

Ukraine strong

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KEYWORDS: invasion; Russian Federation; Ukraine; war

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At the time of this writing (March 5, 2022) the invasion of Ukraine by the armed forces of the Russian Federation has entered its second week. The media has reported missile strikes that appear to have been aimed at civilian targets, including schools, hospitals, apartment buildings, and a near catastrophic attack on Europe's largest nuclear plant. Painful images of devastation, suffering, and death are appearing in the public domain on an almost hourly basis. A mere few weeks ago, as the world's attention was focussed on the happy spectacle of the Winter Olympic Games, such a situation was unthinkable. There are some things that are bigger than the practice of medicine/hepatology, and this is one of them. The events of the past week demand comment, and we feel compelled to write this extraordinary editorial. Although we do not claim to represent the views of all Canadian hepatologists, we are confident that the vast majority of hepatologists share our views and sentiments on this issue.

We, the editorial leadership of the *Canadian Liver Journal*, strongly condemn the tragic, cruel, highly immoral, and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine by the armed forces of the Russian Federation on the orders of their president. We are disturbed that despite the destruction and loss of life, Russian president vladimir putin (the small case letters are intentional) has promised "worse is yet to come" (as reported by Hodge N, Xu X, Jonah A on CNN, March 3, 2022) and has put his nuclear forces on high alert suggesting the threat of global thermonuclear war that would devastate not only NATO and the Russian Federation but every ecosystem on the planet. Although this conflict is, for the moment, physically confined to one geographic area, the effects, including political, economic, or psychological/emotional, are global. Let this editorial stand as an indicator of our clear support of the actions of our Canadian Government with its allies, to support the nation of Ukraine and to hinder the war machine of president putin.



Within the walls of our hospitals and academic institutions, there are people with whom we interact with everyday who have been directly affected by this conflict whether they be our co-workers, patients, or visitors. To those affected, we offer our most sincere support in anyway that we can. We must note that there are those who work in our institution who are of Russian background. We also offer our support to them as they are blameless, and the events of the past week may have left them with feelings of discomfort and vulnerability. We definitely do not want them to become the misguided targets of abuse as has happened to communities that find themselves on the wrong side of a war (eg, the internment of the Japanese Canadian community during World War II, the islamophobia after the 9/11 attacks in the United States). It must be noted that across our great nation, and around the world, members of the Russian community have joined

with the Ukrainian community to protest this unjust invasion. We also note that in Russia itself, a nation where the right of peaceful protest does not exist, thousands of citizens have been arrested protesting this immoral war, just as youth of America did, over half a century ago, to protest what was also considered an unjust war. We note that those protests by Americans significantly contributed to the decision to withdraw American forces from Vietnam in the 1970s, and we sincerely hope that history repeats itself in Russia. Finally, to those in Ukraine, who are courageously defending their homes and families against an adversary that possesses terrifying destructive capabilities, or are just fighting for survival in horrific circumstances, we send you our support, our love, and our heartfelt respect.

DISCLOSURES: The authors have nothing to disclose.