

Ukrainian nationalism and to pass it on to future generations, just as it was passed—with generous state assistance—to them.

References and notes

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Population by ethnic origins, 2006 (Edmonton) bit.ly/2006-census
4. Bohdan Chomiak, “Life inside the Ukrainian Schools,” *Student*, Dec.1979, p.6. bit.ly/Free79
5. This search of *Student*’s back issues shows his active involvement (1972-80). bit.ly/B-Chom
6. Chrystia Chomiak (aka “Dolly Kumar”) bit.ly/C-Chom and bit.ly/C-Chom2
7. Natalka Chomiak was SUSK’s Secretary (1972-1973) and one of three on its “Controlling Committee” (1973-1974). Some articles ran under her pseudonym “T.T.” (1977-80). bit.ly/N-Chom
The July-1973 issue of *Student* (p.4) noted that she ran a SUSK summer program with \$11,000 from the Canadian government (the equivalent of \$66,500 in 2020) to produce TV shows and a national conference. It featured Trudeau’s External Affairs Minister Mitchell Sharp, who presented the government’s official position on the USSR. bit.ly/N-Chom2
8. Halya Chomiak, “In Response,” *Student*, Jan. 1974, p.3. bit.ly/H-Chom
9. Marko Levytsky, “Ukrainian Legal Foundation’s Halyna Freeland ‘Independent thinking is hard to acquire,’” Apr. 29, 1999. bit.ly/HalSor
10. Chrystia Freeland, “The richness of her life,” *Financial Times*, Jul. 13, 2007. bit.ly/CF-Mom
11. Grants and Contributions to Ukrainian Festivals from the Govt of Canada bit.ly/UkrFest
12. Parade / 2013 Toronto Ukrainian Festival www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPxtJLJtCVg
13. “Muted Ukrainian-Canadian celebrations,” *The National, CBC TV*, August 23, 2014. www.cbc.ca/player/play/2495967253
 - 1:20: A Ukrainian-Canadian youth says he may enlist in the Ukrainian military.
 - 2:10: A Right Sector Canada spokesman, wearing camouflage, is interviewed at their fundraising table. On display are OUN-B battle flags and portraits of its fascist political and military leader, Stepan Bandera.
 - 2:45: Then-Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Chris Alexander, calls the Right Sector’s booth a mere ‘rumour,’ refuses to comment and says he is ‘proud’ to be there.
14. Grants & Contributions, *op. cit.*
15. Ukrainian Festival Parade, 2016, Toronto. www.youtube.com/watch?v=gKH78pJtf64
 - 15:58: Freeland appears in the parade.
 - 16:30: The Right Sector group appears.
16. Grants & Contributions, *op. cit.*
17. Ukrainian Festival Parade, 2016... *Op. cit.*

From Chomiak to Freeland: “keep that flame alive” *Close parallels and conflicts of interest in advocacy journalism*

As a teen, in the late Cold War era of Reagan’s 1980s, Chrystia Freeland began her journalism career with jobs for two far-right Ukrainian-Canadian publications in which her maternal grandfather, Michael Chomiak, had also been deeply involved. Both publications used Cold War memes about “captive nations” that were popularized by wartime fascists. While these were likely the last publications with which Chomiak worked, they were Freeland’s first known jobs. The highly-charged, rightwing milieu of these workplaces must have helped shape her worldview, and to hone her skills as a propagandist eager to aid the cause of antiSoviet, Ukrainian ethnonationalism.

She was guided along this path not only by her mother’s family, whose patriarch (Chomiak) was the Nazi’s top Ukrainian news propagandist, but by her teachers, the Ukrainian Catholic church and such militantly patriotic youth groups as Plast.

Chomiak had also been steeped in the biased, advocacy journalism of ultrapatriotic Ukrainian culture. Both began their youthful media careers when thrown headlong into extraordinary historical events that riveted ethnonationalist aspirations. Being in the right place at the right time, they both received widespread public acclaim by serving their community’s interests. Their public fame, aided by outside political forces that ruthlessly exploited Ukrainian nationalism, allowed them to become media gatekeepers editing large news enterprises.

In Freeland’s case, in her early 20s, she was simultaneously a student, political activist and journalist in Lviv, and was fully engaged in Ukraine’s final NATO-backed battle to separate from the USSR. Chomiak too had been a student and journalist in Ukraine on the nationalist beat. While studying law at Lviv University (1930-31), Chomiak wrote for *Dilo (Deed)*, the top daily paper in Galicia, southwest Ukraine. Later, he worked on its editorial staff (1934-39).¹ His work included covering at least one terrorism trial of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). To gain Ukraine’s independence, the fascist OUN assassinated Polish politicians. While on *Dilo*’s staff, said scholar John Paul Himka, Chomiak worked for a Lviv law “firm that handled one of the famous OUN assassination cases.” While Chomiak’s articles “made him a famous cub reporter,”² said Himka (who as Chomiak’s son in law, is Freeland’s uncle), he had a conflict of interest. How could he write unbiased news about such trials when, as an

intern trying to pass the bar, he was beholden to a law firm defending terrorists? His objectivity was also tainted by the Ukrainian nationalist struggle with which he identified.

Freeland too was in a major conflict of interest. The widely-accepted narrative is that she was an “accidental journalist”³ who, in 1990, suddenly began her meteoric rise through some of the world’s largest media firms. This media legend, created by Freeland herself, neglects any mention of her deep involvement in the divisive, partisan fight to sever Ukraine from the USSR. In



Stepan Bandera
posing in his
Plast uniform,
at age 14
in 1923.

early 1989, when her political meddling hit the news, she signalled her intent to enter mainstream journalism and hinted at her conflict of interest. “Freeland says her political activism,” reported Don Retson, “may not make her an ideal journalist.”⁴

Freeland’s legend also neglects mention of her work for far-right propaganda organs in Canada, the US and Europe. These Ukrainian ethnonationalist and CIA-linked enterprises were the first steps in her journalism career. Freeland’s skill in feigning objectivity allowed her to become a beloved darling of corporate media, which remains as entrenched in Russophobic/pro-NATO rhetoric as it was throughout the Cold War.

The right place, the right time and the ultraright ideology

Freeland’s media career benefited from her anticommunist and Russophobic views. These ideologies are valuable qualifications for all candidates seeking careers in Western media. And, being in Soviet Ukraine during the final battle of the Cold War, put Freeland in the right place at just the right time. Beginning in about 1990, she assisted billionaire George Soros in his efforts to manipulate Ukrainian politics. At that time, Soros began funding the CIA-created propaganda network—Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty—which assisted Freeland’s entrée

into the mainstream corporate media.

A main goal of the nationalist, anti-Soviet Ukrainian media for which both Chomiak and Freeland worked, was Ukrainian independence. Since WWII, Ukraine had been a frontline battleground for NATO Cold Warriors and their propagandists. Their greatest ambition was to destroy the USSR and to fight communism in general. This had previously been a central goal of the Nazis and their fascist Ukrainian allies.

Plast Scouts join veterans at monuments in Ukraine to glorify the Nazi's Waffen SS Galicia and Bandera's fascist army.



Berezhany, Ukraine, 2006

After WWII, recognising that the “nationalities issue” was a key weakness of the very multicultural USSR, the CIA recruited Ukrainian ultranationalists linked to terrorism and Nazism. A now-declassified, CIA document states that its OUN allies participated in terrorist activities against Polish officials before the war, and Ukrainian nationalists allied themselves with their Nazi ‘liberators’ ... in 1941.⁵ The CIA’s covert military and psychological-warfare campaigns used Ukrainian nationalism as a powerful wedge to divide and conquer the USSR. Secret CIA programs included those code-named QRDynamic, QRPlumb, AeroDynamic and AECassowary. The Agency’s website has over 4,500 links to formerly-secret and top-secret files on these programs alone.⁶ These and other files on Ukrainian nationalists’ links to the CIA, were released through the Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act (1998). The CIA says that the release of these documents sheds important historical light on the Holocaust and other war crimes, as well as the US Government’s involvement with war criminals during the Cold War. It further enhances public *confidence* in government transparency.⁷ (Emphasis added.) However, during WWII and the Cold War, the CIA invested its “confidence” not in “transparency” but in the Nazi’s East European collaborators, especially Ukrainians.

When launching their careers in journalism, both Michael Chomiak and Chrystia Freeland faced major conflicts of interest. Although neither were objective about Ukrainian nationalism, this did not harm their prospects. In fact, their political biases helped both to become media gatekeepers who served virulently Russophobic, anticommunist power elites.

TOP SECRET

These fascist, US allies were trusted assets in many covert actions against the USSR. Because Canada was the world’s prime place of refuge for antiSoviet Ukrainians after WWII, hundreds of CIA weblinks on these projects, make reference to Canada.⁸

darling of the corporate press. Later, by building on this massmedia work, Freeland launched her political career. During her meteoric rise to Deputy PM, Freeland has come to symbolise Canada’s extremely Russophobic and anticommunist policies. As such, her maternal grandfather would surely have been as proud of her efforts as she is of his.

References and notes

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Keeping Chomiak’s ‘flame alive’ After fleeing the Red Army three times, Chomiak ended his wartime career when the Nazis could no longer protect their Ukrainian propaganda efforts. But, after fleeing to Canada in 1948, Chomiak was again free to propagate the nationalist brand of Ukrainian culture to which he was accustomed. Knowing of his work as a Nazi propagandist, Freeland said his wartime experiences had a very big effect on me [He] was committed to the idea ... that Ukraine would one day be independent and that the community had a *responsibility* to the country they had been forced to flee ... to keep that flame alive.⁹

Once in Canada, Chomiak attended Ukrainian Catholic church with Freeland and worked with Ukrainian veterans representing the Waffen SS Galicia and Bandera’s fascist army. He also supported Plast and the Banderite-led UCC, which Freeland still very keenly supports. These factors helped set the course for her to become a beloved



Plast scouts honouring WWII heroes at a monument to the Waffen SS Galicia, which was created, armed, funded and led by Nazi Germany. Lychakiv Cemetery, Lviv, Ukraine, 2008