Ukraine, ignored by West, is under the gun of economic disaster

by EIR Staff

Ukraine, a nation of 53 million people that has some of Europe’s richest soil, formidable industrial potential, and the world’s third largest nuclear arsenal, is in the throes of economic disaster. Like Russia, Ukraine during the past two years implemented an economic reform based on the decontrol of prices, without a perspective for rebuilding the national economy. Ukraine has felt the additional crush of Russia’s hiking of prices to world levels, and demanding convertible currency payments, on its oil and gas exports. The retail trade is also dependent. The shops are completely empty, as in Albania.

“Right now, the government is saying there will be elections in March. It is probable that it will come to an explosion long before that. Various scenarios are being discussed: One is that the democratic opposition wins, and then Russia will take that as a pretext to start ethnic conflicts and civil war. Then Russia would take that as a pretext to say the nuclear weapons are in danger, and they will move in, and that will be a catastrophe.

“Or, they prevent the democratic opposition from winning; and put in an even weaker leader than [President] Kravchuk, and then just absorb and swallow Ukraine back into some form of a new Soviet Union.

“This will not be accepted by the Ukrainians. They have not forgotten the genocide committed by the NKVD [Stalinist secret police], where 50,000 people were killed, a thing which was, for a long time, blamed on the Nazis, but it was actually done by the NKVD. That was on top of the 8 million people starved by Stalin, as a means to wipe out the Ukrainian population. And at that time, in the 1930s, Great Britain said no, we can’t make that public, because this would ruin our relationship with Moscow. And [Franklin] Roosevelt, in 1934, recognized the Soviet Union after all of this was known.

“IT is quite understandable that the Ukrainians are completely desperate. They’re especially sick and tired of hearing that the only subject being discussed from the Russians and the West, all the time, is the nuclear weapons. Their attitude is that this is the only thing they have left, and if they give this up, they will be finished. Thus we are sitting on a powderkeg. This can go out of control. Civil war can erupt.

“It would be so easy for the West to remedy the situation. For example, the United States could relieve the dependency of Ukraine from Russia in terms of oil, by giving them oil from Texas or the Middle East. But obviously, this is not the case, and therefore, we need a global change.”

Ukrainian political leader Vyecheslav Chornovil and economist Volodymyr Chernyak both spoke for publication in EIR about the consequences of the ill-conceived economic measures adopted so far, and the disillusionment in Ukraine with “liberal capitalist” prescriptions from the West.