

Ukraine's Relations with the West: Disinterest, Partnership, Disillusionment

TARAS KUZIO

Ukraine's relations with the West have gone through three periods of development since 1992. When relations with Ukraine have improved this has tended to be at the same time as relations between the West and Russia declined, and vice-versa. The first period is disinterest during 1992-94 when the West prioritised relations with a reformist Russia. The second period was 1995-99 when Ukraine and the West developed a strategic partnership. From 2000, Ukraine's relations with the West are best described as disillusionment due to the growing gap between official rhetoric of integration into Euro-Atlantic structures and Eurasian domestic policies.

The West's foreign policy towards Ukraine has gone through three changes since the disintegration of the USSR – disinterest, partnership and disillusionment. These three changes in policy towards Ukraine have mirrored the West's changing relationship to Russia.

This article is divided into these three sections – disinterest (1991-94), partnership (1995-99) and disillusionment (from 2000). The major focus of the article is on the last of these three sections – disillusionment – which deals with Leonid Kuchma's second term as president (1999-2004) and the evolution of Ukrainian foreign policy from a Western to an Eastern-oriented multi-vector foreign policy. This section also discusses the growing Western disbelief in Ukraine's declared policy of integration into Euro-Atlantic structures through Ukraine's relations with the EU and NATO. The re-orientation of Ukraine's foreign policy, as evidenced in the slogan 'To Europe with Russia!', is critically surveyed with reference to the different foreign policy objectives of Russia and Ukraine.

The conclusion discusses the many fundamental problems and contradictions in Ukrainian foreign policy that the article surveys. One major conclusion of the article is that the crisis in Ukraine's foreign policy mirrors that found in the domestic domain.¹ Therefore, no resolution of

either crisis is likely, and no improvement in relations with the West is possible, until the post-Kuchma era.

DISINTEREST (1991-94)

In the first half of the 1990s, Ukraine was largely ignored by the West because of its orientation towards Russia, the only CIS state then with a reformist president. At that stage Russia was also wholeheartedly pro-Western and disinterested in the CIS.²

Ukraine under President Leonid Kravchuk (1991-94) placed greater emphasis upon nation and state building and the security of the state, principally *vis-à-vis* Russia, than economic and political reform. Nation and state building distracted Ukraine from reform, making Russia under Borys Yeltsin a more attractive partner for the West. Meanwhile, Ukraine's prioritisation of its security influenced its slow nuclear disarmament until 1996.

The warm relationship between Russia and the West and the poor relations between the West and Ukraine in the first half of the 1990s resembles that which has existed since 2000 after Vladimir Putin became Russian President. When the West was *disinterested* or *disillusioned* with Ukraine it has developed a *partnership* with Russia. This is especially the case after September 11 when Putin committed Russia to an anti-terrorist alliance with the West. When the West was *disinterested* or *disillusioned* with Russia it has developed a *partnership* with Ukraine, as during the second half of the 1990s.

PARTNERSHIP (1995-99)

From the mid-1990s, as relations between Russia and the West declined, those between the West and Ukraine dramatically improved. A new Ukrainian president elected in 1994 initially seemed pro-reform and Kuchma agreed to de-nuclearise (unlike his predecessor Kravchuk). In 1994, Ukraine signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty which paved the way for Ukraine's de-nuclearisation in 1994-96. These factors helped transform Ukraine into an important strategic ally of the West.

From the second half of the 1990s, the United States (US) sought to support Ukraine both bilaterally in a 'strategic partnership' and multilaterally through NATO as a 'lynchpin' and 'keystone' of European security.³ Ukraine's geopolitical importance to the USA in curbing Russia's imperial ambitions within the CIS, acting as a buffer between Russia and Central-Eastern Europe and supporting NATO enlargement were all strategically important for US policy towards Central-Eastern Europe.

Ukraine became the third largest recipient of US aid and was the most active CIS state within NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP).

DISILLUSIONMENT (2000-)

Since 2000, four main factors have led to a growing disillusionment between Ukraine and the West. First, the West became exasperated by the widening gap between rhetoric and reality in Ukraine's domestic and foreign policy. The executive claimed in its foreign policy rhetoric that it was in favour of deeper political and economic reforms and 'returning to Europe'. As Kuchma said in Austria, 'God wants Ukraine to be in Europe'.⁴ But, the realities on the ground in Ukraine were increasingly at odds with this rhetoric. Ukraine's record on human rights and democratisation since the late 1990s has increasingly been negatively assessed by Western governments and think tanks.

This was coupled with a stream of allegations on the inner workings of the Kuchma regime publicised in the Western media. The origins of these disclosures were from tapes made illicitly in Kuchma's office during 1999-2000 by Mykola Melnychenko, a member of the presidential guard that protects high-ranking officials, analogous to the US Secret Service.⁵ Melnychenko fled Ukraine in November 2000, just before the tapes were publicly disclosed in the Ukrainian parliament and since April 2001 he has been a political refugee in the US.⁶

Ukraine's worsening international image on democratisation was also severely damaged by increasing restrictions on the media. The Committee to Protect Journalists ranked President Kuchma in 1999 and 2001 in the top ten worst 'enemies of press freedom'. Reporters Without Frontiers added its critical voice to the media situation in Ukraine and ranked it unfavourably in its first annual index of press freedom released in 2002.

The body of murdered opposition journalist Heorhiy Gongadze was found in November 2000.⁷ The first extract of the *Kuchmagate* tapes released that same month contained a recording of Kuchma ordering his then Interior Minister, Yuriy Kravchenko, to deal with Gongadze. Kravchenko told Kuchma this was to be undertaken using his 'White Eagles' (Orly) special police unit, which is also thought to be responsible for Rukh leader Viacheslav Chornovil's 'car accident' in March 1999. The Gongadze affair was covered in the April 2002 BBC documentary *Killing the Story*, which featured other Ukrainian journalists against whom similar violence had been undertaken by the authorities.⁸

Eight suspicious car accidents in Ukraine leading to the deaths of officials who had fallen in disfavour or oppositionists, such as Rukh leader Chornovil, have been attributed to malpractice by the authorities. The death

of Valeriy Malev, head of a Ukrainian arms export agency, in a suspicious car accident on 6 March 2002, just as the Iraqi arms scandal⁹ first unfolded, was one such 'accident'.

Second, there is growing evidence of high-level corruption. In 1999 Transparency International also began to rank Ukraine as one of the world's most corrupt states. The US accused Ukraine of being the world's largest producer of pirate CDs.

Ukraine's image was damaged by the defection of former Prime Minister Pavlo Lazarenko to the US in 1999. Lazarenko had been stripped of his parliamentary immunity but was suspiciously allowed to leave Ukraine. Although accused of corruption after he fled Ukraine in February 1999, Lazarenko was awarded two state medals by Kuchma when he was Prime Minister during 1996–97. After being sacked as Prime Minister, he fell into disfavour and created the anti-Kuchma Hromada political party.¹⁰ Persecution of Lazarenko and his then business partner Yulia Tymoshenko, now head of a radical anti-Kuchma opposition bloc named after her, follows a similar pattern that has been described as the 'blackmail state'.¹¹ The *Kuchmagate* tapes show how corruption was condoned by the executive as a way of obtaining political loyalty from oligarchs. This loyalty is critically important in the transition to the post-Kuchma era in 2004 to help facilitate Kuchma's immunity.

Criminal cases on corruption have only been opened after oligarchs, such as Lazarenko and Tymoshenko, have gone into political opposition to Kuchma. No high ranking oligarch has ever been placed on trial in Ukraine.¹² Kuchma has desperately attempted to imprison Tymoshenko on corruption charges to silence her radical activities. Meanwhile, other corrupt oligarchs have been left untouched because they remain loyal to Kuchma in the pro-presidential parliamentary majority.

The appointment of Viktor Yanukovich as Ukraine's tenth Prime Minister in November 2002 confirms the Western view that nothing has been learnt from the Lazarenko episode and that reform (or Euro-Atlantic integration) are not Kuchma's foreign policy strategic priority. Yanukovich was governor of Donetsk *oblast* and is linked to Ukraine's wealthiest and corrupt Donbas oligarch, Renat Akhmetov. Not only will Prime Minister Yanukovich continue to be disastrous for Ukraine's democratisation and corruption record but his government will further lead Ukraine to re-orientate towards Russia. This was seen in January 2003, when Kuchma was elected to head the CIS Council of Heads of State, the first time a non-Russian has been allowed to hold this position.

Third, Ukraine's constantly shifting and often contradictory domestic and foreign policies gave an image of a country unable to decide its foreign orientation. Contradictory signals damage Ukraine's international

credibility by giving it an image of an unreliable partner constantly wavering in every direction, one day pro-Western, the next pro-Russian. Although Ukraine's elites have portrayed its 'multi-vector' foreign policy as a well-thought-out and 'pragmatic' response to the geopolitical realities on the ground, this policy has little respect in the West, except in Moscow. From the late 1990s, the West has understood that Ukraine's 'multi-vector' foreign policy is simply a tool for its elites to adjust the country to short-term changes in the international environment that affected them personally. In other words, strategic foreign policy objectives (such as EU membership) are merely rhetoric to mask a foreign policy that serves as a tool for corrupt elites who only have a short-term domestic and foreign policy interest.

Since the *Kuchmagate* scandal, Ukraine's foreign policy has been personally tied to Kuchma's whim and fate. Ukraine's leaders have no developed national interests, as their priority is merely to hold on to power.¹³

Threatening to 'return to Russia' (as in the 1990s) no longer was seen as a credible threat to obtain unconditional support by the West.¹⁴ The US had come to understand by the late 1990s that Ukraine's independence was secure and no elite groups wished to see its sovereignty damaged by, for example, joining the Russian-Belarusian union. Only the Communist Party of Ukraine is in favour of Ukraine joining this union.

After the September 11 terrorist attacks on the US, Ukraine could no longer play off Russia against the US to obtain geopolitical advantages for itself, as it had in the second half of the 1990s.¹⁵ The improvement of Russian-US relations therefore placed Ukraine's elites in a dilemma from which they have still not been able to escape. Since then, Russia has looked more pro-NATO than Ukraine. As a Western diplomat said, 'Since September 11, Ukraine has lost its interest to the West. Letting go of Leonid Kuchma would never have happened if Russia hadn't joined the anti-terrorist coalition.'¹⁶

Fourth, tape recordings from Kuchma's office made by Melnychenko, which showed Kuchma had authorised the sale of Kolchuga radar equipment to Iraq in contravention of UN sanctions in Summer 2000, were authenticated by the FBI and the information was publicly revealed in September 2002. The Ukrainian authorities only grudgingly conceded that the July 2000 meeting where Kuchma authorised the sale actually took place but claim that the Security Service (SBU) blocked its implementation. This is unlikely, as the operation to export the radar equipment to Iraq was itself a *spetsoperation* handled by the SBU.¹⁷

The Iraqi arms scandal is but the climax of a long Ukrainian record throughout the 1990s of illegally supplying arms to countries under UN sanctions (Yugoslavia, Sierra Leone, Liberia) or conflict zones (Eritrea-

Ethiopia, Yemen, Angola, Sri Lanka). A high-ranking arms exporter from Ukraine, Leonid Minin, is awaiting trial in Italy.¹⁸

Unlike Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenko, Kuchma was given a Czech visa to attend the November 2002 NATO summit but was encouraged not to travel to the NATO summit in Prague. At the same time, because of the Iraqi arms scandal, the US pressured Kuchma to not attend NATO's five-yearly summit. In addition, the NATO-Ukraine Commission, which met at the NATO summit, was downgraded to the level of foreign ministers. Kuchma still turned up to the NATO summit but was cold-shouldered by Western and NATO leaders.

For the first time in NATO's history, the French language was used to arrange seating in NATO's Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council so that Ukraine's Kuchma would be the last delegation and he would not sit next to the British or American leaders, which would have been the case if English had been used, as is traditionally the case. This humiliation and pariah status represented a major blow to Ukrainian security policy.

Disbelief in Ukraine 'Returning to Europe' and Crisis in Foreign Policy

Since 2000, the US-Ukraine strategic partnership that developed under President Bill Clinton has floundered and Ukraine's relationship with the West has fallen to its lowest level. Kuchma has been de facto isolated in the West. The year 2002 was the first post-Soviet year in which there was no Ukraine-US presidential summit – something the US ruled out until Ukraine resolved the murder of opposition journalist Gongadze.

United States' foreign assistance to Ukraine, which was once its third largest after Israel and Egypt, has declined by nearly half from \$229 million in 2001 to \$125 million in 2002. Relations between the US and Ukraine are now at their lowest level since the USSR disintegrated.

Ukraine's foreign policy is in crisis and has become more confusing to both domestic elites, foreign governments and international organisations. The crisis is ignored by the Ukrainian leadership who continue to live in a world detached from reality, as seen in Kuchma's incredible claim that:

The year that is passing consolidated the strategic plans of our countries and confirmed its European choice. Steps by step Ukraine moved towards the goal of integrating into the European community.¹⁹

These doubts in Ukrainian foreign policy that increasingly manifested itself from the late 1990s were reflected domestically. Faith in the foreign policy rhetoric espoused by Ukraine's leaders is at an all time low. The *Kuchmagate* crisis, the de-legitimation of the oligarchic centrist elite and uncertainty about Kuchma's fate after he leaves office have produced a double domestic and foreign policy crisis.²⁰

A major problem causing these crises is the Soviet-era culture of duplicity of Ukraine's ruling elites. As one Ukrainian commentary explained, 'The Ukrainian leadership lie all the time with or without reason. Their words and deeds are as far apart as the people and the government of this country'.²¹ Foreign policy is constantly changing, documents are kept secret, there is an inability to determine the country's national interests, and 'return to Europe' rhetoric is undermined by non-European domestic policies. Ukrainian foreign policy has become 'unpredictable, unreliable, mistrusted'.²²

A case in point was the decision to create a CIS free-trade zone in February 2003 after Kuchma had become head of the CIS Council of Heads of State. Would Ukraine's imitation of integration into Europe be now matched by an equally non-assertive drive to Eurasian integration, one Ukrainian specialist asked: 'everyone is sick and tired with all this blather about deep integration within the CIS, and yet another organisation looks at least ridiculous'. Ukraine's desire for European integration no longer looks convincing, even though Ukraine claims CIS and European integration are not incompatible. As one Ukrainian commentator asked, 'But, who would believe them?'²³

Former Ukrainian Foreign Minister Borys Tarasyuk believed that a CIS free trade zone does indeed conflict with Ukraine's goal of EU membership. One Ukraine deputy, Yuriy Kostenko, added that Kuchma's support for the new initiative showed Ukraine has no foreign policy concept and such moves, 'discredit Ukraine both in the West and in the East. Nobody understands a country which demonstrates an absence of any kind of [foreign policy] vector'.²⁴

EU-Ukraine Relations: Poor

On 4 July 2002, Copenhagen hosted a Ukraine-EU summit that failed to resolve the poor relations between Ukraine and the EU. No Association Agreement has been signed with any CIS state, whose 12 members have always been treated differently by the EU from the other 15 former communist states. Association Agreements, which are negotiated individually with each state, signify that a country is an aspirant member of the EU.²⁵

The EU has never expressed any interest in returning to the early 1990s formula in order to sign an Association Agreement with Ukraine (or other CIS states). In the view of Brussels, the EU signed the agreements at that time in solidarity with new post-communist regimes and in a totally different era.

The EU has regularly complained about 'guns, drugs and bugs' and migrants moving from East to West through Ukraine. It has sought to stem

this by tightening the former Soviet border with Central-Eastern Europe (the only exception to this is in the Baltic States, where the new EU border would be between Russia and the three Baltic States). Fifteen million Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians crossed into Poland each year in the 1990s, and this continued until Poland introduced visas for the CIS in October 2003.

Another issue that prevents the EU from agreeing to Ukraine's demands is psychological. The EU finds it difficult to accept that a Muslim country, Turkey, could eventually join the EU. It may take just as long for the EU to accept that the Eastern Slavic countries, Ukraine included, are also part of 'Europe'.

The EU and the Council of Europe have placed Ukraine and Russia in one group on questions of membership, despite the fact that Russia has never raised the question of EU membership. A 2000 policy paper by the French Foreign Ministry typically argued that Ukraine could not be regarded as a potential EU member as this would isolate Russia. On a visit to Moscow in May 2002, EC President Romano Prodi said neither Russia nor Ukraine would become EU members in the foreseeable future.

The EU is now developing a joint strategy towards Ukraine and Belarus, which also makes little sense as both countries have different domestic and foreign policies. Prodi has hinted that Ukraine would do better integrating within the CIS, which could then be considered as a regional group for future Association. Fundamentally, it is still not clear if the EU sees the Western CIS as part of 'Europe' or 'Eurasia'.

Another factor working against Ukraine is its record on political and economic reform. Oligarchic centrist political forces, which control the government and parliamentary leadership and are allied to the executive, espouse the rhetoric of reform and integration into Europe but are unwilling to undertake the necessary domestic reforms to back up their support of EU membership. They have never been pushed into a corner by the EU and forced to change their domestic policies because no Association Agreement has ever been offered to Ukraine.

A Ukrainian commentary pointed out:

Double standards, of which Ukraine often accuses the West, are most often actively used by Ukraine itself. They lie in the striking difference between the authorities' words and deeds. Their words are intended to be used abroad and their deeds are to be used at home.²⁶

A French newspaper added:

It is constantly repeating its desire to draw closer to Europe, but is not

taking the measures to implement the reforms such a partnership requires.²⁷

The discrepancy between domestic policies and foreign policy goals and constantly shifting objectives are major factors in causing the US and the West to no longer treat Ukraine's foreign policy in a serious manner. Ukraine is seen as unreliable and there is a lack of trust in its leaders, US Ambassador to Ukraine Carlos Pascual said, because Ukraine was, 'a country which is not sure of its own goals and objectives'.²⁸

Ukraine has pointed to high support for EU membership as an argument in its favour. A May 2002 poll by the Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Political Studies (UCEPS) found that 57.6 percent of Ukrainians supported this goal. Nevertheless, few Ukrainians at either the elite or popular levels really understand the EU and most Ukrainians merely associate it with higher living standards.

Ukraine's de facto isolation in the West will not be resolved until after Kuchma retires from office in October 2004. A Ukrainian commentary sees the victory of former Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko, leader of the reformist and pro-Western Our Ukraine bloc, which won the largest number of votes in the 2002 elections, as the only candidate able to lead to Ukraine's integration into transatlantic and European structures.²⁹ This is because, 'He is about the only Ukrainian politician whom the civilised world trusts fully.'

At the same time, the EU-Ukraine relationship is in dire need of an overhaul. One aspect of this is that the EU has still to recognise the desire of Ukraine to eventually join the EU. Foreign Minister Anatoly Zlenko complained that, 'The EU is thinking about how to support Ukraine's reforms, while at the same time giving no promises that it will become a member of the EU.'

The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) signed between Ukraine and the EU in 1994 and ratified four years later, and the 1999 EU Common Strategy on Ukraine, are both inadequate and dated. Both the EU and Ukraine have undertaken virtual policies towards one another. If Yushchenko is elected president in autumn 2004, the EU would be forced to finally begin to act seriously on Ukraine's desire to join the EU. Until then, neither Kuchma or the EU takes each side seriously in the relationship.

In May 2002, President Kuchma's annual address to parliament outlined a timetable for the creation of a free trade area with the EU by 2004, a customs union during 2005-7, signing an associate agreement in 2007 and fulfilling all of the criteria laid out by the EU to join by 2011. On the eve of the 2002 summit, the Ukrainian parliament issued an appeal approved by 257 out of 450 deputies asking the summit to upgrade the 1994 PCA 'to a qualitatively new level of development' that would lead to

EU membership. Nevertheless, the joint EU–Ukraine summit statement reaffirmed that the EU still only looked to the PCA (not an Association Agreement) as the basis ‘for developing our relations further’. The March 2003 Wider Europe Initiative also failed to provide for future membership.³⁰

Why then did Ukraine again fail to convince Europe of its right to join the EU? For the EU it is highly convenient that Ukraine’s domestic policies simply re-affirm the deeply held view in Brussels that Ukraine is not part of ‘Europe’. Bertel Haarder, Danish Minister for Refugees, Immigration and Integration, laughed off Kuchma’s plan to gradually move into the EU by 2011 as reminiscent of Soviet era announcements that communism was on the verge of being reached, but never actually was. He advised Kyiv:

Instead of statements and expectations for clear signals, the Ukrainian authorities should switch to fulfilling arrangements and fulfilling their declarations.

NATO–Ukraine Cooperation: A Success Story

Although Ukraine had always been the most active member of Partnership for Peace (PfP) in the CIS, Ukraine only outlined its desire to seek NATO membership in May 2002. Ukraine has two embracing programmes of cooperation with NATO in the form of presidential decrees from 1998 to 2001 and 2001 to 2004.³¹

Ukraine understands NATO as the first step on the path to EU membership, which is more long term. NATO enlargement after September 11 is being undertaken without antagonising Russia, which means Ukraine’s decision to opt for NATO membership is believed by Kyiv to be now less likely to cause problems in its relationship with Moscow. Initial reactions from Russian political parties and parliament indicate this to be not the case and Russian Ambassador to Ukraine Viktor Chernomyrdin openly questioned Ukraine’s need to join NATO. Russian hostility to Ukraine’s membership would grow if NATO began to seriously consider it by giving it a Membership Action Plan (MAP).

The difference between the EU and NATO is that the former has a closed door while NATO has an open policy on membership. Whereas the EU rules out Ukraine moving from a PCA to an Association Agreement, NATO is willing to move Ukraine from the 2002 NATO–Ukraine Action Plan to a MAP.

In the manner common to the Ukrainian executive of divorce from reality, Anatoly Orel, deputy head of the presidential administration, remained confident: ‘the EU’s doors are locked, but it is up to us to make a key for these doors, and this key is our market and democratic reforms’.³² When on a visit to Georgia, Kuchma also admitted that integration into the

EU was a 'thorny path'. Nevertheless, 'government and society must do everything possible to make it succeed'.³³ NATO Secretary-General Lord Robertson warned that Kyiv would have to display, 'a sustained commitment to the implementation of political, economic and defence reforms' and uphold human rights, the rule of law and freedom of the media.³⁴

NATO also remains concerned that Soviet-era ties between CIS intelligence services could compromise shared intelligence between Ukraine and NATO. Ukraine would also have to substantially increase its military expenditure. Ukraine's current military expenditure of \$590 million is low and would require increasing six to sevenfold. Hungary, with armed forces one-seventh of Ukraine's, spends twice as much on the military (\$1.091 billion) while Poland, with a population only slightly less than Ukraine's, spends \$3.58 billion. Ukraine spends only \$2,900 per serviceman compared to Romania's \$9,700, one of the poorest NATO aspirant members, or Poland's \$18,000.

In January 2003, Ukraine and NATO simultaneously released the NATO-Ukraine Plan of Action that had been adopted at the Prague NATO summit. Kuchma's very poor reputation in the West will ensure that Ukraine will not be able to move from its Action Plan to a MAP until the post-Kuchma era. At the earliest therefore, Ukraine could only enter the MAP process in 2005 and possibly join at the 2012, not 2007, NATO summit. This process would be only speeded up if Yushchenko wins the 2004 elections.³⁵

But, Ukraine's participation in a MAP in 2005 is critically dependent on who is elected president in 2004. None of the potential or possible pro-Kuchma candidates, such as Prime Minister Yanukovych, is supportive of NATO membership (Defence Minister Yevhen Marchuk is supportive but he is not likely to be an election candidate). Yanukovych's origins in the Donbas make him disinterested in converting the Russia-Ukraine border into a NATO-Russia border. The establishment of NATO bases in Ukraine would also be problematical given that Russia has naval bases in Sevastopol until 2017. Joining NATO would create a clear break with Russia that would be psychologically problematical for Eastern Ukrainian oligarchs who support a 'To Europe with Russia!' foreign policy.

Official declarations in support of joining NATO remain at the level of rhetoric. President of UCEPS Anatoliy Hrytsenko argued that the Action Plan was purely declarative. There is little new in the Action Plan, which includes a 'similar list of declarations' found in the Ukrainian Constitution, laws, decrees, government resolutions and programmes. 'Yet, none of the above have been duly enforced so far', Hrytsenko asked. 'Why then should we expect the Action Plan to be fulfilled', he asked?³⁶

No state information campaign is underway to increase public support for NATO membership, which is at an all time low. A 2002 Ukrainian Democratic Initiatives poll gave 32 for and 41 per cent against NATO

membership. A February 2003 poll by UCEPS gave only 21.9 per cent in support and 37.7 per cent opposed to membership.

Section 1 of the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan is devoted to internal political, economic and information issues. In all three areas Ukraine has severely regressed since the late 1990s, a regression which accelerated after the March 2002 elections. Western governments and NATO are therefore no longer convinced by comments in support of democratisation, such as those made by President Kuchma after the Prague summit.

Relations with US Damaged

In September 2002, the US made a very serious accusation that President Kuchma had authorised the sale of four Kolchuga radar systems to Iraq. The authorisation was made at a meeting in July 2000 attended by Kuchma, then chairman of the Security Service (SBU) Leonid Derkach and Malev, head of the state arms export agency *Ukrspetseksport*.

The date the revelations were announced – seven months after they were revealed by Ukrainian opposition politicians – was bad timing, as it coincided with the launch of opposition protests. This is not the first time the US has had bad timing. The announcement that Melnychenko had been given political asylum coincided with parliament's vote of no confidence in the Yushchenko government in April 2001.

The most damning aspect of the Kolchuga scandal is the total loss of international trust in Kuchma (after he had already lost it domestically). As a Ukrainian newspaper asked, 'Ukraine keeps doing this, declaring its abidance by European norms and breaking them all the time. The West is confused: who forces Ukraine to make these declarations.'³⁷ During the Kolchuga scandal, the US stated that it did not believe anything Kuchma and his team actually said. Faith in Ukraine's word was especially lost after Ukraine denied that any meeting had even taken place in July 2000, where the decision to sell the Kolchuga's was made, but then Kyiv changed its mind and said the meeting had in fact gone ahead but that the Kolchugas had not been dispatched to Iraq.

The Ukrainian authorities have badly mishandled the entire *Kuchmagate* affair and the Melnychenko tapes. If Ukraine had nothing to hide why did Kuchma block the creation of an investigative commission into the Iraqi arms allegations in the 1998–2002 parliament and only agree to it after US accusations in 2002? During the visit of an international team of experts to Ukraine in autumn 2002 to investigate the Kolchuga claim, Ukraine refused to allow them to meet Derkach, chairman of the SBU in 2000, when the decision was made to export the weaponry to Iraq.

Another argument used by Ukraine to deflect attention from US accusations on Iraq is that it has in place tight export controls of arms. This

is not the view of the West or the international team that visited Ukraine in 2002. The process, sale and income derived from Ukraine's arms exports are highly non-transparent.

In 2001, a war of accusations between then Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council and Defence Minister Marchuk and Derkach claimed each had been involved in illegal arms exports. Marchuk alleged that he had halted dubious transactions by Derkach but refused to say what they were. The accusations between Derkach and Marchuk centred on Ukrainian gunrunners arrested in Italy who had operated throughout the 1990s until 2000–1 but had then been apprehended by Interpol and Italian police and are now awaiting trial in Italy.³⁸

Ukraine's Answer to Western Criticism: To Europe with Russia!

Ukraine's answer to increased Western criticism was to change its multi-vector foreign policy from Western to Eastern orientation. This meant 'returning to Europe' was replaced by a more confusing and ambivalent 'To Europe with Russia!' This new slogan began to be increasingly used by Russophile oligarch groups after Kuchma was re-elected in November 1999. The removal of pro-Western Foreign Minister Tarasiuk in October 2000, after Orel's intervention on behalf of Russian President Putin, reinforced this Russophile re-orientation of Ukrainian security policy.

Such Russophile rhetoric increased during the *Kuchmagate* scandal in Winter 2000–Spring 2001 and since, as the executive has increasingly leaned eastwards for diplomatic and moral support from Russia. Linking Ukraine's fate to Russia's is an admission by Ukraine's elites that their foreign policy ideology aims to legitimise their country entering Europe not independently but under Russia's wings. In effect, this means that Ukraine is unlikely to ever re-join Europe as Russia has never expressed an interest in EU or NATO membership, unlike Ukraine.

Kuchma became president in July 1994 on a platform of re-orientation towards Russia and the 'normalisation' of Ukraine–Russia relations. Russia's refusal to recognise Ukraine's borders until 1997–99 made Kuchma orientate westwards in his first term to obtain security assurances from NATO and the West in its dispute with Russia. This coincided with the West's *partnership* with Ukraine when it was the 'lynchpin' of European security in the second half of the 1990s.

With Ukraine's borders secured by 1999 Kuchma had no more need to orient Ukraine westwards to balance against an unfriendly Russia. Kuchma was able to return to his 1994 election platform, popular in Eastern Ukraine, of a Russia–Ukraine strategic alliance.³⁹

Precipitously for Putin, Ukraine's re-orientation from West to East in 1999–2000 was further deepened in November 2000 by the *Kuchmagate*

crisis that isolated Kuchma in the West. In February 2001, during the height of the *Kuchmagate* crisis, Putin made a deliberate show of support for Kuchma on a visit to Ukraine.

During the Yeltsin era, the Russia–Ukraine ‘strategic partnership’ was devoid of substance, something that both sides have since acknowledged. Under Putin, he has developed a closer bilateral relationship with Ukraine that is implanting greater substance into their ‘strategic partnership’ that serves Russia’s interests in the CIS, Europe and vis-à-vis the US.

Unlike Yeltsin, Putin is not allowing Ukraine to play off Russia against the West. Such a policy became more difficult anyway for Ukraine to undertake after the September 11 terrorist attacks on the US, which changed the nature of the US–Russia relationship. Unlike Yeltsin, Putin has not been willing to allow Ukraine to build up large debts for gas, or allow Ukrainian corrupt officials and oligarchs to steal Russian gas transiting Ukraine. Putin threatened to re-route gas deliveries to Western Europe through Belarus by building alternative pipelines, something that would have removed Ukraine’s main source of control over Russian exports. In 2002 Ukraine and Russia signed an agreement to create a gas consortium that provides Russia with leverage over Ukrainian pipelines (although Ukraine has insisted it will maintain at least 51 per cent control).

In the 1990s, Ukraine and Russia aggressively competed on the international arms market. Putin has offered to coordinate Ukrainian–Russian arms sales in the international arms market and develop joint projects between their Military-Industrial Complexes (MIC), proposals that Kuchma has warmed to.⁴⁰ With little foreign investment entering Ukraine, Kuchma has encouraged Russian investors to take part in the privatisation of lucrative Ukrainian enterprises. Some of the funds used for this are laundered in offshore zones, such as Cyprus, which remains one of the largest investors in Ukraine.

Russia openly intervened in Ukraine’s 2002 parliamentary elections and will do so again in the 2004 presidential. In the 2002 elections Russian media and Russian officials attacked Yushchenko and labelled his Our Ukraine bloc as ‘anti-Russian’ in order to persuade Eastern Ukrainian voters to not vote for Our Ukraine. Russia sentenced Colonel-General Georgiy Oleynik for allegedly accepting bribes from Tymosenko, one of Kuchma’s implacable foes, when she headed United Energy Systems of Ukraine in the mid-1990s. State pressure by the Ukrainian Tax Administration against businessmen who support Our Ukraine have also been launched with Russian assistance.

In 2003 ‘Russian Days in Ukraine’ were held at the state level in Ukraine. A joint commission to coordinate the writing of school textbooks was established in 2002, and this was headed on the Ukrainian side by

Deputy Prime Minister Volodymyr Semynozhenko, formerly leader of the Donetsk-based Party of Regions until Prime Minister Yanukovych took over in 2003.

Ukraine's policies towards NATO and the EU have increasingly been coordinated with Russia's in line with the new unofficial foreign policy doctrine favoured by Ukraine's oligarchs of 'To Europe with Russia!'. Russia continually pushed throughout the 1990s for the coordination of both countries' security policies and a 'joint parrying against foreign threats'. Such a close military defensive relationship has been a long running Russian goal since Kuchma's election in 1994.

Russian-Ukrainian military cooperation has also been expanded. In 2000-1, Ukraine increased the participation of its security forces in the CIS Anti-Terrorist Centre, which it joined in 2000, and the CIS Air Defence Agreement, which it joined as an Associate Member in 1995. Ukrainian officials also expanded their attendance at CIS security functions, particularly after September 11. In December 2000, at the CIS Ministers of Defence meeting in Moscow, Ukraine agreed to undertake 52 military cooperation activities with Russia in 2001, up from 28 in 1998. The following month, Russia and Ukraine signed their first-ever military cooperation programme.

Throughout the 1990s, Ukrainian diplomats were constantly exasperated by the West tying Ukraine's fate to Russia's when it applied for membership in the Council of Europe and of the EU. Then Ambassador to the Benelux countries Tarasiuk said in early 1998 that he was particularly incensed that the EU would only consider Ukraine's membership at the same time as Russia's.

A foreign policy ideology of 'To Europe with Russia!' confirms to the West that Ukraine and Russia's fates are indeed tied together and that Ukraine is only half hearted in its desire to 'rejoin Europe'. The West is now talking about Ukraine and Russia joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) together.

The use of anti-Americanism since the beginning of the *Kuchmagate* scandal is another factor that has caused consternation in the West, and is itself a result of growing Russian influence upon Ukraine's elites. In traditional Soviet style, Ukraine's elites have attempted to shift blame for the domestic crisis on to the West by accusing it of being part of a conspiracy that was allegedly conjured up by former US national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski. The conspiracy allegedly aimed to replace Kuchma with Yushchenko. The so-called 'Brzezinski Plot' was originally conjured up by Russian President Putin's image makers in the Fund for Effective Politics run by Gleb Pavlovsky. It was then introduced into Ukraine by pro-presidential oligarchic groups.

But, Russia and Ukraine Have Different Foreign Policies

A foreign policy of 'To Europe with Russia!' is flawed because Russian and Ukrainian foreign policies are fundamentally different. Russia, after all, has never expressed an interest in NATO or EU membership and Russia sees itself as a great power. Russia is interested in participating in the G8, cooperating with the US against international terrorism and aligning until September 11 with the Chinese to counterbalance the US.

Russia has also always sought to dominate the CIS and transform it into a viable structure with supranational institutions.⁴¹ Moscow is backing Sovietophile Belarus, communist Moldova and authoritarian regimes throughout the CIS. Geopolitics – not reform – is paramount for Russia. Although Russia has enthusiastically endorsed the international struggle against terrorism since September 11, its record in the CIS reflects its own double standards as it has covertly backed separatism in Georgia, Moldova and Azerbaijan.

Ukraine's foreign policy is fundamentally different to Russia's. Unlike Russia, Ukraine seeks to join NATO and the EU as part of a long-touted commitment to 'return to Europe'. Ukraine has never opposed NATO enlargement and has been the most enthusiastic CIS member of NATO's PfP. Cooperation with NATO has had a considerable impact upon Ukraine's armed forces. Traditionally, Ukraine has been opposed to deep CIS integration, suspicious of Russian-led institutions (such as the CIS Collective Security Treaty [Organization] and Eurasian Economic Community), and in favour of balancing NATO and the US against Russia.

Ukraine is different from the remainder of the CIS in that it is the only country with a sizeable domestic, pro-Western and pro-reform movement, Our Ukraine, whose leader, Yushchenko, is the most popular politician. Thus, Ukraine cannot be entirely written off as a typical CIS authoritarian state as reformist and anti-presidential forces have large majority public support.

At the same time, Ukraine is also very different to Central-Eastern Europe and the Baltic States and more similar to the CIS in two areas.

First, there is the growing importance since 1998–99 of the oligarchs as the bedrock of support for Kuchma. Russian support for Kuchma is strengthening this oligarchic alliance as Putin has himself failed to destroy their power in Russia. The requirements of reform, a transparent budget and political system, free media and clampdown on corruption, all policies required for Euro-Atlantic integration, would harm the interests of this new ruling class.

Second, Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration is weak because the oligarchic section of the political spectrum is not ideologically committed

to it. In Central-Eastern European states the centre is also ideologically committed to Euro-Atlantic integration. The centre is backed in turn by communists who have become social democrats, as in Poland. In Central-Eastern Europe both the centrists and post-communists therefore back the national democrats in seeking Euro-Atlantic integration. Meanwhile, in Ukraine, the national democrats are the only group committed to returning to Europe in deed and not only in rhetoric.⁴²

In Ukraine the centre consists of oligarchic groups who are ideologically amorphous because of their origins in the ideologically bankrupt and stagnant Soviet-era Communist Party of Ukraine. Their commitment to Euro-Atlantic integration is at the level of rhetoric and dependent on how it affects their clannish and financial interests. During the 2002 elections the pro-Kuchma For a United Ukraine (ZYU) bloc, for example, backed a CIS and Russian-style super-presidential regime. Kuchma and the parliamentary factions that have grown out of ZYU, now support a parliamentary-presidential republic because they control parliament and do not want Yushchenko, if elected in 2004, to have as much executive power as Kuchma had.⁴³

The centrist oligarchs and executive leaned towards NATO and the US during Kuchma's first term in office (1994–99) when Russia was seen as the principle security threat. By 1999–2000 this threat had disappeared because Russia had recognised Ukraine's borders and Putin replaced Yeltsin. Putin is not challenging Ukraine's independent statehood, while at the same time seeking to maintain Ukraine within Russia's sphere of influence. In addition, by the late 1990s, Ukraine's oligarchs had accumulated sufficient capitol to no longer feel threatened by Russia's oligarchs who had accumulated capitol earlier than their Ukrainian counterparts due to the launch of Russia's reforms in 1992.

During Kuchma's second term in office, the threat, as perceived by the oligarchs and executive, has changed to the US and the West. Kuchma sincerely believes Washington is behind the *Kuchmagate* scandal. This anti-Americanism is grounded in the Soviet origins of Ukraine's new oligarchic class and reflects their neo-Soviet political culture.

End of the Cold War

Although we tend to think the disintegration of the USSR was the end of the Cold War we merely had an interregnum for a decade under President Bill Clinton. The Bush administration is very different. It has no qualms in openly and loudly proclaiming that the US is the victor over communism and the West (meaning the US) is/are now the leading country(s) in the world. Lip service (unlike in the Clinton era) is less paid to Russia's sensitivities, which, after all, claims to be the successor state to the USSR.

Russia and its allies in what US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld describes as the 'old Europe' (France, Germany, etc.) obviously take issue with the Bush doctrine. Neither country has the military or even economic clout to back up their claims to be 'great powers'. The only way that their Cold War status of 'great powers' can be still recognised is through the UN, where they are permanent members of the Security Council. In the case of France it is also through creating a new European Union. France's vision of the new EU would not complement, but rival, the US.

The Iraqi armed forces used former Soviet/Russian weaponry and tactics. In 2003 just 80,000 US troops defeated hundreds of thousands of Iraqis defending Baghdad. Soviet weaponry and tactics proved to be useless in the post-Cold War era. Ukraine's military desperately needs reforms that move its armed forces away from rigid Soviet-style formations in favour of smaller, more mobile units.

Where Does Ukraine Fit In?

During the Iraqi crisis, Ukraine sent a chemical and biological clean up battalion to Kuwait – the only CIS state to send military units. As is usual in Ukrainian foreign policy, it was never clear if Ukraine was, or was not, a member of the Coalition. Head of the presidential administration Viktor Medvedchuk stated adamantly that Ukraine was not. Carlos Pascual, US Ambassador to Ukraine, said that Ukraine had asked to be placed on the list of Coalition countries.

In the debate raging to the west of Ukraine between pro-American 'new Europe' and anti-Iraqi war 'old Europe', Kyiv had little to say. Practically the entire post-communist 'new world' outside of the CIS, together with Uzbekistan and Georgia, backed the US. Poland in particular was a vociferous ally. Where was Ukraine?

Ukraine's absence from this debate is a reflection of foreign policy paralysis in the approach to the post-Kuchma era. What is good for foreign policy has nothing to do with 'national interests', which the presidential administration has been unable to ever define, but is related to Kuchma's personal fate. The central aim of Ukrainian foreign policy is to ensure Kuchma's transition to being a pensioner.

Ukraine was also absent from this new Europe-wide debate because its European aspirations are not taken seriously either domestically by the executive or externally by the EU. Ukraine, a country that is large in territory and population, is simply not taken seriously because its elites do not take it sufficiently seriously.

The Bush Doctrine and Ukraine

Here is where the Bush doctrine comes in. Loyal allies are rewarded while

disloyal allies are ignored or punished. France has suffered the worst with its Ambassador in Washington claiming in an unprecedented manner that US officials were undertaking a disinformation campaign against it in the US media alleging French support for Saddam Hussein. Many Western European states, such as Spain, Italy and the UK, are also wary of French President Jacques Chirac's positions on Iraq and 'deepening' EU integration.

Ukraine should clearly position itself in the non-French camp along with the remainder of 'new Europe' and the UK. France has long preferred 'deepening' the EU to 'widening' it and was a long-time opponent of EU enlargement. Its attitudes towards NATO have been ambivalent or hostile since the 1960s, when it pulled out of NATO's military arm.

France now fears that the inclusion of the 'new Europe' within the EU in May 2004 will mean bringing in a de facto pro-American lobby. Ukraine should only welcome that. This pro-American lobby from the 'new Europe' will be backed by the UK in its preference for 'widening' to 'deepening' of the EU. 'Widening' gives post-Kuchma Ukraine a future chance of getting inside the EU while 'deepening' does not.

United States' relations with Russia have also suffered – a step that is favourable to Ukraine. Since 1992, whenever US–Russia relations have declined, Ukraine-US relations have improved. The same has occurred in reverse. After the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the US, its relations with Russia improved at the expense of Ukraine.

Just compare how the US dealt with arms sales from Russia and Ukraine to Iraq. The US had known since early 2002 that Russia (and its satrap, Belarus) have been selling weapons to Iraq in contravention of the UN embargo imposed after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1991. Belarus was publicly fingered by the US, while Russia was diplomatically and quietly asked to halt such flows. The US only went public about Russia after the Coalition invaded Iraq.

Then came loud, public US allegations against Ukraine in September 2001 about the alleged sale of 'Kolchuga' radar equipment to Iraq in 2000. The manner in which Ukraine was fingered was diametrically different to the way the US handled Russia. Ironically, only Russian and Belarusian arms have been found in Iraq since Saddam's overthrow. 'Kolchugas' (like weapons of mass destruction) are nowhere to be seen.

Postscript: Will Iraq Save Kuchma?

The sending of 2,000 Ukrainian troops to Iraq in Summer 2003 to serve as peacekeeping forces was an attempt to repair the damage caused by the Kolchuga scandal. They are to serve in the Polish-led sector between Baghdad and Basra that will serve to solidify Ukrainian–Polish–US–NATO relations.

Ukraine's decision to send troops to Iraq will earn Kyiv goodwill in Washington and repair damaged relations. At a May 2003 Washington conference on NATO-Ukrainian relations at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, US officials hinted that an application from Ukraine for NATO membership would be warmly received.

From the US and NATO point of view, the Ukrainian troops in Iraq will not return US-Ukrainian relations to the high level that existed in the Clinton era as this will be impossible under Kuchma. The Bush doctrine values trust and Kuchma broke that in 2000 when he authorised the sale of Kolchuga radar equipment to Iraq.

Iraq will promote Ukraine's chances to gain NATO membership in the third round of enlargement at the 2007 summit. This will be helped if Kuchma is no longer president. The Ukrainian military and foreign policy establishment have long been ready for NATO, something that cannot be said of the presidential administration, which is divided between pro-Western and pro-Russian forces.

CONCLUSION; FUNDAMENTAL CONTRADICTIONS REMAIN IN PLACE

Ukraine's relations with the West have undergone three stages since 1992: *disinterest*, *partnership* and *disillusionment*. An end to the disillusionment in place since 2000 is conditional on who is elected president in the October 2004 elections to succeed Kuchma. No improvement in Ukraine's relations with the West is possible until the post-Kuchma era.

Since 1999, during Kuchma's second term in office, Ukraine has moved from a *partnership* with the West to *disillusionment*. EU Foreign Policy Chief Javier Solana advised Kuchma to play by the rules and warned that, 'The course Ukraine is taking is not getting closer to European institutions.' He advised Kyiv to adopt a 'change in course'.⁴⁴ Ukraine under Kuchma has refused to play by these rules and the Ukrainian authorities fail to understand that their country's success in Euro-Atlantic integration is dependent upon it abiding by Solana's friendly advice.

The EU still continues to rule out Ukraine's membership and it would be only forced to change this position if someone the EU had faith in to implement Ukraine's 'Europeanization', such as Yushchenko, would be elected president in 2004. If Kuchma succeeds in electing a like-minded successor, Ukraine's aspirations for EU membership will be again thwarted for many years to come.

NATO also believes that Ukraine's membership remains 'hypothetical', 'long-term' and that 'membership is not on the agenda right now', according to former NATO Secretary-General Robertson. Nevertheless, at

least NATO, unlike the EU has not fully ruled out Ukraine's membership. NATO membership is at least likely in either 2007 (if Yushchenko is elected president) or in 2012.

The activities of the authorities both during and since the 2002 elections,⁴⁵ coupled with the appointment of a prime minister from the Donbas, a region where Yushchenko's Our Ukraine bloc failed to cross the 4 per cent threshold in the 2002 elections, have added to Ukraine's problematical relationship with the West since 2000. The still-unresolved murder of opposition journalist Gongadze (which is now within the remit of the European Court of Human Rights), the sale of military technology to Iraq, and the Lazarenko trial in the US (which began in August 2003) will continue the West's disillusionment with Kuchma and Ukraine.

The West therefore faces difficult strategic choices in Ukraine. As its 1995–99 *partnership* with Ukraine floundered, Russia stepped in to fill the vacuum. Although the US and NATO are attempting to differentiate between their dislike for 'Kuchma', who is totally discredited in the West, and 'Ukraine', with whom they want to maintain open channels of cooperation, this may prove difficult to achieve in practice.

In the meantime, Ukraine's foreign policy is stalled and likely to continue to stagnate until the end of Kuchma's second term in office in November 2004. Rhetoric notwithstanding, Ukraine's chances of Euro-Atlantic integration will be impossible to achieve under either Kuchma or a successor cut from the same cloth.

The revelations made in the *Kuchmagate* tapes have hardened the opposition, divided the national democrats from the pro-presidential centrists and made the executive and oligarchs fear prosecution in the post-Kuchma era. In 2002, the executive attempted to take control of all institutions in order to ensure a controlled transition to the post-Kuchma era. Domestic and foreign policy is closely tied to Kuchma's personal fate and immunity after 2004. Pro-presidential oligarchs also seek to obtain immunity from prosecution for corruption.⁴⁶ A loyal successor can only be elected if the 2004 elections are not free and fair as they would have to block a victory by Yushchenko, who has stable and high popularity ratings. The oligarchs and executive are totally discredited among the population and have no popular candidate to arrange a Russian-style succession like that from Yeltsin to Putin.

To the executive and oligarchs the question of immunity is more important than the issue of free and fair elections. Russian interests in Ukraine (blocking Yushchenko and ensuring the election of a loyal Kuchma successor) coincide with the interests of the Ukrainian executive and oligarchs. Russia – unlike the US and international organisations – will facilitate and accept the outcome of un-free and unfair elections.

The West would look upon the lack of free and fair elections in 2004 as a further sign that the interests of the executive and oligarchs are hostile to democratisation. This would continue to make Ukraine's international image poor and maintain its relations with the West as cold. Such a view of Ukraine would solidify the dominant view within the EU that Ukraine cannot be considered as a future EU member, worsen its relations with the Council of Europe, OSCE and the US while postponing NATO membership indefinitely.

NOTES

1. See T. Kuzio, 'Will Political Reform Lead Ukraine Out of Crisis?', *RFERL Newswire*, 19 March 2003.
2. Taras Kuzio, *Ukrainian Security Policy. Washington Paper 167* (Washington DC: Center for Strategic & International Studies and Praeger 1995); and Oleksandr Pavliuk, 'An Unfulfilling Partnership: Ukraine and the West, 1991-2001', *European Security* 11/1 (Spring 2002) pp.91-101.
3. See Edwin Mroz and O. Pavliuk, 'Ukraine: Europe's Linchpin', *Foreign Affairs* 75/3 (May-June 1996) pp.52-62; and Sherman W. Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch. Ukraine in the Emerging Security Environment of Central and Eastern Europe* (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 1997).
4. *Ukrayinska Pravda*, 7 Nov. 2002.
5. See T. Kuzio, 'Understanding Mykola Melnychenko', *RFERL Poland, Belarus, Ukraine Report*, 6 May 2003.
6. See 'Ukraine: An Insider Report', *June's Intelligence Digest*, 13, 18, 27 Sept. 2002.
7. See T. Kuzio, 'Is Ukraine Any Nearer The Truth on Gongadze's Murder', *RFERL Media Matters*, 28 Feb. 2003.
8. Michael Wines, 'Peculiar Peril of Politics: Accident-Prone Cars', *New York Times*, 9 April 2002.
9. See T. Kuzio, 'When Oligarchs go into Opposition: The Case of Pavel Lazarenko', *Russia and Eurasia Review* 2/11 (27 May 2003).
10. See Keith Darden, 'Blackmail as a Tool of State Domination: Ukraine under Kuchma', *East European Constitutional Review* 10/2-3 (Spring-Summer 2001) pp.67-71.
11. See T. Kuzio, 'Ukraine's Virtual Struggle Against Corruption and Organised Crime', *RFERL Crime, Corruption and Terrorism Watch*, 6 Sept. 2002.
12. Yulia Mostova, 'How Ukraine Might Surprise Europe', *Zerkalo Nedeli/Tserkalo Tyzhnia*, 18-24 Jan. 2003.
13. See T. Kuzio, 'Tabachnyk recycles outdated ideology', *Kyiv Post*, 14 Nov. 2002.
14. After 9/11, Ukraine was still under the illusion that it was strategically important to the West. See Yulia Mostovaya, 'Will This be a Long Winter?', *Zerkalo Nedeli/Tserkalo Tyzhnia*, 30 Nov.-6 Dec. 2002.
15. AFP, 9 Dec. 2002.
16. Both Ukraine and the US have been eerily silent on the fact that no Kolchugas have been found inside Iraq after the Saddam Hussein regime was overthrown by US-led Coalition forces in April 2003. This may be because no other weapons of mass destruction have been found either, the ostensible reason given by the US and UK for urgent intervention into Iraq.
17. See the lengthy investigation by Peter Landesman, 'Arms and the Man', *New York Times Magazine*, 17 Aug. 2003.
18. Ukrainian State Television - 1, 31 Dec. 2002. A commentary replied that, 'But, we haven't

- been let in there so far ... And we still don't know where we are going'. See Ludmila Shangina, 'The New Year and A Little About Ourselves', *Zerkalo Nedeli/Tserkalo Tyzhnia*, 28 Dec. 2002–10 Jan. 2003.
19. Valeriy Chaliy and Mykhailo Rashkov, 'Zovnishne Polityka Vnutrishne Vykorystannia', *Zerkalo Nedeli/Tserkalo Tyzhnia*, 23–30 Nov. 2002.
 20. Mostova (note 21).
 21. Ibid.
 22. Tatiana Silina, 'Pernicious Wind From the East', *Zerkalo Nedeli/Tserkalo Tyzhnia*, 1–7 March 2003.
 23. Quoted from T. Kuzio, 'Ukrainian President Revamps CIS, Obtains Russian Backing for 2004', *RFEL Newslines*, 27 Feb. 2003.
 24. See T. Kuzio, 'The EU and Ukraine: Neighbor, Partner, Member?', *Jamestown Foundation Russia and Eurasia Review* 2/16 (5 Aug. 2003).
 25. *Ukrayina moloda*, 10 April 2002.
 26. *Le Monde*, 2 April 2002.
 27. Speech by Pascual at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington DC, 9 Jan. 2003.
 28. *Ukrayina moloda*, 10 April 2002.
 29. See T. Kuzio, 'Ukraine, Poland, and the EU's Wider Europe Initiative', *RFERL Poland, Belarus, and Ukraine Report*, 1 July 2003.
 30. See Oleksandr Pavliuk, 'NATO Enlargement and Ukraine', in Anton A. Bebler (ed.), *The Challenge of NATO Enlargement* (Westport, CT and London: Praeger 1999) pp.81–92; Oleksandr Potekhin, 'The NATO–Ukraine Partnership: Problems, Achievements and Perspectives', in Kurt R. Spillmann, Andreas Wenger and Derek Muller (eds.), *Between Russia and Europe. Foreign and Security Policy of Independent Ukraine*, Contemporary History and Security Policy 2, Center for Security Studies and Conflict Research, Zurich (Bern: Peter Lang 1999) pp.145–66; James Sherr, 'The Dual Enlargements and Ukraine', in Anatol Lieven and Dmitri Trenin (eds.), *Ambivalent Neighbors: The EU, NATO and the Price of Membership* (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2003) pp.108–44.
 31. Interfax, 17 Dec. 2002.
 32. Interfax, 18 Dec. 2002.
 33. The *Financial Times* (20 Oct. 2002) asked the same question of Ukraine. NATO and EU membership, the newspaper reminded Ukraine, 'comes at a price of accepting Western values, including the rule of law. The West should not dictate a change of leadership in Kuchma – that is for Ukraine to decide – but there is no harm in signalling that Mr.Kuchma is a serious obstacle on the road to further integration with Europe'. An editorial in the *Baltic Times* (6 Feb. 2003) was more scathing, calling Ukrainian foreign policy a 'joke' which was a 'bizarre performance to watch'.
 34. See my optimistic forecast in T. Kuzio, 'Ukraine moves closer to future in NATO', *Kyiv Post*, 3 July 2003.
 35. *Zerkalo Nedeli/Tserkalo Tyzhnia*, 25–31 Jan. 2003.
 36. Mostova (note 14).
 37. Landesman (note 17).
 38. On continued problems in the Russian–Ukrainian partnership, see Serhiy Solodkyi and Viktor Zamyatin, 'Russia Still Sees Ukraine as a Satellite', *Den* (21 May 2003), and the lengthy analysis by UCEPS in *Zerkalo Nedeli/Tserkalo Tyzhnia*, 21 June 2003.
 39. See 'UKRAINE/RUSSIA: Arms export cooperation is rising', *Oxford Analytica East Europe Daily Brief*, 28 July 2003.
 40. This opposition to CIS supra-national institutions was reiterated by Foreign Minister Zlenko in an interview in *Den*, 28 Aug. 2003. The Russian Foreign Ministry responded by suggesting he should go into retirement (*Ukrayinska Pravda*, 29 Aug. 2003), which he did the next month.

41. See T. Kuzio, 'Spot the Reformers', *RFERL Poland, Belarus, Ukraine Report*, 27 May 2003.
42. See Jan Maksymiuk, 'Ukrainian President Offers New Political-Reform Plan', *RFERL Newline*, 27 Aug. 2003; and Yushchenko's response 'Reform is not a game', *Zerkalo Nedeli/Tserkalo Tyzhnia*, 23-29 Aug. 2003.
43. *Financial Times*, 20 Oct. 2002.
44. See T. Kuzio, 'Ukraine Returns to Soviet-Era Tactics to Subdue Opposition', *RFERL Uncivil Societies* 18 (Sept. 2002); and 'Ukrainian President Orchestrates Oligarchic Takeover', *RFERL Newline*, 13 Dec. 2002.
45. See T. Kuzio, 'Fear drives political reform in Ukraine', *RFERL Poland, Belarus, Ukraine Report*, 2 Sept. 2003.

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