

Byelorussian Chronicle

I. The International Scene

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

The Delegates of the Byelorussian SSR addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations on a variety of subjects, particularly connected with colonial affairs. Statements were made relating to Portuguese Africa, Viet-Nam, Southern Rhodesia, Aden and South-West Africa. Speaking at a Plenary Meeting held in New York on the 13th October 1965, the delegate of the BSSR His Excellency A. Hurinovič welcomes the election of Mr. Pazhwak of Afghanistan to the Presidency of the General Assembly, and pledged the support of the Byelorussian people for Mr. U-Thant as General Secretary for a further term. On behalf of his Government, Mr. Hurinovič expressed the apprehension of many Byelorussians over the rearmament of the German Federal Republic, and recalled the sad fate of the "380.000 sons and daughters of the Byelorussian people who were sent off to forced labour camps in Fascist Germany." He also expressed his satisfaction at the part being played by Byelorussian tractors and motor-vehicles in the economic expansion of underdeveloped countries.

On the 15th November Mr. Hurinovič once again addressed the General Assembly, this time on the state of affairs in Viet-Nam. Coming from the delegate of Soviet Byelorussia, his words were particularly meaningful: "If we look back on the age-old history of mankind, we will see many wars large and small, which often brought down entire civilisations and which broke the lives of millions of people. They were all connected with selfishness and non-observance of the rights of other people." Mr. Hurinovič went on to express the support of Byelorussians for the Draft Resolution of "The Prohibition of the threat or use of force in international relations and of the right of peoples to self-determination." He stressed that

"Imperialism has not given up the application of brutal force, nor of direct armed aggression against other states, trying by all means to turn back the tide of history, and to arrest the irreversible force of National liberation movements."

UNESCO

The former Vice-Chairman of the Byelorussian National Commission for UNESCO (the present delegate of the BSSR to the General Assembly) Mr. A. Hurinovič sent to the UNESCO information on the Bibliographical services of the BSSR during the Year 1964. During that year the Inter-Library loan service of the Byelorussian State Library in Minsk was used by some 739 libraries of various types, and a total of 17,497 volumes were loaned through that service.

The contribution made by Byelorussia to the UNESCO fund amounts to 0.49% as compared to a United States Contribution of 30%, United Kingdom — 6.78%, Spain — 0.68%, Denmark — 0.58%, Norway — 0.41%, Yugoslavia — 0.39%, Bulgaria 0.16% and Ireland — 0.15%.

THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

On the occasion of the 47th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of the Byelorussian Democratic Republic (BNR), more than 41 members of the Senate and the House of Representatives issued statements supporting the national and cultural integrity of the Byelorussian people. On the 25th March the Most Reverend Archbishop Vasil Tamašcyk offered prayers in the Senate, and several Senators, including Senator E. Durkin of Illinois, Senator Jacob Javits of New York and Senator George Murphy of California, made statements from the floor. In the course of his address, Senator Murphy said: "Having been exposed to, and having experienced

freedom, the Byelorussian people I am convinced, will not lose faith and will continue in their struggle to regain their independence. The history of this small but brave nation offers clear and convincing evidence that the right to self-determination is an aspiration that all oppressed peoples share."

On the 7th March, prayers for Byelorussia were offered in the House of Representatives by the Revd. Michaś Urbanovič. Among the 35 Congressmen who addressed the House on Byelorussian were the representatives of New York State, Hugh L. Carey and S. Halpern.

INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL EXCHANGES

Ukraine

A Byelorussian Cultural Delegation visited the Donetsk region of Ukraine and gave a concert during February. The delegation included a number of distinguished Byelorussian musicians, in particular the President of the Byelorussian Union of Musicians, the composer D. Kaminski, the musicologist A. Rakoŭ and the violinist L. Harelik.

Slovakia

In February an evening of Byelorussian literature was held in Bratislava (Slovakia), at the Institute of International Literature and Language. Mr. Vaclav Zydlicki, a lecturer in Philosophy at Prague (Bohemia), gave a talk on Byelorussian literary achievements, — a subject with which he is well familiar, having written a book on Byelorussian writers.

Australia

On the occasion of the 80th birthday of Catherine Pritchard, the Government of the BSSR sent greetings to the well-known Australian poetess. She has for many years maintained a friendly correspondence with Ja. Siemiażon, the Byelorussian authority on Shakespeare.

Poland

In May the Bieriascic Theatre Company visited Lublin (Poland) for a short season of Byelorussian plays.

It was the second exchange visit between the two cities since 1958. The Company staged productions of A. Salinski's play *Kameńčyki na daloni* and Shakespeare's *Othello*.

Russia

An exhibition of the works of Byelorussian water-colour painters was held in Moscow, capital of the Russian Federal Republic, during the spring. Among the works were paintings by V. Cvirka, A. Pasliadovič, A. Volkaŭ and V. Kubarau.

Bulgaria

Celebrations were held in Sofia during the autumn to mark ten years of Byelorussian Culture in Bulgaria. An Exhibition on Soviet Byelorussia was opened in the Bulgarian capital on the 5th October and was fully covered by the press and television services.

Tadjikstan

On the 22nd October a Byelorussian Cultural delegation arrived in Dushambe (Tadjikstan) for the celebration organised in connexion with the week of Byelorussian literature. There were readings of poetry by the authors P. Hlebka, E. Loś, L. Kalačynski, K. Kirejenka and S. Hračouški. A group of Tadjik poets including Ja. Chelem (*russ.* Chelemski) then read translations of Byelorussian poetry into the Tadjik language.

II. Events in Byelorussia

MIENSK

The early part of January was marked by commemorative celebrations of a decade of Russian art in the BSSR. An exhibition of Russian painting and *objets d'art* was held in the Byelorussian State Library.

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On the 8th April the Byelorussian organist and international laureate Aleh Jancanka gave a recital of organ music by J. S. Bach. Among the works interpreted by the artist were the *Toccata* and *Fugue* in F. Major, the *Chaconne* in F. Minor and the *Passacaglia* in C. Minor.

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The American pianist Eugene Istomin visited Miensk and gave a recital on the 15th April.

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A Concert of Byelorussian Chamber music was given during the month of April in the Hall of the Composers Union of the BSSR. Among the works performed were the *Sonata for flute and piano* by P. Padkavyraŭ, the *Toccata for piano* by E. Tyrmand, and selected *Romances* by A. Bahatyraŭ, D. Lukas, R. Pukst, H. Ančykaŭ, Ju. Siemianiak, S. Kartes and E. Tyrmand. There were also Instrumental works by Ja. Hlebaŭ and A. Turankoŭ.

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In April a new and impressive Cultural Centre was opened at the Tractor and Motor Works in Miensk. The Centre includes a Concert with more than 800 seats, and also a Cinema with a seating capacity of 300.

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From the 8th — 10th June, the Artists Union of the BSSR held its

VIIth Session in Miensk. Full reports of the Union's activities were read to the Members and were later published in the Journal *Literatura i Mastactva*.

A Delegation from Jugoslavia led by Marshal Jozip Broz Tito visited Miensk on the 20th June. The Delegates were greeted by the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the BSSR, V. Kazloŭ, by the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Byelorussian Communist Party P. Mašeroŭ, and by the President of the Council of Ministers of the BSSR, S. Kisialeŭ. President Broz-Tito and the Jugoslav delegates visited the Museum of the 1st Session of the Social Democratic Labour Party, and later in the evening attended a concert of Byelorussian artists in Miensk.

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On the 5th July the Order of Lenin was awarded to the Byelorussian writer and poet, Piatruš Hlebka, on the occasion of his 60th birthday in recognition of his services to literature.

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The new Theatre season for 1965-1966 opened in August at the Janka Kupala Theatre in Miensk with the performance of the new play *Serca na daloni* by I. Samiakin. The Republic Theatre staged productions of the plays *Muščyna, budź muščynam* by Miatukoŭski and *Zorka Venera* by B. Burian and M. Altuchoŭ.

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On the 17th August a Bulgarian Cultural delegation arrived in the Byelorussian Capital on an official visit. The delegation included the Bulgarian Minister of Culture Ganča

Ganeva, the Secretary of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences Stojka Božkov, the writer Angelo Todorov and the soloist of the Staro-Zagorski Opera M. Minev.

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The new Concert Season opened in Miensk on the 23rd September with a performance by the Byelorussian State Symphony Orchestra of *Symphony No. 2* by L. Abeliovič. The orchestra then went on tour and gave concert of music by Ja. Hlebaŭ, H. Wagner and D. Kaminski.

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The Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian SSR assembled on the 22nd October in Miensk, on the occasion of the opening of the VI Session of that body.

VICIEBSK

At the end of February the play *King Lear* by William Shakespeare was performed in Byelorussian at the Jakub Kolas Theatre in Viciebsk. The part of Lear was played by the well-known dramatic artist A. Truś.

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An Exhibition of paintings by artists in the Viciebsk province was held in the Cultural centre of the Cyrvonaja Armija Collective farm. Among the works exhibited were painting by A. Talkač, P. Javič, Ju. Doktorava and V. Haŭryšava.

LAŠA (*Horadnia Prov.*)

At the beginning of the year a museum was opened in Laša, the birthplace of the distinguished Byelorussian ethnographer and philologist E. Karski. The Museum is devoted to the life and work of a man who did much to shed light on the origins and development of the Byelorussian language and literature.

BIERASCIE (*Brest*)

In March a Concert was given by a group of local artists including the Brest Railway-workers choir conducted by P. Ślakatovič, and a newly-

formed Dance ensemble of the Brest Officers Club.

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During the month of June the Lublin Theatre Company from Poland visited Brest for a short season of Polish plays. The visit was arranged in return for the May visit to Lublin of the Brest Theatre Company.

HOMIEL

The Homiel Regional Library organised an Exhibition of Byelorussian book-printing and illustration during March to mark the 475th anniversary of the birth of Francis Skaryna.

MAHILEŪ

To mark the new Theatre season 1965-1966, the Mahileŭ Regional Theatre in September staged a performance of the play *Muryj Bor* by I. Isačanka.

BARANA VIČI

During February a series of concerts was given in Palessia by various local groups. In Baranovici concerts contributions were made by the Paper Factory Choir (dir. N. Babko), by the Textile Factory Choir (dir. K. Karašėŭ), by the Junačtva Dance Ensemble (leader A. Varabėŭ) and by the Municipal Orchestra (cond. V. Patocki). The soloists E. Asipenko and V. Keda sang Ebal'a's *Aria* from *Don Carlos* by G. Verdi and the Song *Radzima* by Tulikaŭ.

PINSK

In the course of a Concert given during February in Pinsk, a quartet of vocalists accompanied by the Municipal Symphony Orchestra interpreted the song *Nad Pinai* by Ju. Siemianiaka. Other arrangements of songs and dances were performed by the Railway-workers Choral Society and by the Municipal Folk-dance ensemble (dir. M. Puzanaŭ).

III. Events abroad

POLAND

The Bielastok Vovoyvodship (*Polish Województwo*) of Poland embraces most of the old Byelorussian province of Padlasia and part of the Horadnia (pol. Grodno) district of the Troki palatinate. As such, it has a sizeable Byelorussian population which enjoys a relatively active social and cultural life. One of the most successful organisations is the Byelorussian National Cultural Association, whose Lavonicha Dance Ensemble gave its 1000th concert in Bielastok on the 19th March.

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Siarhej Kryšeń addressed the BNCA branch in Sokolka on the 11th April and gave a lecture on the economic and cultural life of the Sokolka district. An important event in the life of the Byelorussian community in Haradok was the opening of the new Kastaŭ Kalinoŭski Cultural Institute by Party secretary Ū. Vicha on the 6th May. The ceremony was attended by several distinguished guests, including the President of the Building Committee S. Juchnicki and the departmental Director of the Ministry of Culture, Č. Kalužny. A solemn Commemoration of the founding of the West Byelorussian Socialist Hramada in 1925 was held on the 26th June at the Trades Union Theatre in Bielastok in the presence of two former active members of the Hramada, Alfred Fidarkievič and Felix Halavač. The meeting was attended by the Secretary of the Bielastok Committee of the Polish Communist Party, A. Laševič, who is a Member of the Sejm, and by the Chairman of the Presidium of the BNR, S. Žmijka. The cultural side of the festival included performances by local Choir and Youth Orchestras from Košak, Hradalėŭ, Bielsk-Padlaski and Bielastok, with contributions from the Lavonicha Dance ensemble and poetry reading by Aleś Barski-Barščeŭski and Viktor Šved. On the 25th of July a similar Festival was held at Orlia in the Bielsk district, and included cultural contributions by groups from Bielsk and Pilik.

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Friends of the BNCA will be gratified to hear of the Honours conferred on the members of this organisation by the Polish Government on the 30th July. Vasil Dzuna was decorated with the Cross of the Knightly Order of the Rebirth of Poland. Gold Service Crosses were awarded to the Chairman of the Presidium of the BNCA Michaś Chmialeŭski, to the Secretary Ū. Juzviuk, to the Chairman of the Bielsk Branch Janka Aziabla and to Artem Čykvin, Branch Agent. Well-deserved Silver Service Crosses were conferred on the Editor of the Byelorussian Journal *Niva*, Jury Valkavycki, on the Instructor of the Warsaw Branch, the poet Viktor Šved, and on the Instructor of the Siemiatyče Branch, Michaś Vyšenka.

It was also a singular honour for the Byelorussian Community when on 1st September, Professor Vitaŭt Lukasevič, the son of a Byelorussian from Bočkaŭ, was appointed by the University Senate to be Rector of the Mikołaj Kopernik University of Toruń, Poland.

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On the 18th September an Exhibition was opened at the Museum of the Revolutionary Movement in Bielastok to mark the 40th Anniversary of the West Byelorussian Hramada. The Exhibition included many photographs and souvenirs of the social and political activity of the Hramada group.

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A welcome visitor from Prague was the distinguished Byelorussian baritone Michaś Zabejda-Sumicki who gave a series of concerts at the Cultural Institutes of Michaloŭ, Bielsk, Milejčycy and Sakołka. On the 21st September he gave a very successful recital at the Hurnik Cultural Institute in Hajnaŭka, and on the 23rd September at Haradka. He made his final appearance on the 25th September at a concert in Bielastok. His repertoire included the songs *Ty prydzi* by Čurkin, *Viečar* by Turankoŭ, *Ci hrech ciabie lubič* by Halakoŭski, and the folksong *Čyrvonaja Kalinka* arr. Kalycanka.

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On the 23rd September a meeting was held at the Technical Institute of Bielaŭsk Scientific Society in honour of the Director of the Historical Institute of the Byelorussian Academy of Sciences, Mme Nina Kamenskaja. After delivering a lecture on the historical research into the origins of the Byelorussian people, Mme Kamenskaja visited the BNCA Centre.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A relatively large colony of Byelorussians emigrated to the United States at the close of the XIXth century. Their principal centres are in Chicago, Cleveland and New York. A leading role is played in the cultural field by the Association of Americans of Byelorussian Descent, and by the Byelorussian Institute of Arts and Sciences.

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During the month of February a session of Cultural and Literary evenings was organised in New York. On the 6th February Dr. Stanislaŭ Stankievič delivered a commemorative lecture on the Journal *Naša Niva* on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of its publication. On the 13th February M. Horoška spoke on the life and activity of Piatrus Krečeŭski (1879-1928), sometime President of the Byelorussian National Rada. A literary & musical *soiree* was held on the 20th February on the theme of Byelorussian Literature during the '20s, and on the 27th February Dr. Stankievic lectured on recent attempts in Soviet Byelorussia to rehabilitate the Journal *Naša Niva*.

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On the 15th March the Most Reverend Archbishop Vasil Tamašcyk had the honour of being received by the Vice-President of the United States, Hubert Humphrey, who expressed his warm sympathy and understanding towards the Byelorussian people and their national aspirations. On the 21st March, after a solemn Liturgy had been celebrated in The Byelorussian Orthodox

Cathedral of St. Cyril of Turaŭ, an Academic evening was held at the Hotel Baltimore in New York, which was attended by members of the Central Committee of BAZA (the AABD), and of the Committees of the New York and New Jersey Branches. Lisa Mankofiskaja gave a recital of Byelorussian songs, which included *Ja pryjdu* (words by Ja. Kupała, music by M. Kulikovič) and *Viasnovy Klič* (words by N. Arseńieva, music by E. Zubkovič). The Dance Ensemble of the Union of Byelorussian Youth in America directed by Alia Orsa-Romano interpreted the popular folk-dances *Taŭkačyki*, *Kryžačok* and *Mikita*, and these were followed by readings from the poems of Janka Kupała and Jakub Kolas.

On the 23rd May the New-Jersey and New-Brunswick Branches of the BAZA (the AABD) celebrated their 15th Anniversary. After a Service in the Byelorussian Orthodox Church of Our Lady of Žyrovicy, a concert of Byelorussian songs and dances was given by local groups.

Messages of greetings and expressions of goodwill were received from Govenor Hughes of the State of New Jersey, and from Mayor Paulus of New-Brunswick.

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The Summer session of Cultural and Literary evenings was held during May and June at the Krečeŭski Cultural Fondation in New York. On the 8th May, Dr. Stanislaŭ Stankievič lectured on recent attempts in Soviet Byelorussia to rehabilitate the Journal *Naša Niva*. On the 15th May Fr. Kusal gave an historical talk on the activities of the ill-fated *Bielaruš* division on the Eastern front and in Germany during World War II. A lecture was given on the 29th May by Jan Stankievic on the relations between the Eastern territories of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Republic of Pskov and the Duchy of Muscovy in the early XVI century.

The Byelorussian colony in America was represented at the Universal Exhibition held in New York in June. On the 27th of June a concert was given within the cadre of the Exhibition by the Dance Ensemble of the Union of Byelorussian Youth in America.

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The well-known Byelorussian bass, Piatruś Koniuch, gave a recital of songs at the Byelorussian Vacation Centre "Belair-Miensk" in New York State. In the course of his concert he interpreted songs by Glinka, Schumann and Tchaikovsky.

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The September term of the Byelorussian Secondary School in Cleveland, Ohio, commenced with more than 40 children in attendance. Among subjects taught at the school are Religion, Byelorussian language, geography and history, singing and dancing. On the 14th of November the Cleveland Branch of the Union of Byelorussian Youth in America celebrated the 15th Anniversary of its foundation.

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The autumn session of Cultural and Literary evenings opened on the 30th November with the poetical works of Jazep Pušč, scripted by A. Adamovič and St. Stankievič.

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Byelorussians in America participated in the International Festival held in Chicago on the 16th and 17th October. An exhibition of Byelorussian books, art and embroidery was arranged, and there was a concert of folk-dancing given by a Folk-dance Group directed by Vera Ramuk.

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UNITED KINGDOM AND WESTERN EUROPE

Considerable numbers of Byelorussians emigrated to Western Europe at the beginning of the present century in search of employment. Although their numbers have been depleted since the last War by re-emigration and assimilation, active communities still flourish in the United Kingdom (London, Manchester, Bradford and Midlands), France (Paris, Le Creuzot, Flandre-Artois and Lorraine), Belgium (Namur, Charleroi and Brabant), Germany (Munich, the Ruhr and Lower Saxony) and Italy (Rome).

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On the 25th March the Hon. Mrs. Maurice Macmillan gave a reception in honour of the Byelorussian community in London. Numerous distinguished guests were present, including members of both House of Parliament and of the Diplomatic Corps, and a report of the reception was published the following day in *The Times*.

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A solemn Liturgy was celebrated in the Chapelle St. Louis, Montparnasse, Paris on the 28th March. The Revd. Leū Haroška officiated, and the French Students Choir of St. Irenaeus sang the responses, including the fine harmonisation of the Sluckak chant *Cherubicon* by M. Kulikovič. The Liturgy was followed by a lunch given by the Union of Byelorussian workers in France (founded 1945), and by an Academic commemoration of the Events of the 25th March 1918.

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The Headmaster of St. Cyrils House School in Finchley, London, gave a dinner to mark the occasion of the Feast of St. Cyril of Turaū. After the dinner, which was attended by several English friends and benefactors of the School, the Revd. Alexander Nadson read a paper entitled *The Writings of St. Cyril of Turaū*.

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On the 9th of June Cardinal Lercaro signed in Rome, Italy, an

historic decree authorising the use of the Byelorussian vernacular as a liturgical language for the celebration of the Mass in the Roman rite.

Sänger des Weissruthenischen Volkstums (Munich, 1959).

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The Very Revd. Dean Michas Maskalik of Goslar, Germany died on the 29th September. Born in Haradziej Byelorussia, Fr. Maskalik devoted his life to ministering to the Byelorussian colony in Lower Saxony. He will be particularly remembered for his learned study of the poetry of Kupala in his book *Janka Kupala, der*

In the course of a brief visit to Rome, the Byelorussian scholars of St. Cyrils House in London had the honour of singing at a solemn Pontifical Liturgy celebrated in St. Peters Cathedral on the 5th November. The presiding celebrant was the Rt. Revd. Česlaus Sipovič Bishop of Mariamme and Apostolic Visitor of Byelorussians, assisted by the Revd. Alexander Nadson and the Revd. Deacon Robert Patry-Tamušanski. Among the worshippers was the Rt. Revd. Boleslaus Sioskans, Apostolic Administrator of Miensk and Mahiloū.