



July 24, 2011

PRODUCERS

60 Minutes

60minutesmail@nine.com.au

Dear Sir,

I am writing in relation to your *60 Minutes* program on *Ukrainian Brides* aired on Sunday July 24, 2011.

The Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations (AFUO) the peak body for Ukrainians in Australia expresses its great disappointment at the program's portrayal of Ukrainian women in Ukraine and protests the incorrect way of referring to Ukraine as - **THE** Ukraine.

The correct name is **Ukraine** - The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) ruled on this some years ago as have other International bodies. Most media outlets have learnt the correct name, given 2011 is the 20th Anniversary of Ukraine's independence. The term used during the program is offensive to Ukrainians.

It would be only fair and correct for your program to rectify and clarify this issue next week.

Ukraine has a rich and historic past. Women in Ukraine are highly intelligent and assume leading roles in all aspects of today's society. They are also caring mothers. Many young women study at various levels of tertiary education and look forward to normal professional and family lives. - Just as they do in Australia and throughout the world.

It is a pity this was not reflected. Rather your program went for a more populous image of a minority, which in parts was demeaning, not only to Ukrainian women, but women in general.

The issue of *brides* is an international issue and problem and whilst everyone has the right to find a partner in life, your program portrayed women as sex objects. No doubt there are agencies involved in this business. Your program did little to further a positive image of women. Your handling of the portrayal of women, marriage and in this case Ukraine itself leaves somewhat to be desired. Your subtlety of reporting the issues of '*finding the right woman*', was overlayed by a tone of a '*free for all - test the model, before taking it home*'.

Earlier this week, at the request of the AFUO, the Embassy of Ukraine in Australia contacted a representative of your program before it went to air. Our understanding is that an assurance was given, the program would be tasteful and 'lovely'. We would argue that it was neither.

We would encourage *60 Minutes* to consider a more in-depth analysis of the political and economic situation in Ukraine. This would be of greater benefit to Australians. The AFUO and the Ukrainian World Congress (UWC) are willing to assist in facilitating this.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these matters with you. I may be contacted on 0419 531 255 or you may contact our Public Relations Director Mike Tkaczuk on 0416 255 715.

I will be in Sydney this coming Friday July 29, 2011 and would be pleased to meet with you to discuss these issues further.

Stefan Romaniw OAM
Chairman