

Dissident Speaks of Strange Alliance

by Eugene Plawiuk

"A strange alliance exists amongst all the governments of the world be they pseudo-socialist, fascist or bourgeois democracies," charged Leonid Plyushch at a public forum on Soviet political prisoners.

Leonid Plyushch, 38, a former Ukrainian mathematician, and avowed Marxist, was in Edmonton last week trying to raise public support for the Democratic Movement for Human Rights in the USSR.

Plyushch was exiled from the Soviet Union in 1976 after serving a lengthy term in a psychiatric hospital because he expressed views counter to the policies of the Communist Party.

"Three factors support the Soviet Government: lies, fear and a monopoly of power. The government fears its own people. The people in turn fear the secret police and the regular police."

Over five hundred people attended the meeting held at St. Joseph's Cathedral last Thursday, and at the beginning of the meeting as he approached the podium, the exiled dissident received a thunderous two minute standing ovation.

One of Plyushch's first complaints against the Soviet government, which led to his ten year struggle in his country as a dissident was the Russification of Ukrainian culture.

"When the Canadian Communist party youth group came to Kiev for an exchange based upon investigating how Russia has allowed for a separate Ukrainian culture, a special tour was arranged. Special Ukrainian teachers, professors, students and schools were set up to show a thriving Ukrainian culture. The Canadian Communists were

fooled. Once they left, the schools were shut down," he said.

Plyushch described the tactics used today in the Soviet Union by the KGB as being "tactics that were common under Stalin."

He said dissidents are assaulted, threatened, fired from their jobs, mocked in the Soviet press, and tried on false charges.

"Rondmuck, (a Kiev dissident) had a gun planted on him," said Plyushch. "Ginzburg (another dissident of the Kiev group) had illegal money planted on him, a dissident poet had pornography planted on him. People are being persecuted and beaten up. In the past year, through my samizdat (underground) contacts I know of three baptists, a worker, a lawyer and a writer who have all been killed for demanding human rights. Killed by the KGB."

Since his exile Plyushch has continued his dissident work and maintains contact with the Democratic Movement in the Soviet Union. He is mandated to do this work from the Moscow Kiev group which is presently monitoring infractions of the Helsinki agreements. Many of the members of this group have been arrested and harassed recently, for merely recording the Soviet offenses against the Helsinki accords.

Plyushch also criticized the New Soviet Constitution, saying it is far worse than even the 1936 Stalin constitution.

"Something dreadful is hiding under the new constitution. Stalin used his 1936 constitution to launch the purges of 1937-1939. The new constitution will lead to far worse purges than that of 1972," he said.

All through the speech and

question period Plyushch emphasized that support for dissidents and political prisoners must come from the public, the trade unions and the left organizations. Only through international pressure would the repression lessen. But pressure must not only come from governments like the Carter administration, but from ordinary people.

Plyushch said that he critically supported the action on dissidents of the Carter administration, as long as Carter applies his call for human rights not only to the USSR but to the fascist countries supported by the US.

Plyushch remarked that the USSR and other pseudo-socialist states are in reality state capitalist, and that he has become even more committed to Marxism after his stay in the West where he saw that many social problems, such as poverty and crime, are the same in both "state and private capitalism." His solution to this problem is not a question of ideologies but one of a system geared to human needs.

Plyushch had spoken at the beginning of the week at the World Mental Health Association conference in Vancouver where a motion was passed condemning the use of psychiatric hospitals as political prisons. And he had spoken Wednesday before the American Psychiatric Association in Hawaii where he confronted a leading Russian psychiatrist who claimed that there are no political prisoners in Soviet mental institutions.

His tour to raise public support to free Soviet political prisoners will continue east to Toronto, New York, and Chicago.

As well as Plyushch, Fletcher Stewart of the U of A Chaplains, Professor Bob Baker of Amnesty International and Harry Kostiuik, President of the Alberta Federation of Labour spoke defending Human Rights of the oppressed and in opposition to the use of torture on prisoners by any state.

The meeting was used to launch a local group, the Committee In Defence of Soviet Political Prisoners, who raised several hundred dollars from the audience, and promises to continue the work that dissidents like Plyushch have begun.

Purse Thief

Campus Security is investigating a wave of purse thefts that has taken place over the past week.

Security director Gordon Perry told *Gateway* yesterday that four purses were taken from desks and coat racks in various university buildings last week.

At least three people have seen the thief. He is described as being about 6 feet tall, weighing from 165 to 170 lbs having a pock marked face, fair hair, and wearing a yellow adidas sweater.

Security warns that people should be cautious with personal belongings, and that with classes beginning next week care should be taken to guard against bicycle theft.



photo by Eugene Plawiuk

"I am not a prophet, I am not a leader, I am not even a politician. I am a witness and I will carry this struggle on as long as I can."

New Director Seeks New Image for Security

Campus security is attempting to end the traditional vision of a separate paramilitary organization policing students.

"We would like to give the Security presence on campus a more compatible image," said newly appointed director Gordon Perry. "For this reason we have discarded the rank designations of constable and the like and are purchasing new more casual uniforms."

Perry 56, was appointed director of Campus Security April 1 of this year.

The organization seeks to provide good personal, physical and psychological security, and has been increased to about 26

from the 9 members it had last year.

It has recruited an associate director with experience in community relations and an experienced investigator.

"Another important part of security is the education of individuals," said Perry. "We have a case of a purse snatcher on campus who is succeeding because persons have not been exercising enough caution."

At the moment the force is involved in helping out with registration week. Throughout the year the increased force will circulate on campus to be of help to students and other members of the university community Perry said.

Arts Undergrads Organize

If the work of a number of ambitious Student Councillors and General Faculties Council (GFC) members is successful, Arts students may have a full fledged undergraduate society early this term.

Arts Students' councillors Steven Kushner and Bill Stewart, along with three Arts GFC members and nine others, have formed an interim executive to set up the initial meetings needed to organize the more than 2,700 arts undergraduate students.

"All attempts in the past to organize the arts undergraduate

students have failed," Kushner said "We are faced with a faculty with a great diversity of interests, but so far response has been very good."

Kushner told *Gateway* last week that a brief social meeting will be held Friday, September 23 in Room 270A SUB for all interested arts students to get to know one another, to discuss planned socials and the intramural program.

The following week a meeting will be held for the possible ratification of the interim executive's constitution and for the election of the society's executive.

Absurdist Reforms

The Students' Union has appointed Manfred Lukat to the position of Vice President Services, filling a vacancy left last spring when elected VP Services Shirley Armstrong resigned her office.

Lukat, a political science graduate studying recreation administration, is one of ten applicants who sought to fill the vacancy resulting from Armstrong's decision to leave Edmonton due to personal reasons

Those who followed last year's Students' Union elections may remember Lukat as presidential candidate Rene Le Larke, head of the Conceptual Reality Alternative Party, (CRAP) a slate which added a dynamic element of political satire to the election.

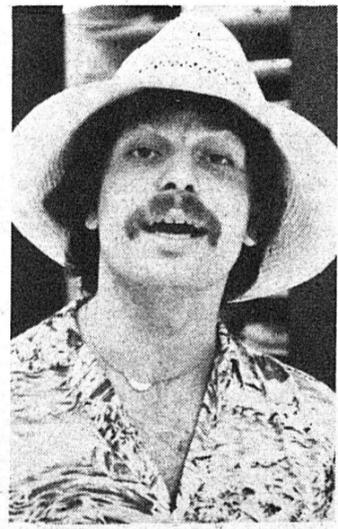
"Clearly, I have moved away from the ideas of the CRAP slate," Lukat told *Gateway* last week. "still, many people will probably be surprised to find me back as VP Services"

Lukat sees the office of VP services largely as a liaison between various clubs and departments of the Students' Union.

He said that he would like to see the U of A join the Association of Student Councils (AOSC) an international

organization which would allow an exchange of ideas between student unions and provide students with an international travel agency. He said this agency would provide student travellers with cut-rates on transportation and accommodation throughout the world.

Lukat mentioned that he would definitely like to see the Students' Union more active in politics, and suggested the Students' Union, working in close co-operation with university clubs can co-sponsor lecture tours and visitations from political speakers.



New vp services Manfred Lukat