

funding from international organizations. A Canadian observer in Crimea recently noted, "If we had a few riots or a rebellion, then aid would come quickly to Crimea. But there's none to help prevent a crisis." As a result there is a general mood of disillusionment among the Crimean Tatars. They feel abandoned by the international community, and this has increased the region's volatility. The aid which has been provided to date has not had a substantial impact on the logistical and material difficulties associated with Tatar repatriation, and little has been done to increase the level of trust among the peninsula's ethnic groups, especially Tatars and Russians.

Preparations

The main Canadian institution involved in organizing the seminars in Ukraine was Forum Eastern Europe (FEE), an independent, international research group based in Ottawa. FEE conducts research on nationalism, ethnopolitics, ethnic conflict, human/minority rights, migration and refugee issues, and democratic development in Central/Eastern Europe. In addition to conducting research, FEE seeks to promote intercultural understanding and respect for pluralism and human/minority rights in this region. In particular, FEE seeks to popularize the experience of Canada and other multi-ethnic liberal democracies in dealing with ethnocultural diversity and conflict management.

Since 1994 FEE, in conjunction with a variety of Canadian and Central/Eastern European institutions, has organized and conducted a number of international seminars, workshops and training programs in Central/Eastern Europe. Given the success of these activities (in particular a seminar on "Managing Diversity in Plural Societies" held in Latvia in September 1996), FEE was approached by government officials and NGO representatives in Ukraine to organize a seminar series in this country. FEE's Executive Committee then utilized its contacts in Ukraine to determine the feasibility of such a project, and to help it prepare a project proposal.

From the very inception of this project FEE was assisted by the personnel of the Pylyp Orlyk Institute for Democracy (POID), a non-partisan, non-profit public policy research and information centre in Kyiv which fosters the process of democratic statebuilding in Ukraine. It is heavily involved in helping to develop public policies on human and minority rights in Ukraine, and the POID was thus a logical local partner for FEE. POID's Center for Pluralism, headed by Dr. Natalie Belitser, was closely involved, from the beginning, in planning and implementing all aspects of the project.

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