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'Ukraine & Canada are the same'

CHRISTOPHER NARDI AND
CATHERINE LEVESQUE

in Ottawa

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Russia is committing genocide of Ukrainians and its invasion "must not go unpunished" as he thanked Canada repeatedly for its ongoing military, financial and political support against Russian invaders.

"Canada's support for Ukraine with weapons and equipment has allowed us to save thousands, thousands of lives. This includes air defence systems, armoured vehicles, artillery shells, and very significant assistance in demining," he told the House of Commons during a historic address Friday.

Zelenskyy spoke in front of a packed Commons featuring nearly every MP as well as senators, senior bureaucrats and foreign dignitaries. A group of Ukrainian officials sat in the centre of the room.

During his speech, Zelenskyy highlighted the deep ties between Canada and his country as well as

IN PARLIAMENT,
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IN NEW AID

the importance of the Ukrainian Canadian community.

He also accused Russia and President Vladimir Putin of trying to exterminate Ukrainians and exhorted Canada and its allies to continue their support of his country as it fights back against the Russian invader.

"It is genocide what Russian occupiers are doing to Ukraine," he said. "This Russian aggression must end with our victory so that Russia will never bring back genocide to Ukraine.

"Can we give up? No. Can we betray the good in human nature?

No. Can we agree to evil? No. Can we allow our identity to be erased? No. Ukraine and Canada are the same. We stand and we fight for life. Ukraine, not genocide, will be victorious in this war," he added.

Many MPs and attendees in the gallery chose to wear their best blue attire, with occasional pops of yellow to represent the colours of the Ukrainian flag.

Others, like Conservative Sen. Denise Batters, opted for traditional Ukrainian attire. Earlier in the day, Batters told Zelenskyy she was wearing a Ukrainian blouse her grandmother had embroidered 100 years ago, before she came to Canada to start her new life.

Zelenskyy began his speech with a recounting of long-standing ties between Ukraine and Canada.

"1983. The city of Edmonton. Its history is closely linked to the destiny of Ukraine and the Ukrainian-Canadian community" because of "the first ever Holodomor monument in the world," Zelenskyy said, about the historic genocide of Ukrainians by starvation due to Soviet policies in 1932-1933.

See ZELENSKYY on NP2

Trudeau pledges vehicles, mental-health care funding

ZELENSKYI

Continued from NP1

Later in his speech, he wished that one day a monument to Ukraine's victory be built in Canada. "Maybe in Edmonton," he noted.

In his introduction of Zelenskyy, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau criticized Putin's "imperial delusions" and promised new, "longer-term, multi-year" aid to Ukraine, namely \$650 million over three years for 50 armoured and medical evacuation vehicles and unspecified funding for mental-health care for Ukrainians.

"I've seen Putin's destructive evil firsthand during my visits to Ukraine since the war began. I saw it in the bombed-out neigh-

bourhoods, and the bridges reduced to twisted steel and the abandoned homes," Trudeau said.

"Putin governs with deception, violence and repression. He imprisons his own people and stirs up ugly sentiments of xenophobia and racism. But his imperial

skyy finally entered the green chamber, he was greeting with a standing ovation and shouts of "Slava Ukraini" (Glory to Ukraine), a common rallying chant in support of Ukraine.

Zelenskyy and his wife arrived in Ottawa Thursday evening and began his tour

hands with the leaders of opposition parties, Senate groups and Speakers of the House of Commons and Senate before proceeding to a first bilateral meeting with Trudeau.

During a brief speech to media gathered in Trudeau's office, he thanked Canada for its "crucial" support since Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine over 500 days ago.

"I can say it in English, and in Ukrainian. I'm sorry I don't know French. But my words to all Canadians in Canada is: thank you so much," he said.

Zelenskyy was expected to travel to Toronto on Friday evening to meet with business leaders and attend an event, the Prime Minister's Office said.

National Post

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delusions in Ukraine have been met with a fierce defence.”

The speeches began roughly 30 minutes later than expected. When Zelen-

Friday morning with a meeting with Gov. Gen. Mary Simon at Rideau Hall.

He then proceeded to Parliament Hill where he met with Trudeau and shook