

CHORNOBYL CHRONICLE

CHILDREN OF CHORNOBYL RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT FUND NEWSLETTER Spring 2007 Vol. XXXVIII

The Lasting Impact of Chornobyl

The following is the complete speech delivered by Dr. Zenon Matkivsky on April 24, 2006 in Kyiv, Ukraine at the 20th Anniversary International Conference dedicated to the aftermath of the Chornobyl catastrophe, as a rebuttal to the IAEA's Chornobyl Forum resolution of September 2005.

As we look back at the twenty-year history of the Chornobyl aftermath, one event stands out in my memory. In July of 1992, I took part in a U.S. Congressional hearing, and I listened to the testimony of Dr. Fred Mettler, President of the International Atomic Energy Agency, as he testified before a U.S. Senate Subcommittee. Dr. Mettler assured Senator Joseph Lieberman that his agency had conducted the most comprehensive investigation possible on the Chornobyl survivors and that the IAEA had found no evidence of a perceptible increase in thyroid cancer in children. I knew that Dr. Mettler was either seriously shading the truth, or his supposedly exhaustive research had deliberately avoided the most obvious places where thyroid cancer was being diagnosed and treated. Had he bothered to visit the Institutes of Endocrinology in Minsk or Kyiv, or if he had visited any of the regional children's hospitals in Chernihiv or Gomel or Zhytomyr, he would have found ample evidence that children were being stricken with this extremely rare form of cancer at alarming rates. But based on mathematical models and limited health data following the bombing of Hiroshima, Dr. Mettler assured Senator Lieberman that no increase in thyroid cancer would be detected for 15 years after Chornobyl, and that any reports of such increases could be attributed to hysteria and radiophobia.

Five weeks after Dr. Mettler's testimony, the World Health Organization and the prestigious British scientific journal *Nature* validated the reports of Belarusian scientists showing an indisputable **eighty-fold** increase in thyroid cancer in children living in radiation contaminated villages in Belarus.

Perhaps you will consider me unkind to question Dr. Mettler's credibility now that the IAEA has re-invested him with new authority as the co-author and spokesman for last year's Chornobyl Forum report. Once again Dr. Mettler has sought to downplay

the impact of Chornobyl and to dismiss new reports of serious health effects as a matter of radiophobia. Dr. Mettler was wrong in 1992, and he was wrong again in September of 2005. The thyroid cancer epidemic should serve as a warning for scientists and journalists who want to jump to premature conclusions about Chornobyl's aftermath.

Ukraine is fortunate to have some excellent surgeons and medical specialists who were able to surgically remove thousands of thyroid cancers, and our organization [CCRDF] is proud to have supported this effort with \$2 million dollar donation of thyroxin (thyroid replacement hormone) to sustain the lives of these children. We were fortunate to catch the thyroid cancer epidemic in time. But the epidemic is not yet over. At the present time, there are over 9,000 children in Ukraine alone with pre-cancerous thyroid lesions. And there are thousands more adults who suffer from other endocrine disorders.

For twenty years, we have listened to the incantation of radiophobia as the catch-all phrase dismissing all reports of Chornobyl health effects. The lack of a public health infrastructure or effective cancer registries in the Soviet Union lends itself to easy denials of health effects. The fact that Soviet health authorities went out of their way to cover up the accident, and prohibited doctors from listing radiation exposure as a cause of illness or death makes it easy for their successors and collaborators to offer ridiculously low numbers for the actual numbers of victims. (Continued on page 4)



An infant being treated by a neonatologist at our partner hospital in Chernihiv.

CCRDF's National Office Moves to New Location



Although CCRDF's address has changed, our mission has remained the same. CCRDF continues to provide life-saving medical treatment to children in our partner hospitals.

60-C North Jefferson Road, Whippany, New Jersey 07981-1030

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The Children of Chornobyl Relief and Development Fund (CCRDF) is proud to announce, as of February 14, 2007, the opening of our new office at the Ukrainian American Cultural Center of New Jersey (UACCNJ) located in Whippany, NJ. During the blessing ceremony, His Excellency Archbishop Antony and Father Daniel Zelinsky of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of USA, Father Roman Mirchuk, Pastor of St. John Ukrainian Catholic Church in Whippany, and Father Leonid Malkov, Pastor of St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church in Newark blessed CCRDF's new office. Metropolitan-Archbishop Stefan Soroka of the Ukrainian Catholic Church could not attend but sent a congratulatory letter. In attendance during the opening were UACCNJ Chairman of the Board Victor Hatala, CCRDF's Board members, and friends. CCRDF's Chairman and President Dr. Zenon Matkivsky expressed his gratitude to all who attended and for all who have supported the work of CCRDF over the past 18 years. "Our work could not have been accomplished without the dedication and support of the community and the many thousands of individuals who sent in their charitable contributions from throughout the United States."

The members of the Board of Directors, the Medical Advisory Board, and the Executive Staff of CCRDF take this opportunity to congratulate all the organizations and members of our community for their outstanding work in helping to crystallize the dream: the realization of the Ukrainian American Cultural Center of New Jersey.

Cleveland Walk-a-thon to Benefit CCRDF: Support the Cause

The United Ukrainian Organizations of Ohio have initiated a community effort to remember the Chornobyl tragedy and raise funds for the needy in Ukraine by hosting a walk-a-thon. This 5 kilometer walk is planned for **Saturday, September 29, 2007** in the historic Tremont district of the city of Cleveland. This neighborhood is significant not only for Cleveland but also for the Ukrainian community of Ohio. The Tremont area was initially settled by Ukrainian immigrants over 100 years ago and several churches and institutions still exist in the neighborhood. With the support of the City of Cleveland and the Greater Cleveland Ukrainian-American Community, this creative project hopes to stimulate a greater awareness of the consequences of the nuclear disaster and provide funding for CCRDF programs.

The event will begin at 9am with prayer of remembrance for the children in need. Registration starts at 9:30 and the walk-a-thon begins at 10am. Various activities are planned for this day's event. CCRDF invites all interested constituents to participate and support the Cleveland Walk-a-thon. For further information, please contact Matt Zappernick at zapps@cox.net or Rev. Deacon Dr. Ihor Mahlay at imahlay@yahoo.com.

Save the Date! CCRDF Rochester Chapter to Host 9th Annual Golf Tournament to benefit CCRDF's medical programs Saturday, September 8, 2007 Durand Eastman Golf Club 120 Kings Highway, Rochester, New York

Registration @ 11:00 am
4-Person Scramble
Shotgun Start @ 12:30 noon

Early Registration by August 1, 2007:
\$90.00 Fee / Player

Donation includes:
18 Holes of golf with carts, Lunch,
Beverages, Dinner, and Prizes

Registration after August 1, 2007:
\$100.00 Fee / Player
(Deadline: September 1, 2007)

For more information please contact:

Bohdan Skrobach 585-872-7260 bskroba1@rochester.rr.com
John Adamczuk 585-265-3394 jadamczu@rochester.rr.com

The Maria Hulai-Lion Foundation Grants \$10,000 to CCRDF Program

The Maria Hulai-Lion Foundation approved a \$10,000 general support grant to CCRDF. To date, The Maria Hulai-Lion Foundation has donated over \$58,000 for CCRDF's medical programs. On behalf of the MHL Foundation, Executive Director Volodymyr Maychenko stated, "We strongly believe that CCRDF is a leading Ukrainian-American charitable organization in providing health-care to the Ukrainian children in need." CCRDF thanks the Maria Hulai-Lion Foundation for their continued support of our mission.

Deputy Ruslana Lyzhychko Visits DC; CCRDF Supports



Deputy Ruslana Lyzhychko receives flowers from CCRDF volunteers Nadia (left) and Olenka Olesnycky who thanked Ruslana for helping children in Ukraine.

On Friday, March 30, Deputy Ruslana Lyzhychko, a member of the Parliament of Ukraine, and composer, producer, and entertainer, spoke candidly at the Woodrow Wilson Center about the social, political, and medical issues of present-day Ukraine. The Event was co-sponsored by the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation and the Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund. The monitor of the debate was Renata Kos-Harmatiy, Program Associate at the Kennan Institute. Nadia Matkiwsky from CCRDF and Nadia McConnell from U.S.-Ukraine Foundation welcomed Deputy Lyzhychko and thanked her for her dedication to the Ukrainian children.

CCRDF Hires Country Director

The Country Director Search Committee and the Board of Directors extends a warm welcome to Ms. Lilia Horodysky as the new Country Director for Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund in Kyiv, Ukraine. Ms. Horodysky joined the staff in April 2007 and has ushered in a new era of leadership here at CCRDF. "We were fortunate to find someone of Lilia's caliber to take our organization to the next level," said Mrs. Nadia Matkiwsky, co-founder of CCRDF. "Her in-depth knowledge of business operations and marketing experience from working across a range of industries will be invaluable for the organization."

Ms. Horodysky has gained extensive experience with international start-ups, business management, integrated marketing, communications, and operations through her ten years of managing business objectives for companies such as General Motors, Procter & Gamble, GlaxoSmithKline, and DuPont. Her large array of innovative business approaches can be credited to her work experiences in a variety of countries and across different industries.

At CCRDF in Kyiv, Ms. Horodysky is responsible for focusing on every aspect of management activities, from strategic initiatives, marketing, volunteer recruitment, to fundraising and grant writing for CCRDF. She will provide direction and leadership toward the achievement of CCRDF's vision, mission, strategy, and its annual goals and objectives in Ukraine. Ms. Horodysky remarked, "I look forward to developing a close working relationship with Dr. Zenon and Mrs. Matkiwsky, the Kyiv Advisory Board, the CCRDF staff, as well as the Ukrainian and expatriate community in Kyiv. I recognize the tremendous impact the Fund can have in fulfilling the needs of the children in Ukraine who suffer from the effects of the Chernobyl tragedy."

A native from the Detroit area and graduate of Kent State University, Ms. Horodysky also studied at La Universidad Complutense de Madrid in Spain and at Harvard University, attending the Ukrainian summer school for three years.

PHILIP MORRIS CONTINUES TO SUPPORT CCRDF'S MEDICAL PROGRAMS:

Kharkiv Hospital Receives Ventilator

On April 19, with funds from "Phillip Morris Ukraine," the Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund (CCRDF) was able to purchase and install a new U.S.-manufactured ventilator Newport E-100 at the Kharkiv Children's Hospital No. 16. The respirator, the most crucial piece of intensive care equipment in the NICU, will serve as the lungs of hundreds of underdeveloped or critically ill children as they recover, gaining enough strength to breathe on their own.

"Kharkiv Children's Hospital No. 16 is the onco-hematological center in Kharkiv oblast," states the hospital's chief physician Dr. Tatiana Kharchenko. "Thanks to our collaboration with CCRDF and Phillip Morris Ukraine, we are becoming more successful with the treatment of children suffering from oncologic diseases. In 1992, our hospital was capable of saving only 5% of children diagnosed with leukemia and lymphomas, but today, 75% of children recover. Our hospital hopes that in the near future, we can match the world standard of an 85% remission rate."

During 2005-2007, thanks to the donation made by "Phillip Morris Ukraine," a company owned by "Altria Group Inc.," CCRDF purchased medical equipment, reagents, and medicine that enabled better medical care for children in four Ukrainian hospitals located in Kharkiv, Rivne (see article below), Zhytomyr, and Kyiv. CCRDF is proud to report that the humanitarian aid provides effective treatment for onco-hematological diseases for 100-120 children yearly.



CCRDF Program Coordinator Eugenia Medvedenko pictured with the new ventilator.

Rivne Hospital Welcomes Blood Cell Separator



Fresenius representatives demonstrate how to use the newly donated blood cell separator.

On April 19, the Department of Hematology at the Rivne Regional Children's Hospital officially welcomed the Fresenius Medical Care (Germany) blood cell separator which was purchased and delivered by the Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund (CCRDF) with funds from Philip Morris Ukraine's hematology grant. During the installation of the blood cell separator by the Fresenius representatives, doctors not only had the chance to observe the installation, but also to acquire information about plateletpheresis procedures, or procedures done to collect platelets from the blood.

"In the past, due to the lack of laboratory equipment, our young leukemia patients of the hematology department had to be treated in Kyiv," explained Rivne Hospital's Head Hematologist Maya Barabash. She continued, "Thanks to the delivery of the blood cell separator, we have the opportunity to prevent various complications during the treatment of complex forms of leukemia in our very own Hematology Department by immediately providing the patients with needed plasma or platelets collected by the blood cell separator."

The Rivne Regional Children's Hospital is one of CCRDF's partner hospitals since the year 2000 and the Fund works closely with the hospital's NICU and departments of neonatology and hematology. Over the past two years under CCRDF's hematology initiative, the Rivne hospital has received medical equipment, reagents, and medical supplies valued at a total of \$64,937 in order to provide state-of-the-art treatment for the young patients of the Rivne Regional Children's Hospital.

Cargill Funds Ultrasound for Donetsk Hospital

In the fall of 2006, at the request of the administration of the Donetsk City Children's Hospital #4 and with the funds provided through a grant from the agricultural company Cargill, the Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund (CCRDF) installed the "Sonomed" ultrasound with the medical diagnostic complex "Sphera 4." The donation of the sophisticated ultrasound allows the hospital to produce very accurate ultrasound scans of the abdomen and have greatly improved perinatal diagnostic capabilities.

Donetsk Children's Hospital #4 treats over 18,000 children (ages 3 to 18) from the city of Donetsk. The hospital was built over 60 years ago and is in poor condition. All of the hospital's existing equipment is archaic and is in need of replacement. CCRDF is grateful to Cargill for responding to the urgent need of our medical programs by helping fund the much-needed equipment for the hospital's young patients.



The donated ultrasound can detect abdominal abnormalities which, if left untreated, may lead to life-threatening illnesses.

CCRDF Board Welcomes Two New Members



Alexander Kuzma



Inya Chehadé

The Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund (CCRDF) is pleased to welcome two members to the Board of Directors who are not new to the foundation: Mr. Alexander Kuzma and Mrs. Inya Bonacorsa Chehadé. Mr. Kuzma was with the foundation for fifteen years, starting in 1991 as the Director of Development and, in 1999, as the Executive Director. Mrs. Chehadé worked with CCRDF in an administrative position and from 1995-2000 served as the In-Country Executive Director for the Fund. It is a pleasure to welcome back Mr. Kuzma and Mrs. Chehadé as Board Members who bring their passion for the mission of CCRDF and energy for the cause of the children.

Mrs. Chehadé currently works as Senior Director of Development at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey in Newark, New Jersey. Mr. Kuzma works as the Senior Development Manager at Aid to Artisans, a non-profit organization based in Hartford, Connecticut.

The UOC of the USA College Student Mission Trip Aids Post-Chornobyl Orphanages in Ukraine

By: Father Daniel Zelinsky

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA (UOC of the USA) continues its vital ministry of providing missionary opportunities for young adults. The trips organized by the UOC Offices of Youth and Young Adult Ministry and Mission and Christian Charity are growing in participants, productivity, and Christian outreach. The college-age youth of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA have admirably taken on the challenge of orphan care and advocacy in the post-Chornobyl orphanage environment in Ukraine.

In 1996 His Eminence Archbishop Antony, announced that the UOC of the USA was about to take on a major humanitarian effort in Ukraine. Thus, begun the Church's long-term relationship with the Children of Chornobyl Relief and Development Fund (CCRDF). At the 10th anniversary of the Chornobyl disaster the Church and CCRDF raised over \$150,000 to establish two neonatal intensive care units in Chernihiv and Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine. The most successful effort with the CCRDF, however, has been the Orphanage Adoption Program (OAP).

CCRDF identified two orphanages with 120 children each, poorly managed, deteriorated facilities, understaffed, and under funded. The Consistory of the UOC of the USA committed to a five year plan to adopt the two small city in the Kirovohrad province directly in the center of Ukraine, and Zaluchya, a village in the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains located in the Ivano-Frankivsk province.

Christianity demands that care for the poor and orphans is fundamental to God's plan and we must actively engage in identifying and implementing the best ways to provide this care. God's promise of care for the poor, the orphans, and the widows has always been a tremendous source of hope during times of severe difficulty.

In 2006, the College/Young Adult Mission Teams to Ukraine consisted of 17 team members and team leaders. The missionaries were divided between the two orphanages and spent some of their time repairing the buildings, feeding the children, remodeling rooms in the orphanages, teaching children loco-motor skills through various activities, and providing religious services on a daily basis to the children and workers of the orphanages.

Shannon Adamiak, 2006 UOC of the USA Mission Team member, states: *It is hard to describe the feeling in words, but it is definitely out of the norm. I'm sitting on my final plane ride home and I feel calm. It never hits me until I am gone that the things that had worried me before now seem trivial. Next to me is a woman reading Cosmo for the latest styles and gossip. Normally I would be interested to look over her shoulder, but I have no interest. It's amazing how much a child who doesn't even share the same language with you can teach you about patience, sharing, and love. These are 3 virtues that I have the most difficulty with sometimes.*

Behind me on the plane a child is complaining about the food. One thing that I noticed while visiting the orphanage was that I rarely saw or heard most of the children crying or whining. This made me think, these children have less than the poorest people in Ukraine, yet you never hear them crying to be changed, although their diapers are always saturated.

I saw love in these children's eyes. Behind the cataracts and strabismus you could see a perfect child. Strangers had come into their obscure lives and showed them compassion. They, in return, gave us their love. I will never forget when a little, bedridden 12 year old girl named Nastia looked into my eyes and said "I love you" just for taking her outside for some fresh air, something that for her only happened maybe once a year. These children

deserve to be comforted. They have the right to a normal, healthy childhood. It is unbearable for me to remember these children's lives every day. They are born, live their lives in the only way that they have ever known and then they die and are buried in an unmarked wooden grave in an overgrown field where nobody comes to lay flowers or say prayers for them. That is why I feel the urge to become a messenger for these children. We in America, including me, have the mentality that if you can't see it, don't worry about it. In Exodus 22:22,23 it says, "You shall not abuse any widow or orphan. If you do abuse them, when they cry out to me, I will surely heed their cry..." I am going to try my hardest to never let the pleading look of these children leave my memory.

Dictionaries often define orphan as "a child whose parents are dead." However, very often the word "orphan" can be used interchangeably with "outcast." An outcast is a person excluded from a society or system. This certainly describes many orphaned children. Even though many orphans, or outcasts, have living parents or family, they have been left on their own, whether children or adults, and they come in many different shapes, sizes, ages, and races.

The Church's Mission Trip is a time for spiritual renewal of each of its participants and reflection on who they are as Orthodox Christians, people who claim to follow in the footsteps of our Lord. While the effects of the Mission Trip experience could

be described with such words as extraordinary, moving and spiritually uplifting for the team members it is also important to reflect upon the impact that these trips have had on the UOC of the USA. Parishes of the UOC of the USA throughout the country have been reenergized by the spirit of 10-17 young people traveling to Ukrainian orphanages.

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church hopes to nurture these trips in years to come and continue providing young people with the opportunity to reach out to their fellow man. The UOC humbly asks that you keep these programs in your prayers as they continue to develop and bring Christ to those they visit.

If you are interested in participating in a Mission Trip or make a voluntary donation to the Orphanage Fund, contact the Office of Public Relations of the UOC of the USA at (732) 356-0090 or ConsistoryOPR@aol.com



One of the older orphans, Misha, carries his friend.



An orphan is proud to display her artwork created as part of a mission trip project.



One of the activities planned by the Mission Team is Special Olympics. Pictured with the children are team members Shannon Adamiak, Alexandra Hucul, and John Charest.



A photo of the 2006 Ukrainian Orthodox Church's Missionary Team: (back row, left to right) E. Skocypiec, J. Zimmerman, J. Hogg, M. Chubenko, A. Stwko, M. Nakonachny, A. Zelechivsky, Archbishop Antony; L. Prytula, J. Senedak, L. Tschaikowsky, S. Adamiak, E. Senedak, (front row, left to right) Fr. T. Chubenko, J. Charest, A. Hucul, M. Sendak, and Fr. D. Zelinsky

Individuals Making a Difference

The CCRDF National Office often receives inquiries from individuals wondering how they can help. In response, we invite individuals who live near to volunteer at our New Jersey office with administrative duties, urge students to raise awareness about the Chornobyl disaster and help with our most current fundraising initiative (see "GoodSearch" page 4), encourage children to sell wristbands or tickets to fundraisers, and always encourage individuals to use their talents and skills to raise funds for our medical programs. Whether an artist, such as Lydia Bodnar-Balahutrak, selling her artwork for the benefit of CCRDF's medical programs, or an IT consultant, such as Bohdan Yaremko, volunteering countless hours to making our office technologically sound, **using your talents can greatly benefit a worthy cause.**

Below is the personal reflection of a volunteer, Lisa Prytula, describing how she used her abilities to help the children in our orphanages:

Inspired to share my many blessings, I have volunteered for several years in Ukraine with the marginalized victims of Chornobyl. This year I am not able to volunteer in Ukraine due to a recent relocation and job change. However, I am continuing my support of the victims of Chornobyl with my words.

My mission is simple. I speak to friends, colleagues, and fellow humanitarians about my medical mission trips and graduate nursing research project: nurses who serve the victims of Chornobyl in zone 2 villages. I also speak of the under-served orphans that desperately need our support. I partnered with a photographer, Michael Nakonachny, and wrote a picture book to tell their story, "Forgotten Faces: Orphans of Ukraine." It is a beautiful photo essay that captures both their joy and suffering.

*Most people will never hold an orphan in their arms but I have. I am a nurse and a mother and I will work strenuously to raise funds and awareness for the child victims of Chornobyl. I must and I will. Americans are generous and I am constantly surprised at the wonderful support I receive. **Together we can make change.***

Lisa Prytula recently sold copies of her book, "Forgotten Faces: Orphans of Ukraine" and spoke about her humanitarian work to a gathering of friends in Chicago, an initiative which raised \$1,275 for the orphanage program. If you are interested in contributing to Lisa's initiative and purchasing the book, please send CCRDF a \$30 check (\$25/book and \$5 shipping fee) payable to "CCRDF." Your donation will directly benefit the children of the Znamyanka and Zaluchya orphanages in Ukraine.



Missionary team member, Alexandra Hucul, leads the beading arts-and-crafts activity.

(Continued from page 1) Although it is incredibly difficult and costly to conduct proper health studies in countries with poor baseline data, this does not mean that the release of 185 million curies of radiation will leave a negligible mark on those millions of individuals who were exposed.

For those of us who work with children's hospitals in Rivne and Zhytomyr and Chernihiv, Dr. Mettler's assurances are not at all persuasive. Our colleagues from Ireland and the United States who work in Belarus have also documented a wide array of rare cancers and birth defects that call for further study. For those who say there is no evidence of an increase in birth defects, we invite you to visit the Omni Centers established by the Ukrainian-American Association for the Prevention of Birth Defects. Just in the provinces of Rivne and Volyn these Omni Centers have been tracking the genetic health of 26,000 newborns per year, or 104,000 over the past four years. They have documented and photographed a whole host of birth defects and deformities both in living and stillborn infants that should occur in much smaller numbers even in a much larger population. Polydactylism - the appearance of extra fingers and toes, deformed limbs, missing or deformed critical organs, microcephalia, cataracts, and other conditions are known to be caused by radiation exposure. Perhaps the most disturbing is the incidence of spina bifida that has increased to levels four times higher than normal, and NINE TIMES higher for the districts of northern Rivne province that were most heavily contaminated by radioactive fallout. Our organization, our partner hospitals in Ukraine, and our counterparts who work in Belarus have all witnessed a disturbing increase in these conditions. Other birth defects are virtually unprecedented, and are being photographed for the first time.

There is a microbiological [sic] basis for our concern, as a joint Israeli-Ukrainian study found that children born to Chernobyl liquidators suffer from chromosomal aberrations at a rate seven times higher than their siblings born prior to 1986. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that chromosome damage will have a significant impact on genetic health as well as cancer incidence.

How can the W.H.O. and the IAEA say with any confidence that there has been no impact on the immune system of children when blood samples taken from Chernobyl children show a much lower count of killer-T cells as opposed to control populations? How can one claim that there has been no impact on reproductive health when the only available peer-reviewed studies in Belarus and Ukraine have clearly shown that women living in radiation contaminated territories have a much higher rate of pregnancy

complications, stillbirths and birth defects than women living on non-contaminated regions? What is the basis for the IAEA's conclusions when Ukrainian and Belarusian doctors who actually WORK with sick children, mothers, and newborns have consistently disputed your findings? If your mathematical models are contradicted by physical data, what is the value of those models, and why should we trust them?

For scientists who actually care about the health of children and future generations, clinical evidence should be a starting point for further inquiry, not a pretext for closing the book on the problem. Tragically, Chernobyl provides a fertile laboratory full of rich research opportunities. There are a whole host of studies that a reasonably curious scientist who cares about radiation health impact should be eager to pursue - IF he approaches his work in good faith and without a pre-existing bias. We owe it to the survivors to maintain a watchful eye on cancers and immune deficiencies and congenital deformities that may not appear until AFTER the twenty-year anniversary has passed. The latency period for many cancers only begins to toll after twenty years, and the radioactive cesium that was so widely distributed by this disaster has a half-life of 30 years, so it is the next ten years and the next generations of the grandchildren of Chernobyl who could provide much more evidence of Chernobyl's impact.

What will be the impact on children who live in areas contaminated with "low levels" of radiation, but who have accumulated a significant internal dose through the consumption of foodstuffs that eluded public monitoring? What is the impact of radiation exposure on the cardiovascular health of young children and liquidators? Why are 75% of the children who live in contaminated villages such as Ivankove in northern Kyiv province suffering from high blood pressure? Why is the incidence of acute lymphoblastic leukemia in children in the provinces of Zhytomyr and Rivne significantly higher than national averages?

These are just a few of the questions that we would like to see researched with follow-up studies and we would like to see the international research community approach these problems with some sense of urgency and intellectual rigor, as if these were our own children whose lives were at risk. Instead of looking more deeply into these issues, there has been a peculiar LACK of curiosity on the part of Western research institutions to look beyond the thyroid cancer epidemic.

Ours is not a morbid curiosity. We want to know how to allocate limited resources in such a way that we can help and save as many children as possible. Our commitment is to provide Ukrainian doctors and hospitals with the tools they need to combat the cancers and birth defects that we are seeing on a daily basis, to improve survival rates, to reduce infant mortality and to correct as many birth defects as possible so that as many Chernobyl children as possible can lead a normal life, without long-term disability.

In the past 18 years, the Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund (CCRDF) has delivered over \$55 million dollars worth of medical technology and humanitarian aid. We rejoice in knowing that many of our partner hospitals have achieved substantial improvements in cancer remission rates. We rejoice when we see reductions in infant mortality after our partner hospitals obtain diagnostic instruments and intensive care equipment they once lacked. Their successes are a tribute to the zeal of physicians and nurses who work in difficult conditions, for a paltry compensation that no Western doctor would ever accept. But their success is all the more remarkable because they are treating larger numbers of cancer cases and children with congenital heart defects, and infants with more complex pathologies - not less.

We also want to minimize Chernobyl's impact and its death toll, but not by clever sleights of hand and cover-ups, and not through the exclusion of critical data. We are striving to do this through physician training and through an infusion of aid that we hope will establish a higher standard of care. We want to stimulate an overhaul of the medical system that Ukraine so desperately needs.

We invite the WHO and the IAEA, the journalists and the government health officials present in this theater to visit the God-forsaken orphanages crammed with children with severe disfigurements, in villages like Znamyanka, Vorzel, Tsiurupinsk, and Zaluchya and to see for themselves the situation we are trying to address.

We also urge you to visit the hospitals and OMNI Centers that have been meticulously tracking rare cancers and birth defects over the past four years. Only after you have studied these issues in good faith can you BEGIN to make a reasonable assessment of Chernobyl's impact.

In order to understand why Ukrainians and Belarusians are so skeptical of the Chernobyl Forum and the IAEA, we need to understand some of the painful history that preceded Chernobyl. Seventy-four years ago, Ukraine suffered a genocidal famine that took the lives of 7 million farmers and their children. Thanks to the cunning Josef Stalin and a young *New York Times* reporter named Walter Duranty, that famine was covered up for over 50 years. Duranty even received a Pulitzer Prize for his reports that downplayed the enormity of

Stalin's crimes. But as one of history's most accomplished liars, his name now lives in infamy. One way or another, the truth will come out about Chernobyl. It may take another twenty, or even 50 years.

We can only hope that Chernobyl's impact will be less severe than we expected. But we have a duty to seek the truth. We also have an opportunity to rebuild the shattered medical infrastructure that the Soviets left behind. In the process, we can save the lives of countless Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Russian children and adults. These goals are not mutually exclusive. They are fully compatible and fully intertwined, and they are worth every ounce of energy we can devote to this mission.

GoodSearch

Raise Funds for CCRDF by Searching the Internet!!

It couldn't get simpler than this:
every time you search the internet,
a contribution is made to CCRDF

The opportunity to raise funds is provided by a search engine powered by "Yahoo!" called *GoodSearch*. Make *GoodSearch* your homepage on your internet browser so that you can help raise funds for medical programs which support CCRDF's 24 partner hospitals throughout Ukraine. It's easy to set *GoodSearch* as your homepage. Just follow these trouble-free instructions:

1. Go to www.goodsearch.com
2. Go to your toolbar and click "Tools"
3. Click on "Internet Options"
4. Click the "General" tab
5. In the "Home page" box, click "Use Current." You should see the *GoodSearch* page appear.
6. Click "ok" and your homepage is set to *GoodSearch*.
7. Now, to make sure your searches benefit CCRDF, type "CCRDF" in the blank space provided under the question, "Who do you GoodSearch for?"

You can even check how much money CCRDF has raised to date by clicking on the "Amount Raised" button. Thank you in advance for your support!

Please TELL YOUR FRIENDS and enjoy surfing the web!!



A child from the orphanage embraces missionary team member Laryssa Tschakowsky.



Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund, Inc.

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