



2247 W. CHICAGO AVENUE, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60622 WWW.UCCAILLINOIS.ORG

SOLEMN MEMORIAL OBSERVANCE ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF VASYL STUS

**Wednesday, September 12 at 7:30 PM
Ukrainian Cultural Center
2247 W. Chicago Avenue, Chicago, IL**

On the anniversary of the death of Vasyl Stus a series of public memorial events are being held in Ukraine and throughout the world including Chicago, IL.

Vasyl Stus, a Ukrainian poet, translator, literary critic, and journalist, was an active member of the Ukrainian dissident movement of the 1970s and 1980s. For his political convictions, his works were banned by the Soviet regime, and he spent 13 years in the Gulag until his death in Perm-36—a Soviet forced labor camp for political prisoners. Subjected to sadistic physical and psychological torture, he died in prison rather than renounce his struggle for freedom and justice for his nation. On November 26, 2005, the Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko posthumously awarded him the highest national title: Hero of Ukraine. (weblink: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vasyl_Stus)

As we remember Vasyl Stus we are constrained to note with profound outrage and sadness that one of his principal tormentors, Viktor Medvedchuk, continues to live freely in Ukraine and to wield power and influence in the corridors of government. Today, Medvedchuk is attempting to whitewash his complicity in the torture and death of Vasyl Stus as the government-appointed defense attorney at the time. Recently, Medvedchuk went so far as to blame Stus for his own fate by refusing to recant. Furthermore, today, as Oleh Sentsov and dozens of other current Ukrainian political prisoners languish in Russian prisons, Medvedchuk again callously repeats the same terms for their release as for Stus: admit your guilt, recant, and seek a pardon from the current Kremlin despot.

His past and present nefarious relationship to Ukrainian political prisoners is but one aspect of Medvedchuk's role as an agent of the Russian government. He directs and coordinates the pro-Russian revanchist forces in Ukraine. The admitted goal is to return Ukraine to Russian domination. Just as Vladimir Putin is godfather to Medvedchuk's children, so Medvedchuk is Putin's godfather over Ukraine.

Medvedchuk was one of the very first people to be included on US sanctions lists following the illegal annexation of Crimea and Russia's military invasion and on-going war in Donbas. The United States of America imposed personal sanctions against Medvedchuk on March 17, 2014, for: "threatening the peace, security, stability, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and for undermining democratic institutions and processes in Ukraine." Medvedchuk remains on the sanctions list to this day.

We cannot faithfully memorialize Vasyl Stus and honor Ukraine's struggle for freedom without simultaneously condemning Viktor Medvedchuk and his revanchist forces.

God Bless America!
Glory to Ukraine! Glory to the Heroes!