

THE POSITION OF THE UKRAINIANS

The recent meetings addressed in different parts of the west by Mr. P. Krat have already been the subject of considerable comment. A letter which appears in the Vegreville Observer from Mr. Demi Prystash and an editorial in Nowyny, the Edmonton Ukrainian newspaper serve to make it clearer what the agitation amounts to and what the response of the Ukrainians has been.

Mr. Prystash declares that Mr. Krat did not suggest that this was an opportunity to throw off British rule and establish an "Independent Ukraine" in Canada. No one seriously thought of such a thing. His people, he states, are "most quiet and laborious farmers who never dreamed to be more independent than they are at present under the auspices of Great Britain, and do not think to be even in such an independent Ukraine itself."

But they sympathize, according to Mr. Prystash, with their "thirty-two millions of fellow-Ruthenians in Europe suffering now under Austrian, Magyar and Russian usurpacy," and want to help them. He cannot see why an independent Ukrainian committee should be allowed to exist in London, where the cause has been taken up by many Englishmen, and should be denounced in Western Canada. He admits that Mr. Krat spoke "a little untactically" about Russia, but "he did not mention a word which could be regarded as an offense against Russia or anybody."

On the other hand, Nowyny takes the ground that this agitation at the present time is not helping the work of Ukrainian independence in Europe, which all Ukrainians in this country desire.

"There is war in Europe," the editor says in the present issue. "As a part of the British Empire, Canada is involved in the war. Russia is an ally of Great Britain. We must not forget about it. Every unfriendly act against Russia is, in a further meaning, an unfriendly act against Great Britain. We cannot help it. We may hate Russia as much as we like, but as long as there is war we have no right nor privilege to commit unfriendly acts against Russia."

"We are living in the British Empire, and nobody would prohibit us to feel sorry while reading that Russian Cossacks have destroyed some of our villages or killed some of our brothers in Austria. Nor will our people's future be much endangered under the Russian government if we would know how to profit by circumstances. **Let us not forget that Great Britain is our only government just now.** If Russia would win, let us not forget that only Great Britain would be in a position to come to the defence of our people, if there would be any necessity to defend it. Is that the right way to proceed with Great Britain if we would during the war organize rebellions against her ally?"

This statement does credit both to the heart and the head of the editor, who is in no doubt that he speaks for the mass of the Ukrainian people in Canada. To help towards the establishment of an independent Ukraine in Europe is a very different thing in time of war than in a time of peace, and any agitation along that line, so long as any British and Russian troops are in the field with a common object in view, cannot be tolerated. This applies to the movement in London just as much as it does to that in Alberta.

All whose racial sympathies are such that in the present struggle they may find themselves drawn two ways would do well to think carefully over what Nowyny has to say.