



КОНГРЕС УКРАЇНЦІВ КАНАДИ

UKRAINIAN CANADIAN CONGRESS

CONGRÈS DES UKRAINIEN-CANADIENS

May 29, 2018

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, PC, MP
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A3

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

Re: Participation of Government of Canada officials in so-called “Victory day celebrations” organized by the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Ottawa

The Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC) was shocked to see Government of Canada officials participating in so-called “Victory day celebrations” held by the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Canada on May 9, 2018.

This event was replete with Soviet Communist symbols – the hammer and sickle; Soviet Communist flags; the so-called “St. George’s ribbon.” These symbols are those of a brutal, totalitarian regime that is responsible for the murder of tens of millions of people.

Moreover, these symbols are being used today by the regime of the Russian Federation as a propaganda tool to lionize the Soviet past, excuse Soviet crimes and justify Russia’s war against Ukraine, which since 2014 has cost Ukraine over 10,000 lives, 24,000 wounded and over 1.5 million internally displaced.

For Central and Eastern Europeans - Ukrainians, Poles, Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, Croatians, Czechs, Romanians, Slovaks and many other captive nations - the end of WWII replaced the vicious and cruel Nazi German occupation with the vicious and cruel Soviet Communist occupation, which lasted over 4 decades. For millions of people, the Soviet Communist occupation brought deportations, mass arrests, imprisonment in the slave labour camps of the Gulag, and death. It is that Soviet Communist occupation which Government of Canada officials, were involved in glorifying on May 9.

Many members of these communities sought refuge from the scourge of Soviet Communism in Canada. Here, they found liberty and peace. At a time when Canada is partnering with affected communities to build a National Memorial to the Victims of Communism, it is dismaying to see our own Government’s officials actively participating in events that glorify the Soviet Union.

Every year on August 23, Canada officially commemorates the National Day of Remembrance for the Victims of Communism and Nazism in Europe. As you stated in 2017, “we join people in Canada and around the world to remember the victims and survivors of Communism and Nazism in Europe, and to pay tribute to all those who continue to face violence, loss of dignity, and repression from totalitarian regimes. [...] We all share the responsibility to promote and protect human rights, freedom, and democracy. We must stand guard against those who seek to devalue the humanity of others, and uphold the inherent dignity of every human being.”

Accordingly, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress calls on you to ensure that Government of Canada officials do not participate in future “Victory Day celebrations” and similar initiatives used to venerate the crimes of Communism.

Yours sincerely,

UKRAINIAN CANADIAN CONGRESS

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Grod". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Paul Grod, National President

CC: The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, PC, MP, Minister of Foreign Affairs
The Honourable Andrew Scheer, PC, MP, Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition
Jagmeet Singh, Leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada
Andris Kesteris, President of the Central and Eastern European Council of Canada