

2012 Report on Manifestations of Anti-Semitism in Ukraine

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Anti-Semitism is one of the chief causes of concern for both the Jewish community of Ukraine and foreign observers. Doubtlessly, the presence and intensiveness of manifestations of Judophobia in a given country are important not only in the context of Jewish life, but as a meaningful index of the state of general xenophobic tendencies, the status of national minorities, and human rights in general. Thus, this topic traditionally attracts attention of community leaders, experts, journalists, representatives of international organizations, members of the diplomatic corps, and workers of international organizations.

The year 2012 was the 10th anniversary year of my work on monitoring manifestations of anti-Semitism in Ukraine. The volume of materials that I have collected over the course of these ten years presents more than just a static picture of the current situation, also allowing a researcher to study the dynamics of the situation and understand its tendencies.

Of course, any personal tragedy, so placed in a certain context, thus becomes a “depersonalized” statistic. But I believe that an analysis of social processes in a more long-term, strategic perspective, without concentrating on any absolutely justified indignation over particular incidents, is entirely worthwhile. Which direction is the situation with anti-Semitism developing in? Which large-scale processes in society can it be connected to? Which changes should we expect in the nearest future?

After listing the main facts that my monitoring of anti-Semitic manifestations has collected over the course of 2012, I will try to articulate an answer these questions.

**Anti-Semitic Violence**

Doubtlessly, in the conventional “hierarchy” of different manifestations of xenophobia, racial, national, and/or religious violence is the most serious and painful problem that causes the most concern. Racist attacks in the street committed by young people of different xenophobic views on representatives of “visibly discernible” national minorities, who are unmistakably recognized as “outsiders” in a crowd, have on repeated occasions taken a death toll in different regions of Ukraine. According to the data collected by my monitoring, over 300 people in Ukraine have been victims of similar violent crime since 2006. It should be noted that this is merely the top of the iceberg, as these are only the incidents reported by various sources and on which there is enough information to state the racist character of the attack with certainty. At the same time, these attacks have almost never, with only a few exceptions, have been officially classified by the police as crimes motivated by racial, national, or religious hatred.

According to my monitoring, the quantitative dynamic of violent crime motivated by racial hatred in Ukraine was not linear. The number of these crimes had been rapidly growing

up to early 2008, with the strongest influx after the end of 2006. Conversely, a decline had been noted from the spring of 2008 to the fall of 2010 (there are certain hypotheses that explain this dynamic, but I'll not exploit the reader's attention by listing them). From the end of 2010 and to the current moment, another steady rise has been recorded, not as sharp as in 2006-2008, but all the more noticeable after a short respite.

Of course, Jews are not the first-priority targets of the nightmarish neo-Nazi "safari" (as the criminals themselves call their activities). The most common victims of street racists are those who hail from Africa, Central and South East Asia, Southern Caucasus and Caucasian republics of the Russian Federation. Of the traditional Ukrainian national minorities, the Roma are a constant object of morbid xenophobic attention, as well as (sometimes, in the distinctive environment of the Republic of Crimea) the Crimean Tatars. But some of the criminals who have been most indoctrinated into the misanthropic Nazi ideology have searched on the streets for enemies of the Ukrainian nation and the white race in the persons of the Jews – and, unfortunately for the latter, sometimes they found them.

The dynamic of anti-Semitic violence is, for a number of reasons, somewhat different from the general "curve" built according to the number of hate crimes motivated by racial hatred. The "crest" of the wave of anti-Semitic violence was in 2005-2007.

In 2005, there had been six incidents in which over eight people were hurt (it is difficult to be more precise, as one of the incidents is an attack on a group of school children in Simferopol). One victim, a student of the Kyiv yeshiva who had been severely beaten by neo-Nazis using improvised weapons, had received life threatening wounds.

In 2006, my monitoring had collected reports of five incidents with eight Jewish victims and one non-Jewish passerby who had attempted to interfere. In one of these incidents, an armed attack made on Hitler's birthday in the city of Dniepropetrovsk, it had been practically a miracle that the victim had survived. There had also been two dubious incidents, on which I could not collect verified information.

In 2007, there had been eight victims in five incidents (if we make the highest possible estimate and consider one more incident that had not been confirmed with certainty, then, accordingly, there had been six attacks and nine victims). Thankfully, there had been no incidents recorded akin to those of 2006-2007, in which the life of the victims had been seriously threatened.

In 2008, three people were victims of anti-Semitic attacks out on the street. Two more received trivial injuries during the so-called "pogrom" of the Jewish educational center in Lviv in July 2008. The attackers in the latter incident, a middle-aged couple that lived nearby, were also hurt during the resistance attempt; however, this in no way contradicts the fact that they had been the aggressors and the initiators of the confrontation. Thus, at the highest possible estimate, five people became victims of anti-Semitic violence in 2008.

It is easy to see how one could tentatively see a tendency towards improvement since 2007. This trend continued in the next few years. In 2009, only one case of similar violence had been recorded – a group of teenagers had attacked a religious Jew in the Simferopol synagogue. According to my data, there had also been only one victim of

anti-Semitic violence in 2010. The (non-Jewish) security guard of the Chernigiv synagogue was hit by a piece of ice thrown by teenage anti-Semites, who had been trying to break the windows of the synagogue by throwing ice at it. Finally, in the previous year (2011), excluding the collisions in Uman' (which took place due to the very particular context of a mass pilgrimage of Orthodox Chasidim to the city and thus require a separate inquiry), there had been no recorded instances of obvious anti-Semitic violence.

Admittedly, it had been pleasant to state, having all the facts on hand, that anti-Semitic violence in Ukraine had receded. Contradicting a still-popular stereotype of "Ukrainians imbibing anti-Semitism with the milk of their mothers" and seldom-appearing media publications (both local and foreign) of the horrific judophobic crimes of Ukrainian neo-Nazis, my work had been an eloquent testimony to the fact that Ukrainian Jews in their everyday life are not threatened by ideologically motivated violence.

Unfortunately, the preliminary results of the 2012 monitoring require me to state a certain deterioration of this positive trend. In the summer of 2012, three facts of indisputably anti-Semitic violence had been recorded, of which four people had been victims. I do not consider the widely known tragic incident concerning the student of the Kyiv yeshiva, who received major cranial injury, to be anti-Semitic.

● Late evening on the fifth of July, an anti-Semitic attack took place in the city of Beregovo (Zakarpatskaya oblast'), the victim of which was an Orthodox Jew, a member of the local community. The victim, who was dressed in traditional Orthodox clothing, was walking down a street, when a tattooed young man ran up to him, shouting in Hungarian (including the word "jyd," i.e. "kike") and pointing at him. Then the young man started talking in bad Russian, threatening the Jew and his family, and hit the Jew on the head, after which the victim lost consciousness. The victim was provided medical aid in a hospital.

The incident had a sequel several months later: unknown persons attempted to set fire to the house of the Jewish victim, who lived in a single-family home. Graffiti with anti-Semitic insults and threats had been inscribed on the walls of the house.

Despite the lack of information on the Beregovo incidents, certain details clearly indicate the ideological character of these crimes (and not that they were motivated, for example, by personal vengeance or dislike).

Two other incidents took place in Rivne.

● At the beginning of July, three young men attacked the city's rabbi, Schneur-Zalman Schneerson, near the synagogue. One of them used OC spray on the rabbi, and another struck his face, breaking his glasses. The victim called for help, and the young men ran away.

● On September 21, the leader of the Rivne Jewish Community, Chairman of the Chesed Osher Charity Foundation Gennadiy Frayerman was attacked by five young men, who had been aimlessly meandering around the Rivne community center before he appeared on the steps. The attackers first said that they were looking for Jews, and when the chairman of the community said that he was a Jew, they began beating him.

The chairman's driver, who attempted to defend Frayerman, was also hurt. The attackers stated that they hated Jews. The victims received minor physical injuries and were able to receive timely medical aid.

Frayerman himself believes that the attack was connected to his active participation in the investigation and court proceedings of the vandalism towards the local memorial to Holocaust victims, which took place in June 2012 (see below). The first court hearing on this incident took place the day before the incident – it was one of the rare cases where the culprits in the desecration of such a memorial were found. In that case, the young people could have been sympathetic to the vandals who wound up in the dock or perhaps they could have been part of one informal group, and thus they would have been looking for Frayerman personally. Of course, this does not change the anti-Semitic character of the incident. It also seems reasonable to suppose that the attack on the rabbi could have been connected with the desecration of the memorial, a kind of answer by the neo-Nazi subculture to the Jewish community's institution of criminal proceedings and to the arrest of the vandals.

Of course, three incidents, out of which two are possibly connected, in which four people were victims are not grounds enough to state a persistent trend. At least for now the situation seems to be more likely a fluctuation within the margins of error than a serious change in the situation. However, I no longer have the grounds to state that anti-Semitic violent crime is nonexistent in Ukraine.

As I have already noted, racist street attacks have become more common in the last two years. Other ideologically motivated crimes by supporters of radical right ideas from the youth subcultures and political groups have also become more frequent, such as attacks on radical left and anti-Fascist activists, setting fire to the offices of the governing party or even to the premises of state government bodies, and so on. Considering these (and a few other) tendencies both in the radical right movement and in society in general, I look to the nearest future with a degree of worry.

## **Anti-Semitic Vandalism**

A more common form of criminal anti-Semitism in Ukraine, as in all of post-Soviet territory, is criminal vandalism. We are talking about anti-Semitic graffiti on the walls of buildings belonging Jewish organizations, sometimes of broken windows in those same buildings, vandalism in cemeteries and the desecration of memorials to Holocaust victims. I also count the scarce cases of arson (or attempts at arson) concerning Jewish places of worship.

- At 2 AM on January 1, 2012, unknown persons threw a bottle with an incendiary mixture at the building of the local synagogue. Part of the building was damaged, including the reinforced concrete beam near the synagogue's entrance.
- On February 20th, an insulting anti-Semitic inscription and a swastika appeared on the fence connecting to the Giymat-Rosa synagogue in Zaporizhya.
- On March 22, unknown persons smeared red and blue paint and left insulting anti-Semitic inscriptions on the Lviv memorial to Holocaust victims and the stone slabs with individual names.

- On March 30, unknown vandals poured black and red paint over the memorial to Holocaust victims in Feodosiya.
- On April 6, the old Jewish cemetery of Kherson on Rosa Luxemburg street was seriously damaged in a fire (possibly due to arson). Around 700 square meters of land were burned out. According to a representative of the State Emergency Service, at first the possibility of arson by “an unidentified person” was not out of the question. But on the next day after the fire, that same official stated that “the fire began due to careless handling of fire, not because of arson.”
- On the evening of June 6, unknown persons desecrated the place of mass shooting of Jews during the Holocaust at the Sosonki stow in Rivne. The vandals damaged the pavement tiles near the mass grave at the center of the cemetery. 11 lamps were broken around the perimeter of the memorial. The unknown persons also desecrated the place reserved for floral tributes and strewed the candles all over the memorial. Three persons suspected of this act of vandalism were arrested and put on trial.
- On July 1, the memorial “We Remember for the Future” to genocide victims (the civilians of the Novomoskovsky district, who were shot from ), which stands in Novomoskovsk city of the Dniepropetrovsk oblast' was desecrated by unknown vandals, who painted different inscriptions onto the memorial, including the Nazi swastika in several variations. The person suspected of this crime was later arrested.
- On the night of October 15, just before Rosh-ha-Shana, a Holocaust memorial was desecrated in Nikolayev. Unknown anti-Semitic vandals left inscriptions that read “Die, kikes” and “Satan” (with a 't' that looked like an inverted Christian cross) on the memorial stone.
- On September 19, unknown anti-Semites vandalized the memorial to Jewish victims of the Holocaust in Petrikovskaya hollow (on the territory of the Petrikovsky town hall). The vandals smeared nail polish and lipstick all over the memorial in a rather clumsy attempt to depict a black swastika against a red backdrop. There was also been a crack on the memorial which had not been there previously, possibly indicating an attempt to break it or pull it down.

Thus, according to my monitoring, 9 cases of anti-Semitic vandalism could be said to have taken place in 2012 (since the absence of certainty in the case of the Kherson cemetery fire, I do not include it into the final count, although, naturally, the Beregovo arson incident described above is included).

Let us examine the dynamic once more. In 2011, my monitoring also recorded 9 cases of anti-Semitic vandalism, in 2010 – 16, in 2009 – 19, in 2008 – 13, in 2007 – 20. Thus, we see that in the last two years the level of anti-Semitic vandalism has remained steady, but, thankfully, one can tentatively state a general trend for a slow yet steady decline of the number of incidents of in this sphere.

To conclude this review of criminal manifestations of anti-Semitism, I must note that in all of the abovementioned cases (both for violence and vandalism) the law enforcement authorities refuse to see the ideological motive and to evaluate these crimes adequately.



Moreover, in most cases criminal proceedings were never even started. In most cases, the anti-Semites are able to elude punishment.

## **Anti-Semitism in Public Consciousness**

Unfortunately, Ukraine does not have a constant, systematic, and professional sociological monitoring of generally xenophobic and particularly anti-Semitic trends in society. The only studies that are sometimes positioned as such are the Kyiv International Sociology Institute studies into the social distance between different ethnic groups utilizing the Bogardus scale, which have been held for many years.

The Bogardus scale measures social distance between different groups of the population. It is used to measure whether a person is psychologically ready to accept or reject people of other ethnic backgrounds, regardless of their personal qualities and characteristics. The answer of the respondent to the question of how close they are willing to accept members of another ethnicity (as family members, as close friends, as neighbors, as colleagues, and so on) measures the social distance that he would like to keep between himself and the group in question. The average of the collected answers is evaluated on a 7-point scale, which is called the index of social distance. The more the number, the lower the level of tolerance for this group in society. The average index of social distance is often called (not quite correctly, I believe) “the xenophobia index.”

Results of studies using the Bogardus scale require correct interpretation. It is not quite correct to equate the coefficient of social distance, which can be obtained through using this scale, and the level of xenophobia. Strictly speaking, it is hard to use the terms “tolerance,” “xenophobia,” and “anti-Semitism” when talking about the results of these studies. However, both the sociologists themselves and journalists who popularize the results of their work use these terms. The Bogardus scale was developed in the 1930s and measures, first and foremost, the level of integration (or possibly even assimilation) of ethnic minorities into society, and trying to use it to interpret the entire spectrum of interethnic relationships is hardly justified. This method allows one to measure social distance, and only that. Thus, one needs to be careful of statements taken out of context, such as “N percent of the respondents believe it would have been better had Jews not lived in Ukraine.” However, as we have no other data, only the results of these studies using the Bogardus scale, we can only speak on an approximate hierarchy of the images of ethnic groups in the Ukrainian public consciousness.

These studies are done yearly in Ukraine by the Kyiv International Sociology Institute (KMIS, headed by Vladimir Paniotto), and I used their data for this review.

The last such poll was completed by KMIS in November 2012. Its results, though they were graciously provided to me by V. Paniotto, have not yet been published, and I do not believe it would be right to use them in full. However, it is possible to examine the general tendency.

According to KMIS data, the level of social distance towards Jews in Ukraine had been steadily growing over the first 15 years of Ukrainian independence, from 3,63 in 1994 to 4,6 in 2007. In 2008, the situation had stabilized, and there has been a declining trend over the last four years. According to the most recent data of 2012, the index of social distance towards Jews has gone down to 4,2.

It should be noted that, according to this same research, the general “xenophobia index” (as the sociologists of KMIS call it) had also peaked in 2008, and a decline has also been seen in recent years, though slow and inconsistent. It should be noted that in 1994-2007, the distance towards Jews had been growing quicker than the general “xenophobia index,” and beginning from 2008, the general “xenophobia index” had overtaken the social distance index towards Jews. This means that the distance towards Jews had become smaller not only in comparison to the previous period, but in comparison to all other social groups. The social distance towards Jews in Ukraine is the lowest out of all other “non-Slavic” ethnic minorities (i.e. all ethnic groups except Ukrainians, Russians, Belarussians, and Poles).

### **Anti-Semitism in Politics. Parliamentary Elections.**

Electoral campaigns in Ukraine have always been accompanied by an increase in anti-Semitic rhetoric. The parliamentary elections of 2012 were no exception to this rule.

As before, there are two types of anti-Semitism to be seen during the electoral campaign.

Firstly, nationalistic groups of varying degrees of radicality sometimes use anti-Semitic rhetoric, both out of honest judophobia and to mobilize potential allies.

During the electoral campaign, materials were spread (almost as if copied from Russia's “Pamyat” pamphlets that were in circulation some twenty years ago) accusing the current Verkhovna Rada of being composed almost entirely of Jews and “Russians,” the latter term as used in Ukrainian, both for ethnic Russians and citizens of Russia, and severely lacking in Ukrainians. According to one such piece of propaganda material, disseminated on behalf of the Ukrainian Republican Party (the roll of candidates for the nationwide multi-mandate constituency had been recalled shortly before the elections, but some of the candidates ran in single-mandate constituencies) and prepared (as far as can be inferred) at the request of the leader of one of the regional organizations of the party, Jews constitute 43% of the members of the parliament, and also dominate the government. In particular, the voters’ “eyes were opened” as to the ethnicities of such members of the acting government as, among others, Prime Minister Nikolai Azarov, Minister of Fuel and Energy of Ukraine Yuri Boyko, Minister of Foreign Affairs Konstantin Grischenko, none of whom, naturally, have any ethnic Jewish roots.

Such materials were not disseminated widely, but the same idea was propagated by the relatively popular daily news paper “Ukraina Moloda” (“Young Ukraine,” print run of over 100 000 copies), which had, as before, supported Victor Yuschenko's party “Nasha Ukraina” (“Our Ukraine”). The newspaper quoted Grigoriy Omelchenko (a people's deputy of the current parliament and the candidate that held the 10th position in the Nasha Ukraina roster) on data very similar to the data given above: “there are less than 36% of the titular (indigenous) Ukrainian nation in the Verkhovna Rada” and that “by national composition and in essence [the Ukrainian parliament] is more like a department of the Russian State Duma or the Israeli Knesset.” Moreover, this candidate, highly placed on the roster of the former President, spoke out from the pages of Ukraina Moloda to reveal that “the shadowy global government has made its first steps towards its legalization” - while talking about the creation of an organization with the boisterous

title “The European Jewish Parliament” by Ukrainian businessman Igor Kolomoisky. While denying anti-Semitism, Omelchenko said that “International Zionism” and “Russian imperialism” are the enemy.

This interview by Omelchenko did not provoke any reaction from his fellow party members, but was reprinted by the marginal and openly anti-Semitic monthly journal caled “Informational Bulletin.” Perhaps, this reprint should not have been mentioned, as the newspaper has a meager print run, but it was here, among the newspaper's natural anti-Semitic context, the illustrations, caricatures, and other materials, that Omelchenko's interview looked quite logical. At the same time, the Informational Bulletin, as well as Ukraina Moloda called for their readers to vote for “the only candidate not controlled by the Russian Kremlin” (which was one of the official slogans of Victor Yuschenko and his party).

Interestingly, according to the preliminary results, Nasha Ukraina received 1,11% of the votes and none of its candidates won an election in a single-mandate constituency.

At the same time, as it had happened on multiple previous occasions, the elections saw many a technique to discredit political opponents through emphasizing their real or imagined Jewish ethnic heritage.

Certain regions, especially during the struggle for deputative mandates in the territorial constituencies, had very primitive and direct examples of such counter-campaigning.

For example, fliers were spread throughout constituency #204 (Khotin, Kelmenetsk, Sokiryansky and Zastavnovsky districts of Chernovitskaya oblast) titled “You need to know this!”, in which it is said that the candidate from the unified opposition was “a Jew, but that is not even the worst of it!” “The worst of it,” according to the author of the flier, which was signed by journalist F. Vasilenko, is that “the candidate believes that the Jews are the supreme race, and that Ukrainians and Russians are third-rate at best.” According to the text, “when he is behind closed doors with his friends, he says that the world and Ukraine should be ruled by Jews.”

On the pan-Ukrainian level of the recent elections, this strategy was used far more elaborately against the leader of the UDAR party, Victor Klichko. The news item that informed the readers about the Jewish roots of the sportsman and politician was seemingly formulated in a neutral manner, yet was placed in a context in which it became clearly discrediting. In particular, one text signed by a pseudonym stated that “the Jewish lobby” helped Vitaliy and his younger brother Vladimir achieve their success in sport, and now they are ungratefully “denying” their nationality. “Vitaliy Klichko has disowned his history and the community which has supported him throughout his life for the sake of popularity,” says the author. It is interesting how the author of this news item connects Klichko's “disownment,” a light version of the classic Jewish conspiracy theory, and one more rumor that discredited the politician in the eyes of the oppositional electorate: “the famous Jewish lobby had not only helped Vitaliy become a great sportsman, but to achieve quick success in business, as well. For instance, it is no secret how the ex-mayor of Odessa, Eduard Gurvits, helped Klichko – moreover, he put Klichko in touch with his main sponsor, Valeriy Horoshkovsky” (the first Vice President of the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers).



Interestingly, there was at least one instance in which the idea of Vitaliy Klichko being a Jewish protégé was spread by a public officer – the Chairman of the Volochyskaya District Administration Igor Dobzhansky. An audio recording exists of the following statements of this official: “Of course, you all know who 'protects' (in the criminal sense. - transl.) and finances Vitaliy [Klichko]? I'll tell you. He is protected and financed by Gurvits. Odessa's former mayor. This is the Jewish community. People like Kolomoysky. Those who stole everything. Kikes. You have to know this.” At the same time, the leader of the district administration pressured the local businessmen, trying to involve them in the election campaign for the Party of Regions.

Notably, the last time a similar attempt to disseminate as widely as possible “information” of the allegedly Jewish heritage of a politician took place during the 2010 Presidential elections, and had then been aimed at Arseniy Yatsenyuk. Yatsenyuk's popularity decreased significantly during the months before the election, even though I would not say this is connected to the anti-Semitic campaign. Nonetheless, it seems that the tactic began to be seen as worthwhile by ordering customers (earlier, similar attempts towards Yuliya Tymoshenko or Yuri Lutsenko did not give any even slightly notable results). According to the template created in 2010, a self-pronounced Jewish public figure must take part in the campaign (for instance, in Yatsenyuk's case, the social commentator Alexander Naiman, who had fought against Zionism in Soviet times, published an entire book titled “Famous Jews of Ukraine,” where he included the politician's biography). In 2012, the information of the Jewish heritage of the two Klichko brothers was widely disseminated by the Kharkiv political writer Eduard Hodos, who calls himself “the head of the religious Jewish community of Kharkiv” and who has written a multitude of books on “Ziono-Fascism” and “Judeo-Nazism.”

The mock Jewishness of Arseniy Yatsenyuk was also brought up during the election campaign of 2012 in an unexpected context – a politician from the party currently headed by Yatsenyuk became a prisoner of the anti-Semitic myth.

On October 28 (election day, which is notable in itself), a small video (as well as its transcripts on certain news websites) was spread throughout the Internet. The video showed the quite anti-Semitic ponderings of Leonid Datsenko, a candidate from the united opposition by the “Batkivschina” (“Fatherland”) party of the 197 single-mandate constituency (Cherkasskaya Oblast). During a talk with an unknown person (who had obviously been in a provoking role), Datsenko speaks of Yatsenyuk with overt antipathy, stressing his alleged ethnic heritage. “I'll tell you,” Datsenko says, “Yatsenyuk does not add much [to the popularity of the party – V.L.]. He is questionally perceived in Central Ukraine, considering his connections, since he's a kikey and so on. [...] He thinks that he's the next President of Ukraine. But he's making a grave mistake, because not with the Soviets, not with the Tsar – never have Jews been the first people in this land.” While answering a follow-up question on the ethnic heritage of the “Batkivschina” leader from his provocative partner in the conversation, the candidate laughed and said “people don't break your passport – they break your face.”

However, the scale of these manifestations was not large even in comparison with the most recent Presidential elections, and is unlikely to have seriously affected the outcome.

The more serious result of these elections was, of course, the extreme success of the

national-radical political party "All-Ukrainian Union 'Svoboda,'" which received 10,44% of the votes in the proportional system, and which had 12 candidates elected in single-mandate constituencies. This result allowed the party to form a parliamentary party of 37 people and to delegate their representative to the post of parliamentary Deputy Speaker.

Many of Svoboda's functionaries and activists who have become deputies, including its leader Oleg Tyagnybok, had previously been noticed to have made anti-Semitic statements, as well as in actively using xenophobia towards other groups. The union of Svoboda and other, more moderate and democratic oppositional fractions, had indirectly legitimated the xenophobic rhetoric of the national radicals.

It should be said that directly after the elections Oleg Tyagnybok had multiple times publicly denied the anti-Semitic character of Svoboda's ideology. Some optimistic observers even expressed hope that the party, having made it into the parliament, will begin to lower the degree of its radicality and will dispose of xenophobic rhetoric. This, however, did not come to pass. Between the elections and the first meeting of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, quite a few of Svoboda's elected deputies were seen making rather crudely formulated anti-Semitic statements.