to attend events as part of their delegation where 'they were supported in their statements calling for a nuclear-free Ukraine by many Third World delegates' (*The Ukrainian Weekly*, 1986). UPC called for a nuclear-free Ukraine through the removal of all nuclear plants and nuclear missiles from Soviet Ukraine and collected a petition with these demands from confused delegates. By mobilizing through the WPC and END for the removal of Soviet nuclear missiles from Eastern Europe, the CIA, working through Prolog, had turned the tables on the Soviet Union which had campaigned through Western peace movements for the removal of American nuclear missiles from Western Europe.

Needless to say, this mysterious and newly formed UPC — armed with literature and placards explaining why Ukraine was oppressed and why Soviet participation in the conference was the highest form of cynicism — made headline news, caused havoc among WPC organizers and drew a barrage of defensive propaganda from the Soviet delegation. A bewildered US Embassy Station Chief cabled back urgently to Washington wondering what was the 'Ukrainian Peace Committee' that had disrupted the Soviet delegation's plans to have a successful and friendly peace conference.

After the Copenhagen congress, UPC received funding from Prolog to publish the quarterly newspaper *UPC News* that attracted a following among anti-Soviet (Trotskyist) British leftists who excelled at smuggling books, journals and leaflets to Poland and Soviet Ukraine. Scottish leftists were also adept in smuggling literature into the USSR through Soviet fishing boats which visited Scottish ports such as Ullapool. Scottish shopkeepers were paid to stock videos, books and journals that could be distributed gratis to visiting Soviet fishermen.

## 5. The USA, disintegration of the USSR and Ukrainian independence

A key issue for U.S. policymakers was how to deal with a disintegrating USSR which possessed a massive stockpile of nuclear weapons that were a threat to the West and potentially could be stolen. During the second half of the 1980s different U.S. government departments debated Soviet developments and particularly the significance of the nationalities question. The CIA, according to Gates, was more alarmist than the State Department. CIA officers such as George Kolt, head of the CIA's Soviet Analytical Office, and Fritz Ermath, Chairman of the National Intelligence Council, were more positive towards Russian President Boris Yeltsin and believed Gorbachev was finished by the late 1980s. The CIA warned as early as 1987 of growing ethnic conflict in the USSR that had implications for the ability of the Soviet center to maintain control over its empire and nuclear weapons, a position the State Department believed was alarmist. In a September 1988 report, which concurred with

that of the CIA, Grey Hodnett remained pessimistic that Gorbachev could retain control, believed the Soviet leader was out of touch with developments on the ground and proposed the need for contingency plans for the disintegration of the USSR.

By 1990 the CIA had become the most pessimistic about the ability of the Soviet center to retain control of the USSR, a country it described as in a 'revolutionary situation' (Gates, 1996, 511 and 526). Ironically the CIA had worked over the preceding four decades towards the defeat and disintegration of the USSR by supporting émigré anti-communist groups such as Prolog. By Summer 1989 the U.S. had begun thinking and preparing for the Soviet collapse which was reflected in a July 1989 NSC paper entitled 'Thinking About the Unthinkable: Instability and Political Turbulence in the USSR' (Gates, 1996, 527). Gates believed the rise of Yeltsin and developments in Ukraine, – not the Islamic demographic problem as argued earlier in that decade by D'Encausse (1979), Bennigsen and Broxup (1983) and Wimbush (1985), played the key role in defeating the hard-liners who launched a putsch in August 1991. 'The determination of the Ukraine to be independent, and Yeltsin's acceptance of that reality, was critical to this historical development,' Gates (1996, 525) wrote. Prolog, which provided the bulk of émigré support for the Ukrainian opposition through its ability to draw on U.S. government assistance, therefore played a strategic role in Ukraine's drive to independence. Soviet attacks on Prolog activities continued through to 1990, only a year before the USSR collapsed (see Bogatyrchuk, 1988; Kuznetsov, 1988; Derymov, 1989; Nypadymka, 1990). Kuzio, who had planned to attend the inaugural congress of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union in April 1990, was deported from Moscow's Sheremetyevo airport and told he was not permitted to enter the USSR because he was on a foreigners blacklist. His first visit to the USSR came in September 1991 following the failed putsch the month before. OUNb leader Yaroslava Stetsko was permitted to enter the USSR that same year.

Fear of the unknown, a disintegrating nuclear superpower, divided U.S. policymakers. Bush and Secretary of State James Baker feared the break-up of the USSR and did not support moves in this direction. Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney remained a strong advocate of the position that the break-up of the USSR would be in the U.S. national interests (Gates, 1996, 529–530). Cheney's critical views of Russia and his long-standing support for the non-Russian nations of the former USSR, such as Ukraine, remained with him as Vice President in the 2000–2008 George W. Bush administration where he was a staunch supporter of Ukraine and Georgia's membership of NATO (Cheney, 2006; Tymoshenko, 2007). A prominent fear at the time was that the USSR would become a 'nuclear Yugoslavia' because Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan (in addition to Russia) had strategic nuclear missiles on their territories while tactical nuclear weapons were distributed throughout the fifteen Soviet republics.

These policy divisions led to what became dubbed President Bush's 'chicken Kyiv' speech in July 1991 to the Soviet Ukrainian parliament, a month before the failed putsch by Soviet hard-liners speeded up the disintegration of the USSR. The speech, a 'sales pitch' for Gorbachev Gates recalls, told Ukrainians that the US, 'would not aid those who promote a suicidal nationalism based on ethnic hatred' (Gates, 1996, 506). Looking back at the speech, Gates (1996, 506) believes, 'we did not fully grasp the emotional fever in Kiev, in Ukraine, by that time and understand that the Ukrainians would examine every word Bush uttered through the prism of their zeal for independence.' President Bush had not grasped the depth of changes engulfing Soviet republics such as Ukraine that Prolog, with U.S. government support, had assisted in bringing about.

U.S. government policy debates influenced the decision made in 1988 to terminate U.S. government funding to Prolog which received its last year of financing from the U.S. government the following year. According to Kupchinsky (2008), the year before President Bush had ordered the NSC to instruct the CIA to halt its financing to Prolog and other émigré groups, 'as a thank you to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.' Gates writes that President Bush was thankful to Gorbachev for bringing liberalization to the USSR, exercising restraint in not invading Eastern Europe to suppress democratic movements and being willing to countenance German unification.

Following four decades in the business of seeking Ukraine's national liberation, and after completing its task when Ukraine became independent in 1991, Prolog closed its doors in November 1992 and in July of that year Welhasch officially handed over equipment to the first Suchasnist office in Kyiv, close to the newly re-established independent Kyiv Mohyla Academy University. In 1992, Suchasnist magazine moved to Kyiv where it was edited and published until 2010 by Rutgers University Professor Taras Hunczak, and literary critics Bohdan Pevny and Dzyuba. Dzyuba was a well-known member of the shistdesiatnyky (generation of the 1960s) cultural intelligentsia and archetypal member of the Soviet Ukrainian intelligentsia that Prolog employees and supporters had met during their visits to the U.S. The last issue of Suchasnist magazine was published in May 2010, only three months after pro-Russian candidate Viktor Yanukovich was elected Ukrainian president.

## 6. Conclusions

Representatives of the Ukrainian nationalist ground first established contact with the OSS/CIA at the close of World War II and cooperation developed through to the defeat of the nationalist underground in Poland and Soviet Ukraine in the early 1950s. This cooperation included the sending of parachuted couriers into Soviet Ukraine. After the end of armed resistance US government policy shifted from hard to soft power and led to the establishment of Prolog in 1952. Prolog's four decades of operations (1952–1992) demonstrates the success of U.S. Government assistance to émigré anti-communist groups. Prolog undertook a wide variety of covert activities that expanded under the young generation of Ukrainian-Americans after Kupchinsky became President in 1978 and following the influx of additional funding and ideological determination to combat Soviet communism during the Carter and Reagan era's. Diuk (2011) points out, 'Kupchinsky was the main force behind all of this, first as one of the group and then as its president from 1978 to 1988. These were the years when the collapse of the Soviet Union became inevitable, not least because of the work of small organizations like Prolog.'

Motyl (2011) believes that Prolog, 'was an excellent example, for little money, of an organization able to serve as a mouthpiece for the dissident movement and help keep it known and to a certain extent alive. Prolog's publications were

certainly important in bringing knowledge of Ukraine to both Ukrainians and the West.' A younger generation Ukrainian-American adds: 'Prolog was an excellent example of an organization with a small budget, perhaps 15 people on staff that played a key though modest role in explaining Ukraine to the West and establishing networks to open minded and opposition Ukrainian intelligentsia. Later, after the National Endowment for Democracy was established and support for democracy building became more open and congressionally funded, and after George Soros stepped in, it was less crucial.' He continues, 'Still for a good 30 years, from the early 1960s through to Ukrainian independence, it was an amazingly influential resource. In short, they kept alive intellectual life and intelligent debate in Ukraine about how the empire could be defeated' (*Young generation Ukrainian-American*, 2011).

The history of U.S.–Ukraine relations during the Cold War cannot be written without including a history of the main recipient of U.S. government financing to Ukrainian émigrés, Prolog, and its multi-varied activities towards Soviet Ukraine and around the globe. Further scholarly studies of U.S. support to Ukrainian émigré groups in the Cold War will become possible as U.S. government documents are de-classified in the decades ahead.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Documents pertaining to the early relationship between the U.S. government and zPUHVR from the 1940s through to the 1960s have been released and are available at the U.S. National Archives. Ukrainian-American scholar Jaroslaw Koshiw and Swedish scholar Per Anders Rudling are researching the documents.

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