

Taras Vasilyevich Muranivsky and America

by Rachel Douglas

On Feb. 2, 2005, Prof. Taras V. Muranivsky would have turned 70. Our friend and colleague Profesor Muranivsky died on July 17, 2000. The work he did, as leader of the LaRouche movement in Russia during the 1990s, still reverberates, in the urgent discussions of a new monetary system and Eurasian development, conducted by Lyndon LaRouche with leading intellectuals and political fighters from Russia, Europe, Asia, and the rest of the world. To honor the 70th anniversary of Taras's birth, we present here the message from Rachel Douglas of EIR and the LaRouche movement in the United States, delivered at a memorial meeting held in Moscow in the Autumn of 2000.

On June 15 of this year [2000], I received the following message from Taras Vasilyevich Muranivsky: "I am prepared to speak in support of Lyn [Lyndon LaRouche] anywhere, including in the U.S.A., that it's needed." At the time, we were working hard to finish editing LaRouche's speech "On the Subject of Strategic Method," which he had delivered at the Schiller Institute conference in Bad Schwalbach on May 26, 2000 (you can read the translation in [Russian] Bulletin #9 of the Schiller Institute, which came out six days before Taras Vasilyevich's death). In June, Taras Vasilyevich also reported on his own presentation, at Prof. Pirogov's seminar on June 5, 2000, where he gave a report about the Bad Schwalbach conference and its deliberations about the potential for growing resistance against predatory monetarism and speculation on a world scale. In July, he sent his latest articles, published in *Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta*, in which he had brought Russian readers news about the steps taken by Italian Members of Parliament, this time, towards creating a New Bretton Woods system.

In other words, Taras Vasilyevich kept working until the last minute of his life. Rereading the lively correspondence of those last summer weeks of his, lines came to my mind from the Ukrainian poet Maxym Rylsky's sonnet about his father:

I knew not, then, that over his brow
Death, like a kite, had flashed its wing. . . .

I quoted Taras Vasilyevich on his readiness to travel to the ends of the Earth in order to disseminate valuable ideas, not in order to tell you what a hard worker he was. I'm sure

you all know that, already. Rather, I wanted to draw your attention to an especially precious ability that Taras Vasilyevich had, to grasp the most essential quality of the world strategic situation. It was evident in his attitude towards other countries, particularly the United States. I mean his ability to understand and even to love another country—to shape his attitude towards the life and politics of another country, on the basis of profound study of its history and culture, to care about its destiny and about the ways in which the principles of Universal History are manifested in that country.

An American is telling you this. Working at *EIR* magazine, serving from time to time as translator for Lyndon LaRouche and others at Schiller Institute conferences, helping to prepare the Russian Schiller Institute Bulletins for publication, I had the opportunity to work with Taras Vasilyevich for eight years—in Moscow, in Germany, in the corridors and offices of official Washington, and even at the Federal Prison in Rochester, Minnesota, where Professor Muranivsky came for his first meeting with LaRouche, in May of 1993. Therefore, what I am telling you are my personal recollections, but at the same time they are political recollections about that difficult decade after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the criminal behavior of the Bush (Sr.) and Thatcher regimes, which imposed upon the countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union the worst possible economic strategies, in the name of "reform." I can also say something on behalf of the activists and supporters of the Schiller Institute in the United States, who all loved and treasured Taras Vasilyevich Muranivsky.

Everyone who was there remembers Taras Vasilyevich's speech at the Schiller Institute conference near Washington, D.C., in February 1994. The hall was packed, as the conference participants joyfully welcomed Lyndon LaRouche after five years of his incarceration as a political prisoner of the Bush Administration. Prof. Muranivsky came to the podium. I should note, that in May 1993 he had spoken Russian during his interview with LaRouche. In the intervening nine months, he had revived his command of English—having studied it in the past and having worked at the U.S.A./Canada Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences—to such a level, that he was able to announce in beautiful English, with an accent, but without mistakes, Lyndon LaRouche's election to membership in the Universal Ecological Academy: "Every member

of our Academy,” Taras Vasilyevich began, very seriously and with great concentration, “has the right to name only two other people, as members of our Academy.” Pause. Prof. Muranivsky turned towards me, standing at a side mike, and said in Russian, “Please translate!”—and almost simultaneously with my exclamation, “You spoke English!” he burst out laughing. And the entire audience roared with him. At that moment, we all fell in love with this Russian professor.

He and I had a kind of linguistic mutual assistance agreement. We corrected each other’s mistakes. Once at a conference in the United States, a few years later, Taras Vasilyevich came up to me and asked in a conspiratory tone, “How do you say in English, ‘working an after-hours job’?” In a whisper (a panel was in session), I started explaining the expression, “moonlighting.” He frowned, not pleased with that suggestion. I thought some more, then proposed, “You can say it this way: ‘I wear two hats.’” “What, what?” I explained the literal meaning. Five minutes later, Professor Muranivsky was at the mike: “Allow me to introduce myself: Professor Muranivsky from Moscow. I am an economist, but I wear two hats.”

I don’t dare try to count how many hats Taras Vasilyevich really wore. Professor, scientific editor, journalist, polemicist, organizer of seminars, president of the Moscow Schiller Institute, unofficial ambassador of Russian and Ukrainian antimonetarist scientists at international conferences. You may continue the list yourselves. He had an ability to get into the mind and consciousness of another culture. That is the quality Schiller writes about—the ability to be simultaneously a patriot of one’s own country and a citizen of the world. (And it’s a quality Pushkin had, as do all great artists and poets.) To take upon oneself the tribulations of other countries, as one’s personal business. But, what could that have to do with the United States in the 1990s? After all, any citizen of the Russian Federation had every basis to be absolutely furious with the U.S.A. and to hate it! And, what tribulations?

I mean his understanding, that the policy of globalization with an admixture of neo-colonialism, conducted by Bush or Gore, is alien to the history and true character of the United States. Taras Vasilyevich was one of the few people in Russia, who picked up the idea LaRouche expressed this way:

“There can be no competent U.S. strategic doctrine or foreign policy, which does not proceed from understanding of the nature of, and reasons for the irreconcilable, principled difference in moral character between the British monarchy and the constitutional Federal republic of the United States.

“It is a corollary of that same point, that there can be no competent understanding of the United States by any nation, unless that nation recognizes that the very national identity of the United States, and its most vital interests, are rooted, since no later than Royal Governor Andros’s pranks of 1688-89, in a fundamental conflict of interest between the British monarchy and the continued existence of the United States. At issue is nothing less fundamental, than *two, mutually exclusive con-*

ceptions of man and nature.” (From “The New Role For Russia In U.S. Policy Today,” *EIR*, Sept. 25, 1995.)

Prof. Muranivsky’s innate intellectual curiosity helped him a lot. He was not afraid of fresh ideas, even if they ran counter to established conceptions. He had what the late Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin called “the courage to change axioms.”

After arriving in Washington to meet LaRouche in 1993, he stopped, on the way to Rochester, in the town of Leesburg, Virginia, where *EIR*’s editorial offices are located. He stayed several days at the home of Richard Freeman, an economist, friend, and colleague of Lyndon LaRouche. For three days and three nights, Taras Vasilyevich practically didn’t sleep. Hearing from Richard the view that Keynes and Roosevelt did not represent the same thing, Prof. Muranivsky demanded from his new acquaintance everything he could get his hands on: articles, unpublished reports, archival material, demonstrating how President F.D. Roosevelt differed from Keynes. The second night, he spent reading the history of the greatest 1930s infrastructure project in the United States, the Tennessee Valley Authority.

It was on the basis of understanding who Roosevelt was, that Taras Vasilyevich could write things like the short introduction to the last Bulletin, under the title “LaRouche and Russia”: “Some people think that mediocre persons are generally elected as President of the United States. But in critical situations, the voters prefer talented leaders, like Franklin Roosevelt.” And, “LaRouche interests us not only as a U.S. Presidential candidate from the most rational and constructive, FDR wing of the Democratic Party. He himself is a brilliant and experienced politician, whose ideas and principles are needed today not only for America, but for the peoples and nations of the entire world, including Russia.”

I witnessed, in May 1993, how Professor Muranivsky with his penetrating gaze skewered a young, self-assured official of the U.S. Treasury Department, who was lecturing his Russian guest to the effect that “all world history” teaches us to follow the postulates of “free trade,” and so forth. Calmly demonstrating the flaws in the young man’s assumptions, Taras Vasilyevich warned of the ruinous impact such policies would have in Russia. After the meeting, he asked me, “What type of guy was that?”—and mastered a new socio-political term, “yuppie.”

In conclusion, I would like to share with you Taras Vasilyevich’s own words. They come from his short talk, given in English, to the staff of *EIR* in April 1995. You will hear, why we love him, and you will understand how much we miss him. He spoke after the Ukrainian Members of Parliament, whom he was accompanying, and said:

“Dear friends, when we discussed the order of our speeches for you, I proposed myself to be the last. There were three reasons for it. The first reason is that these people have appeared in Leesburg, and in the United States, for the first time. The second reason is that you have heard and listened

to me many times. . . . The third reason is that I knew that the first part of our meeting would be very pessimistic, and I would try to turn the mood of our meeting in an optimistic way.

“The first optimistic line is connected with the activity of the Schiller Institute in Moscow. A month ago or so, you did not see me, but you met three Moscow representatives [including two members of the State Duma]. Now, my friends from my historical motherland, Ukraine, are here, and you are listening to them. And don’t be astonished if a month or so later, you will meet here some representatives from Belarus, Kazakhstan, or maybe Uzbekistan.

“But the main optimism is connected not only with different countries, different persons, etc. The main optimism is connected with Lyn’s ideas. Lyn’s ideas are spread more and more widely, and our movement has gained more and more strong support, all over the world.

“Before our representatives from Russia went to the United States, there was one interesting event in the Russian Parliament, the Duma. On the 20th of February, we got a Memorandum from Lyn, 37 pages in size. And, together with Jonathan Tennenbaum, we prepared specially for hearings in the Duma, a summary . . . [so] I used in my speech in the Duma, the material of Lyn’s Memorandum. . . . Many people were satisfied, that Lyn proposed some very interesting principles. . . . I would like to draw your attention to such things as Lyn’s proposal to take decisive measures. He wrote in his Memorandum about measures, as if connected with the war period—the so-called war mobilization of the economy. The second thing, which didn’t appear before, is measures connected with the development of political activity. He proposed the idea of the so-called National Party—the national party, which can be against the oligarchical movement, all over the world. And the third thing is the same as this last conference in Washington [took up]—it is connected with the possibility to make real reforms in our country. Because the condition is only one: not the conditionalities of the IMF, but the condition to unite all countries against IMF conditionalities.

“If we take it together, we can organize it, and the sources for such organization, we got from our movement, spreading more and more, all over the world. The example is its spread among the countries of the former Soviet Union.

“The ideas of Lyn are very good and are supported by many people in different countries, because of their humanis-



Prof. Taras Muranivsky: “I am prepared to speak in support of Lyn [Lyndon LaRouche] anywhere, including in the U.S.A., that it’s needed.” Here he is speaking at a 1998 Schiller Institute conference in Germany, holding a Russian biography periodical, Who is Who, which featured LaRouche.

tic direction. Humanism and high morality are a very important thing, which find support in all other countries. And my friends from Kiev told us, that some ideas that appeared with the Schiller Institute and were appreciated by Lyn, had been in their heads earlier, too, and so they met Lyn’s ideas with such great pleasure.

“But in Russia, we have some interesting things about not only economic, not only philosophical, but purely *moral* aspects. I remember one book that was written in the 1960s in the former Soviet Union and published in the late 1980s. The author’s name is Yuri Dombrovsky. I don’t know if you read it or not; it was published in *Novy Mir* in 1988. The book was called “The Department of Useless Things.” He was imprisoned, because of these “useless things.” Because he said—it was an *ironical* novel—man doesn’t need such things as truth, sincerity, poetry, music, etc. Man can survive without them! And a little later we got the ideology of Adam Smith in the person of Jeffrey Sachs and the IMF. And now our people understood, and felt it on their own skin, what is this “Department of Useless Things.” Human beings cannot live without such useless things.

“And Lyn’s criticism of the IMF, and Adam Smith’s ideas, and such persons as Jeffrey . . . excuse me if I pronounce Sachs as Sex-Maniac!—has a wider sense than criticism of some persons or some narrow economic ideas. It is morality, it is human beings, it is the future of humanity, all over the world. Thank you.”

Those were the words of Taras Vasilyevich Muranivsky.